

## Landowner Responsibilities

### Cleaning Your Watercourse

Nebraska law (Neb. Rev. Stat. §31-224) requires landowners or tenants to clean “all rubbish, weeds, or other substance blocking or otherwise obstructing the flow of water” from any watercourse on their property. This statute requires landowners/tenants to clean their watercourse between March 1 and April 15 of every year. Should a landowner fail to comply with this statute and a neighboring landowner suffer harm as a direct result, the offending landowner/tenant can be held criminally and civilly liable. (Neb. Rev. Stat. §31-221). For purposes of these laws, a “watercourse” is defined as “Any depression or draw two feet below the surrounding lands and having a continuous outlet to a stream of water, or river or brook . . .” (Neb. Rev. Stat. §31-202).

### Annual Crop Report Due March 31

Update your Crop Reporting Form for Nitrogen Management at [cpnrd.gisworkshop.com](http://cpnrd.gisworkshop.com) by March 31. When forms are successfully submitted, a receipt will be sent to your email address. Note: Producers who don't submit forms by the deadline will receive a Cease & Desist order following the May board of directors meeting. Violations will be enforced prior to irrigation season.

### Nitrogen Certification

Nitrogen certification is valid for 4 years. If your certification expires in 2020, you should've received a certification test to be completed and returned to the CPNRD office. If you did not receive the test, contact Tricia Dudley at (308) 385-6282. Certification from other districts is accepted.

**Note: Producers who attend CPNRD's Water Programs Update on February 12 in Lexington will not be required to complete the Nitrogen Management test. RSVP by Feb. 5 for the lunch count.**

### Chemigation

Current renewal permits expire on June 1. Renewal permits can be issued without an inspection at a cost of \$20. Applications received after June 1 must comply with provisions for new permits, including a \$60 permit fee and a required inspection before the permit can be issued. Once a system has been inspected, the system will be inspected every 3 years. If changes are made to any part of the system, such as a new pump or a new pivot, reinspection of that system is required.



The Nebraska Chemigation Act rules are administered by Nebraska's Natural Resources Districts and the Nebraska Department of Environment & Energy. CPNRD inspects the required safety equipment on chemigation systems, receives permit applications and fees, and issues chemigation site permits. UNL Extension provides the training and exams. NDEE issues chemigation applicator certifications; which are good for four years, after which renewals are required.

### Local training dates:

Jan 10	York	9:00	Holthus Convention Center	(402) 352-3821
Jan 21	Central City	1:30	Merrick County Fairgrounds	(308) 946-3843
Jan 31	St Paul	1:00	Library Meeting Room	(308) 754-5422
Feb 19	Holdrege	1:30	Ag Center – Fairgrounds	(308) 995-4222
Feb 27	Minden	12:30	Kearney County Fairgrounds	(402) 461-7209
March 3	Grand Island	1:00	Hall County Extension	(308) 754-5422
March 4	Aurora	1:00	Hamilton County Fairgrounds	(308) 946-3843
March 11	Lexington	1:30	Dawson County Extension	(308) 324-5501
March 17	Columbus	6:00	Club Room, Ag Park	(402) 352-3821
March 19	Holdrege	1:30	Ag Center – Fairgrounds	(308) 995-4222
March 26	Kearney	1:30	Buffalo County Extension	(308) 236-1235
April 2	Holdrege	1:30	Ag Center – Fairgrounds	(308) 995-4222
April 27	St Paul	9:00	School Library Meeting Room	(308) 754-5422

Your CPNRD contact: Tricia Dudley (308) 385-6282 or [dudley@cpnrd.org](mailto:dudley@cpnrd.org)

## Important Dates

- \* **January 1** Nitrogen Certification test due.
- \* **January - March** Chemigation training available. See training schedule on Page 5.
- \* **March 31** Crop Report forms due for Groundwater Management Program.
- \* **April 1** Last day to order trees and weed barrier.
- \* **April 15** CPNRD-Ron Bishop College Scholarship applications due.
- \* **June 1** Chemigation applications due.
- \* **September 1-March 1** Transfer applications for irrigated acres accepted.
- \* **September 15** Chemigation reinspections must be completed.

