

Board of Directors Updates

Bendfeldt Steps Down from Central Platte NRD and NARD Boards



Jim Bendfeldt resigning from NARD Board during Legislative Conference.

Jim Bendfeldt stepped down as director of the Central Platte NRD Board for personal reasons at the January Board meeting. Consequently, he also announced his resignation from the Nebraska Association of Resources Districts (NARD) Board of Directors at the NARD Legislative Conference in Lincoln. Deb VanMatre, of Gibbon, was elected to represent CPNRD on the NARD Board. In 2022, Jim was inducted into the NRD Hall of Fame by the NARD for significant contributions to improving the state’s natural resources.

Jim was first elected in 2005 to Subdistrict 5, located in southern Buffalo County. He served as Board Secretary (2009-2012), Vice-Chairman (2013-2016) and Chairman (2017-2020).

The Search Committee will interview applicants in March. A recommendation to fill the seat will be made at the March 30th Board meeting.

CPNRD Board & Committee Chairs

Board Officer Election In January, Mick Reynolds of Wood River was re-elected Chairman of the Board. Jerry Wiese of Grand Island was re-elected Vice-Chairman. Reynolds and Wiese have both served one of their eligible two consecutive two-year terms.

Committee Chairs Each January, Board members select two committees to serve on. Committee chairmen: Lon Bohn - Water Quality, Tom Downey - Water Utilization, Doug Reeves - Programs, Brian Keiser - Western Projects and Ed Stoltenberg - Eastern Projects

Board Approves Moving Forward with Bids for Education Building/Office

In February, the Board approved a contract with JEO to complete construction documents and bidding negotiation on the proposed education/office building at the Upper Prairie Silver Moores Flood Reduction (PSM) site northwest of Grand Island. Based on the schematic design and design development, the new office building will be approximately 20,000 square feet in size on the main level with a lower level to match. The final design and bids are expected to be received within six months.

CPNRD has \$1.7 million available from funds received through the Nebraska Natural Resources Development Fund for the PSM project that were approved by the Commission to be utilized for an education center in October 2022.

Producers To-Dos Before Spring Planting

Annual Crop Report, Water & Soil Samples Due March 31st

Producers in Phases II/III of the NRD’s Nitrogen Management Program are required to submit the 2023 Crop Report by March 31st. Producers who don’t submit forms will receive a Cease & Desist letter from NRD staff following the April board of directors meeting. The following samples are required with the Crop Report:

• **Water Samples** Groundwater analysis for nitrogen content required on each field. Water sample bottles are provided by your agronomist, crop consultant or laboratory.

• **Soil Samples** Deep soils analysis for residual nitrogen (NO3-N) required on each field or 80-acre tract. Composite sample must consist of a mixture from no less than one three-foot probe every five acres. The report from the lab must be attached to the annual report.

Violations will be enforced prior to the 2023 irrigation season. **SUBMIT FORMS at: cpnrd.gisworkshop.com**

Chemigation Permits Due June 1st

Chemigation renewal permits expire on June 1st. Applications received after June 1st must comply with new permit requirements, including inspection before the permit is issued. Below are applications available and fees:

Annual Renewal \$20.00 New Application \$60.00 for each new permit Special permit \$60.00

Emergency Permit \$500.00 (when chemigation is necessary on short notice)

Your CPNRD Contact for Annual Reports & Chemigation: Tricia Dudley (308) 385-6282 | dudley@cpnrd.org

Important Dates

- * January 1 Nitrogen Certification test due
- * March 1 Deadline: Transfer applications for irrigated acres
- * March 31 Crop Report & samples due for Groundwater Management Program
- * April 1 Deadline: Last day to order Conservation Tree Seedlings
- * April 15 CPNRD-Ron Bishop Memorial College Scholarship applications due
- * June 1 Chemigation renewal permits due
- * September 1 Transfer applications for irrigated acres accepted
- * September 15 Chemigation reinspections must be completed
- * November 1 Tree and shrub seedling orders accepted
- * December 25 - January 1 Office Closed

Follow Central Platte NRD on:   

Board of Directors Subdistricts

Subdistrict At-Large Keith Ostermeier, Grand Island (Treasurer)

- | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Jay Richeson, Gothenburg | Brian Keiser, Gothenburg |
| 2 | Dwayne Margritz, Lexington | Tom Downey, Lexington |
| 3 | Marvion Reichert, Elm Creek (Secretary) | Steve Sheen, Kearney |
| 4 | Lon Bohn, Gibbon | Ryan Kegley, Kearney |
| 5 | Deb VanMatre, Gibbon | Vacant |
| 6 | Jerry Milner, Grand Island | Mick Reynolds, Wood River (Chairman) |
| 7 | Jerry Wiese, Grand Island (Vice-Chairman) | Ed Stoltenberg, Cairo |
| 8 | LeRoy Arends, Grand Island | Alicia Haussler, Grand Island |
| 9 | Ed Kyes, Central City | Doug Reeves, Central City |
| 10 | Chuck Maser, Grand Island | Barry Obermiller, Grand Island |

Staff

General Manager: Lyndon Vogt
 Assistant Manager: Jesse Mintken
 Administrative Assistant: Kelly Cole
 Communications Assistant: Brody Vorderstrasse
 Cozad Ditch Manager: Michael Schmeeckle
 Cozad Ditch Rider: Jake Laird
 GIS Coordinator: Angela Warner
 GIS Image Analyst: Luke Zakrzewski
 Hydrologist: Brandi Flyr
 Information/Education Specialist: Marcia Lee
 Precision Conservation Specialist: Darren Cudaback
 Prescribed Fire Planning Specialist: Nelson Winkel
 Projects Assistant: Tom Backer
 Range Management Specialist: David Carr

Resources Conservationist: Bill Hiatt
 Resources Conservationist: Shane Max
 Secretary/CPNRD: Deb Jarzynka
 Secretary/NRCS-Grand Island: Colleen Buettner
 Secretary/NRCS-Central City: Kyla Friedrichsen
 Secretary/NRCS-Lexington: Samantha Keith
 Secretary/NRCS-Kearney: Shelly Lippincott
 Secretary/Thirty Mile Irrigation District: Marci Ostergard
 Thirty Mile Irrigation District Manager: Jim Harris
 Thirty Mile Irrigation District Technician: Mike Ostergard
 UNL/CPNRD Demo Project Coordinator: Dean Krull
 Water Quality Specialist: Tricia Dudley
 Water Resources Specialist: Dan Clement
 Water Resources Technician: Courtney Widup



IN PERSPECTIVE

Central Platte NRD Newsletter

215 Kaufman Ave Grand Island NE (308) 385-6282 cpnrd.org

10-Year Groundwater Pumping Research Complete

Co-Authored by Dean Krull and Brandi Flyr

In 2013, Central Platte NRD initiated a 10-year “Groundwater Pumping Program” that had three main objectives:

1. Provide producers with real time data including pumping, soil moisture and precipitation
2. Collect water usage data district-wide
3. Incorporate the pumping data into groundwater modelling efforts to determine total district water usage

Project site locations were located within all twenty-four of CPNRD’s Groundwater Quality Management Areas. The Program included three different irrigation systems - gravity, pivot and sub-surface drip irrigation (SDI). Over a three-year period, a total of 77 locations were established with 50 pivots, 19 gravity and 8 SDI.

Central Platte NRD staff did not interact with the producers during the 10-year life of the project to prevent the District from interfering or skewing the data. The real-time precipitation and soil moisture probes provided producers the opportunity to incorporate these technologies into their decisions on when to irrigate each field. These types of technologies can help producers to reduce irrigation throughout the growing season without reducing yields.

The data was collected annually for each meter location and categorized according to the irrigation system. When the project was completed, the measured data was aggregated into a district-wide database of water pumped by month and year. Collecting the data in this manner allows for the district to understand the variation in the use throughout the irrigation season and to see how those irrigation practices vary across the District. This program also provided measured data to support water use computations for the district’s groundwater models. Cooperating producers and the program staff had access to the real-time pumping data.

Results showed that at several of the demonstration sites producers potentially used the real-time irrigation pumping and soil moisture telemetry data to impact their decisions; particularly decisions to decrease water usage.

See chart on Page 2 that shows an example of a field that changed their water usage.



