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## 2022 NACD Poster Contest Winners!

Thank you to all who participated in the 2022 National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Poster Contest sponsored by LCNRD. The winners of this year's local NACD Poster Contest are 6th grader Kiersten Hans (Wynot Public Schools) and freshman Miley Pinkelman (Bloomfield Community Schools). Kiersten Hans also won the State level competition for the 4th- 6th grade division.



Kiersten Hans- 6th grade



Miley Pinkelman- 9th grade

## 2023 NACD Stewardship Week

"One Water" is the theme for Stewardship Week, April 30th through May 7th, in 2023. This observance is one of the largest national programs to promote natural resource conservation and has been celebrated for 68 years.

A watershed is an area of land that channels rainfall and snowmelt to creeks, streams, and rivers, eventually leading to outflow points such as reservoirs, bays, and the ocean. Those bodies of water are all connected, so every drop that falls becomes part of one water. A lot of the water we use and drink every day comes from water in the ground. All land across the entire earth is made up of watersheds. We all live in a watershed. We share the water in our watershed with other people, animals, and plants because... it is all one water.



LCNRD promotes Stewardship Week by providing educational materials within the district at no charge. Consider taking advantage of the opportunity to promote conservation of our local natural resources and the role water plays in our daily lives.

## Learn about Butterflies Day

On March 14th, National Learn About Butterflies Day encourages us to look for a blur of color as butterflies migrate across the country. Each year the celebration brings awareness of the varieties of butterflies and their importance to our survival. Spring and summer are just around the corner, so it is an excellent time to take a few minutes and learn something about butterflies and appreciate their beauty.

Butterflies need our help as they rely on flowers and other natural resources for survival.

### Quick Facts

- There are more than 20,000 types of butterflies.
- Their wingspans can range from 1/2 in. to 11 in.
- Monarch butterflies migrate from Mexico to Canada, which is a distance of about 2500 miles.
- The lifespan of butterflies is a week to one year.

## LCNRD Amateur Photo Contest Winners!



"Farmstead During a Full Moon"  
by Brad Wieseler- 1st Place



"February Frost"  
by Dee Bratetic- 2nd Place



"Pot of Gold"  
by Dee Bratetic- 3rd Place

The LCNRD Amateur Photo Contest encourages LCNRD residents to get out and capture the natural wonders of the district. Check out the 2022 winning photos above.

Thank you to everyone who participated, and we look forward to the 2023 contest starting mid-summer.

The Lewis and Clark Natural Resources District (LCNRD) enacted a 180-day stay of development on high-capacity wells under the authority of Nebraska Revised Statutes, 46-707, at their regularly scheduled board meeting on November 17, 2022. The board of directors clarified the language of the stay at their regular meeting on December 20th, stating that the board will consider permit applications for expanding irrigated acres utilizing existing wells during the stay.

The stay has been adopted to allow for updates to LCNRD's current groundwater rules and regulations and the high-capacity well and irrigated acre permitting process to protect the groundwater resources of the district effectively.

The 180-day stay only pertains to new well construction and irrigation expansion related to new construction. Permits that were previously approved and have not expired

are not affected by the stay. The stay does not impact the construction of wells pumping less than 50 gallons per minute for stock and domestic use. Public water supply wells and replacement wells can be completed upon approval from LCNRD. Drilling test holes is allowed.

LCNRD is dedicated to protecting the existing uses of groundwater and the investments related to that development while continuing to permit well development where it makes sense. During the 180-day stay, the board of directors may revise existing rules and regulations and hold a hearing on the proposed revisions to accept public comment. It is anticipated that the stay will be lifted May 16th, 2023, with new permit applications accepted for consideration at upcoming board meetings when permit applications are regularly reviewed.

## Natural Resources Award Recipients

Every year, LCNRD recognizes community members who go above and beyond to protect and conserve our natural resources, including volunteers, district residents, and directors. Four district members recently received recognition for their work to conserve and protect natural resources in northeast Nebraska: Susan Olafsen-Lackey, Bob Hansen, and Jeff and Jolene Steffen.