### Board of Directors

- At-Large Keith Ostermeier, Grand Island
- Jay Richeson, Gothenburg  
Brian Keiser, Gothenburg
  - Dwayne Margritz, Lexington  
Chris Henry, Cozad
  - Marvion Reichert, Elm Creek  
Steve Sheen, Kearney
  - Lon Bohn, Gibbon  
Keith Stafford, Kearney
  - Deb VanMatre, Gibbon (Secretary)  
Jim Bendfeldt, Kearney (Chairman)

### Staff

General Manager: Lyndon Vogt  
Administrative Director: Kelly Cole  
Assistant Manager: Jesse Mintken  
Biologist: Mark Czaplowski  
Cozad Ditch Manager: Michael Schmeckle  
Easement Admin Specialist: Michelle Steffen  
Easement Habitat Specialist: Krystal Bialas  
Easement Habitat Specialist: Ele Nugent  
GIS Coordinator: Angela Warner  
GIS Image Analyst: Luke Zakrzewski  
Hydrologist: Brandi Flyr  
Information/Education Specialist: Marcia Lee  
Projects Assistant: Tom Backer  
Range Management Specialist: David Carr

Resources Conservationist: Bill Hiatt  
Resources Conservationist: Shane Max  
Secretary/CPNRD: Deb Jarzynka  
Secretary/NRCS-Central City: Cindy Duerksen  
Secretary/NRCS-Grand Island: Marcy Johnson  
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 Programs Assistant: Tricia Dudley  
Water Resources Specialist: Dan Clement  
Water Resources Technician: Courtney Widup

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Volume 23  
No. 3  
January 2020



# IN PERSPECTIVE NEWSLETTER

215 Kaufman Ave Grand Island NE

(308) 385-6282

[cpnrd.org](http://cpnrd.org)

## WATER PROGRAMS UPDATE

Wednesday, February 12<sup>th</sup> 9:30 AM- 3:30 PM

Dawson County Extension 1002 Plum Creek Parkway

Central Platte NRD's annual Water Programs Update is scheduled for February 12<sup>th</sup> in Lexington to provide updates on groundwater levels, nitrate levels, and current research studies. Our guest speakers include:

- Al Dutcher, Nebraska State Climatologist, UNL. Al will discuss anticipated weather challenges in 2020
- Chuck Burr, Crops & Water UNL Extension Educator. Chuck will explain the TAPS program.
- Tim Schmeckle, Gothenburg producer. Tim will talk about his successes with the TAPS program.

There is no cost to attend and lunch will be provided. RSVP by Feb. 5th- see RSVP info below.

**NOTE: Producers in Phases II & III who attend this meeting will not be required to take the Nitrogen Management Certification Test for CPNRD's Groundwater Management Program.**

### SCHEDULE

- 9:30 Static Groundwater Levels in CPNRD Luke Zakrzewski, GIS Image Analyst
- 10:00 2nd Generation Integrated Management Plan & Research Studies Brandi Flyr, Hydrologist PhD
- 11:00 Platte River Recovery Program Mark Czaplowski, Biologist
- 11:15 Central Nebraska Irrigation Project Courtney Widup, Water Resources Technician
- 12:00 Lunch Around the Block Catering
- 12:45 Quality Management Program Overview Tricia Dudley, Water Quality Programs Assistant
- 1:00 Chemigation Program Requirements David Carr, Range Management Specialist
- 1:15 Vadose Zone Nitrate Study Dan Clement, Water Resources Specialist
- 2:00 TAPS Program Chuck Burr, Crops & Water Ext Educator-UNL and Tim Schmeckle, TAPS Producer
- 2:45 Weather Challenges That Lie Ahead for 2020 Al Dutcher - Nebraska State Climate Office, UNL
- 3:15 Question/Answer Session Lyndon Vogt, General Manager

To ensure an accurate lunch count, RSVP by Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> - (308) 385-6282 or email Marcia Lee at [lee@cpnrd.org](mailto:lee@cpnrd.org).



What are the benefits of planting cover crops between established corn? Watch our new video at:  
<http://cpnrd.org/cover-crops/>

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## Platte River Program Extended to Protect Endangered Species

U.S. Secretary of Interior David Bernhardt, along with the Governors of Colorado, Nebraska and Wyoming, committed an additional \$156 million for recovering threatened and endangered species in the Platte River Basin in December. The amendment extends the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program Cooperative Agreement through December 31, 2032.

