

Crop Report & Nitrogen Certification Tests Mailed

The NRD staff were busy this month assembling 4,720 Crop Reports and maps for 849 producers. The Groundwater Quality Management Program requires producers in Phases II/III to submit an annual Crop Report Form with water and soil samples.



The Nitrogen Management Crop Reports provide the NRD with producer-driven data to analyze and refine water quality management decisions. Producers who do not submit the crop reports violate CPNRD's Rules and Regulations and are issued Cease and Desist orders. Potential penalties for violation are: fines ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000 per violation per day and/or loss of irrigated acres, ineligibility for NRD cost-share and restriction from transferring irrigated acres.



Crop Report Forms are due March 31st for all crops in Phase II and III Nitrogen Management areas.

NITROGEN CERTIFICATION TEST REMINDER

Producers whose nitrogen certification is expiring should have received a certification test to complete and return to the CPNRD office. Nitrogen certification is valid for four years, and certifications from other districts are accepted. If you did not receive the test, please contact Tricia Dudley immediately to ensure you remain in compliance. Note that the test was due January 1st, so timely action is necessary.

Alternative Option: Attendance at CPNRD's annual Water Programs Update fulfills the requirement to complete the Nitrogen Certification Test.

Your CPNRD Contact: Tricia Dudley (308) 395-7213 | dudley@cpnrd.org

Get Ready for Spring Planting - Order Your Seedlings Today!

Spring is just around the corner, and now's the time to plan your planting! Our high-quality tree and shrub seedlings, sourced from Halsey National Forest, are carefully delivered to the Central Platte NRD office in Grand Island. Stored in a climate-controlled cooler, they'll be ready for pickup by mid-April.

But don't wait – some species are already sold out! Secure your order now, and we'll notify you when your seedlings are ready for pickup at our office or your local NRCS office.

COST: \$31.25 for 25 trees | \$125 for 100 trees Sold in bundles of 25
50 % cost-share is available for trees and weed barrier on orders of 200+ trees.



Trees & Shrubs Available

Deciduous: Black Cherry, Black Walnut, Bur Oak, Catalpa, Cottonwood, Hackberry, Manchurian Apricot, Midwest Crabapple, Silver Maple, Swamp White Oak

Conifers: Black Hills Spruce, Colorado Blue Spruce, Eastern Red Cedar, Jack Pine, Ponderosa Pine, Rocky Mountain Juniper, Southwestern White Pine

Shrubs: American Hazel, American Plum, Amur Maple, Black Chokeberry, Caragana, Chokecherry, Common Lilac, Elderberry, False Indigo, Golden Currant, Peking Cotoneaster, Red-Osier Dogwood, Sandcherry, Serviceberry, Silver Buffaloberry, Skunkbush Sumac

Small Acre Packages COST: 50 seedlings for \$65 (10 of each specie)

Eastern NE Package Bur Oak, Peking Cotoneaster, Swamp White Oak, Midwest Crabapple, Red-Osier Dogwood-

Western NE Package Ponderosa Pine, Bur Oak, Rocky Mountain Juniper, Silver Buffaloberry, American Plum

Flowering Package Serviceberry, Midwest Crabapple, Common Lilac, Red-Osier Dogwood, Caragana

Wildlife Package Silver Buffaloberry, American Plum, Elderberry, Golden Currant, Red-Osier Dogwood

To learn more or to print a tree order form visit: www.cpnrd.org/conservation/trees-weed-barrier

Your CPNRD Contact: Kelly Cole 308-395-7134 | cole@cpnrd.org

Important Dates

January 1	Nitrogen certification test due
February 6	Rain Water Basin Joint Venture Info Seminar
February 11	CPNRD's Water Programs Update - Grand Island
March 1	Transfer applications for irrigation due
March 31	Crop Report, water and soil samples due
April 1	Tree & shrub orders due
May 13	Nebraska Children's Groundwater Festival
June 1	Chemigation renewal permits due
June 15	CPNRD-Ron Bishop scholarship applications due

Follow Central Platte NRD



Transfer Applications Due March 1st If you plan to irrigate acres that aren't certified with CPNRD, you must offset the new acres by applying for and completing a transfer request prior to the new acres being irrigated. Producers who fail to obtain an approved transfer are subject to penalties.

Purchasing New Land? Check the certified irrigated acres of the property before making any buying decisions.

