



# NEBRASKA'S

## Natural Resources Districts



PROTECTING LIVES  
PROTECTING PROPERTY  
PROTECTING THE FUTURE



# NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICTS

Districts are responsible for 12 key areas:

1. Development, management, use, and conservation of groundwater and surface water
2. Soil conservation
3. Erosion prevention and control
4. Flood prevention and control
5. Pollution control
6. Water supply for any beneficial uses
7. Prevention of damages from flood water and sediment
8. Development and management of recreational and park facilities
9. Forestry and range management
10. Development and management of fish and wildlife habitat
11. Drainage improvement
12. Solid waste disposal



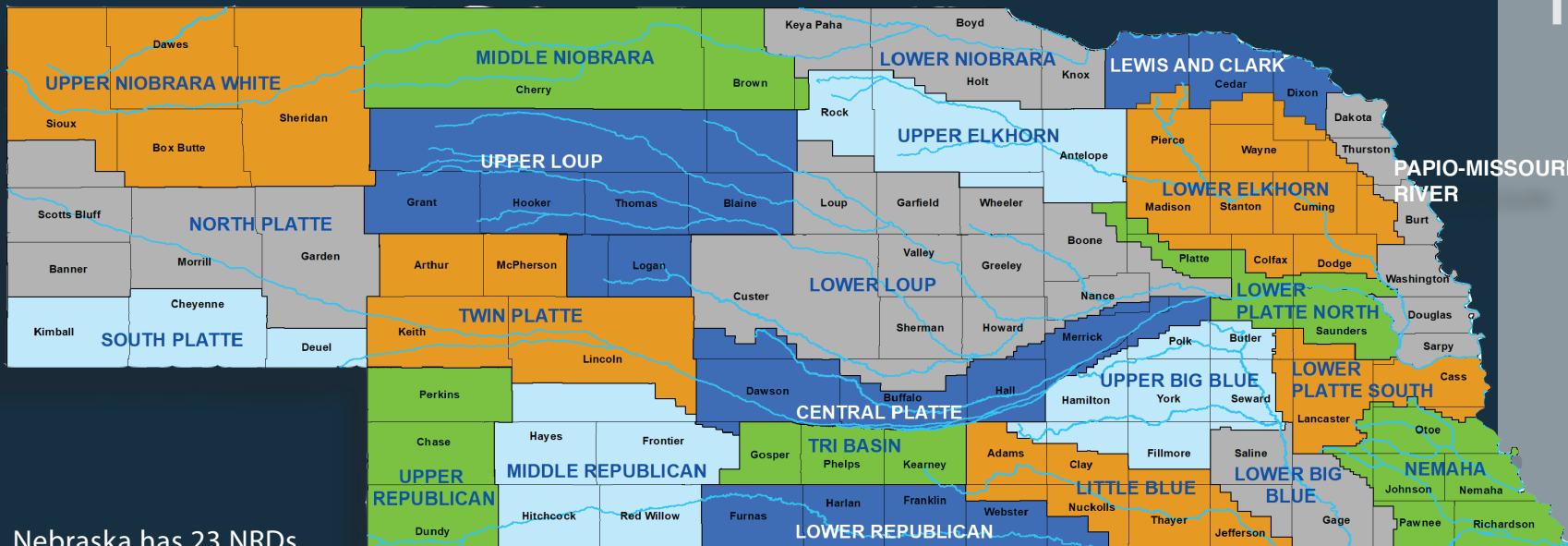
Photos provided by Lower Platte North Natural Resources District

In 1972, the Nebraska Legislature created the Natural Resources Districts (NRDs) to solve issues related to flood control, soil erosion, irrigation run off, and groundwater quality and quantity.

Nebraska is known both nationally and abroad for its agricultural bounty and natural wonders. These wonders surround the state from the Sandhills to the bluffs.



# LOCAL CONTROL



Nebraska has 23 NRDs with boundaries based on Nebraska's major river basins, allowing for better coordinated management of soil and water resources. NRDs help Nebraskans respond to natural resources challenges with local control, solutions, and field offices. Since their creation in 1972, state statutes have expanded the responsibilities of the NRDs, specifically in protecting groundwater. The Nebraska Association of

Resources Districts, a statewide association created by NRDs, provides administrative services, legislative representation, statewide communication, and coordination for the independent districts. These districts are unique to Nebraska, and act as local government units with broad responsibilities to protect natural resources. Elected boards govern each NRD, and primary funding comes from local property taxes.