**Susan Olafsen-Lackey** was honored as the 2022 NRD Hall of Fame Supporter. Sue was nominated with the support of the NRDs she works with in northeast and north central Nebraska. Olafsen-Lackey was also awarded the Maurice Kremer Groundwater Achievement Award by the Groundwater Foundation. Sue has authored/coauthored various hydrogeologic publications and has logged over 60,000 feet of test holes since her hydrogeologist career in Nebraska began in 2004. Sue approaches every hydrogeologic question and problem with the same effort and dedication; 100% of her time, knowledge, and expertise. She shares her insights as a UNL educator and hydrogeologist, wholly dedicated to her service area and state.



Susan Olafsen-Lackey

Project (BCWP), with LCNRD. Cassidy Wessel, Wildlife Biologist for NGPC, said, "Being around Bob is a reminder that as we continue to strive for the preservation of species and landscape, it's not just what we do. It's about the manner in which we choose to do it. And it's about the people we welcome and the community we create." Bob continues to volunteer with the BCWP and NGPC.

**Jeff and Jolene Steffen** received the Honor Award from the Soil and Water Conservation Society for excellence in land management on their farm near Constance, NE. The Steffens utilize diverse crop rotations of corn, soybeans, oats, peas, and other spring crops that benefit their rotation. Jeff and Jolene's conservation practices include no-till, cover crops, and planned field grazing. Jeff's involvement with LCNRD and Nebraska Natural Resources Commission has reinforced their belief in the importance of cover crops and animals for land conservation. The Steffens consider their love of farm life a continuation of a legacy they learned from their parents.



Jeff & Jolene Steffen

Thank you to the 2022 award recipients for your dedication to protecting and conserving Nebraska's natural resources. If you are interested in volunteering with LCNRD give us a call at 402-254-6758.





LCNRD Water Quality Protection

Bow Creek Watershed Project (BCWP)

Education is a large focus of the Bow Creek Watershed Project. In 2022, eight educational meetings were held featuring guest speakers sharing information on conservation farming practices while maintaining or enhancing profitability. Following are highlights from a few of those meetings.

In May, high school students from the Hartington area participated in a stream assessment led by staff from Nebraska Game & Parks Commission and BCWP Coordinator, Becky Ravenkamp. The students assessed a segment of Bow Creek near the school. This activity brings water quality awareness to students who may use Bow Creek for summer recreation.

In June, a field day was held near Constance, featuring speakers Rick Clark, Loran Steinlage, Paul Jasa, Katja Koehler-Cole, and Jeff Steffen. Attendees discussed organic no-till systems, cover crops, and evaluated termination timing and methods. More than 100 farmers and crop consultants from the area attended.

In August, farmers joined together on a three day bus tour to visit farms that are practicing and researching conservation in the Dakotas. The focus was on farms that practice innovative cropping and grazing practices. It was an information-packed event with one participant asking the bus driver to drive slower on the way home to prolong the networking!



Farmers touring a research farm during bus tour.

UNL Agronomy Capstone students spent three days in the watershed in August working with farmers and learning about conservation practices and the challenges that come along with them. The students provide the producer they work with a presentation that identifies ways the producers could solve problems on their farm.

Nutrient management meetings are planned on March 15th, and April 19th, contact Becky Ravenkamp at 402-254-6758 for information.



Bazile Groundwater Management Area (BGMA)

In late September, LCNRD assisted the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Conservation and Survey Division (CSD) with vadose sampling in the BGMA. The vadose layer is the variably saturated zone between the land surface and the permeable water table. The samples provide data on infiltration rates, residual soil nitrogen, and the depth of the water table.

In October, Creighton High School FFA students got the ball rolling for this year’s Know Your Well Project. Students learned about water quality sampling through testing private domestic wells for contaminants, including nitrates.



Creighton FFA students sampling a private domestic well.

The BGMA group hosted a booth at Northeast Community College’s Ageceptional Women’s Conference to test water samples and inform about the risks associated with drinking water with a high concentration of nitrate.

On February 7th, the BGMA group hosted the 2023 Winter Meeting in Osmond. Producers and agriculture professionals from the area discussed interseeding of cover crops, nitrogen application methods, and an update of the UNL Demo Sites.

Annual crop reports are due to the LCNRD office on April 1, 2023. If your reports are going to be late just contact the office.