Also In This Issue

- New! Sensor-Based Fertigation Cost Share
- NRD Birding Events in Nebraska
- Free Crane Viewing Areas
- Student & Teacher Opportunities
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- Producer To-Dos Before Spring Planting

Last Call to Order Trees

We have a few remaining deciduous, conifer and shrub seedlings available to order for spring planting. COST: \$1 per tree, sold in bundles of 25.

Your CPNRD Contact:
Kelly Cole (308) 385-6282 | cole@cpnrd.org

Meter Program continued

The first year that the meter was installed and connected to telemetry, historical irrigation habits were maintained. However, by the third year of the available telemetry data, irrigation behavior changed markedly from just over 25" per acre to averaging less than 10" per acre.

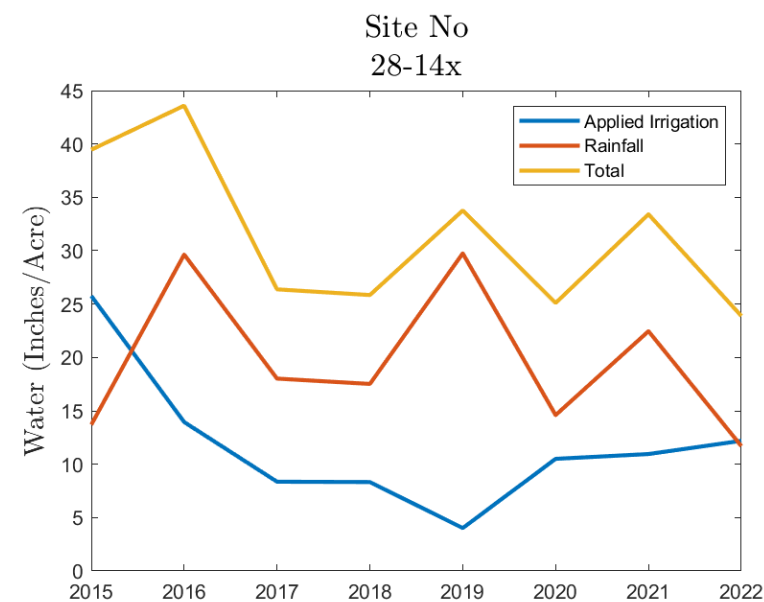
Although not all producers accessed the data or changed farming practices as drastically as the field mentioned, these types of technologies can help reduce the water usage throughout the District.

To learn more about this program call the CPNRD office or email Dean or Brandi.

Your CPNRD Contacts:

Dean Krull, UNL/CPNRD Demo Coordinator
(402) 469-0155 | dkrull1@unl.edu

Brandi Flyr, Hydrologist PhD.
(308) 385-6282 | flyr@cpnr.org



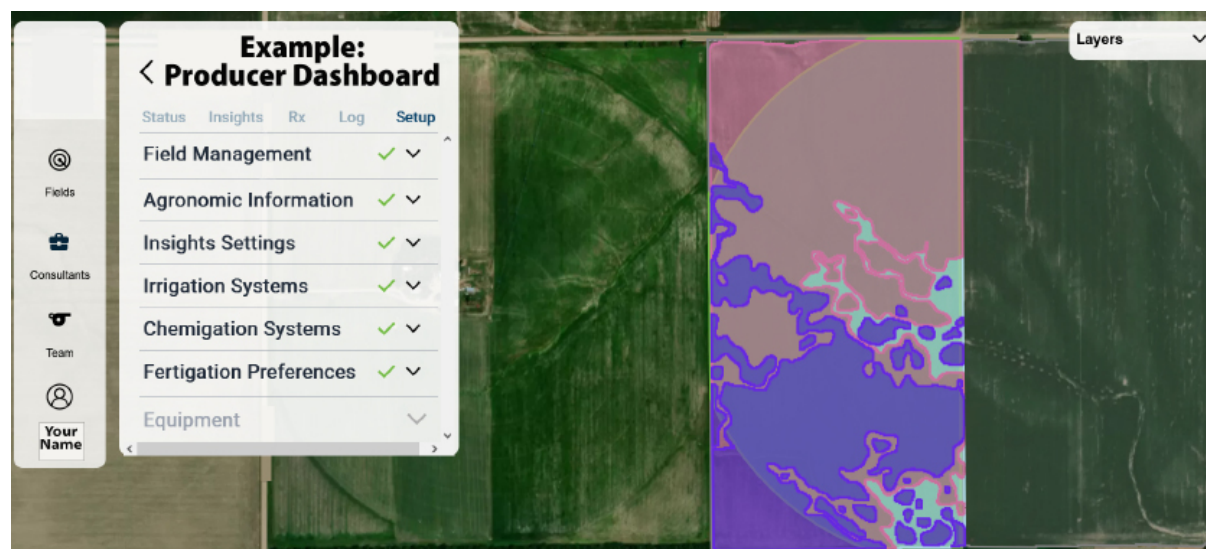
New Sensor-Based Fertigation Cost Share Program