The Program utilizes federal and state provided financial resources, water and scientific monitoring and research to support and protect threatened and endangered species that inhabit areas of the Central and Lower Platte rivers in Nebraska. The Central Platte NRD provides funding and staff to improve and conserve habitat for the whooping crane, piping plover, least tern, and pallid sturgeon.

The Program improves habitat while allowing for continued water and hydropower project operations in the Platte River Basin. Existing water-related projects include the Bureau of Reclamation's Colorado Big-Thompson Project on the South Platte River in Colorado and the North Platte Project in Wyoming and Nebraska.

The program began in 2007 and is managed by a governance committee comprised of representatives from Colorado, Nebraska and Wyoming, water users, environmental groups, and the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Reclamation and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Central Platte NRD board members, management, and staff are actively involved in the Program Governance Committee; and the Technical, Land, and Water Advisory committees.

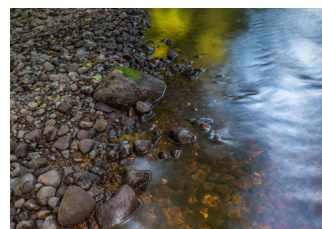
"Agriculture is Nebraska's number one industry. Extending the Platte River Recovery Program gives Nebraska's ag producers certainty around water and land use in coming years," said Governor Ricketts.

The estimated total value of federal and state contributions to the program during the first extension is \$156 million. The U.S. Department of the Interior will provide one half of the funding necessary for the extension, which will be matched by states through contributions of non-federal funding and water from state-sponsored projects that is provided for the benefit of target threatened and endangered species.

To learn more visit [platteriverprogram.org](http://platteriverprogram.org).

*"We appreciate the collaboration we enjoy with the other states who are party to this agreement, and we look forward to working with them in the coming years."*  
-Governor Pete Ricketts

## Historic Groundwater Level Increases from Spring to Fall



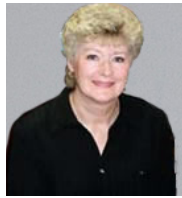
Central Platte NRD saw historic groundwater level increases in 2019. Staff read 363 wells in both the spring and the fall that determined a district-wide gain of 0.76 feet from Gothenburg to Columbus. Although wells are read annually in both the spring and fall, the fall readings are not used for management purposes.

With crop irrigation that normally takes place from May until August in central Nebraska, it is unusual to have wells that record this type of increase. The historic precipitation that the District received attributed to 210 of the well levels increasing an average of 2.51 feet; and 153 wells that declined an average of 1.65 feet.

Twenty of the wells recorded their highest groundwater level and 50 wells had readings in the top 10% of their respective historic range. Most of the wells have been monitored by the CPNRD since the mid-1980s.

Follow Central Platte NRD  

## Miller Retires After 47 Years with CPNRD



Dianne Miller retired as administrative director on November 30, 2019. Dianne was employed by the Central Platte NRD since the NRDs were established in 1972. Prior to the NRDs being created, Dianne worked for the Mid-Platte Valley Watershed; which was merged into the NRDs. She oversaw the accounting system, District operations insurance, NRD elections, and board meeting minutes.

Kelly Cole worked with Miller and took over as the administrative assistant effective Dec. 1st. Cole will continue her prior duties as programs coordinator, administering the cost-share programs, tree program, and the Nebraska Children's Groundwater Festival.



## Board & Staff Service Awards

Service awards are presented annually to board and staff in five-year anniversary increments. In December, the following board and staff were recognized for their service.

### BOARD MEMBERS

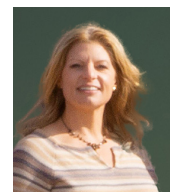
**Keith Stafford** was recognized for 25 years of service. Keith was first elected to Subdistrict 4 in 1988 and served until 2008. He was elected again in 2013. Keith has served on Water Resources, Western Projects and Groundwater Quality committees.



**Mick Reynolds** was elected to the board in 2009 and is an active member as Eastern Projects chairman. He also serves on Water Resources, Programs and Budget committees. As the Middle Platte Basin representative on the Nebraska Natural Resources Commission; he serves on the scoring committee for the Water Sustainability Fund.