2023 Chemigation Certification

To chemigate in Nebraska, a person who applies chemicals through their irrigation system must complete a chemigation safety course and pass a written exam, offered through UNL and Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy.

Certification courses are offered online and in-person at multiple locations and dates throughout the state every year. To find out more information about upcoming chemigation training course dates and locations near you, contact the NRD office or a local county UNL Extension office. Online training is available year round. Certification is good for three years, starting January 1.

Questions? Contact the LCNRD office at 402-254-6758 or <https://water.unl.edu/article/agricultural-irrigation/chemigation>.

2023 Conservation Tree Program

Each spring, the Lewis and Clark Natural Resources District (LCNRD) distributes tree seedlings and provides planting services for conservation purposes such as windbreaks, shelterbelts, and wildlife habitats. Seedling orders are accepted through the end of March. Early ordering is encouraged as availability is limited. Assistance is available through local Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) offices for preparing tree planting plans that meet your conservation needs.

AVAILABLE TREES, SHRUBS & PLANTS

Shrubs

- Buffaloberry
- Chokecherry, McKenzie
- Chokeberry
- Cotoneaster, Peking
- Dogwood, Redosier
- Elderberry
- Lilac, Common
- Lilac, Vilosa
- Serviceberry
- Sumac, Skunkbush

Deciduous

- Catalpa
- Cottonwood
- Crabapple
- Hackberry
- Honeylocust
- Maple, Amur
- Maple, Silver
- Oak, Bur
- Oak, Red
- Oak, Swamp White
- Walnut, Black

Conifers

- Cedar, Eastern Red
- Pine, Jack
- Pine, Ponderosa (Plugs)
- Pine, Southwestern White
- Spruce, Colorado Blue
- Spuce, Black Hills (Plugs)
- Spruce, Colorado Blue (Plugs)
- Spruce, Norway

Plants

- Milkweed, Butterfly
- Milkweed, Swamp



Tree planting in a park



Northern Catalpa



Serviceberry bush



Colorado Blue Spruce

Other species may be available upon request. For descriptions and pictures go to: <https://www.nrdnet.org/tree-program>

Pricing

\*All orders subjected to sales tax\*

Seedling Trees/ Shrubs/ Plants	\$1.20 per tree	Must order in lots of 25 per species (\$30 per bundle)
Small Acreage Package	\$35.00 per package	3 Blue Spruce, 2 Bur Oak, 2 Hackberry, 5 Chokecherry, 5 American Plum, 3 Redosier Dogwood
NRD Tree Planting Charge	\$1.20 per tree	Minimum planting charge of \$300.00 \$4.00 per mile go back charge
Weed Mats	\$3.50 each	4’x4’ mat with 5 (8”) staples
Weed Barrier	\$225.00 per roll	500’ x 6’ roll
Staples	8 inch \$0.20 each	10 inch \$0.25 each

NDEE now accepting applications for Private Well Reverse Osmosis Rebate Program

The Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE) is accepting applications for the Private Well Reverse Osmosis Rebate Program. NDEE will administer \$1.2 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds through rebates for private well reverse osmosis sytems, which is part of a larger \$4 million ARPA initative administered by NDEE as authorized under LB 1014e Section 51.

Private well reverse osmosis system rebates are available to property owners of private wells with nitrate levels above 10 parts per million (ppm) in drinking water. Applicants may be eligible for up to \$4,000 in rebates for Reverse Osmosis system that is effective in removing nitrates to a level below 10 ppm. Rebate applications can include testing costs, purchase price of the system, and installation costs.



The application period for private well property owners opened January 1, 2023 and the first round closes March 31, 2023; installation and follow-up testing needs to be completed by September 30, 2024.

More information on the Reverse Osmosis Rebate Program, along with application forms and an instructional video can be found on NDEE’s website at <http://dee.ne.gov/Publica.nsf/pages/22-051>. Inquiries can also be made to NDEE State Revolving Fund State Supervisor Steve McNulty at [steve.mculty@nebraska.gov](mailto:steve.mculty@nebraska.gov) or 402-471-4200.

LCNRD is available to assist and provide information on the Reverse Osmosis Rebate Program and its requirements.