Sign-ups are open for Central Platte NRD's new Sensor-Based Management of Fertigation Cost Share Program. The Board approved the new program in February for the 2023 growing season. It will provide \$11 per acre with a two-year commitment and a maximum of two fields or 320 acres. The program is open to the entire District.

The goal of the cost-share is to provide financial assistance for landowners/operators to utilize a service that delivers real-time, imagery-based nutrient recommendations directly to users throughout the growing season. The Board's goal is for producers to try this new satellite technology to encourage efficient management of nitrogen to address water quality management concerns in the District.

To be eligible land must be pivot or SDI irrigated with priority given to those using a chemigation system. To learn more visit CPNRD's website at cpnr.org/cost share

Your CPNRD Contact: Kelly Cole (308) 385-6282 | cole@cpnr.org



NRD Birding Events in Nebraska

To celebrate Nebraska Bird Month, avian enthusiasts are invited to participate in two bird watching events near Grand Island and Hampton. Bring a friend and explore nature's wonders in these wetlands and grasslands, two of Nebraska's most important and endangered landscapes.



PSM Birding Event

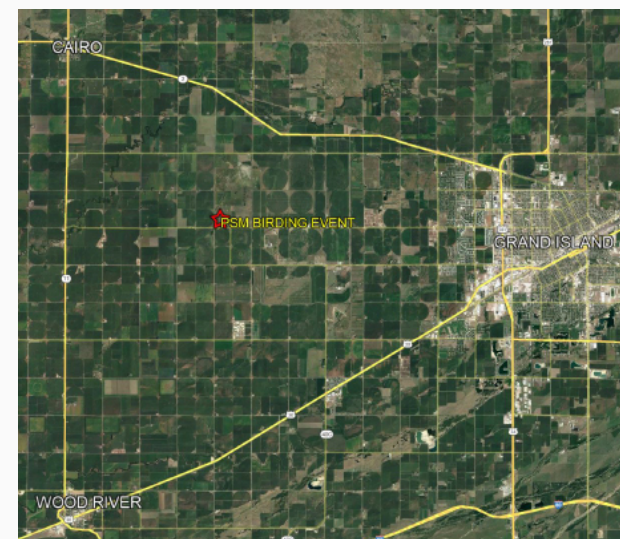
Saturday, April 29 | 8:00 - Noon

Prairie Silver Moores Flood Cells (PSM) near Grand Island

Owned by Central Platte NRD and located six miles northwest of Grand Island, enter at south gate off of 13th Road. Enjoy the unique Nebraska landscape PSM offers including 500 acres of flood cells, wetlands and 600 acres of grassland and forested areas for excellent bird and wildlife habitat. Wildlife biologists will be on site to assist in identifying bird species.

Bring your binoculars! Porta-potties will be on site.

CPNRD Contact: Bill Hiatt (308) 385-6282 | hiatt@cpnr.org



Teal View Birding Event

Saturday, May 6 | 7:30 - 9:00 a.m.

Teal View Wetland Education Area near Hampton

This public access wetland is managed by the Upper Big Blue NRD and is frequented by thousands of birds each year. Thanks to a partnership with Nebraska Game and Parks, the NRD will have 20 sets of binoculars and birding guides available for use at the event. The birding activity will be self-guided. Plan ahead: This area is minimally developed and has no bathroom facilities.

