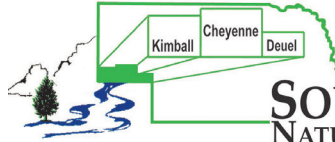


# KNOW YOUR NRD

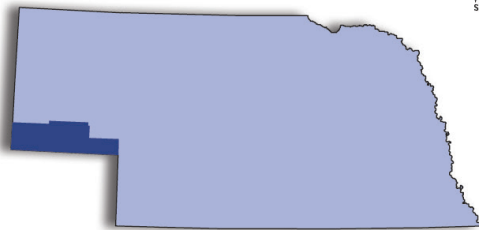


**SOUTH PLATTE**  
NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

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

Summer 2023

## SOUTH PLATTE NRD



### South Platte NRD QuickFacts

- \*1 of 4 NRDs aligned on county boundaries
- \*Encompasses 1.65 million acres
- \*14 - 18" annual precipitation
- \*12 Wellhead Protection Areas
- \*~200 districtwide observation wells measured twice a year to monitor ground water levels
- \*~160 network wells sampled yearly for ground water quality
- \*1,246 Irrigation wells
- \*Oliver Reservoir Recreation Area, Goldeneye and Goldenrod Wildlife Management Areas
- \*Provide free bacteria water testing

### Protecting Lives

#### Ground Water Levels

Keeping track of changes in ground water levels is one of the NRD's many responsibilities. During March-April 2023, SPNRD staff measured approximately 200 observation wells to determine average changes in ground water levels. Spring measurements detect the water table activity from the previous irrigation season. Districtwide water levels decreased -1.28 feet on average since Spring of 2022.

Overall water usage increased across the District. Districtwide crop irrigation usage for 2022 averaged 13.6" per acre, an increase of approximately 26% from last year.

### Protecting Property

#### Flow Meters

Flow meters must be installed on all water wells pumping more than 50 gpm by an approved contractor and be properly maintained. Flow meters are a valuable tool that provides the total amount of irrigation water applied and the amount of water being withdrawn from various aquifers.

The information aids in future ground water modeling efforts and enables informed management decisions and practices.

Learn more at [www.spnrd.org](http://www.spnrd.org). Select "Reports" and "Water Management".

### Protecting The Future

#### Tree Programs

SPNRD provides a low-cost, wide variety of bulk trees and shrubs to encourage tree planting. Each year we collect orders from October through the end of March, and distribute in time for spring planting.

To make tree planting more accessible, we offer cost share through our Conservation Tree Program and Community Forestry Programs. Although the district does not plant trees, we have a tree planter rental and a list of several certified contractors to provide planting services.

Learn more at [www.spnrd.org](http://www.spnrd.org) and select "Forestry".

### Ground Water Quality Management

In 1988, the South Platte NRD proactively and consistently began monitoring ground water quality to protect and conserve water resources. From 1988 through 1991 our monitoring program identified levels of nitrate-nitrogen and determined baselines. We have been actively addressing the complex issue of nitrates in ground water for nearly 35 years through our network of irrigation, domestic, and monitoring wells.

SPNRD's Ground Water Management Plan was implemented to facilitate the proper management of ground water for quality, quantity, and integrated management. Our Plan includes general enforcement and specific controls for ground water quantity and quality.

Currently, the district has four ground water quality management subareas (GWQMSA). The subareas are governed by Phase levels, the higher the Phase, the more implementation of management efforts for protection is required. The table below summarizes when each subarea was created and the current management level, and our phases are as follows:

- Phase I: nitrate-nitrogen levels of 6.5 ppm average for 3 consecutive years
- Phase II: nitrate-nitrogen levels of 8.0 ppm average for 3 consecutive years
- Phase III: nitrate-nitrogen levels of 9.5 ppm average for 3 consecutive years

HISTORIC TIME LINE			
GWQMSA	Date Est.	Phase History	
Sidney	1990	Phase II: 1990 - 2021	Phase III: 2022 - present
Lodgepole Valley (Deuel County)	1995	Phase I: 1995 - present	
South Platte Valley	1995	Phase II: 1995 - 2014	Phase I: 2015 - 2023
East Lodgepole Valley (Cheyenne County)	1998	Phase I: 1998 - present	

Also, Lodgepole Valley in Kimball County is not a subarea, however, several wells are included in our monitoring program.

South Platte Valley has seen a steady increase of nitrate-nitrogen composite averages and due to these elevated levels will transition from Phase I to Phase II Controls. On June 13, 2023, the SPNRD Board of Directors approved and adopted the Amended and Restated Districtwide Ground Water Management Area Rules and Regulations, effective July 13, 2023. A general description of the content is the transition of the SPVGWQMSA from Phase I to Phase II designation. These changes affect irrigated agricultural lands in the Deuel County South Platte River Valley.

A partnership between producers, state agencies and the NRDs will require a long-term collaborative effort and working together, we can make an impact on the quality of our ground water. The full text of the rules and regulations is available at [www.spnrd.org](http://www.spnrd.org).

### Nebraska's NRDs:

In 1972 the Nebraska Legislature enacted laws to combine 154 special purpose entities into what became 23 NRDs. Unique to Nebraska, the districts are local government entities with responsibility to protect natural resources. Major Nebraska river basins form the boundaries, enabling districts to respond best to local needs.

#### 12 Areas of Responsibility

- Erosion Prevention and Control
- Prevention of Damages from Flood Water and Sediment
- Flood Prevention and Control
- Soil Conservation
- Water Supply for Beneficial Uses
- Development, Management, Utilization, and Conservation of Groundwater and Surface Water
- Pollution Control
- Solid Waste Disposal and Drainage
- Drainage Improvement and Channel Rectification
- Development and Management of Fish and Wildlife Habitat
- Development and Management of Recreational & Park Facilities
- Forestry and Range Management

*Learn more at [www.nrdnet.org](http://www.nrdnet.org)*

### The South Platte NRD

Seven locally elected directors manage the southern Panhandle Natural Resources. Their actions help ensure public safety, a strong local economy and a bright outlook for future generations.

#### Our Directors

Subdistricts:

1. Bill Halligan
2. James C. Johnson
3. Timothy R. Maas
4. Marc Sprenger
5. Chris Meyer
6. Kathryn E. (Kathy) Narjes
7. Larry L. Rutt