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 Data Compliance Officer- Sandy Noecker
 Demonstration Plot Coordinator- Dean Krull, UNL
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 GIS Image/Analyst- Luke Zakrzewski
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 Programs Assistant- Tom Backer
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 Projects Manager- Jesse Mintken
 Range Management Specialist- David Carr
 Resources Conservationist- Shane Max
 Water Resources Specialist- Dan Clement
 Secretary NRD Office- Deb Jarzynka
 Secretaries NRCS Offices- Sara Carlson, Central City; Samantha Keith, Lexington
 Angie Lau, Grand Island; Shelly Lippincott, Kearney

IN PERSPECTIVE NEWSLETTER

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 (308) 385-6282 www.cpnrd.org



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Transfer Rules Updated and Groundwater Declines Addressed in Rules & Regs

Public Hearing to be held on April 24

The Central Platte NRD's Board of Directors is considering updates to the Rules and Regulations for Groundwater Use in Fully & Over Appropriated Areas. The changes include: a December 31, 2014 deadline to certify irrigated acres; allowanc- es for limited transfers on Class VIIe soils; and transfers of groundwater for irriga- tion of cropland on Class Vw, VIw, VI, VIIw, VII, VIIIs, or VIIIIs soils if approved by the Corps of Engineers and NRCS.



Central Platte Natural Resources District
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 Grand Island NE 68803-4915
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If you would prefer to receive this newsletter by email to reduce printing costs, send your email address to Marcia at: lee@cpnrd.org.

Summary of Rules to be Added
 ~Deadline to certify irrigated acres December 31, 2014.
 ~Limited transfers on Class VIIe soils.
 ~Transfers for irrigation of cropland on additional Class V, VI, VII & VIII soils.
 ~Stop on transfers & supplemental wells depending on groundwater declines.

PROPOSED ADDITIONS

- 6.3.5 Certification of irrigated acres will only be accepted by the Central Platte Natural Resources District until December 31, 2014.
- 7.1.a Transfers off of overlying land of one acre or more to newly irrigated lands will be allowed for cropland on Class I, Class II, Class III, Class IVw, and Class IVs soils as identified in the NRCS Standard Soils Survey and inclusions of soils within Class IVe and VIIe soil map units that do not have a high potential for soil erosion due to water or wind, as delineated using CPNDRD Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) data layer and NRCS Standard Soils Survey.
- 7.1.b Transfers of groundwater for the purpose of irrigation of cropland on Class IVe, VIe, and VIIe soils, that have high potential for soil erosion, will be allowed as part of a one-time exemption on up to 10% of a project (any combination of Class IVe, Class VIe & Class VIIe soils not to exceed 15.0 acres) transferred at one times the acres or ac-ft whichever is greater. If the land which the groundwater is being transferred from is a Class VIIe soil, it must be seeded back to Central Platte NRD approved grasses following the transfer.

Proposed Changes to Rules & Regs (continued from Page 1)

7.1.d. Transfers of groundwater for the purpose of irrigation of **existing** grass on Class IVe and VIe soils that have high potential for soil erosion, and **not part of an exemption**, will be allowed provided the land that the groundwater is being transferred to remains in grass.

7.1.e Transfers of groundwater for the purpose of irrigation of grass on Class VIIe soils that have high potential for soil erosion, and not part of an exemption, will be allowed provided the land that the groundwater is being transferred to remains in grass.

The existing topography of the land on which the groundwater is transferred for irrigation, that is not part of an exemption, must remain as it is without grading, knob knocking, land leveling or any form of slope alteration. Center pivot travel ways may be constructed and shall be maintained with the wheel track not exceed a width of three (3) feet.

7.1.f Transfers of groundwater for the purpose of irrigation on Class Vw, VIw, VIIw, VIIIw, or VIIIw, soils will be allowed provided the land which the groundwater is being transferred to, complies with the US Department of Agriculture Wetland Conservation Provisions and/or the US Army Corps of Engineers, Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and any other local/state/federal requirements. Documentation of compliance of the aforementioned must be provided to the Central Platte Natural Resources District prior to the transfer review.

7.1.g Transfers of groundwater for the purpose of irrigation of crop-land on Class IVe, and VIe and VIIe soils will be allowed under the following specified criteria for Small Area Exemptions.

7.1.h Transfers of groundwater for purpose of irrigation on Class VII and VIII soils will not be allowed.

