

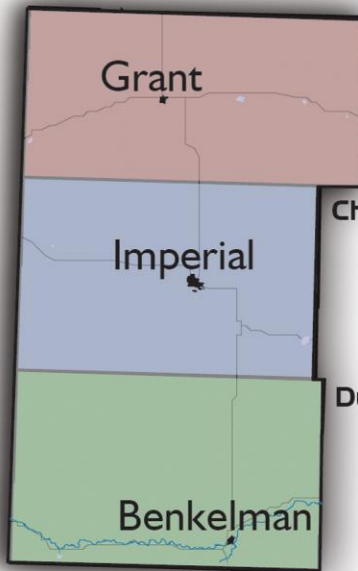
KNOW YOUR NRD



UPPER REPUBLICAN
Natural Resources District
Imperial, NE

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

2019



Perkins Co.

**Local People
Providing Local
Solutions**

Chase Co.

Dundy Co.

UPPER REPUBLICAN NRD



URNRD QUICK FACTS:

440,000 Irrigated Acres

250 Water Samples Taken to Monitor Water Quality

All Irrigation Wells Metered and Regulated Since 1979

Groundwater Levels Monitored at 400 Locations in Spring and Fall

15 Observation Wells Continuously Measuring Water Levels

No New Irrigation Development Since 1997

Protecting Our Groundwater

Maintaining Compact Compliance

For the 2015-2019 Republican River Compact compliance period, there is approximately a 16,000 acre foot positive balance. Over the last several years, Nebraska has exceeded its Compact allocation by approximately 9,300 acre feet but Kansas has not requested that water because it hasn't had a use for it. Prior to new, cooperative and beneficial agreements reached with Kansas a few years ago, Nebraska would have had to provide that amount of water to Kansas even though the water wasn't needed by irrigators in the neighboring state. Kansas could request the 9,300 acre feet be delivered from October '19 to June '20. However, we do not anticipate them requesting it due to the large irrigation water supply in Harlan County Lake.

Protecting Our Resource Based Economy

Water-Saving Regulations The District is believed to be the first entity in the U.S. to limit agricultural water use, having done so since 1979. Water-use allocations are imposed on all irrigated acres in the District and the regulations have significantly slowed groundwater level declines. The allocation system has been a model for other parts of Nebraska, and neighboring states that don't yet have allocations. Regulations have encouraged the use of progressive, water-saving technology throughout the District.



Protecting Our Future

Preserving Water for the Future

Through our Soil Moisture Probe Cost-Share Program, the URNRD received applications for 110 probes on approximately 14,000 acres in the District for 2019. Since 2011, the URNRD has cost-shared about 625 probes using grants from the state and the federal government. Research shows that the use of probes typically reduces water usage by 1"-2" per acre and over the eight years we have had the program, the URNRD has had probes covering 81,000 acres. Assuming the use of each cost-shared probe reduce water usage by 1.5", the program has reduced water use by approximately 10,000 acre feet during that time and introduced farmers to a tool they will use in future years to reduce water use.

Conserving our Resources

The URNRD is actively involved in conservation and programs that maintain viable water allocations for users, as well as management practices that conserve water and ensure that producers in the basin aren't threatened by the loss of water rights.

Producers in the District have shown their support for these efforts by paying an occupation tax on irrigated land the last few years. The tax has produced revenue for programs including the augmentation project and irrigation retirement.

The District has also been involved in promoting and helping pay for the use of irrigation-related technology that can reduce water use. The use of such technology could help continue a recent trend of reduced water use.

Safeguarding the Local Economy

The economy of Southwest Nebraska relies upon agriculture - the URNRD is dedicated to protecting the viability of this ag-based economy by sustainably managing resources for today, and tomorrow.

Projects recently employed by the District are part of the multi-faceted plan to address short, mid and long-term needs without unnecessarily harming the economy of the region. The District will continue to consider regulations and policies that fit this strategy. One component of the District's state-approved plan to maintain compliance with the Republican River Compact is reducing groundwater pumping.



Consumptive use will have to decrease across the District in coming years and it can be done in a gradual, progressive manner that tracks with the development of drought-resistant crops and other irrigation efficiencies.

Protecting Future Natural Resources

The URNRD provides conservation education to youth of the district by sponsoring a local week long science camp every other summer. We are protecting our future natural resources through education of our youth about water quality, conservation, stewardship, and encouraging critical thinking. Utilizing hands-on activities, children are learning how to become involved and are encouraged to further develop their knowledge of conservation.



KNOW YOUR MANAGER: Jasper Fanning
URNRD General Manager since 2004.

- **Leading the way in groundwater management**
- **Protecting our natural resources since 1972**

Located in southwest Nebraska, the Upper Republican Natural Resources District consists of all of Chase, Perkins and Dundy Counties. The District is unique in that it borders both Colorado and Kansas; it also neighbors the Middle Republican NRD to the east, and the Twin Platte NRD to the north. Imperial is the largest municipality of the District's twelve cities and villages.

NRDs help Nebraskans respond to natural resource challenges with local solutions that work. Major Nebraska river basins form the boundaries of the 23 NRDs, which are governed by locally-elected boards of directors. These directors are elected by registered voters within the District. The board sets policy for the District and works closely with the staff through a committee system to carry out the District's goals.

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