Your CPNRD Contacts: Luke 308-395-7672 | luke@cpnrd.org or Angela 308-395-7595 | warner@cpnrd.org

Board of Directors

Subdistrict At-Large Keith Ostermeier, Grand Island (Secretary)

1	Jay Richeson, Gothenburg	Brian Keiser, Gothenburg
2	Dwayne Margritz, Lexington	Tom Downey, Lexington
3	Marvion Reichert, Elm Creek (Treasurer)	Steve Sheen, Kearney
4	Lon Bohn, Gibbon	Ryan Kegley, Kearney
5	Deb VanMatre, Gibbon	Mike Wilkens, Gibbon
6	Jerry Milner, Grand Island	Mick Reynolds, Wood River
7	John Stoltenberg, Cairo	Ed Stoltenberg, Cairo
8	Todd Arends, Grand Island	Kevin Werner, Grand Island
9	Ed Kyes, Central City	Doug Reeves, Central City
10	Chuck Maser, Grand Island	Barry Obermiller, Grand Island

Staff

General Manager: Lyndon Vogt

Assistant Manager: Jesse Mintken

Administrative Assistant: Kelly Cole

Agronomist: Collin Quandt

Communications Assistant: Brody Vorderstrasse

Cozad Ditch Manager: Michael Schmeeckle

Cozad Ditch Rider: Open

GIS Coordinator: Angela Warner

GIS Image Analyst: Luke Zakrzewski

Hydrologist: Brandi Flyr

Information/Education Specialist: Marcia Lee

Natural Resources Technician: Devin Hingst

Precision Conservation Specialist: Darren Cudaback

Prescribed Fire Planning Specialist: Nelson Winkel

Projects Assistant: Tom Backer

Range Management Specialist: David Carr

Resources Conservationist: Bill Hiatt

Resources Conservationist: Shane Max

Office Assistant/CPNRD: Courtney Olson

Office Assistant/NRCS-Grand Island: Lexie Zubia

Office Assistant/NRCS-Central City: Kyla Friedrichsen

Office Assistant/NRCS-Lexington: Lisa Kennicutt

Office Assistant/NRCS-Kearney: Shelly Lippincott

Office Assistant/Thirty Mile Irrigation District: Marci Ostergard

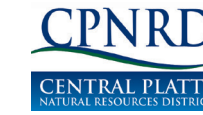
Thirty Mile Irrigation District Manager: Jim Harris

Thirty Mile Irrigation District Technician: Mike Ostergard

UNL/CPNRD Demo Project Coordinator: Dean Krull

Water Quality Specialist: Tricia Dudley

Water Resources Technician: Courtney Widup



IN PERSPECTIVE

Volume 29 No. 6
January 2025

Central Platte NRD Newsletter

215 Kaufman Ave Grand Island NE (308) 385-6282 cpnrd.org

Register Now for the Annual Water Programs Update!

Join us on Tuesday, February 11th for an engaging, free day-long event to explore innovative irrigation strategies and discuss critical water quality and quantity issues affecting our communities. 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM | Bosselman Enterprises, 1607 South Locust Street in Grand Island. You'll hear from leading experts, including:

- **Dr. Richard Ferguson** will unveil UNL's new nutrient recommendations.
- **Dr. Jesse Bell-UNMC**, will present research on health and cancer concerns linked to elevated nitrates in drinking water.
- **Don Blankenau-BWJ Law Group**, will explain drainage law and landowner responsibilities.
- **Mike Moritz-National Weather Service**, will share his 2025 weather outlook.

NRD staff will also provide updates on key topics including nitrogen management phase areas, groundwater level comparisons, fertigation trial results and cost-share programs.

Why Attend?

CPNRD General Manager Lyndon Vogt explained, "We started this Annual Water Programs Update in 2015 to provide producers and the public an opportunity to learn from leading experts and connect with water professionals."

Each year, the event is held in a different location within the District to address water issues that are most relevant to that specific area. This ensures that attendees gain valuable insights and information in their community.

Credits & Certification Available

- Earn **continuing education credits** for water well contractor licenses.
- Satisfy the **nitrogen management certification test requirement**.

No cost to register! Enjoy a free catered lunch. RSVP by **February 4th**

Don't miss this opportunity to stay informed and engaged on critical water topics! For a full schedule visit www.cpnrd.org/about/events



In This Edition

- **UNL NebGuide: New Recommendations for Irrigated Corn**
- **Try Sensor-Based Nitrogen Management**
- **Annual Water Use Reports**
- **Board & Staff Service Recognition**
- **Attend Spring Workshops: Rain Water Basin Joint Venture & Rx Fire**
- **Protect Your Water Rights: Well Registration**
- **Crop Report & Nitrogen Certification Tests**
- **Get Ready for Spring Planting: Order Tree Seedlings Today**
- **Transfer Applications Due March 1**
- **Important Dates**

UNL NebGuide: New Recommendations for Irrigated Corn

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) has released an updated NebGuide, *In-Season Nitrogen Management for Irrigated Corn*, recommending a shift to sensor-based, in-season nitrogen (N) management. This approach is shown to improve profitability and nitrogen use efficiency (NUE) significantly.

