



Resources

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NPNRD Reminders...

NPNRD Board Meetings

Regular NPNRD Board meetings are open to the public and held the second Thursday of each month at the NRD conference room, 100547 Airport Road, Scottsbluff unless otherwise announced. Next Board meetings are: July 11, Aug. 8, and Sept. 12, 7:00 p.m.

Local Students Attend Camps

Four local students attended camps the past couple of weeks. Taylor Edmonds and Josh Jenkins attended the 2013 Nebraska State Range Camp. The camp is hosted by the Nebraska Section of the Society of Range Management. Liam Tygart and Jake Jenkins attended the 2013 Adventure Camp about the Environment (ACE). ACE was sponsored by Nebraska's NRDs. All four students received scholarships from the North Platte NRD to attend. The scholarships covered the cost of registration to the camps. For more information on the camps, go to www.npnrd.org/education/camps/.

Tree Planting Completed

Roy Lyles reported that the 2013 tree planting season has been completed. He reported that the District had sold a total of 50,726 trees. Last year's drought had an impact on tree orders, and the snow and rain came to late for people to order more trees. The NRD planted 24,650 trees within the District.

For tips on tree planting or care, go to our website, www.npnrd.org/trees/, or contact Lyles or Craig Uhrig at (308) 632-2749.

Newsletter Sign-up

Sign-up to receive the electronic version of the North Platte NRD newsletter Resources via email. Resources provides an insight into what is currently going on in the North Platte NRD and provides updates on programs and services the NRD provides.

Cacek to Retire, Berge Hired

Ron Cacek announced to the North Platte Natural Resources District Board of Directors that he plans to retire next year. Cacek has been with the NRD for 40 years and has enjoyed working with the people of the North Platte NRD. Cacek mentions the development and implementation of the Integrated Management Plan, the Harrisburg Water System, and working with other professionals in the management of water as some of his more memorable moments. He also credits his success with working with an excellent Board of Directors and staff.

He has overseen the many changes experienced in the District. Under Cacek's watch, the NRD has planted over 5 million trees that help protect soil from erosion and protect livestock from the extreme heat and cold. He has seen the expansion of conservation programs, and oversaw the implementation of many different programs and projects in the District to help with the conservation of water.

At the June 13 North Platte NRD Board of Directors meeting, John Berge was hired to replace Cacek as General Manager. Berge is currently the Deputy Administrator for the Farm Services Agency and brings a wealth of agriculture and natural resource experience. He has previously worked for United States Agriculture Department as Deputy and Acting Assistant Secretary and White

House Liaison. Berge also worked for Senator Ben Nelson as District Manager. He oversaw staff operations in 52 counties in western and central Nebraska, and he specialized in agriculture and natural resources issues.

"I am pleased that the Board of Directors of the North Platte Natural Resources District has shown such confidence in my ability to take over the reigns of the District from the steady hand of Ron Cacek later this year. The challenges and opportunities that I see in resource management, particularly ground water, are well suited to my background in administration and agriculture and my personal perspective as the son of a farmer and landowner who knows the struggles of production agriculture. I look forward to working with the board, the staff, and the public, both our current and future partners to ensure that we meet the challenges and exploit the opportunities that present themselves." Berge will start August 1st, and the Board and staff welcome John to the North Platte NRD.

Cacek will continue to make managerial decisions for the Board and District until October 1, 2013. He will assist the Board and Berge in the transition process until January 1st, 2014. Cacek will then take on a consulting role until June 30, 2014, when he formally retires.

Water Levels Report

In order to provide the best information possible, NRD staff collects ground water levels from over 750 monitoring wells every spring and fall. The data collected allows the Board of Directors and staff to monitor the changes in ground water levels within the District over a period of time. By analyzing the data, the NRD can understand how natural conditions, pumping and management actions affects the hydrologic system over time, allowing the NRD to make decisions based on the best available information.

Why are the maps just showing the spring data? Spring ground water level data is a more accurate gauge of the level of the ground water table than the fall level data because spring levels are less influenced by seasonal recharge from nearby canal leakage and irrigation, and pumping stress. The fall level data can be used to see how ground water levels are affected by recharge, pumping stress, and irrigation.

