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Plan for the future, plant a tree today!

Thank you, Glenda!

Sheridan County NRCS Field Office Secretary, Glenda Cushing, retired earlier this year after 44 years of dedicated service to both the NRCS and the UNWNRD. Glenda started with the UNWNRD in 1975, shortly after the original formation of the NRD system in Nebraska, making her the longest running employee or director that the UNWNRD has ever had.

The residents of Sheridan County and beyond will miss her smiling face and witty remarks, as well as her many years of experience and knowledge regarding natural resources. "Countless customers have mentioned they can't imagine coming into the Sheridan County NRCS office

without her here," commented Anna Ferguson, NRCS Soil Conservationist.

To say that Glenda will be missed is an understatement. From all of the staff and directors at the UNWNRD and the NRCS as well as all of the partnering agencies and landowners in the District, thank you, Glenda!

UNWNRD has a new website!

Please check out www.unwnrd.org for more user-friendly and up-to-date information on all of the District programs and events including:

- ♦ Tree Order Forms
- ♦ Chemigation Permits
- ♦ Rules and Regulations
- ♦ Calendar of Events
- ♦ Educational Programs
- ♦ Board Meeting Minutes
- ♦ Crop Water Use
- ♦ And much more!

Coming soon... There will be a more personalized option for each landowner in the District with the new Producer Profiles. Each landowner will be able to access all of their NRD information in a more efficient manner. Stay tuned!

For more information on the website please contact Tricia Goes at goes@unwnrd.org.

For questions, comments or concerns regarding this publication or if you would like a copy emailed to you please contact:
Kylene Armstrong, Conservation Programs Coordinator - armstrong@unwnrd.org



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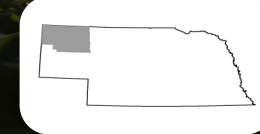
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Reflections

October 2019

Upper Niobrara White Natural Resources District
Serving Box Butte, Dawes, Sheridan and Sioux Counties



Static Water Levels:

Measure the distance to groundwater below the surface.

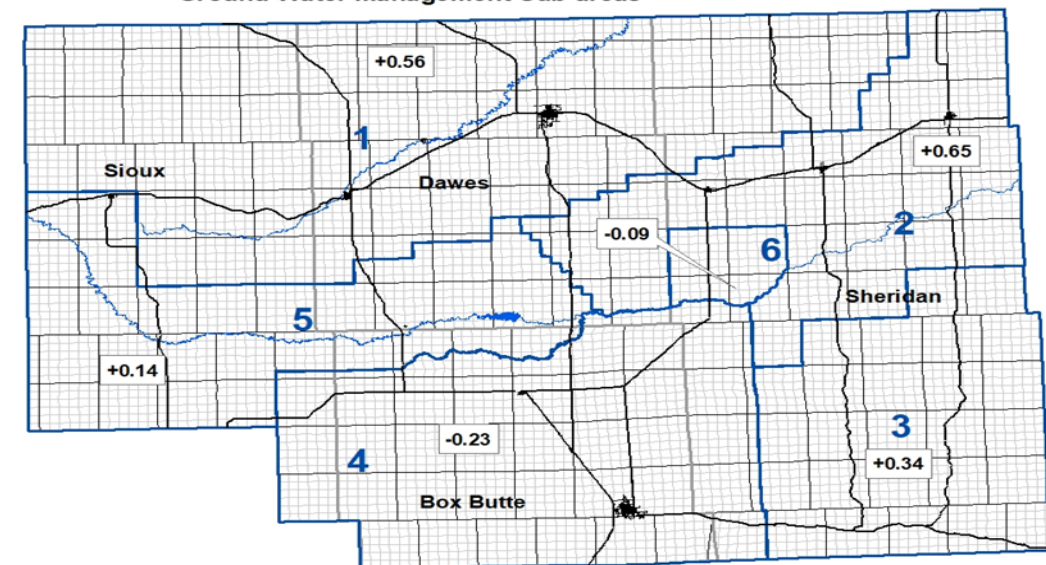
The Upper Niobrara White Natural Resources District (UNWNRD) measures static water levels twice a year, once during the spring and once in the fall. The UNWNRD records static water levels from 191 wells that are scattered throughout the District. The most recent measurements show the changes between the 2018 spring level and the 2019 spring level. The water level changes reported for each subarea are the average of the difference between the spring 2018 and the spring of 2019 recordings.

