

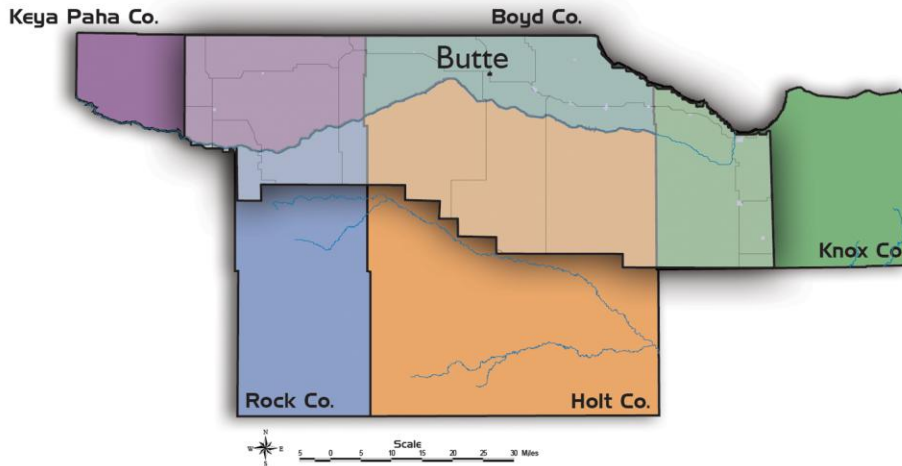
KNOW YOUR NRD



LOWER NIOBRARA
Natural Resources District
Butte, NE

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

SUMMER/ FALL 2009



LOWER NIOBRARA NRD



NRD QUICK FACTS:

- 76 wells measured for static water levels in the Spring 2009
- 2 wellhead protection areas
- 636 chemigation inspections completed in the Summer 2008
- 1093 total number of chemigation permits issued in 2008
- Free nitrate and bacteria water testing
- 472 total monitoring wells are checked for nitrates
- Free ultrasonic flowmeter checks
- Drills for rental for grass seedings

Protecting Lives

Protecting Property

Protecting the Future

Secure Water Source

The Lower Niobrara NRD established the West Knox Rural Water System in 1984. The WKRWS protects residents of Verdigre and Winnetoon along with rural residents by making sure there is quality drinking water available. Currently water is provided to 200 rural customers.

The directors of the LNNRD voted at their July 2009 meeting to hire an engineering firm to study possible expansion of the system. This would allow for additional rural hookups and a village connection. Included in the study will be an analysis of projected needs for 5, 10 and 15 years.

Our efforts help ensure abundant safe drinking water for the future.

Groundwater Monitoring Protects Property For The Future

The Lower Niobrara NRD (LNNRD) is concerned about water quality and is committed to protecting the districts groundwater. A Groundwater Monitoring Program was established several years ago to monitor nitrate levels in designated wells throughout the district.

Based on the nitrate results of those monitoring wells the entire District was initially placed in a Phase 1 Area (0-7.5 ppm).

Two areas have since been designated as Phase II Areas as a result of nitrate levels in those wells being greater than (7.5-9.5 ppm). Phase II requires that

a Crop Reporting Form is submitted by December 31st each year for every field of at least 40 acres .

Information required on this form includes: 1) results of nitrate analysis for each irrigation well every 4 years, 2) crop planted for the current and previous year, 3) yield expected and actual yield, 4) recommended nitrogen fertilizer application, actual nitrogen fertilizer and pesticide applied, and 5) estimated amount of irrigation water applied in inches.

The Crop Reporting Form was created to make operators aware of the nitrate-nitrogen levels already available for crop use in their soil and water. For a complete listing of Phase I and Phase II requirements please contact the LNNRD.

Major Projects & Programs

Tree Planting and Wildlife Habitat

To encourage tree planting, the Lower Niobrara NRD makes low cost tree and shrub seedlings available to District residents. Over the past five years we have planted on the average 69,000 trees per year. Trees are planted for livestock and homestead protection, prevention of soil erosion, wildlife habitat, as a “living snow fence” and for aesthetic value. The District also offers conservation mulch and mulch squares at a reasonable price. Please check with the LNNRD for pricing and availability of trees, shrubs and conservation mulch.



Natural Resources Awareness

To increase awareness of natural resources the LNNRD offers sixteen scholarships to the Nebraska Range Youth Camp. The scholarships consist of paying 75% of the registration fee. Youth who are interested in rangelands and practical range management are encouraged to attend. Participants develop an awareness of the importance and value of Nebraska’s greatest renewable resource.



Students launching bottle rockets while learning about NRD’s

Office Staff of the LNNRD promotes awareness of natural resources through other educational activities including:

- 1) Eighth Grade Conservation Days
- 2) Eighth Grade Essay Contest
- 3) Co-sponsor the Natural Resources Festival with the UENRD
- 4) Assist with the Wonderful World of Water
- 5) County Government Day
- 6) Hosting Land Judging Contests
- 7) Hosting Range Judging Contests
- 8) FFA class presentations to explain responsibilities and duties of NRDs
- 9) Nitrate testing for school classes
- 10) Presentations to schools upon request

Protecting Resources

April 3, 2009 the LNNRD was notified they were awarded a grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund. The \$90,000 grant over a three year period will provide for purchasing flowmeters for landowners. Flowmeters will give a better understanding of the total amount of water irrigated along with pumping rates. The amount of water withdrawn from the aquifer in combination with changes in static water levels will provide the LNNRD Board of Directors key information necessary for updating of the LNNRD Groundwater Management Plan. Landowners within the LNNRD are encouraged to contact the NRD Office if they are interested in this program.

Nebraska NRDs:

- Protect lives and property through flood protection
- Are leaders in groundwater management
- Use taxpayers dollars efficiently

Formed in 1972, Nebraska’s Natural Resources Districts are local government entities with broad responsibilities to protect our natural resources.

NRDs help Nebraskans respond to natural resource challenges with local control and local solutions. Major Nebraska river basins form the boundaries of the 23 NRDs, which are governed by locally elected board of directors. A 17-member board of directors governs the Lower Niobrara NRD, they are elected by registered voters within the District. The board sets policies for the District and works closely with the staff through a committee system to carry out the District’s goals.

In the quarter century since they were created, NRDs have experienced tremendous growth in the responsibilities given to them by state statute, especially in protecting ground water.

Find out more about
Nebraska’s NRDs at
www.nrdnet.org