Nebraska's NRDs make a larger conservation impact through partnerships with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, other state and federal agencies, municipalities, counties, and private organizations.

# LOCAL SOLUTIONS

Find contact information for your local Natural Resources District on pages 21-22.

# QUICK FACTS

NRDs offer many different conservation programs

NRDs were first established in 1972

23 Districts

Partner with other conservation organizations

Districts are separated by watershed boundaries

# EDUCATION



Photo provided by Twin Platte Natural Resources District

## CONSERVATION

Educating Nebraska's youth about natural resources conservation is a vital responsibility. NRDs are nationally known for their innovative and effective environmental education programs.

NRDs help engage youth in a wide variety of environmental and natural resources activities throughout the state.

## ACTIVITIES

- Resource Management
- Envirothon Competitions
- Poster Contests
- Engaging Presentations
- Adventure Camp about the Environment (ACE Camp)
- Water Festivals
- Outdoor Classrooms
- Land Judging
- Range Judging
- Nature Nights

## ENVIROTHON

High school students interested in natural resources have an opportunity to compete in the Envirothon. This challenging competition allows students to demonstrate knowledge in soils, aquatics, wildlife, forestry, range, policy, and a current environmental issue. Regional competitions and the state championship are hosted by the Natural Resources Districts.



Photo provided by Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District

## INTERACTION

Each year, thousands of students in Nebraska are given interactive outdoor education experiences through their local Natural Resources District.

## CONNECTION

Whether in the classroom or on a field trip, students connect and learn the principles of environmental stewardship and conservation.



Photo provided by South Platte Natural Resources District

NRDs ARE SHAPING NEBRASKA'S YOUTH INTO FUTURE DECISION MAKERS AND STEWARDS OF THE LAND

# TREES AND

Arbor Day, the tree planting holiday, originated in Nebraska in 1872.

During the 1930s Dust Bowl, Nebraska was a leader in tree planting.

Nebraska is home to the world's largest hand-planted forest.

## CONSERVATION TREES

The NRD Conservation Tree Program helps Nebraskans plant more than one million trees each year in windbreak structures and urban forestry programs.

Districts sell trees and weed barrier, and assist landowners with designing, planting, and installing windbreaks.

As funds are available, many districts cost share on tree plantings with the landowner.

Visit [nrdtrees.org](http://nrdtrees.org) for more information on tree programs



# WILDLIFE AREAS

## WINDBREAK BENEFITS

- Shade and shelter homes
- Reduce soil erosion
- Protect crops and livestock
- Provide shelter for wildlife
- Buffer noise
- Add beauty to landscapes



# SOIL HEALTH



Diminished agricultural productivity can be linked to poor soil health. A primary cause of poor soil health is excessive soil erosion. NRDs address these problems by promoting conservation, educating the public, and working with partner agencies like the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Erosion is controlled by installing terraces, cover crops, grassed waterways, grade stabilization structures, buffer strips, dams, planting tree windbreaks, and improving range management. Many NRDs offer cost-share incentives to install conservation measures on the land. These practices can be implemented along with NRCS programs and need to meet specific engineering and agronomic standards. When soil erosion becomes a threat to neighboring properties, districts have authority to mediate a solution under the Erosion and Sediment Control Act.



Unprotected soil erodes easily during rain events. Conservation practices such as terraces, cover crops, and no-till farming reduce soil erosion, improving soil and water quality.

As conservation professionals, NRDs along with partner agencies like NRCS, assess each operation individually to provide programs and utilize best management practices to conserve soil and water.