Subarea 1 - which is mostly Dawes and part of northern Sheridan and Sioux Counties, showed an increase of 0.56'. Subarea 2 - which is part of Dawes and Sheridan Counties, showed an increase of 0.65'. Subarea 3 - which is southern

Sheridan County, showed an increase of 0.34'. Subarea 4 - which is most of Box Butte County and a small part of Sheridan and Sioux Counties, showed a decrease of 0.24'. Subarea 5 - which is along the Niobrara River and south central Sioux County within the UNWNRD, showed an increase of 0.14'. Subarea 6 - which is the Mirage Flats area in Sheridan County, showed a decrease of 0.09'.

"The abundant spring precipitation did not translate into dramatic increases in groundwater levels" stated Haley Anders, Water Resources Manager; "While the groundwater supply was impacted, the timing of the precipitation events and measurements likely did not coincide to show what those impacts were".

Upper Niobrara White NRD
2019 Static Water Level Changes by
Ground Water Management Sub-areas



Final Year of the 2015-2019 Allocation

As the end of the irrigation season approaches, the final year of the 2015-2019 allocation period for subareas 4 and 6 will come to an end as well. In September, UNWNRD staff began reading meters district-wide for the 2019 irrigation year in order to report final readings for the allocation period. District staff plans to read all flow meters by November 1st, with water use reports mailed to producers prior to the Thanksgiving Holiday. The 2020-2024 allocation has been set at 65 inches for the 5-year period, plus the allowable 50 percent of the current allocation or 32.5 inches of carry forward. As a reminder, if you irrigate in an allocation area and exceeded your allocated amount, you are subject to a reduction of allocation for the 2020-

2024 allocation period. Transfers of water are allowed within a three adjacent government survey section area with UNWNRD Board approval; please contact the NRD, if you have questions on applying to transfer water from one allocated field to another. To allow staff ample time to work on transfer applications with the applicant, transfer applications are required to be submitted no later than December 31, 2019 to the NRD office; this will also allow for NRD Board approval prior to the 2020 irrigation season.

Please contact Lynn Webster at webster@unwnrd.org for more information on water transfers or the 2015-2019 allocation.

Nickerson Named Nebraska Outstanding Tree Planter



The Upper Niobrara White NRD, with endorsements from the North Platte, South Platte and Middle Niobrara NRD's, nominated Doak Nickerson for the 2019 Nebraska Outstanding Tree Planter Award. Nickerson was chosen by the Nebraska Association of Resources Districts to receive this highly coveted award, presented at the Association's Annual Conference in Kearney, Nebraska at the end of September.

Doak Nickerson has been a Forester for the Nebraska Forest Service (NFS) since 1979. He currently serves the Pine Ridge area as District Forester, though he has worked in many other areas of Nebraska throughout his successful forestry career. Nickerson has spent many years planting and planning windbreaks and other forestry related projects for the Forest Service, NRDs, cities and private landowners. He works tirelessly to improve the health and longevity of our forest ecosystem in Western Nebraska.



Nickerson is housed in the Upper Niobrara White NRD and regularly receives visitors and fields calls from the entire Panhandle. Many of the inquiries involve tree species selection, tree care or identifying tree pests and diseases. Folks often request a site visit be conducted. Nickerson always takes the time to answer these requests for information and does this with an emphasis on helping trees survive on the landscape. Nickerson has spent numerous evenings and weekends assisting various groups with tree planting events including the Boy Scouts tree planting at Fort Robinson and Chadron State Parks.

Nickerson's dedication to forestry and passion for trees is evident to everyone who has had the pleasure to work along side him. His abundant knowledge of tree health, care and management deserves to be recognized by the Natural Resources Districts he has served over his 40-year career. He is a true champion to Western Nebraska and voice of the trees.

Congratulations, Doak Nickerson!

Mesonet Weather Station

This year the UNWNRD is sponsoring a Mesonet weather station in Alliance, NE. These weather stations, across Nebraska, provide a variety of different maps, ranging from potential evapotranspiration, wind speeds, temperature, and precipitation. To view data from our sponsored station you can visit mesonet.unl.edu or visit our website at www.unwnrd.org and click on the weather station data tab.

For additional information on the UNWNRD Weather Station, contact Maria Baglieri at baglieri@unwnrd.org.

Conservation Award Winners

In April, the UNWNRD received several nominations for Conservation Awards in seven different categories. With the abundance of nominations received, the decisions were difficult but the UNWNRD Board was able to decide on six winners in recognition of their conservation efforts.