Coauthored by Dr. Richard Ferguson, the guide replaces fertilizer nitrogen practices used for over 50 years. Below are the key recommendations and insights from this updated resource.

Key Recommendations:

- 1. Avoid Pre-Season Applications:**
Fall nitrogen applications and large spring pre-plant applications are no longer recommended for irrigated corn. The closer N fertilizer is applied to crop use, the more efficiently it will be used by the crop.
- 2. Adopt In-Season Applications:**
Apply 60% or more of total fertilizer N during the growing season, using either fertigation (applying fertilizer through irrigation systems) or a high-clearance applicator. This method maximizes nitrogen use efficiency and profitability.
- 3. Base Rate at Planting:**
Apply an initial base rate of 50–100 lbs of nitrogen per acre at or near planting. Use of enhanced efficiency fertilizer with inhibitor is encouraged.
- 4. Target Growth Stages for Maximum Effectiveness:**
Apply the majority of nitrogen between the V8 and R2 growth stages, when the crop's nitrogen uptake is highest.
- 5. Soil Health Benefits:**
Implementing in-season applications minimizes nitrogen losses to the environment, helping reduce the ecological impact of corn production.

Insights into Nitrogen Uptake and Fertigation

The NebGuide highlights typical nitrogen uptake trends for corn, backed by research from 1965 to 2021. It explains how fertigation enables growers to efficiently manage nitrogen delivery using their irrigation system. With a fertilizer injection pump and storage tank, growers can apply nitrogen multiple times throughout the season based on the crop's needs. N application using a high clearance applicator and active crop canopy sensors should occur between V8 and V12 growth stages.

Satellite-Based Fertigation

Fertigation using satellite imagery uses reflectance data to determine rate and timing within specific field sections between V8 and R2 growth stages aligning with the crop's peak nitrogen uptake period for greater precision. If sensor data is unavailable, fertigation during these growth stages should follow the UNL Corn N Calculator recommendations.

Early-Season Fertigation Adjustments

The guide emphasizes the need to fertigate earlier in the season than water requirements may dictate. Growers should anticipate this and prepare to apply small irrigation volumes (0.25–0.5 inches per acre) to ensure nitrogen application aligns with the crop's needs.

NebGuide Summary

UNL's newest NebGuide equips irrigated corn growers with modern, research-backed nitrogen management strategies. By transitioning to in-season applications and leveraging tools like fertigation and satellite technology, growers can improve yields, increase nitrogen use efficiency and contribute to sustainable agricultural practices.

Check out the UNL NebGuide on CPNRD's website at: www.cpnrd.org/water-resources/groundwater-quality

Annual Water Use Activities

Central Platte NRD oversees various water use activities throughout the year to better balance and sustain water resources including certified irrigated acres, transfers, well permits and water banking initiatives. Each year, CPNRD submits a report detailing these activities to the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources and other NRDs in the Platte Basin to incorporate in the Platte Basin annual summary.

In 2023, CPNRD had a total of 1,018,290 irrigated acres, categorized as follows:

- 936,264 groundwater acres
- 5,238 surface water acres
- 76,788 co-mingled acres (groundwater and surface water)

From 2010 to 2023, the overall base of irrigated acres increased by 1,655 acres. The NRD approved 107 water use transfers, which included 792 new irrigated acres and the retirement of 686 groundwater acres. The transfers ensured no net increase in stream depletion, as calculated by the CIR offset tool developed from COHYST.

The annual water report provides insights into water usage across the district and the Platte Basin, ensuring an adequate groundwater supply for residents, agriculture and industry. The 2023 Water Use Activities Report is available on CPNRD's website at www.cpnrd.org/about/management-plans/

Your CPNRD Contact: Jesse Mintken 308-395-7567 | mintken@cpnrd.org

Board and Staff Service Recognition

Annual service recognition awards are given to outgoing Board members, as well as to Board members and staff who have dedicated 20, 25, 30, 35, or more years to the Central Platte NRD. Listed below are the individuals honored ahead of the December Board meeting.

OUTGOING BOARD MEMBER

Jerry Wiese – Jerry was elected to Subdistrict 7 in 2001. Over the past 24 years, Jerry has been an active member of the Eastern Projects, Programs, Water Resources, Variance/Appeals, Budget and Executive committees. He served as voting delegate multiple years at the NARD Legislative Conference and held the position of Treasurer from 2007 to 2011. Jerry was elected Vice-Chairman of the Board in 2021. Thank you for your service Jerry!

