

KNOW YOUR NRD

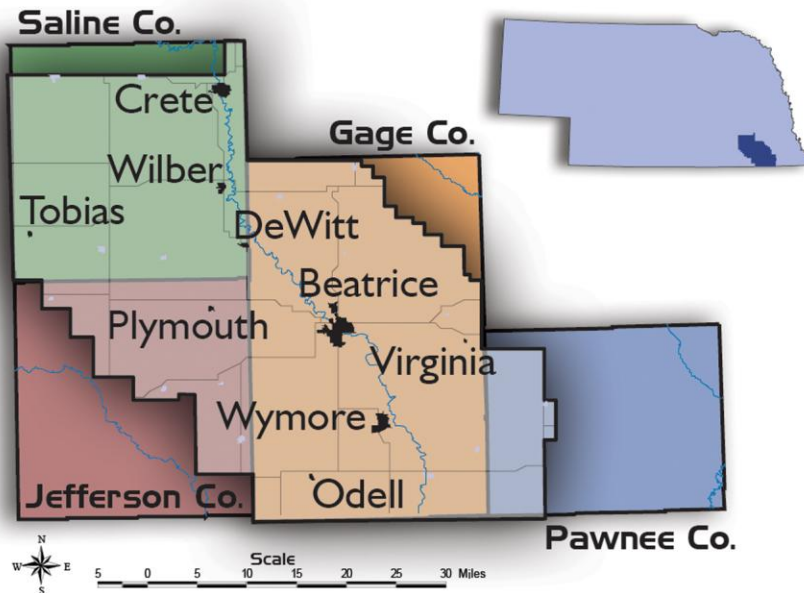


LOWER BIG BLUE
Natural Resources District
Beatrice, NE

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

Fall 2013

LOWER BIG BLUE NRD



LBBNRD QUICK FACTS:

Watershed Capital of Nebraska

*The Lower Big Blue NRD serves parts of Gage, Jefferson, Pawnee and Saline counties and encompasses over 1 million acres.

*274 dams control 364,313 acres and provide 98,007 acre-feet of flood control in 11 completed watersheds

*9 NRD Public Recreation and Wildlife Management Areas on 1,153 acres

*District tracks groundwater levels and has established water quality areas.

Protecting Lives

Water Quality:

The Lower Big Blue NRD (LBBNRD) tests domestic drinking water wells at no charge to rural residents of the district.

A water test for nitrates is highly recommended by the LBBNRD for households with infants, pregnant women, nursing mothers, or elderly people, as these groups are most susceptible to nitrate poisoning.

Without a test, nitrates in water are undetectable because they are colorless, odorless and tasteless.

The LBBNRD samples approximately 400 irrigation wells each year for nitrates and other chemicals.

In conjunction with the NDEQ, the LBBNRD collects surface water samples at public recreation areas and tests surface water samples during rainfall events.

Protecting Property

The Lower Big Blue NRD manages several programs that protect property throughout the district including:

-The LBBNRD is responsible for flood control and grade stabilization structures that protect roads, bridges, villages, and lives.

-The LBBNRD assists local communities in the establishment of Wellhead Protection Areas and the development of Community Wellhead Protection Plans.

-The LBBNRD provides cost-share and technical assistance for the installation of conservation practices including terraces, tile and waterways to improve water quality.

-The LBBNRD establishes tree windbreaks for the protection of communities, farmsteads, livestock, and wildlife.

Protecting the Future

Rural Water Supply:

The Lower Big Blue NRD with assistance from the USDA completed construction of a new rural water project in southern Gage County in 2013.

The project will supply 200 rural Gage County users and 25 users in the Village of Holmesville. These rural residents were in great need of a quality water supply as quality and quantity are both issues due to a lack of water bearing groundwater formations.

The district operates and maintains the Beatrice Rural Water Project that supplies water to rural residents west of Beatrice and to the Homestead National Monument.

This project was developed because of a lack of groundwater and the need for quality water for rural residences and the National Monument.

Wymore Rural Water Project

The estimated \$5 million USDA Rural Development project broke ground in November 2012 with Carstensen Contracting, Inc. of Pipestone, MN winning the bid. Today, the LBBNRD is providing water to roughly one-third of the initial users, and pending final testing, anticipates serving the remaining initial users by the end of September. Overall, the rural water line will provide a safe, secure source of water to over 225 residences through about 160 miles of pipe. Ultimately, the project has been viewed as a success by those who are currently receiving water service.



Lower Turkey Creek Watershed Project

The NRD started construction of the Lower Turkey Creek project in the spring of 2008. The project involves the construction of seven new flood control structures that will control approximately 43,600 acres in the Lower Turkey Creek Watershed drainage area.

The seven flood control structures will reduce damages of the 100-year storm event by \$2,000,000 dollars and will have a \$400,000 average annual benefit to the district. Benefits of the project include sediment storage, improved water quality, reduced damage to public roads and bridges, fish and wildlife habitat enhancement, and stream augmentation.



As of Spring 2013, five of the seven structures planned for the project have been completed with the remaining two slated for next year.

- Protect Lives and Property Through Flood Control
- Provide Soil Conservation Through the Installation of Terraces, Tile, Waterways and Buffer Strips

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

The Lower Big Blue NRD is governed by a 13-member board of directors elected by voters within the district. The board sets policy for the district and works with the staff to carry out the district's goals. LBBNRD staff work cooperatively with other local and state groups to promote good stewardship of natural resources in the district.

Major Nebraska river basins form the boundaries of the 23 NRDs. This system is unique to the State of Nebraska. The system allows Nebraska to effectively and efficiently manage natural resources through a watershed-based plan.

NRDs help Nebraskans respond to natural resource challenges with local control and local solutions.

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