UBBNRD Contact: Crystal Houston (402)362-6601 | chouston@upperbigblue.org | upperbigblue.org

WHAT TO BRING

- Dress warmly. Wear quiet clothing (no noisy buckles/fabrics) in natural colors to blend in with wetland surroundings
- Bring a camera or journal to record your experience.
- Wear walking shoes and/or waterproof footwear.
- Bring something to sit on.
- Plan for stillness. Participants will spread out in the space & observe wildlife quietly.

Both events are free - no RSVP necessary. Some refreshments provided.

Free Crane Viewing Areas

Central Platte NRD has two crane and wildlife viewing decks along the Platte River with free parking.

- **Richard Plautz Site** Located 1.5 miles south of 1-80 on Exit 285 (Gibbon)
- **Alda Crane Viewing Deck** Located 2 miles south of 1-80 on Exit 305 (Alda)

Additional roadside turnouts to enjoy safe viewing are located south and east of the Alda interchange on Platte River Drive and west of Rowe Sanctuary on Elm Island Rd.

Full brochure and storymap available at cpnr.org/wildlife/crane-viewing.

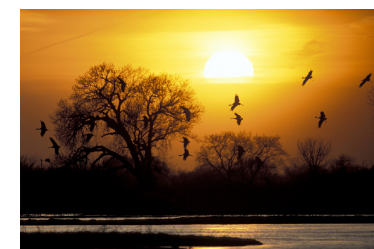


Photo by Brad Mellema

Student & Teacher Opportunities

The CPNRD has educational opportunities for all ages and grade levels throughout the District from providing in-classroom presentations, funding and partnership opportunities, to educational events. Below are just a few opportunities available this spring. Please share the following with students or teachers who may be interested.

Free Arbor Day & Earth Day Seedlings

Ponderosa Pine and Colorado Blue Spruce tree seedlings will be provided at no cost to classrooms and youth groups to celebrate Arbor Day and Earth Day holidays. The seedlings are 6-12" tall and are ordered from Halsey National Forest. Tree bags with planting instructions are provided for each student. NRD staff will deliver to your school and provide an activity if requested. Call or email to reserve seedlings and/or schedule an activity.

Your CPNRD Contact: Brody Vorderstrasse (308) 385-6282 | brody@cpnr.org



\$\$ for Students to Learn Outside

Your school could receive up to \$2,500 to implement or update an outdoor classroom. CPNRD provides funding for three outdoor classrooms annually to promote natural resources education. This program supports teachers in providing lessons outside to ensure that children are growing up with meaningful daily connections to nature.

Funds can be requested by teachers or administrators. 25 outdoor classrooms have been funded since 2001 including rain gardens, rain barrels, butterfly habitat, pollinator gardens, trees, native grasses, bird and wildlife feeders, educational signage, outdoor student seating and other conservation-minded projects.

Additional details and applications available at cpnr.org/education/outdoor classroms.

Your CPNRD Contact: Marcia Lee (308) 385-6282 | lee@cpnr.org



Ron Bishop/CPNRD College Scholarships

Five \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded to college juniors, seniors/graduate students enrolled in a natural resources course of study at an accredited college or university for the 2023-2024 academic school year. Applications must be postmarked by April 15, 2023. Additional details and applications available at cpnr.org/education/scholarships.

Your CPNRD Contact: Marcia Lee (308) 385-6282 | lee@cpnr.org



Coffee Time

We need YOUR Help with the 35th Annual Groundwater Festival

Adults and high school students are invited to assist with the Nebraska Children's

Groundwater Festival on Tuesday, May 16th at the Central Community College/College Park in Grand Island. CPNRD coordinates over 800 fifth-grade students from across the state to attend seven in-depth classes that reinforce education on groundwater, natural resources and wildlife. Over 50 water and natural resources professionals will be presenting the activities. Our volunteers enjoy their day as much as the students and learn a few facts about groundwater as well.

So how can you help? As a volunteer, you'll receive instructions and training. Donuts, lunch and t-shirts provided. We'll need 45 classroom guides (most needed position), activity assistants, registration and lunch room helpers. Volunteer forms are available at cpnr.org/education or contact the office with questions.

Your CPNRD Contacts: Marcia lee@cpnr.org | Brody brody@cpnr.org | (308) 385-6282