Photos provided by Lower Platte North Natural Resources District



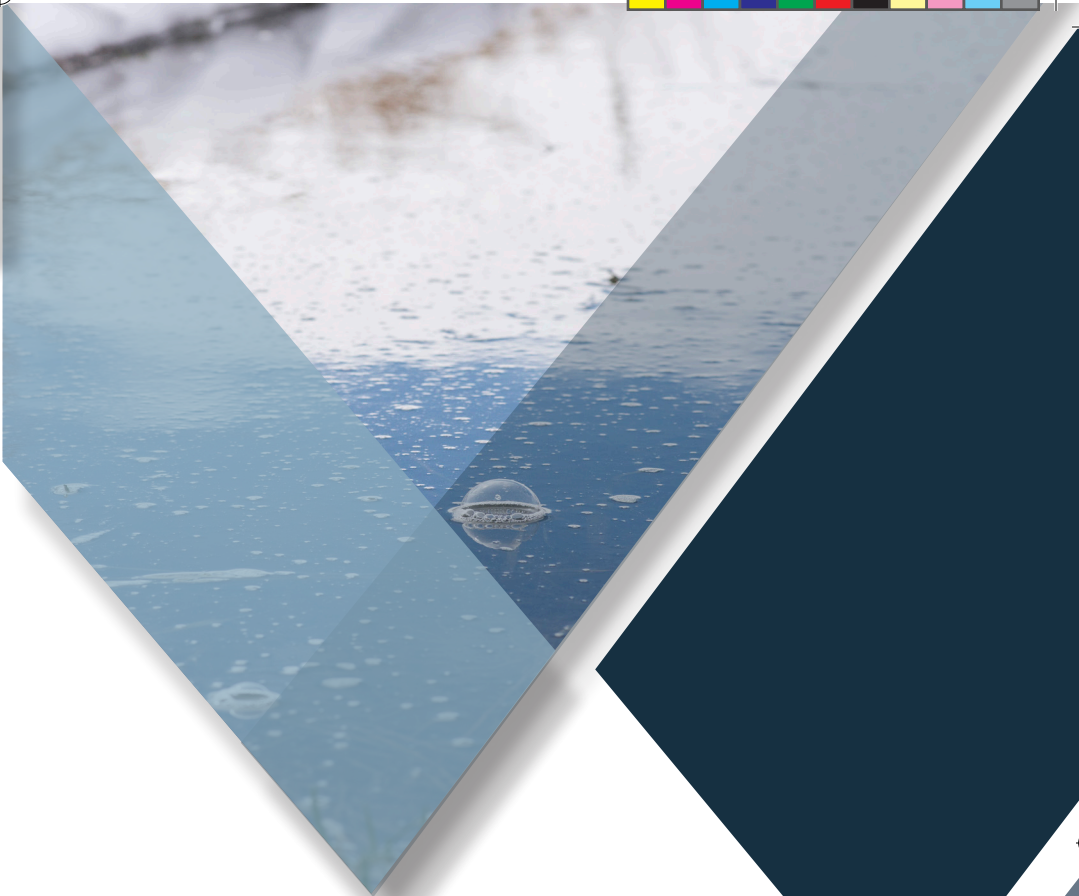
# FLOOD REDUCTION

## PROACTIVE APPROACH

As long as rain falls and snow melts, floods will occur. NRDs are at work protecting people and property, and prepared to help in any natural disaster.

**Flood control projects often provide the additional benefit of recreation including activities such as:**

- Boating
- Fishing
- Camping
- Wildlife Viewing
- Pedestrian Trails



## FLOOD STRUCTURES

Nebraska's NRDs work with landowners and partner organizations to minimize flood damage. NRDs protect people and property with watershed protection structures such as:

- Dams
- Levees
- Dikes
- Drainage ditches and other flood structures



# WATER MANAGEMENT

Once dismissed as “The Great American Desert,” Nebraska is blessed with ample water resources including nearly 80,000 miles of rivers and streams.

The Ogallala Aquifer supplies Nebraska with more groundwater than any other state.

Natural Resources Districts help to secure the future by protecting groundwater from overuse and pollution.

Although Nebraska’s water is plentiful, it is not infinite or immune from drought or contamination.

## QUANTITY

Irrigators, communities, industries, and wildlife all compete for this precious resource. Finding a balance between competing demands is key to protecting water resources for the future. Each Natural Resources District has a management plan to protect groundwater from overuse, shortages, and user conflicts. Districts often cost share with landowners on water meters and soil moisture sensors to encourage water stewardship.



