



LOWER PLATTE RIVER BASIN

Basin includes: most of Lower Platte North and Lower Platte South NRDs and portions of the Pappio-Missouri River NRD, south and west of Omaha

Lower Platte Basin NRDs:

- protect drinking water for one-half of Nebraskans
- monitor and maintain 280 dams and 27 miles of levees that protect lives and property
- provide 22 public access areas and 63 miles of trails for recreation and fitness
- cost-share annually on over \$1.2 million of surface water quality projects with more than 250 landowners

## Local Leadership in Protecting Lives and Property

### Schuyler Levees

Construction is scheduled to begin in fall 2013 on levees and channel improvements on a 2½ mile stretch of Shell Creek north and east of Schuyler.



A second phase involving a new 3-mile levee along the Platte River is on indefinite hold due to cost increases, but it is hoped that it will be built at some point as well.

With both levees complete, the project would reduce flooding in Schuyler enough to remove the city from the 100-year flood plain, and residents would no longer be required to carry flood insurance.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is the Federal sponsor of the project, with Schuyler and the Lower Platte North NRD as local partners.

### Western Sarpy/Clear Creek

The Lower Platte River is the area of our state most in danger of ice jam flooding. After severe flooding in 1993, three NRDs pursued a major levee improvement on both sides of the Platte as it runs through Sarpy and Saunders Counties. Levee reconstruction began in 2009 for this project that will protect 18,000 acres of fertile agricultural land, NE National Guard facilities, national telecommunications lines, rail lines, plus Highway 6 and the Interstate 80 corridor and bridge. This project will also secure Omaha and Lincoln well fields, supplying nearly 50% of Nebraska's population.



Working with the Corps of Engineers and utilizing mostly federal dollars, the improvements will greatly enhance flood prevention for **(continued on back)**

### Salt Creek Levee

In the 1960s, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers built 13 miles of levee along both sides of Salt Creek to help control flooding in Lincoln. Today, the Lower Platte South NRD maintains the levee and the NRD staff is trained to monitor it during high water events. Inspections in 2011 identified many needed repairs to drainage structures that conduct stormwater through the levee and into Salt Creek. The NRD is in the process of making those repairs as funding allows. Most of the work involves either sliplining or completely replacing drainage pipes. Watersheds served by each structure are also



being re-evaluated to see if installing larger pipes is warranted.

### Western Sarpy/Clear Creek (continued)

this area. The \$38 million Western Sarpy/Clear Creek project includes nearly 20 miles of levees, as well as elevating or removal of river cabins located in the floodway. This important cooperative project also offers environmental and wildlife enhancements including improved habitat for the least tern, piping plover and pallid sturgeon.

Elected officials at local, regional and state levels and the Congressional delegation have long committed to this project's completion because of risk to critical water supplies and infrastructure.

### Regional Water Planning

This is a pivotal time for the future of water in the Lower Platte River Basin. All three NRDs in the basin and other NRDs throughout eastern Nebraska, with help from the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, are in the process of developing their own plans for making sure future generations have enough groundwater and surface water to meet their needs. We all realize the importance, too, of making sure these individual plans, called integrated management plans, are rooted in a regional vision that not only enhances each NRD plan, but also helps prevent them from infringing on each other.



Groundwater Sampling Truck

As planning progresses, it will be important that the NRDs receive input from a wide variety of water interests, including domestic users, industrial, agricultural, recreational and others. Please be looking for opportunities to provide your thoughts and concerns to your NRD during its planning process. While 20 percent of the state's population lives in the Lower Platte River Basin, the basin protects and preserves drinking water for 50 percent. Good planning will help make sure there is enough water available to meet all future demands.

### Maintaining River Efficiency

The Lower Platte Weed Management Area (LPWMA) is a coalition of public and private agencies and individuals, including the three Basin NRDs, working to stop the spread of noxious and invasive plants in the Lower Platte River drainage area. The group is currently targeting Purple Loosestrife, Saltcedar, and Common Reed (Phragmites), which can impede the river flow. GPS and GIS technology track infestations and the success of control efforts along the river corridor.

### Protection Against Ice Jams

Each winter, the three basin NRDs and four counties (Cass, Sarpy, Douglas and Saunders) closely monitor ice conditions on the Lower Platte. If potentially dangerous ice jams form, the partnership may contract with explosives specialists to blast the jams loose and prevent flooding in the heavily-populated corridor between Fremont and Plattsmouth. Heavy ice buildup in the river does not always require these extreme measures. The NE Emergency Management Agency, working with the NRDs and others, sometimes uses aerial ice dusting with coal slag to aid the spring ice breakup.



### Contact Your Basin NRDs

**Lower Platte North NRD**  
511 Commercial Park Road  
P O Box 126  
Wahoo, NE 68066  
(402)443-4675  
[www.lpnrd.org](http://www.lpnrd.org)

**Lower Platte South NRD**  
3125 Portia Street  
P O Box 83581  
Lincoln, NE 68501-3581  
(402)476-2729  
[www.lpsnrd.org](http://www.lpsnrd.org)

**Papio-Missouri River NRD**  
8901 South 154th Street  
Omaha, NE 68138  
(402)444-6222  
[www.papionrd.org](http://www.papionrd.org)

### Education

NRDs in the basin and statewide recognize the need to instill an appreciation for nature and the environment in young people. Presentations are made to more than 22,000 students in the basin each year on topics like ground water, flood management, animals, urban stormwater and many more. Contact your local NRD to learn how it can enhance your curriculum.

### LPRCA

To try and help accommodate the many varied interests along the Platte River, the three basin NRDs have created the Lower Platte River Corridor Alliance. The Alliance serves as a forum through which interests like tourism, agriculture, the sand and gravel industry, municipal water and more can obtain information, discuss points of conflict and hopefully find some middle ground for cooperation.

[www.lowerplatte.org](http://www.lowerplatte.org)

Find out more about  
Nebraska's NRDs at  
[www.nrdnet.org](http://www.nrdnet.org)