7.1.3 No transfers will be allowed into any sub-area if the ground water declines of such sub area meets or exceeds 25 percent of the maximum acceptable decline as defined in 2.0 of the Groundwater Quantity Management Plan. This rule will stay in effect until the average water level is less than the 25 percent decline for two consecutive years, according to the spring water levels, taken by the District.

7.1.3.a Supplemental wells as defined in 2.14.2 will not be allowed in sub-areas that meet or exceed 25 percent of the maximum acceptable decline.

A complete copy of the proposed Rules and Regulations for Groundwater Use in Fully and Over Appropriated Areas is available at the Central Platte NRD office and at our website: www.cpnrd.org.

2 & 10 Certification Requirement

In order to protect your certified irrigated acres, the NRD adopted Rule 6.6.4 that states: After Jan. 1, 2010, all certified irrigated acres within the NRD are subject to decertification if non-use is determined. Two years prior to decertification, landowners will be notified by mail of the pending decertification.

Producers have several options available for maintaining irrigated status on their acres. The simplest is to irrigate all certified irrigated acres a minimum of two out of ten years in every decade, starting January 1, 2010. For the current decade (2010-2019), the last two years a landowner would have under this option to irrigate is 2018 and 2019.

Landowners that do not want to physically irrigate but still maintain their right to irrigate, have multiple options to choose from. Following are alternatives to irrigating that provide the opportunity to choose what works best for each producer: 1) Enroll land in a federal conservation program (CRP, CREP, etc), 2) Grow alfalfa in the sub-irrigated areas in the district, 3) Sign up for a short-term temporary transfer or 4) Sign up for a long-term temporary transfer.

The sign up for a short term or long term temporary transfer will only be accepted in the calendar years ending in a 4 or a 9. **2014 is the sign up year to protect the certified irrigated acres that will not be irrigated at least twice within the 2010-2019 decade.**

Candidates to be on November Ballot

SUB DISTRICT	FILING STATUS	NAME	CITY/TOWN
1	Incumbent	Brian Keiser	Gothenburg
2	Non-Incumbent	Pete Wardyn	Cozad
2	Non-Incumbent	Chris Henry	Cozad
2	Non-Incumbent	Andrew Hoffmeister	Kearney
3	Incumbent	Steve Sheen	Kearney
4	Incumbent	Robert Schanou	Shelton
5	No candidates filed for this seat.		
6	Non-Incumbent	Kelly Markham	Grand Island
6	Non-Incumbent	Jerry Milner	Grand Island
7	Incumbent	Ed Stoltenberg	Cairo
7	Non-Incumbent	Jim Eriksen	Grand Island
8	Incumbent	Alicia Haussler	Grand Island
9	Incumbent	Ed Kyes	Central City
10	Incumbent	Charles Maser	Grand Island
At Large	Incumbent	Dick Mercer	Kearney

BOARD/ELECTION NOTES:

***Jerry Milner of Grand Island** was appointed to the vacant seat in Sub-District 6 at the March board of directors meeting. Milner will fill the current remaining term through December 31, 2014 and will remain on the November election ballot with Kelly Markham.

***There are no candidates running in Subdistrict 5.**

***Subdistrict 2** will be the only seat on the Primary ballot since there are more than two candidates running.

College Notes

CPNRD COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM: The Central Platte NRD provides \$1,000 scholarships to ten college students each year. Applicants are ranked according to grade level and major, with preference given to those majoring in and/or already enrolled in a natural resources field. Congratulations to the following recipients for the 2014-15 year:

***GRAND ISLAND:** Mitchell Baker, Carlye Kush, Elizabeth Lutz ***KEARNEY:** Julia Burchell, Issac Richter
 ***CENTRAL CITY:** Mitchel Herbig, Jonathan Royle ***WOOD RIVER:** Carson Schultz
 ***CAIRO:** Tyler Plejdrup ***HORDVILLE:** Tyler Tomasek

AG DAY ON THE HILL REPRESENTATIVE: Morgan Kowaleski of Gothenburg is one of six UNL students elected as delegates to represent Nebraska for the National Ag Day on the Hill program. The Ag Day on the Hill program allows college students from Nebraska to join with other students from across the country to learn more about policy, natural resources and agriculture; which is supported by the Nebraska Association of Resources Districts (NARD) Foundation.