## QUALITY

Keeping groundwater clean is an essential responsibility of the Natural Resources Districts. By offering water sampling, well decommissioning, best management practices, chemigation inspections, and demonstration projects, NRDs can help ensure water is protected for future generations. In some cases, NRDs are also water suppliers operating Rural Water Systems that provide safe, affordable drinking water to rural residents and small towns.







# RECREATION

There are more than 80 recreation areas across the state built and run by NRDs.  
*For more information, visit [nrdnet.org/recreation](http://nrdnet.org/recreation)*

## EXAMPLES OF NRD RECREATION AREAS:



Public Access Lakes



Trails



Wetland Areas



Campgrounds

### RECREATION AREAS

These areas include public access lakes, trails, and wetland areas. There's something for every outdoor enthusiast to enjoy! Many NRD projects are developed for multiple purposes. Recreational trails are built atop flood-control levees or along abandoned railroad lines. Dams built for flood control often develop into recreation areas. Habitat areas and wetlands are available for hunters and are often preserved for interpretive nature study.

- Alda Crane Viewing Site
- Bear Creek
- Big Indian Rec Area
- Brewer Bridge
- Buckskin Hills
- Chalco Hills
- Cottontail Lake
- Davis Creek
- Homestead Lake
- Iron Horse Trail Lake
- Lake Seldom
- Lake Wanahoo
- Liberty Cove
- Lincoln Saline Wetlands
- Maple Creek
- Oliver Reservoir
- Pibel Lake
- Prairie Lake
- Smith Creek
- Willard L. Meyer Rec Area
- Willow Creek
- Wild Plum Lake



Photos provided by Twin Platte Natural Resources District

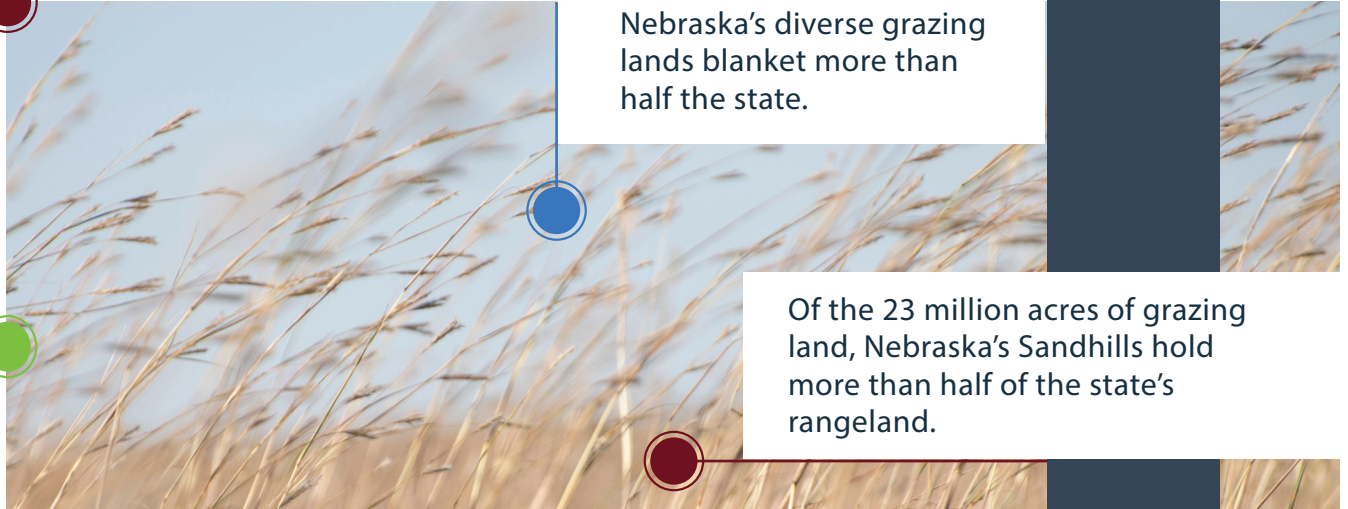
# GRAZING LANDS

## REGENERATE PRAIRIES

With proper management, grazing land can recharge the state's aquifers, help promote water quality, and prevent soil erosion. In addition, grasslands provide a way of life for livestock producers, homes for wildlife, and recreational opportunities.

