



Lower Republican NRD Review

FALL 2016

Volume 48

Protecting Lives, Protecting Property, Protecting the Future

LRNRD Receives 2.1 Million Dollar Grant for Irrigation Efficiency

Mike Clements, General Manager of the Lower Republican Natural Resources District (LRNRD) said, "We are pleased to announce that the LRNRD in partnership with the Middle and Upper Republican Natural Resources Districts is the recipient of a \$2.1 million dollar U.S.D.A. Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grant."

Out of 84 RCPP projects funded across the nation Nebraska had three projects approved for over three million dollars to improve irrigation water management, create wildlife habitat and reduce soil erosion on cropland. The leading partners involved with these projects include the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the Lower Republican and Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources Districts.

The Lower Republican Project will focus primarily on three areas; conversion from gravity to sub-surface drip irrigation, permanent end-gun retirement and high-end soil moisture sensors. Applications are presently being taken through November 18th at your County NRCS office. Contracts will be awarded by the end of February for 2017.

If you have any questions about this exciting new program, please contact your County NRCS office or the LRNRD at 308-928-2182.

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 6—Daylight Savings Time Ends

November 10—Board Meeting 2 pm, LRNRD Meeting Room

November 11—Veteran's Day, Office Closed

November 18—RCPP Application Deadline

November 24—Thanksgiving, Office Closed

December 8—Board Meeting, 2 pm, LRNRD Meeting Room

December 26—Christmas Observed, Office Closed

January 2—New Years Day Observed, Office Closed

NSWCP Funding Available

Funding is currently available in the Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Program (NSWCP) fund. Contact your local NRCS office to apply for cost-share. Applications will be approved in order of priority: 1. Water; 2. Range; 3. Erosion.

RANGE JUDGING

The LRNRD along with the NRCS, Franklin County Extension Service and the Society for Range Management hosted one of six statewide area contests on September 21st near Franklin. With fourteen schools participating from Chase County all the way to Amherst.

It was exciting to have nearly 250 students compete in either the Junior or Senior division as well as 6 adults. The participants were sent to a pasture to identify 24 individual plants, three ecological sites and one ranch map.

The top LRNRD teams were a Southern Valley FFA Senior division team who placed 2nd and an Arapahoe-Holbrook FFA team receiving 5th place in the Junior division. Individually Kade Bose of Southern Valley FFA placed 2nd in the Senior division and Olivia Leising of Arapahoe-Holbrook FFA won the Junior division.

We had a great group of staff to make it run smoothly including LRNRD board members and Franklin County Officials who provided assistance at the site. The LRNRD sincerely thanks everyone for their part.



Top photo
courtesy of
Cammie
Kerner. Lower
photo courtesy
of the Kearney
Hub.



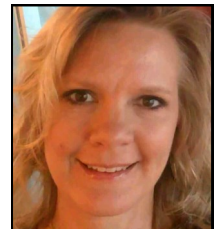
Spring Tree Planting

Ordering Deadline is March 10, 2017

Anyone wishing to plant trees in the spring should be thinking about making plans now. The Lower Republican NRD cost-shares on orders of at least 100 trees and their planting. Early planning and tree ordering is encouraged. The benefits of windbreaks are numerous. They protect your home and livestock, and when planted along cropland edges they increase crop production. Orders are now being accepted at local Natural Resources Conservation offices for planting in the spring. The NRCS will assist you with deciding which tree species will work best for you, draft planting plans, and filling out the cost-share forms. Check with your local NRCS office now. **The deadline for ordering trees is March 10th.**

New LRNRD Employee

Sasha Hahn is the LRNRD's new Information & Education Coordinator / Rural Water Secretary in Alma. Sasha lives in Loomis with her husband, Matt, who works at Holdrege Irrigation. They have 2 grown children. Sasha enjoys spending time with her family and friends, reading and playing on the lake.



Sasha Hahn

Republican River

Compact Update

The LRNRD is excited to share news on resolutions approved by Nebraska, Kansas and Colorado this last August. Prior to these resolutions, volumes of water stored in Harlan County Lake were based solely on complicated formulas that produced estimates of how much water was needed to maintain full compliance with the Compact and associated settlement agreements.

Under the newly signed resolutions, those estimates will still be made. However, now any amounts that exceed what the states agree is actually needed by Kansas, in a Compact Call Year, may not need to be delivered during that year. Instead, those volumes may be delivered by Nebraska to Kansas in future years if it is determined that the water can be used by Kansas water users. This three state agreement benefits Nebraska by potentially reducing the management actions (augmentation pumping or state water administration) required for compact compliance. This agreement also helps Kansas water users, because water will be provided only when it is determined that the water will be beneficially used by Kansas.

Compliance water not needed and therefore not sent to Harlan County Lake (for use in Kansas), will not increase the occurrence of Water Short Year accounting when Nebraska needs to augment stream flow and take other actions to maintain compact compliance. Water-Short Years are triggered when the amount of deliverable water from the lake is limited. Under the signed resolutions, compliance water not delivered to Kansas but that is available for future use will not reduce the estimated, available water supply that is used to determine whether Water Short Year accounting is in place.

“These resolutions represent a long-term strategy for representing each state and ultimately improving water Management for water users in all three states,” said Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts.

Flow Meter Readings

The LRNRD technicians are currently reading irrigation flow meters in the District. These meter readings will be used to determine water usage for the 2016 irrigation season. If there is a possibility that you irrigated after your meter was read and you would like that consumption to be included in your 2016 usage, please contact our office at 308-928-2182.

Please remember that operational flow meters are the responsibility of the water user. The LRNRD provides assistance to water users to make sure that flow meters are reading properly. The LRNRD staff is certified and trained by McCrometer to make necessary repairs. Additionally, we can provide ultrasonic testing to assist water users with their water management decisions. Contact our office if you believe you need support and please have your flow-meter serial number handy when you call.

“This helps to ensure that water delivered through management actions into Harlan County Lake has the opportunity to be used at a time when it is needed, rather than delivering water when it is not needed and risking that it will be lost, for example - through evaporation. Water is the big winner here and the officials from the three states that have been meeting monthly for the last two years need to be strongly commended for their accomplishments and continued effort,” said Scott Dicke at the LRNRD.

2016 Allocation Usage

The LRNRD board set a 13” cap on water usage for 2016. There will be a **3 to 1 penalty** for usage that exceeds the 13” cap. These caps were set to control the amount of water used this year in an effort to stay in compliance with the Republican River Compact. Water used this year will be deducted from the inches remaining for the 2013-2017 allocation period.

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RESOURCES DISTRICT
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Nebraska Trivia The Nebraska Sand Hills are the biggest grass-covered sand dunes in the Western Hemisphere. They cover about one-fourth of the state. Only the Sahara and the Arabian deserts have bigger areas of sand.

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