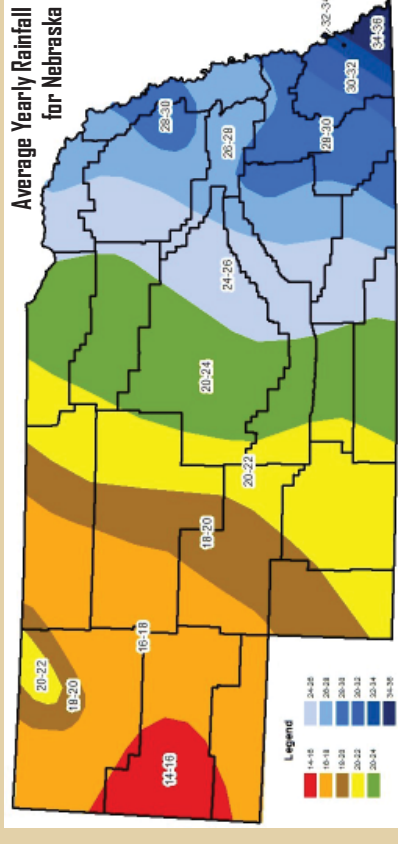
"By attending Ag Day on the Hill, I will experience firsthand valuable networking opportunities with agriculturists and legislators from across the nation. I'll also have the chance to expand my knowledge and understanding about current issues facing the industry and related policies designed to address those issues," said Morgan Kowaleski, Nebraska Ag Day on the Hill Representative.

NRDs Are Managing Water Statewide—As of February 2014:

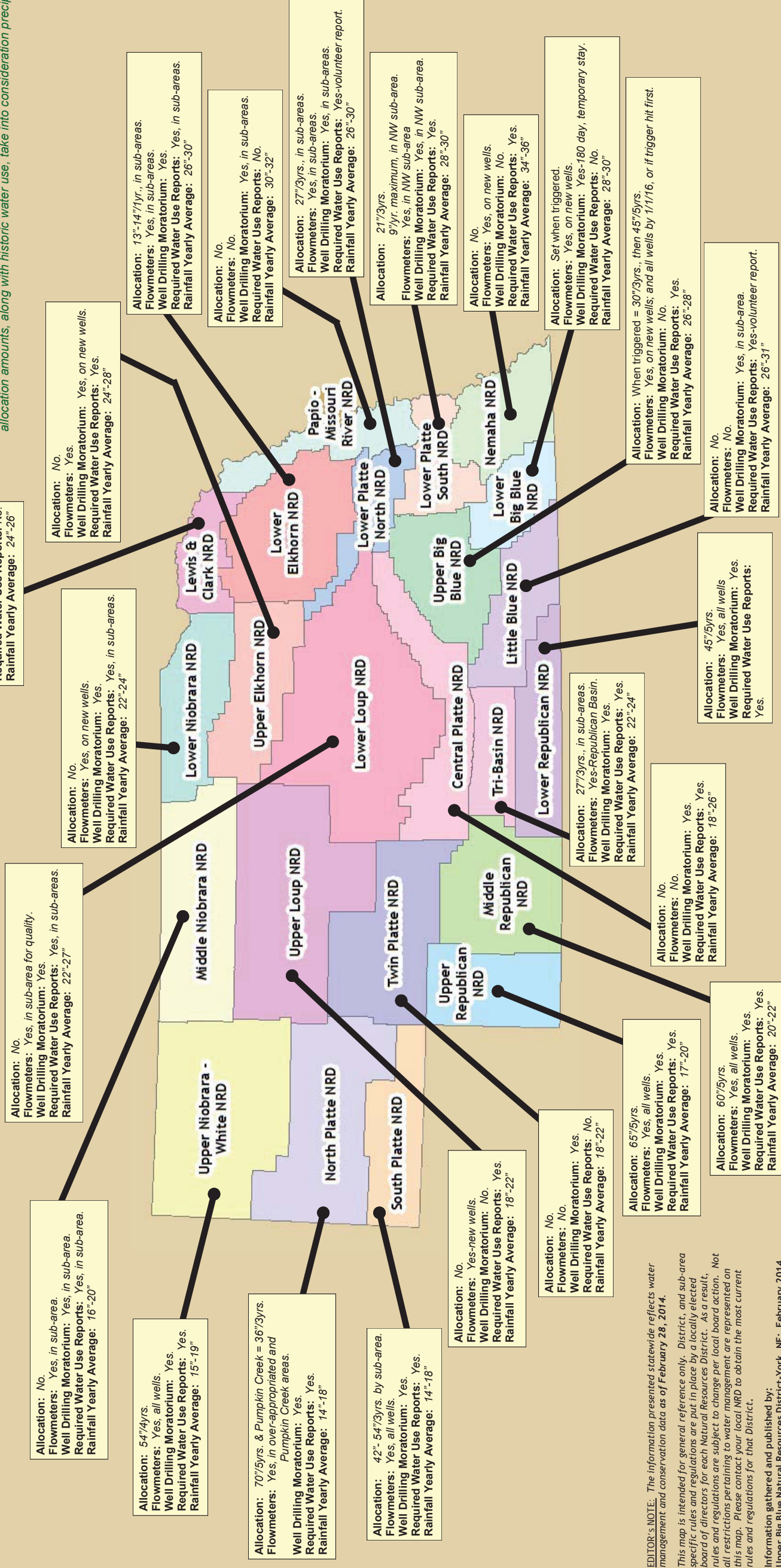
Nebraska's 23 Natural Resources Districts (NRDs) are uniquely positioned to manage the conservation of the state's natural resources through local governance. Because of Nebraska's diverse geology, climatology, and hydrology, each NRD—and its locally elected board of directors—are able to enact rules, regulations and programs that can assist its District's citizens and protect local natural resources for future generations to share. Water management regulations in particular include allocating groundwater, augmenting surface water, requiring flowmeters, instituting well drilling moratoriums, and restricting the expansion of irrigated acres. Individual NRDs use these regulations in different combinations and to different degrees depending on their respective geographic areas of concern. Below is a map showing all 23 NRDs and their most recent status of water management techniques.