## ENCOURAGE STEWARDSHIP

NRDs encourage stewardship by providing financial assistance for planned grazing systems, including constructing cross-fencing systems and pipelines for livestock water.



Nebraska's diverse grazing lands blanket more than half the state.

Of the 23 million acres of grazing land, Nebraska's Sandhills hold more than half of the state's rangeland.



Prescribed burning prepares grazing land for interseeding, controls weeds and invasive tree species, enhances wildlife habitat, and improves forage quality.



23 million acres of rangeland in Nebraska

## PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY

Along with partner agencies, NRDs sponsor grazing land field tours and educational programs to promote sustainable conservation practices.

# URBAN CONSERVATION

Conserving Nebraska's natural resources is just as important in cities as in rural areas. The activities of the urban population also have a major impact on water and soil. Converting farmland to urban uses like housing developments greatly increases the potential for flooding and water pollution problems such as soil sedimentation and urban runoff.



Photo provided by Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District

Photo provided by Lower Platte South Natural Resources District



# DEVELOPMENT

Natural Resources Districts respond to these needs by focusing resources and programs on urban issues, including forestry, park development and improvement, wellhead protection, flood control, streambank stabilization, recreation, and environmental education.

NRDs construct and maintain hundreds of miles of levees and channel improvements to protect urban and rural residents from flooding.

# CONTACT YOUR LOCAL NRD



NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF  
RESOURCES DISTRICT  
8100 S. 15th St. | Suite B  
Lincoln, NE 68512  
[www.nrdnet.org](http://www.nrdnet.org)

## CENTRAL PLATTE

215 Kaufman Ave.  
Grand Island, NE 68803  
308.385.6282 | [www.cpnrd.org](http://www.cpnrd.org)

## LEWIS & CLARK

608 N. Robinson Ave. | PO Box 518  
Hartington, NE 68739  
402.254.6758 | [www.lcnrd.nebraska.gov](http://www.lcnrd.nebraska.gov)

## LITTLE BLUE

100 E. Sixth St. | PO Box 100  
Davenport, NE 68335  
402.364.2145 | [www.littlebluenrd.org](http://www.littlebluenrd.org)