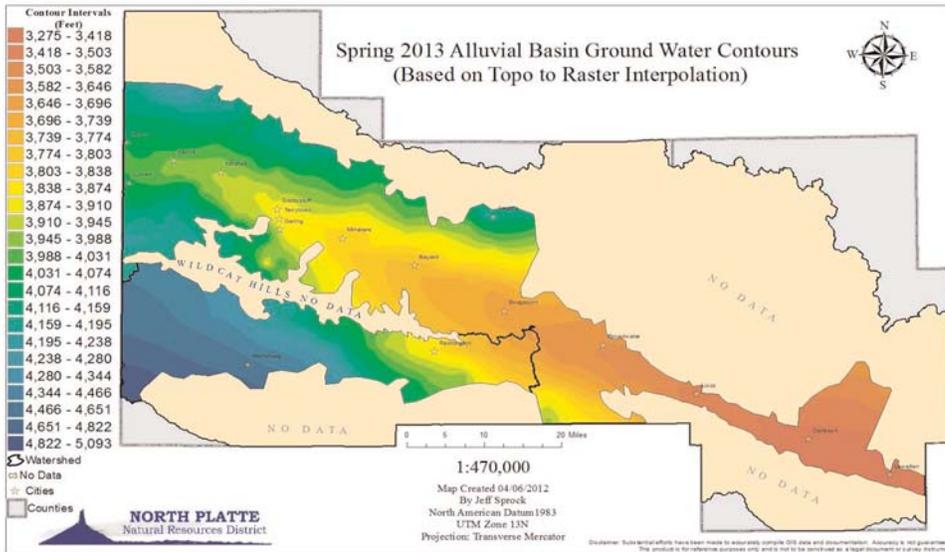
See Spring Water Levels, pg. 3



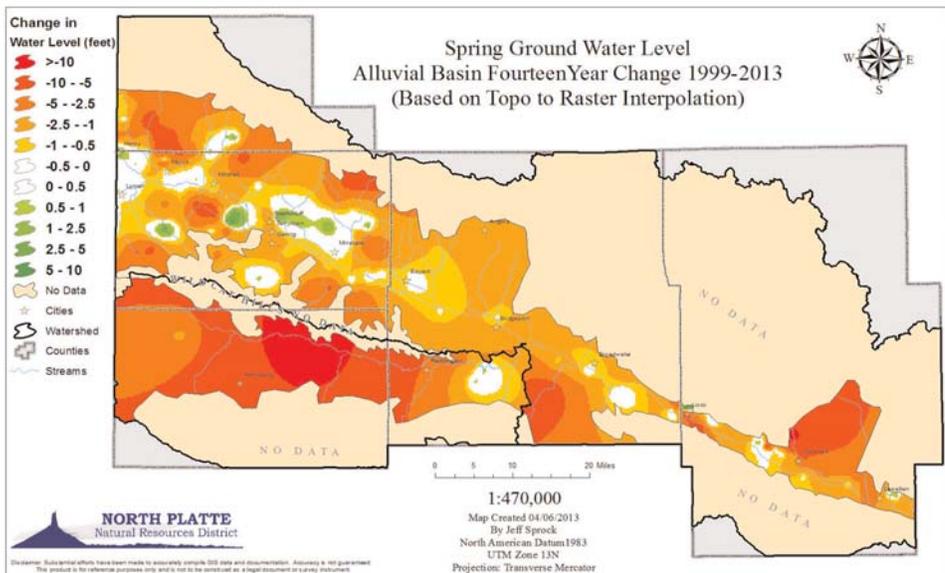
Craig Uhrig drives the tractor with a load of trees behind him. For tips on tree care and planting, go to www.npnrd.org.

Spring 2013 Ground Water Levels

Map 1



Map 2



Spring 2013 Alluvial Basin Ground Water Contours

Map 1

The spring 2013 alluvial basin ground water level contours above mean sea level are depicted by colors from dark blue which represent higher elevation water levels, to red, which depicts lower ground water table elevations. The District's alluvial basin is comprised of sand and gravel deposits as well as areas of fractured Brule Formation. The Ogallala Group, Arikaree Group, and Chadron Formation aquifers are not depicted in these maps, but they are monitored by the District. This visual interpolation between the point data was generated using ESRI ArcGIS software. The data used in this interpolation was gathered from the NRD's alluvial basin monitoring well data network throughout the District. The tan areas depict areas where the District doesn't have any monitoring well data or is outside the alluvial basin.

