

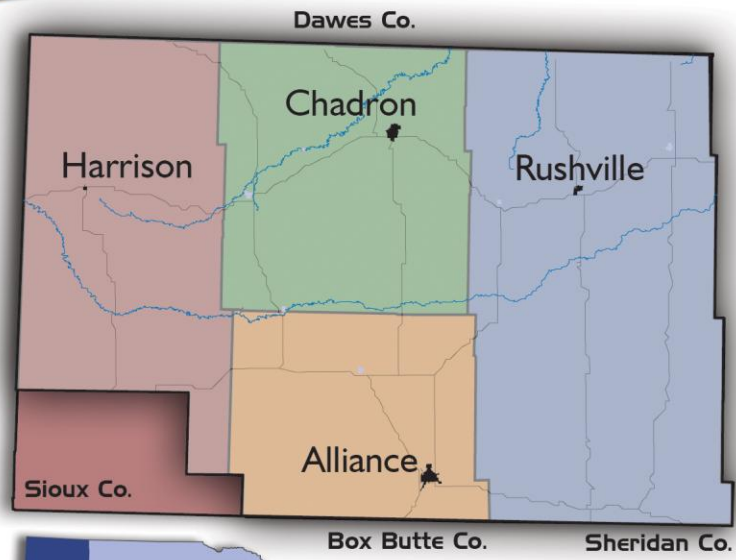
KNOW YOUR NRD



UPPER NIOBRARA WHITE
Natural Resources District
Chadron, NE

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

Summer-Fall 2009



UPPER NIOBRARA WHITE NRD

Water Quality Facts (FY 2008)

- 913 Nitrate samples
- 1,132 Total chemigation permits
- 623 Chemigation inspections
- 2 Wellhead protection area plans complete

Water Quantity Facts

- 647 Registered domestic wells
- 877 Monitoring wells
- 2,095 Irrigation wells
 - 1,665 allocated
 - 430 no allocation
- 251,018.87 Irrigated acres

Land Improvement Facts

- 6,085,888 Trees sold since 1985
- Over 233,000 Trees sold in FY 2008

Protecting Lives -- Protecting Property -- Protecting the Future

Your Local Leaders in Ground Water Management

Protecting the Future Water Supply

Water is without a doubt our most important resource. That's why the Upper Niobrara White Natural Resources District (UNWNRD) strives to ensure that we will have enough water for generations to come.

The UNWNRD closely monitors ground water levels using 1990 as a base year. Static water levels are measured to show the average changes in subareas of the district, and regulations have been put into effect in areas of concern.

In 2003, the UNWNRD established a stay on new high capacity wells to prevent the over-appropriation of our water resources. Working with the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the UNWNRD

maintains the balance of our water's supply and demand. Currently, DNR has determined that over three-fourths of the UNWNRD is fully appropriated.

To manage surface water and ground water that are hydrologically connected, the UNWNRD has partnered with DNR in the creation of an Integrated Management Plan (IMP). In June of 2009, this IMP was implemented, strengthening the regulations already in place.

Protecting Lives

To aid cities in protecting their drinking water supply, UNWNRD worked together with city leaders to develop several Wellhead Protection Plans. This ensures that potential contaminants are addressed before they become a problem.

In 1998, the UNWNRD designated the entire district a Ground Water Management Area (GWMA), to identify where problem areas may exist with the quality and quantity of our ground water. The UNWNRD regularly conducts ground water quality studies within the GWMA to ensure that contamination patterns are identified in a timely fashion.



The UNWNRD also tests domestic wells for nitrates and bacteria for free. This program allows residents outside of city limits to verify the safety of their drinking water.



“Our property has been protected thanks to the Upper Niobrara White NRD’s Tree Program. They’ve been very helpful with information and installation of windbreaks in Northwest Nebraska.”

-The Mike Manning Family, Hemingford

Projects and Programs

Protecting the Future through No-Till Education

The Upper Niobrara White Natural Resources District (UNWNRD) is a pioneer in no-till education in the Nebraska Panhandle. Each year the UNWNRD hosts a No-till Field Day in the summer and a Winter No-Till Conference. Through these events, the UNWNRD reaches over 130 producers each year.

Although no-till farming is less common in Northwest Nebraska, the UNWNRD’s efforts in no-till education are leading producers to change. More acres are being converted to no-till, as producers realize the benefits to soil health and water conservation.



Protecting Property through Tree Planting and Wildlife Habitat Restoration



To encourage tree planting for conservation, the UNWNRD makes low-cost tree and shrub seedlings available to landowners, in addition to weed barrier and planting services. Within the past year, over 233,000 trees were planted through the UNWNRD’s tree program for livestock and homestead protection, soil conservation, wildlife habitat, water conservation, and for aesthetic value.

Because the tree program is such a large source of the UNWNRD’s revenue, the UNWNRD is able to keep its tax request to a minimum.

Cost-Share Programs

During the past two fiscal years, the UNWNRD provided \$619,000 in cost-share for district residents, but only about \$40,000 came from the UNWNRD’s budget. Where did the rest of the funding come from? The UNWNRD writes grants and requests dollars from other agencies for cost-share programs. This allows residents to plant trees and low-water use grasses, put in irrigation flow meters, install drinking water filtration and reverse osmosis systems, properly plug abandoned wells, and convert their pivots to water efficient nozzles for little cost. During the last five years, the UNWNRD has distributed \$650,000 for irrigation flow meter cost-share alone.



Your NRD:

- Uses taxpayer dollars efficiently
- Protects lives through water testing
- Protects property through soil conservation

The NRDs are partially funded by property taxes - typically one to two percent of all property taxes in a county. For each resident in the Upper Niobrara White NRD this amounts to only \$1.20 a month toward the protection of lives, property and the future.

Find out more about the UNWNRD at www.unwnrd.org

The Natural Resources District system is unique to the State of Nebraska. In 1972, 23 districts were developed according to watershed basins, instead of by political boundaries. This system provided a more efficient management strategy because it solved the issues of overlapping authorities and lack of funds.

Each District is governed by a locally elected Board of Directors, which ensures that local issues and concerns are addressed.

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