So why does this matter to you? Quite simply, Nebraska's NRDs are working to ensure that you and future generations can continue to share in the use and enjoyment of our natural resources. Nebraska's NRDs: Protecting Lives, Protecting Property, and Protecting the Future...

NRD GROUNDWATER REGULATIONS ACROSS NEBRASKA



Precipitation varies dramatically across the state ranging from 14" to 36" a year in the Panhandle to 34"-36" a year in the most southeastern portion of Nebraska. Therefore, allocation amounts, along with historic water use, take into consideration precipitation.



EDITOR'S NOTE: The information presented statewide reflects water management and conservation data as of February 28, 2014.

This map is intended for general reference only. District, and sub-area specific rules and regulations are put in place by a locally elected board of directors for each Natural Resources District. As a result, rules and regulations are subject to change per local board action. Not all restrictions pertaining to water management are represented on this map. Please contact your local NRD to obtain the most current rules and regulations for that District.

Information gathered and published by:
Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District-York, NE; February 2014

Gibbon Partners Honored at National Conference for Innovative No-Till Practices

Don Blaschko and Lonnie Bohn, owners of B&B Partnership of Gibbon, were one of three winners to be recognized with a Responsible Nutrient Management Practitioners Award recently at the National No-Tillage Conference in Springfield, Illinois.



Don Blaschko & Lonnie Bohn of Gibbon receiving National No-Till Award in January.

The awards recognize growers who develop and adopt farming practices that maximize crop nutrient use and minimize waste and loss into the environment. The other winners were Dean Glenney of Ontario and Roger Wenning of Indiana.

B&B switched to continuous no-till 13 years ago and are seeing a boost in corn and soybean yields surpassing county averages, plus improved soil structure and quality. About 80% of their 1,600 acres are irrigated with a crop rotation of 2 years of corn followed by 1 year of soybeans. Corn, soybeans and wheat are raised on the dryland acres.

Bohn said, "Switching to no-till has improved irrigated corn yields by about 15 bushels per acre over the Buffalo County average."

Their dryland acres are beating the County average by 55 bushels and soybeans are 10 bushels better.

B&B PRESCRIPTION: Fertilizer is applied on a prescription basis through test results. On ground that is going into corn, nitrogen is applied in split applications. Ten gallons each of 32-0-0 and 10-34-0, plus NutriSphere-N and Avail, are applied at planting, 2" to the side of the row unit on the soil surface. They add nitrogen & NutriSphere-N to the crop during the first post-emergence herbicide application.

"After the crop is about knee-high, we apply more nitrogen based on 1 of 3 management zones with the center pivot, depending on what our soil tests show we need," Blaschko says.

When the crop is chest-high, tissue samples are taken. If the crop needs another shot of nitrogen, they apply the proper amount using center pivot. Whether it's phosphorus, zinc, sulfur, or any micronutrients, all fertilizer is variable-rate applied.

