

Spring/Summer 2010



LOWER ELKHORN NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

Directions

Construction continues on Maple Creek Recreation Area

Construction of the Maple Creek Recreation Area is nearing completion. Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District (LENRD) Assistant General Manager Ken Berney said, "The dam is essentially complete.

The valve is closed now, and we are officially filling the lake. The boat ramps have been added and Pruss Excavation of Dodge has started the recreation construction."

Phase I of the project construction is complete which includes: the flood control dam - which protects downstream land-owners on the West Fork of Maple Creek, sediment

traps, raising Hwy 91, work on two county roads, wetland mitigation, stream improvements - providing fish habitat in the stream above the reservoir, spawning bed and other in-lake fish habitat improvements.

Phase II of the project will continue with the development of the following recreation components: roads and parking lots; picnic facilities; restrooms; RV campground - 50 pads; tent camping; playground; shower house; hiking /biking trail - there will be a bridge that will extend across the lake allowing walkers/bikers to travel to the other side - a box culvert will also allow walk-

ers/bikers to cross under Hwy 91 - providing safe access to both parts of the 557 acre recreation area; swimming beach; no wake boating; staff with the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission have started stocking the lake with fish; habitat tree plantings are started - developing good wildlife habitat for the future.

The LENRD plans to open the area to the public in the spring of 2011. In July, public tours/trolley rides of the area will be available during the Colfax County Fair. Contact the LENRD for more information.



Construction of the flood control dam is complete. The valve is now closed and the lake is starting to fill.

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Special points of interest.

The Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District has a variety of helpful material available to the public, FREE of charge. One of the most popular booklets available is the *Backyard Conservation* guide with tips on tree planting, wildlife habitat, backyard ponds, wetlands, composting, mulching, nutrient management, terracing, water conservation, and pest management. Other brochures available include tree planting tips, maps of Nebraska's recreation areas, trails, arboretums, and much more.

Two new staff members join the LENRD



Adam J. Nolan, Field Technician

Adam is a Nebraska native, formally of Spencer, NE. He has a strong agricultural background, his family owns a farming/cow-calf operation. After high school he attended Wayne State College and graduated in May 2009 with a Bachelor's Degree in biology, and a minor in environmental studies. Throughout the summers of his college career, he worked with

the Lower Niobrara NRD, Upper Elkhorn NRD, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, from which he gained valuable knowledge in wildlife, plant, and water conservation. Adam's interests include: working on the farm, hunting, working out, golfing, baseball, and camping. Adam is the son of John and Jan Nolan of Spencer.



Pamela Bergstrom, Forester

Pam grew up on a farm between Plainview and Brunswick, NE. She is a 2001 graduate of Plainview High School. She spent 3 years at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where she worked on the agricultural portion of her degree and then transferred to the University of Missouri-Columbia where she received her Bachelor's of Science degree in

Individualized Forestry Studies specializing in Agroforestry in May 2006. After graduating, she worked for the South Dakota Department of Agriculture for three years as Natural Resources Specialist as a liaison between the state, South Dakota NRCS, and the South Dakota Conservation Districts. Pam is the daughter of Francis & Jeanne Bergstrom of Plainview.

Spring water levels show increases in 189 wells across the district

The Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District's (LENRD) spring well measurements have been completed by the water staff. They measured the depth to water in approximately 245 wells this spring to estimate the quantity of our groundwater supplies.

Spring measurements show the groundwater levels across the district and allow the staff to estimate the groundwater's stable, non-pumping level. The geology in northeastern Nebraska is complex, making a district-wide assessment of groundwater conditions difficult, but the following statistics can give us a general feel for what was found in the irrigation wells that were measured.

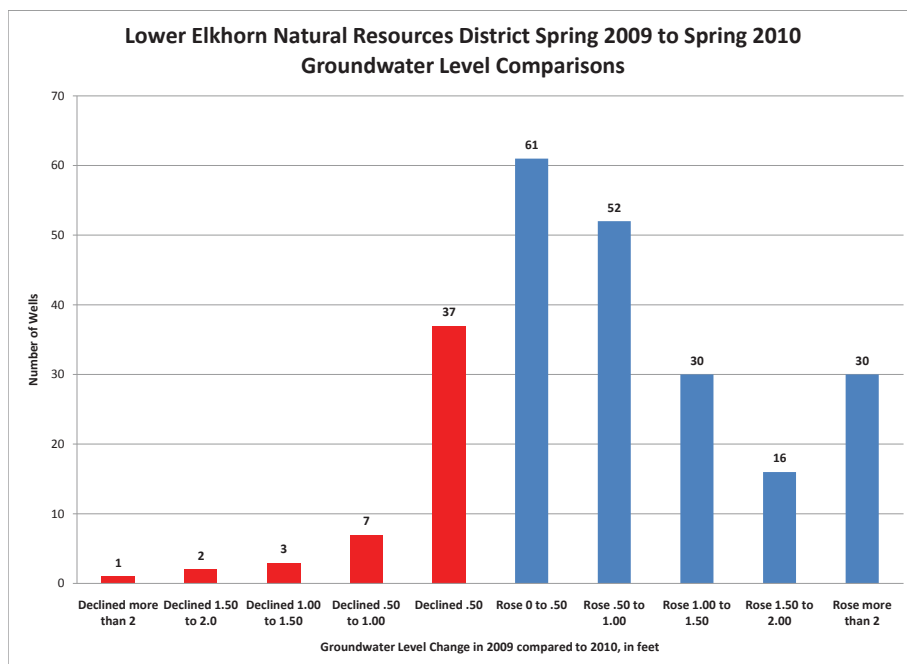
- Of 243 wells, 50 wells had a decline in groundwater levels from spring 2009 to spring 2010. Of the 243 wells, 37 declined from 0 to a half-foot. The biggest drop was a well in Cuming County that was - 7.44 feet lower than last spring. This is a well the LENRD has seen rise and fall over the years. A transducer will be installed in a monitoring well in the area to gain more data about the water levels. Seven wells declined from a half-foot to one foot and 5 wells declined from 1