- ♦ Forest Management: Walt Montague – Dawes County
- ♦ Soil Conservation: Neilson Ranch Company – Sheridan County
- ♦ Outdoor Recreation: JAKES Day Event- Kevin and Donna Jech – Sheridan/Dawes County
- ♦ Tree Planting: John Nadobny – Sheridan County
- ♦ Wildlife Habitat & Natural Resources Education: Dan Anderson – Box Butte County
- ♦ Range Management: TBA (will be awarded at the Range Day)

The UNWNRD would like to congratulate these Conservationists on their hard work and dedications to protecting or enhancing our precious natural resources throughout the District.

Nominations for 2020 will be accepted in March for other conservationists that have displayed outstanding conservation efforts in any of the categories above or beyond.

Please contact Kylen Armstrong for more information at armstrong@unwnrd.org.



Sheridan County Award Winners

Crop Water Use Report

A crop's water use or evapotranspiration (ET) will depend on the crop's stage of growth, as well as numerous environmental conditions such as temperature, humidity, and soil types. Each growing season UNWNRD staff provides weekly Crop Water Use Reports to help producers gauge how much water a variety of crops will use each week. The Crop Water Use Report is completed using the average growth stage for each crop and ET gage reading from across the district. Conversions of specific crop growth stages are found at:

<https://nawmn.unl.edu/GrowthStageData>. This is a valuable tool for any producer to calculate their specific crop growth stage for water use. The Crop Water Use Report also includes soil moisture readings from different areas of the district.

This year, instead of just using a district average, crop water use is broken down into each subarea of the Upper Niobrara White District. This helps tailor to different areas of the District, as water use changes from location to location. Water use is now provided for up to three growth stages for each crop, compared to the previous report where only one growth stage was used each week. Not all crops in the district are in the same growth stage at any given time, so multiple stages are provided to better serve the

producers of the District. These charts can be found at our website www.unwnrd.org. The chart below illustrates an example of a subarea crop chart for the week of 8/5/2019:

CORN

ET		V14	V16	Full Dent
Subarea I	Used	1.62	1.76	1.54
	Projected		1.87	
Subarea II&VI	Used	1.41	1.54	1.34
	Projected		1.65	
Subarea III	Used	1.41	1.54	1.34
	Projected		1.65	
Subarea IV	Used	1.41	1.54	1.34
	Projected		1.65	
Subarea V	Used	1.21	1.32	1.15
	Projected		1.43	

For more information, to be added to the crop water use email list, or to inquire about ET gages or soil moisture monitoring equipment, please contact Maria Baglieri, at the Upper Niobrara White Natural Resources District at 308-432-6190 or visit our website at www.unwnrd.org. All crop water use reports can be found on the website, or you can listen to reports on KCOW or KCSR each week.

2019-2020 Budget Does Not Increase Property Taxes

At the September 5, 2019 Budget Hearing the Upper Niobrara White Natural Resources District (UNWNRD) Board of Directors voted to pass the fiscal year 2019-2020 budget as well as the tax asking and levy. For the sixth straight year, the tax asking has remained the same at \$627,300.00 with the balance of the income being received from grants, state funds and customer charges which includes conservation tree sales. Budgeted expenses will be reduced by 4.5% to \$1,437,000.00. The NRD will again be able to lower the district's portion of the property tax levy. Although the tax asking will remain the same, services provided by the UNWNRD will not be reduced.

"All across the state, property owners are concerned over taxes and for six years the UNWNRD has responded by not increasing the tax asking", said Treasurer Nancy Fisher. "The board and staff carefully scrutinize income and spending to make sure the natural resources of the district are protected and statutory obligations are met".

Range Day 2020

The UNWNRD will host the 5th Annual Range Day on January 16th, 2020 and again partner with Chadron State College, Nebraska Environmental Trust, the C.F Coffee Gallery as well as many local sponsors. This one-day event will include a wide variety of range related topics from speakers throughout the region. Lunch will be provided for all those in attendance.

Range Day topics may include:

- * Utilization of Prescribed Fire
- * Annual Forage for Grazing
- * Cheatgrass Management
- * Producer Panel
- * CSC Student Presentations
- * And much more!

Please plan to attend the 2020 UNWNRD Range Day on January 16th at the CSC Student Center! For more information or to RSVP, contact Nevin Price at 308-432-6190 or price@unwnrd.org.

Producer Testimonial:

"The Crop Water Use Report is an easy way for me to gauge how much water my crops need each week depending on the precipitation in my area. It helps me to make sure my crops are getting the moisture they need for maximum yield without wasting water."

-Steve Burke, Box Butte County



Save the Date:
January 16, 2020