Variable-rate irrigation and cover crops are two other practices adopted by the partners that help contribute to increased yield. CropMetrics variable-rate irrigation applies water to the corn crop based on soil type, yield maps and hybrid. The results have been dramatic. Across the farm, corn yields were improved by 7 to 20 bushels per acre.

Cover crops are used to build soil organic matter and manage residual nitrogen. After bean harvest, they drill a mix of collards, cereal rye and winter canola. The benefits are two-fold; one, residual nitrogen is brought to the surface of the soil by the cover crops and made readily available to the next crop; two, the covers help reduce soil erosion on their rolling fields.

"We've planted a cover of rye, collards and canola on a farm with steep hills. The roots of cover crops keep the soil intact. We used to have large ditches on that field, but we haven't had to deal with ditches at all since using the cover crop," Blaschko said.



Parts of this article reprinted from No-Till Farmer/April/2014.

Why the NRD is Burning

Central Platte NRD has conducted a couple of prescribed burns already this spring and plans to conduct a few more when weather conditions are safe. Many folks want to know why we are burning and if it's really safe to be burning.

There are a lot of misconceptions about burning. Burning a field is not simply done to clean it off or try to get rid of weeds. Burning does not kill most grasses. In fact, almost all grasses survive a fire and some grow better after the fire. This is because the heat from a fire rises and doesn't penetrate down into the ground where the plant's growth point and root reserves are stored. The result is that desirable grasses come back as good or better after the fire. Fire does not get rid of weeds immediately and is not a stand-alone treatment for weeds.

Why we ARE doing Prescribed Burns

We are doing these burns to meet objectives of the landowners in our District. These objectives might be included in a conservation plan from the NRCS or individual plans and include improving grasslands for grazing and habitat for native wildlife. Another objective is to reduce small trees in a pasture such as cedar trees which can take over a pasture.

Pastures are improved when grazing/fire rotations are used. This has been studied and proven by Oklahoma State University scientists, as well as others. The benefits include:

- **Increased Plant Diversity in the Pasture:** better forage quantity and quality.
- **Increased Drought Tolerance** Native warm season grasses and broadleaf plants have deeper root structures and handle drought better.
- **Reduced Wildfire Danger:** Burned fields are less likely to re-burn in a given year, reduced trees and logs mean smaller easier to control fires.
- **More Native Wildlife:** Patch burn/graze systems increase native wildlife. Wildlife populations are essential to maintain a healthy balance with our environment.

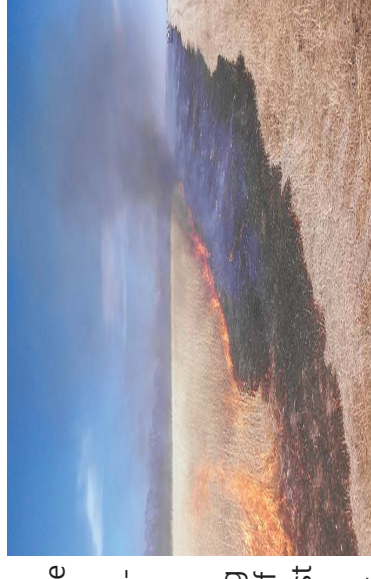
The benefits of a burn are not only enjoyed by the landowner, but also by their neighbors. When we increase wildlife habitat there may be more game species around for everyone. Also, by removing trees and logs, it reduces the threat of summer wildfires to neighbors. These benefits don't stop at the fence line.

Burn Safety

When is it too dangerous to burn? Central Platte NRD conducts burns with staff who are well-trained and well-equipped. We have standards in place for burn preparation which ensure the landscape is ready for a safe fire. The rest is up to Mother Nature.

Weather and drought can make the environment unsafe for burning. For pasture burns with trees long term drought is an issue and we need recent significant moisture to help increase safety. This can also be true for conservation fields with heavy grass loads. For moderate grass loadings long term drought is less of an issue, and what we really need are favorable winds, relative humidity, and temperature. For grassland burns with no trees, long term drought by itself does not make a burn too dangerous. This is because the moisture in grass rises and falls daily with the daily cycle of temperature and relative humidity. We just need the right weather.

The escaped burns we see on the news are the result of rekindled pile burns on very windy days with



Burn conducted by NRD staff in March near Central City. Proper wind direction was a major consideration on this field.