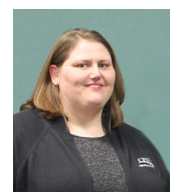
### STAFF

**Tom Backer- 35 Years** Tom manages the tree planting crew and weed barrier contractor. He does the physical maintenance at the NRD office and on the NRD's projects including the Upper Prairie/Silver/Moores, Kearney Northeast, Wood River Floodway, and flood control dams. Tom also assists with the prescribed fire program.



**Marcia Lee- 20 years** Marcia conducts the District's public relations, education, and wellness programs. She is responsible for District outreach with local media, print materials, and social media; and develops the board meeting agendas. Marcia presents activities for K-12 classes, coordinates the outdoor classroom program, Nebraska Children's Groundwater Festival, and regional high school contests for land judging, range judging and Envirothon.

**David Carr- 15 Years** David is the prescribed fire program manager and safety coordinator. He works with private landowners and other organizations to implement prescribed fires for rangeland and habitat improvement. David coordinates prescribed fire trainings for landowners and fire departments and gives presentations to high schools. He also helps take water samples, depth to groundwater measurements, and gallons per minute measurements on irrigation wells.



**Samantha Keith- 10 years** Samantha is the first point of contact for landowners that visit the Dawson County NRCS office. She helps the District with data entry, records management, and mailings. She also administers the conservation programs and helps score land and range judging contests.

## Order Trees & Shrubs for Spring Planting



Norway Spruce grow well on almost all types of soils and are ideal for windbreaks. They provide winter cover for several species of wildlife. Grouse eat the spruce leaves and the seeds are consumed by a number of birds and small mammals.  
Height at 20 Years: 25 -35'  
Height at Maturity: 30 -60'  
Spacing Within Rows: 16 -20'  
Spacing Between Rows: 12 -24'

Does your windbreak need replacement trees? CPNRD is taking conservation tree orders until April 1. We sell 35 types of tree and shrub seedlings that will be available to plant this spring.

**Seedlings are sold in bundles of 25 for \$22.50 + tax.**

If you need less than 25 of the same kind of tree, we also sell the following Small Acre Packages. Each package includes five species with 10 seedlings of each specie. These packages are tailored to include trees and shrubs typically found in Eastern Nebraska, Western Nebraska, Flowering and Wildlife plantings.

**Small Acre Packages- 50 seedlings for \$55:**

**Eastern Nebraska:** Colorado Blue Spruce, Ponderosa Pine, Swamp White Oak, Nanking Cherry, McKenzie Black Chokeberry

**Western Nebraska:** Ponderosa Pine, Rocky Mountain Juniper, Bur Oak, Nanking Cherry, American Plum

**Wildlife:** American Plum, Woods Rose, Elderberry, Nanking Cherry, McKenzie Black Chokeberry

**Flowering:** Nanking Cherry, Midwest Crabapple, Common Lilac, Red-Osier Dogwood, Caragana

Your CPNRD Contact: Kelly Cole (308) 385-6282 or contact your local USDA-NRCS office.

## Grassland Conservation Grant Successful

In 2015, Central Platte NRD was awarded a three-year grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust to reduce invasive Eastern Red Cedar trees and improve rangeland. The focus was in Dawson County; however, other pastures within the District were included in the project as well.

Two cost-share programs were developed to administer the funding. The Grassland Conservation Program was initiated to pay participants to prepare fire breaks and clear cedar trees in preparation for a prescribed burn; and the Grazing Deferment Program provided \$15/acre to defer grazing on a pasture for one year to allow a prescribed burn to be successfully applied the following year.

The fire contractor cut an estimated 299,585 cedar trees to implement the landscape-style burn. The crew worked on land-owner burns from Dawson to Merrick counties, preparing 257,978 lineal feet for firebreak and mechanically cutting 3,691 acres of cedars. David Carr, range management specialist, said the project improved habitat and preserved native grass species including the Tallgrass Prairie in Dawson, Lincoln, and Custer counties.

As part of the grant funding, CPNRD staff also visited six high schools and conducted a demonstration burn at Gothenburg High School to discuss the benefits of prescribed fire.

Grant funding included \$775,735 from Nebraska Environmental Trust and \$2.2M in matching funds from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, and the Nebraska Forest Service.



CPRA members conducting prescribed fire in Dawson County.