to 2 feet.

- Of 243 wells, 189 wells had higher groundwater levels from spring 2009 to spring 2010. Of the 243 wells, 61 wells rose from 0 to a half-foot. The largest increase was a well in Cuming County, which was 35.93 feet higher than last spring as shown on the graph. This is another well the LENRD has seen rise

and fall over the years and a transducer will be installed in a monitoring well to study changes in the water level. Fifty-two wells rose from a half-foot to a foot, 46 wells rose from 1 to 2 feet, and 30 wells rose more than 2 feet.

- Four wells didn't change in water levels; these wells are located in Pierce and Madison County.



Board elects officers for 2010

In January, the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District (LENRD) Board of Directors elected officers for 2010. The Board meets on the 3rd and 4th Thursdays of each month in the LENRD office in the Lifelong Learning Center on the campus of Northeast Community College in Norfolk.

2010 Officers: *Chairman* - Tim Tighe, Humphrey; *Vice-Chairman* - Rod Zessin, Madison; *Secretary* - Joel Hansen, Wayne; *Treasurer* - Bob Huntley, Norfolk

2010 Board members: Garry Anderson, Dixon; Stan Baier, Wayne; Chris Carlson, Norfolk; Danny Kluthe, Dodge; Mike Krueger, Pierce; Gary Loftis, Craig; Bill Meyer, Pierce; Lloyd Nellor, Beemer; Ken Peitzmeier, Norfolk; Marion Shafer, Norfolk; Elden Wesely, Oakland.



Above—2010 Officers are back row (left to right): Nebraska Association of Resources Districts (NARD) Alternate - Chris Carlson, Norfolk; NARD Delegate - Ken Peitzmeier, Norfolk; Treasurer - Bob Huntley, Norfolk. Front row (seated left to right): Secretary - Joel Hansen, Wayne; and Chairman - Tim Tighe, Humphrey. Not pictured: Vice-Chairman - Rod Zessin, Madison.

New member takes office



Danny Kluthe of Dodge (left) became the newest member of the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District Board of Directors. He was given the Oath of Office by Assistant General Manager Ken Bemey (right) at the April Board meeting. Danny was appointed by the Board to replace David Oligmueller of Pilger who recently resigned. Danny and his wife Josie farm and raise hogs near Dodge. They have four daughters and 2 granddaughters. Danny owns and operates Nebraska's 1st Hog Methane Digester Manure Processing System, with the bi-product being electricity. He is very excited to join the Board and believes that both soil and water are very important natural resources that each and every one of us should protect and conserve.

Outdoor Classroom Grants available

Outdoor Classrooms can offer students a chance to explore their natural environment right at their school. Math, science, social studies, art, and language arts all come alive when using nature as a learning lab.

The Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District (LENRD) works with area schools in establishing outdoor classrooms on school grounds. The district provides information about developing school sites, provides some technical assistance (such as design ideas), and a \$650 grant. Everyone benefits with an outdoor classroom - students, teachers, wildlife and the community.

Ultimately, our goal with this project is to help students learn about our natural world and to become responsible adults. For more information on establishing an outdoor classroom, contact Julie Wragge at the LENRD. Happy Learning!



LOWER ELKHORN NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

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"Strive to improve the quality of life for all citizens of the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District by promoting and demonstrating sound methods of stewardship which conserve, develop and manage all natural resources."

To :



Protecting Lives - Protecting Property - Protecting the Future

LENRD Program Assistants - Your local voice for conservation

The Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District (LENRD) works very closely with our partners in the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to develop new programs to assist urban and rural landowners in making wise decisions about our precious natural resources.

The LENRD has five Program Assistants in each of the core district county NRCS offices to assist on the local level: Phyllis Knobbe - Cuming County - 30 years of service; Valissa Tegeler - Madison County - 10 years of service; Kathy Dohmen - Pierce County - 15 years of service; Carey Tejkl - Stanton County - 15 years of service; Karen Hansen - Wayne County - 13 years of service.

They are your local voice for protecting our natural resources. They will help you find a program that fits best with your operation. Stop by your local NRCS office today.



LENRD/NRCS Program Assistants - Back row, left to right: Phyllis Knobbe, Cuming County; Karen Hansen, Wayne County; Carey Tejkl, Stanton County. Seated, left to right: Kathy Dohmen, Pierce County; and Valissa Tegeler, Madison County.