

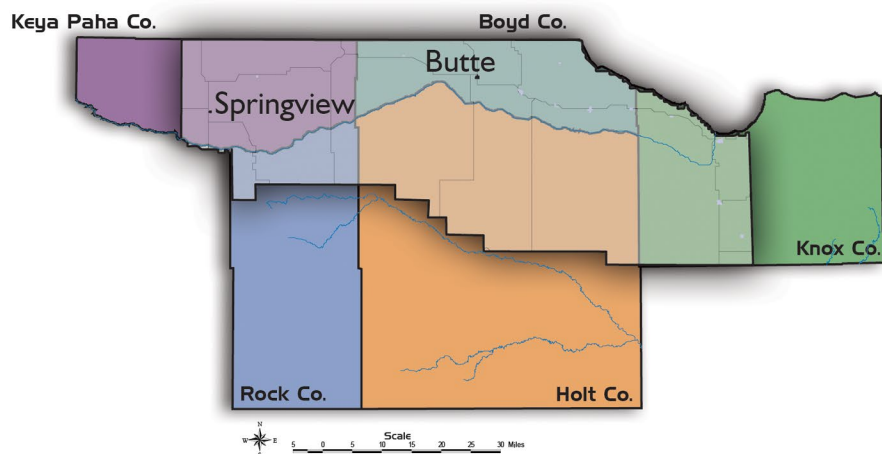
KNOW YOUR NRD



LOWER NIOBRARA
Natural Resources District
Butte, NE

Nebraska's Natural Resources Districts
Making the Good Life Better Since 1972

2022



LOWER NIOBRARA NRD



NRD QUICK FACTS:

- Static water levels are measured spring & fall
- 2 wellhead protection areas
- 732 chemigation inspections completed in 2022
- 1408 chemigation permits issued in 2022
- Free nitrate water testing
- 300 monitoring wells are sampled for nitrates levels
- Ultrasonic flowmeter checks
- Sold 9652 total trees and shrubs
- Added 499 New Irrigated Acres
- Presented to all the elementary schools in our district

Protecting Lives

50 Anniversary of NRD's

2022 was a big year for NRD's it's not every year you get to celebrate 5 decades of protecting, conserving, and improving Nebraska's nature resources. We had an open house in July to celebrate and a chance to look back at pictures and memories of changes and growth in the past 50 years. To also celebrate the 50th anniversary, we participated in the 100 millionth tree planted by the NRD's by planting a Maple tree at the State Capital yard. We partnered with Nebraska City tourism & Commerce, and they purchased a Burr Oak for our NRD yard, and we purchased a Burr oak for the Boyd County Courthouse yard and a Matador Maple tree and planted at the Keya Paha County Courthouse yard.

Protecting Property

West Knox Rural Water District

To protect and provide quality drinking water to the residents of Knox County, Nebraska the Lower Niobrara NRD established the West Knox Rural Water System in 1984. The WKRWS provides clean safe high quality drinking water to the residents of Verdigre and Winnetoon along with 1250+ rural residents and many pasture hookups.

The system is monitored 24/7 and the staff have access to the system via their smartphones. The March 14th "Bomb Cyclone" caused over \$700,000 in damages to sixteen creek crossings in the system. Working with FEMA and NEMA all the repair projects are completed with 90% of the cost covered by NEMA and FEMA Grants. Each year the Systems adds (continued on

Protecting the Future

back)

Tree Planting and Wildlife Habitat

To protect property and to encourage tree planting, the Lower Niobrara NRD sells low cost conservation tree and shrub seedlings to District residents. Over the past five years the District has planted an average of 7,000 trees per year. These trees and shrubs are planted in windbreaks for livestock and homestead protection, prevention of soil erosion, wildlife habitat, "living snow fences" and for aesthetic value.

Nebraska Environmental Trust Grant

The Lower Niobrara NRD received the 3-year grant for \$160,00.00 from the Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund to drill test holes, record geological data,

Local Leader in Conservation

West Knox Rural Water District (continued from front)

new hookups to rural homes, cabins, pasture or feeding operations. The system is a vital part in keeping central Knox County growing and prospering.



Natural Resources Awareness Activities

To increase awareness of natural resources the LNNRD hosted an 8th Grade Conservation Day. Forty-Nine 8th Graders from across the district participated in this year's event, at the Butte Golf Course. Natural resources professionals from across the state shared their expertise with the students using hands-on activities.

Office Staff of the LNNRD promotes awareness of natural resources through other educational activities including Co-sponsor the Natural Resources Festival with the UENRD, Partnering Sponsor of the Wonderful World of Water, Hosting Land Judging Contests, and Range Judging Contests, Know Your Well Program, elementary class presentations explaining responsibilities/duties of NRDs, and Natural Resources. LNNRD offers scholarships to youth who attend the Nebraska Range Youth Camp or Adventure Camp about the Environment (ACE). The scholarships consist of paying 75% of the registration fee.

As part of the Bazile Groundwater Management Area (BGMA) which is made up of land located within 4 NRD'S including the Lewis & Clark, Lower Elkhorn, Upper Elkhorn, and Lower Niobrara NRD's. Together we are addressing the rising nitrate levels in the area communities and domestic wells. The communities included are Bazile Mills, Brunswick, Creighton, Forster, Orchard, Osmond, Plainview, Royal, Wausa, and Winnetoon. The BGMA group offers cost-share for several different practices, hold meetings and field days on the UNL/BGMA Demo sites in the area to help raise awareness on how to lower the nitrates in the area.

Protecting Resources

The Lower Niobrara NRD Board voted to allow up to 500 new irrigated areas in the district. With the increase in static water levels over the last few years, the completion of certifying Irrigated acres in the District and requests received from irrigators the Board approved the Groundwater Management Committee recommendation. The Lower Niobrara NRD accepted applications starting July 1st and ended August 31st, 2022, with a nonrefundable fee for new acres. Each application goes through a ranking process and reviewed by the Groundwater Management Committee. Their recommendations are then presented at the September board meeting. The highest priority will be given to applications which complete circles. There is a stipulation of not more than 25% of currently irrigated acres can be added to these systems along with no transfers of irrigated acres, no adding towers or end guns and no new wells are allowed. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) can also allow new surface water acres up to 1/3 of new groundwater acres applied for and received.



Nebraska Environmental Trust Grant (continued from front) construct observation wells and install water-level data loggers. Do to supply demands we got an extension on the Grant. We now have all the wells completed and waiting for the transmitters to arrive. With this technology you will be able to go to the website and get live time readings. The total budget for this project was \$272,000.00 and is a great addition to our water quality/quantity resources.



Nebraska's NRDs

- Protect lives and property through flood protection
- Are leaders in groundwater management
- Use taxpayers dollars efficiently

Formed in 1972, Nebraska's Natural Resources Districts are local government entities with broad responsibilities to protect our natural resources.

NRDs help Nebraskans respond to natural resource challenges with local control and local solutions. Major Nebraska river basins form the boundaries of the 23 NRDs, which are governed by locally elected board of directors. A 17-member board of directors governs the Lower Niobrara NRD; they are elected by registered voters within the District. The board sets policies for the District and works closely with the staff through a committee system to carry out the District's goals.

In the 50 years since they were created, NRDs have experienced tremendous growth in the responsibilities given to them by state statute, especially in protecting ground water.

Find out more about
Nebraska's NRDs at
www.nrdnet.org

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