## LOWER BIG BLUE

805 Dorsey St. | PO Box 826  
Beatrice, NE 68310  
402.228.3402 | [www.lbbnrd.net](http://www.lbbnrd.net)

## LOWER ELKHORN

1508 Square Turn Blvd.  
Norfolk, NE 68701  
402.371.7313 | [www.lenrd.org](http://www.lenrd.org)

## LOWER LOUP NRD

2620 Airport Dr.  
Ord, NE 68862  
308.728.3221 | [www.llnrd.org](http://www.llnrd.org)

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## LOWER NIOBRARA

410 Walnut St. | PO Box 350  
Butte, NE 68722  
402.775.2343 | [www.lnnrd.org](http://www.lnnrd.org)

## LOWER PLATTE NORTH

511 Commercial Park Rd. | PO Box 126  
Wahoo, NE 68066  
402.443.4675 | [www.lpnrd.org](http://www.lpnrd.org)

## LOWER PLATTE SOUTH

3125 Portia St. | PO Box 83581  
Lincoln, NE 68501  
402.476.2729 | [www.lpsnrd.org](http://www.lpsnrd.org)

## LOWER REPUBLICAN

30 N. John St. | PO Box 618  
Alma, NE 68920  
308.928.2182 | [www.lrnrd.org](http://www.lrnrd.org)

## MIDDLE NIOBRARA

303 E. Highway 20  
Valentine, NE 69201  
402.376.3241 | [www.mnnrd.org](http://www.mnnrd.org)

## MIDDLE REPUBLICAN

208 Center Ave. | PO Box 81  
Curtis, NE 69025  
308.367.4281 | [www.mrnrd.org](http://www.mrnrd.org)

## NEMAHA

62161 Highway 136  
Tecumseh, NE 68450  
402.335.3325 | [www.nemahanrd.org](http://www.nemahanrd.org)

## NORTH PLATTE

100547 Airport Rd. | PO Box 280  
Scottsbluff, NE 69363  
308.632.2749 | [www.npnrd.org](http://www.npnrd.org)

## PAPIO-MISSOURI RIVER

8901 S. 154<sup>th</sup> St.  
Omaha, NE 68138  
402.444.6222 | [www.papionrd.org](http://www.papionrd.org)

## SOUTH PLATTE

551 Parkland Dr. | PO Box 294  
Sidney, NE 69162  
308.254.2377 | [www.spnrd.org](http://www.spnrd.org)

## TRI-BASIN

1723 Burlington St.  
Holdrege, NE 68949  
308.995.6688 | [www.tribasinrd.org](http://www.tribasinrd.org)

## TWIN PLATTE

111 S. Dewey St. | PO Box 1347  
North Platte, NE 69103  
308.535.8080 | [www.tpnrd.org](http://www.tpnrd.org)

## UPPER BIG BLUE

319 E. 25<sup>th</sup> St.  
York, NE 68467  
402.362.6601 | [www.upperbigblue.org](http://www.upperbigblue.org)

## UPPER ELKHORN

301 N. Harrison St.  
O'Neill, NE 68763  
402.336.3867 | [www.uenrd.org](http://www.uenrd.org)

## UPPER LOUP

39252 Highway 2  
Thedford, NE 69166  
308.645.2250 | [www.upperloupnrd.org](http://www.upperloupnrd.org)

## UPPER NIOBRARA WHITE

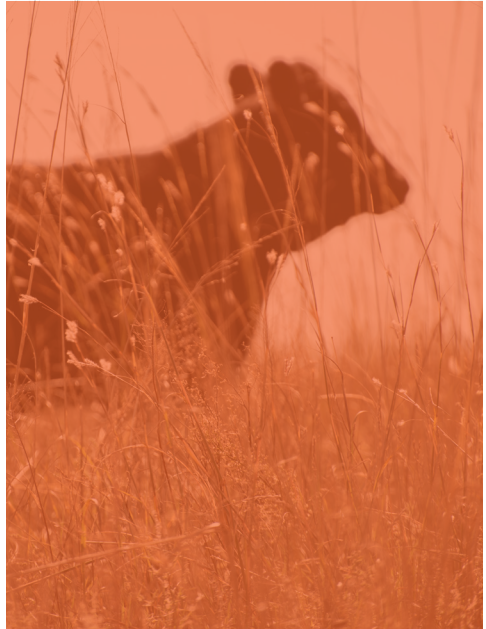
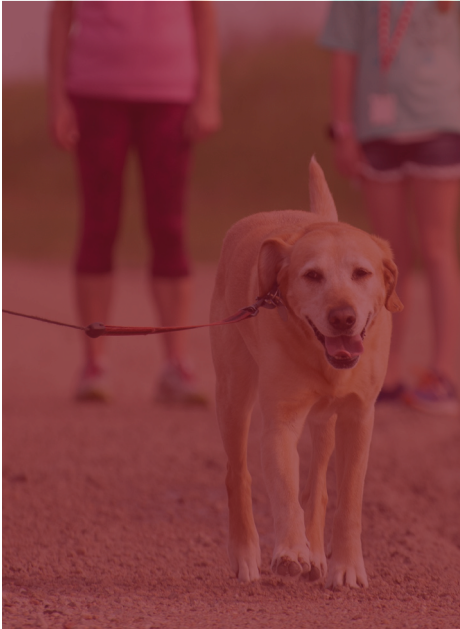
430 E. Second St.  
Chadron, NE 69337  
308.432.6190 | [www.unwnrd.org](http://www.unwnrd.org)

## UPPER REPUBLICAN

511 E. Fifth St. | PO Box 1140  
Imperial, NE 69033  
888.883.9066 | [www.urnrd.org](http://www.urnrd.org)

FOLLOW YOUR  
LOCAL NRD ON  
FACEBOOK AND  
TWITTER

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Nebraska's Natural Resources Districts are unique with boundaries based on watersheds. For more information on the districts and their individual programs, please contact your local NRD.

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