Alluvial Basin Change in Water Level Maps

The District selected three different intervals to investigate ground water level changes. Maps 2 through 4 show the difference in ground water levels from 2013 compared to several previous years using all of the monitoring wells measured during the two years being compared. The green depicts increasing ground water levels, no color depicts no change in the ground water levels, and the oranges/reds depict decreasing ground water levels. Again, the tan shows the areas where the District doesn't have any monitoring well data or is outside the alluvial basin.

Map 2

The first investigation is the twelve year change in ground water levels from spring 1999 to spring 2013 measured from ground surface to the water table. This interval is a good comparison of pre-drought conditions to spring 2013 conditions. The map shows the effects of several years of drought, two years of normal to wet conditions on the system (2010-2011), and a record dry year in 2012. The

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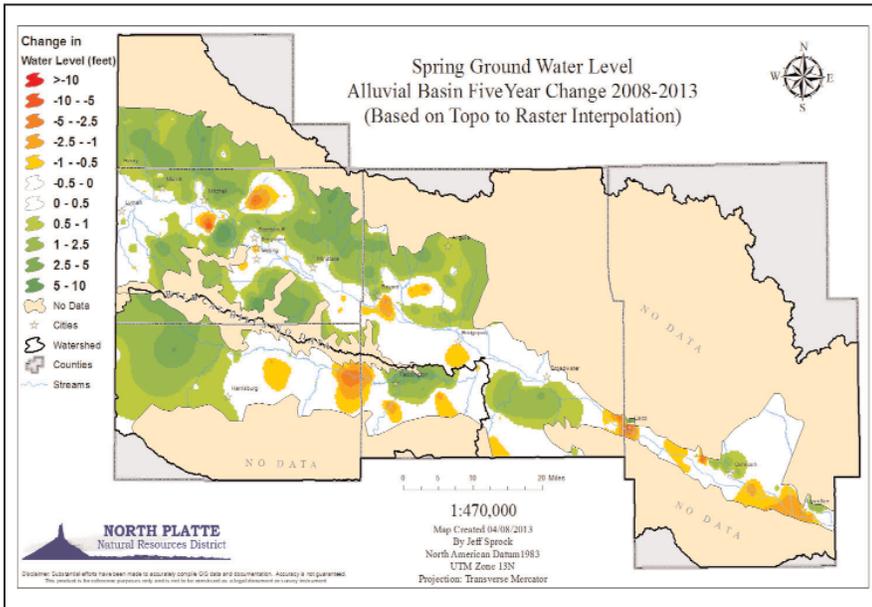
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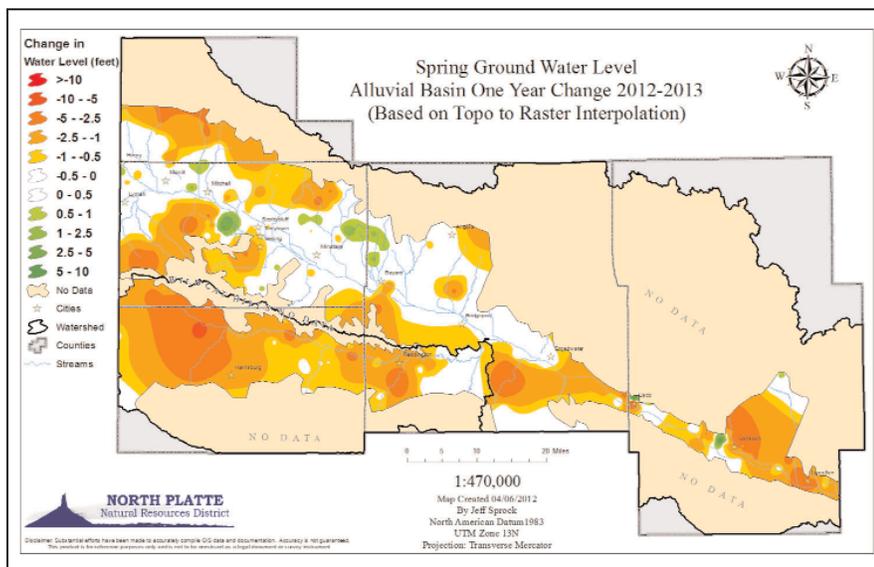
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Editor: David Wolf

Spring Water Levels, *Continue from pages 1*

Map 3



Map 4



monitoring wells within the alluvial basin show ground water levels decreasing across much of the District with some pockets of increase. Map 2 reveals that we are not back to pre-drought levels, and it shows just how bad the impact of the drought has been.