STAFF RECOGNITION

Tom Backer- 40 Years Since 1984, Tom has been the lead maintenance person for the NRD office and numerous projects, including the Upper Prairie/Silver/Moores, Kearney Northeast, Wood River Floodway and flood control dams. His duties include mowing, spraying, and assisting with the Prescribed Fire Program. Tom has also managed the tree planting program for 40 years and the weed barrier program for 33 years.

Marcia Lee- 25 Years Marcia has dedicated 25 years to serving the district, overseeing public and media relations, education and wellness programs. She collaborates with staff to prepare the monthly board agenda, creates/writes print publications including the *In Perspective Newsletter*, social media posts, and maintains CPNRD's website. Marcia organizes public events, activities and educational outreach for K-12 schools in the District and for the Groundwater Guardian Team. Marcia also coordinates presenters and sponsors for the Nebraska Children's Groundwater Festival.

David Carr- 20 Years David has served as CPNRD's Range Management Specialist and Safety Program Coordinator for two decades. Initially hired to collaborate with private landowners and organizations to implement prescribed burns for rangeland and habitat restoration, his role has evolved to focus on organizing fire training sessions, giving high school presentations on native prairies and prescribed fire, and tasks like static water level monitoring, chemigation inspections, and water sampling. He oversees conservation grant programs for fire and rangeland management.



2024 service recognition awards were presented to the following honorees (from left): Jerry Wiese- Outgoing Director, Marcia Lee- 25 years, David Carr - 20 years, Tom Backer- 40 years

Attend Spring Workshops Hosted by Partner Agencies

RAIN WATER BASIN JOINT VENTURE INFORMATIONAL SEMINAR

Mark your calendars for the 2025 Rainwater Basin Joint Venture Informational Seminar, happening on February 6 from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Ramada by Wyndham in Grand Island. This full-day event will feature insightful presentations from conservation organizations across Nebraska, covering topics such as:

- Habitat management on private and public lands
- Eastern red cedar removal
- Carbon and greenhouse gas emissions
- GIS projects
- Landowner perspectives on conservation

The seminar will also include a dynamic panel discussion on groundwater quality and nitrate management.

Cost: Free for landowners! **Registration Deadline:** January 30 (to ensure meals and materials)

Don't miss this opportunity to connect, learn and contribute to conservation efforts in Nebraska.

Register now at: <https://www.rwbjv.org/education-outreach/info-seminars/>

PRESCRIBED FIRE WORKSHOPS

California's recent devastating wildfires, as well as last year's Betty's Way Fire in Nebraska that burned more than 70,000 acres northeast of North Platte, are a stark reminder of the importance of proactive land management. One of the most effective tools for reducing wildfire risk is prescribed fire—a practice that has proven to protect landscapes while improving their health and productivity.

Here in Nebraska, wildfires may not grab national headlines, but the risks are real. Heavy fuel buildup, invasive species like Eastern Redcedar, and extreme drought conditions can quickly turn into a wildfire hazard. Nebraska landowners have the opportunity to stay ahead of the curve by adopting prescribed burns as part of their land management strategy. Prescribed burns, especially when paired with proper grazing practices, help clear out dead vegetation and invasive plants, significantly reducing the risk of uncontrollable wildfires. But the benefits go beyond safety such as drought resilience, wildlife diversity, economic productivity from grazing and erosion control.

Learn How to Improve Your Land

Nebraska's network of conservation agencies is offering Basic Prescribed Fire Workshops from January to May. These workshops provide landowners with the knowledge and confidence needed to plan and conduct safe and effective prescribed burns.

Cost: \$10 Includes training materials and a meal

Locations: Statewide in-person workshops and online options available



Protect Your Water Rights: Are Your Wells Registered Under Your Name?

Did you know that Nebraska law requires all water wells to be registered with the State? Whether you're installing a new well or taking ownership of an existing one, it's the well owner's responsibility to ensure proper registration. Registering your well is more than just meeting a legal requirement—it's essential for protecting your water rights. Landowners should confirm that their wells are properly registered under their name.

Well registration plays a crucial role in managing Nebraska's water resources. Natural Resources Districts (NRDs) use groundwater well registration data to monitor groundwater usage, address groundwater declines, evaluate groundwater management areas and implement strategies to protect water resources. Accurate well registration ensures that NRDs can make informed decisions to sustain water availability.

Link to registered well data <https://dnr.nebraska.gov/data/groundwater-data>

Link to well registration and ownership update <https://dnr.nebraska.gov/groundwater/forms>