Map 3

The next investigation interval is from spring 2008 to spring 2013. This interval was chosen as mid-drought conditions compared to spring 2013 conditions. As seen on the map, much of the District's alluvial basins show either increases or no change in ground water levels. However, there are very few pockets of decreasing water levels (as shown in red).

Map 4

The last investigation interval is from spring 2012 to spring 2013. As seen on the map, most of the District saw either decreases in ground water levels or no changes. A main cause of the decreases could be the drought conditions that started in mid-2011 and lasted through all of 2012. Several observations can be made about the portions of the alluvial basin that show no change in ground water levels. First, the portions of the District with no change in levels coincide with the areas where producers used surface water in conjunction with ground water. The impacts to the aquifer from the 2011 canal flood mitigation-recharge project may also be a factor. The North Platte NRD, working with the region's irrigation districts, canal companies, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, was able to help reduce the flooding in the North Platte River by redirecting water down the irrigation canals. A secondary benefit of the project was to recharge portions of the District's aquifers.

Although we are not at the pre-drought ground water table levels, the District is slowly gaining ground, thanks in part to the water management efforts of District producers. The North Platte NRD continues to work with producers to protect our precious water resources, and producers have been successfully adapting their practices to fit the current water availability conditions.

Carolyn takes a measurement from one of the 750 monitoring wells scattered throughout the district.



Reminders for Irrigators

Now that the irrigation season is in full swing, the North Platte NRD would like to remind ground water irrigators of a couple of things.

" For those producers in the overappropriated portion of the District, excluding Pumpkin Creek, the allocation period was extended an extra year and 14 acre-inches per acre was added to the allocation. The allocation period now ends in 2014, so it is important to keep track of your ground water use, and how much you have left to ensure that you have some available for 2014.

" Staff would also like to remind producers that according to our rules and regulations, if the flow meter needs to be removed for repair or replacement, you must notify the NRD prior to removal, so we can take a reading and break the NRD seal. You must also notify the NRD once the flow meter has been reinstalled so that we can take a reading and reseal it.

" If a flow meter is removed and will be left outside, make sure that it is positioned in a way that the wind does not move the meter propeller. If the propeller does turn, it could result in a loss of water. The best way to ensure that the propeller doesn't turn is to shield it from the wind.

" It is important to periodically check your flow meter to ensure that it is properly functioning. If a flow meter fails during the irrigation season, the District will have to do a manual calculation of water use using power records and the results of a flow rate test. You will not receive a water use report until the District has completed the calculation, which is typically in the spring of the next year after the well is turned on. If you think your meter has failed, contact the NRD as soon as possible at 632-2749.

For your convenience, a water calculator tool is available on the NRD website that can calculate how much water has been pumped based on the meter reading. To use the calculator, go to <http://npnrd.org/programs/flow-meters/>.

Please contact the North Platte NRD at 632-2749 or go to www.npnrd.org, if you have any questions or would like more information about NRD ground water management programs.

The North Platte Valley Water Association is a new group formed to help protect our water resources. For more information, go to www.npvwater.org



Ron Cacek, pictured above, has spent the last 40 years as the General Manager of the North Platte NRD. He has agreed to stay on to help with the transition to the new manager. He will be officially retiring June 30, 2014.

John Berge, pictured below, will be taking over as General Manager. Berge will start August 1st and will take over the full duties of General Manager starting October 1st.



For information on no-till practices, go to www.panhandlenotill.org.

Website Gets Facelift

The North Platte NRD's has contracted with Bytes Computer & Network Solutions to update the District's website. David Wolf, Information/Education Coordinator, stated that it was time for the change. "Our old website was a great resource for people to learn about natural resources and what the North Platte NRD is doing to protect the lives, the property, and the future of the District, but we felt like the website could be updated." The website will have a whole new look, style, and format. The new website is more streamlined, making it easier to navigate and find the content that you want.

The new website will also allow the NRD to adapt faster to the technologies that can help producers, teachers, and others learn more about conservation. Wolf says the use of video is one technology that the NRD hopes to utilize more. "Whether it is a demonstration on how to properly prune a tree, read a flow meter, or how a well affects ground water, I think videos can provide a great source of information." The videos will allow instant access for constituents, if they are unable to attend a workshop to meet with NRD staff.

Wolf says that the new site will be up and running by the first of July.

Reminder for ground water irrigators:

For those that would like to receive their 2013 Annual Ground Water Use Report via email, go to www.npnrd.org and click on the link on the front page.