



# Upper Loup Scoop

Upper Loup NRD

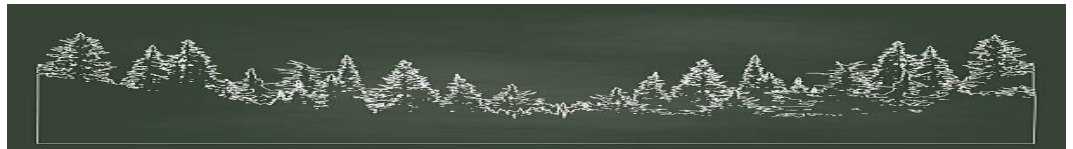
January 2025

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## Tree Planning -Funds Are Still Available

The Upper Loup Natural Resource District continues to sell and plant trees and shrubs for property owners across the district. If you are interested in planting trees in the spring, now is a good time to be making those plans. Our cost share programs are distributed on a first come, first serve basis. There are cost-share programs on hand plant orders and on machine plant orders. The cost share program for hand planted trees requires ordering a minimum of 100 trees or shrubs and the machine plant program requires a minimum of 200 trees. There is also cost share funds available for fabric mulch placement and drip line irrigation installation. Windbreaks provide many benefits, such as: protection for livestock, crops, wildlife and your home. Brent McIntosh is the resource technician that is in charge of our tree programs. If you would like assistance in filling out cost share program forms, deciding what tree species will work best for your needs or drafting a plan for planting, please contact him at the office.



## Local Working Group Meeting

The Local Working Group (LWG) is a group of people with agricultural and natural resource interests. They provide advice on the priorities for many U.S. Department of Agriculture conservation programs. The meeting will be held at the Upper Loup NRD in the Thedford, on Thursday, February 13th, at 2 pm CST. The public is encouraged to attend and express their thoughts and concerns about our natural resources. The LWG advises the NRCS state conservationist on how to conserve programs like the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) to be effectively used in the area.

## New Sub-District 2 Board Representative

Jill Coble is a Stay At Home Mom, or in professional language, an "Executive Assistant". She has her Bachelor's degree in Human Development with an emphasis on Family Science from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. She began managing her family's farm in Eastern Nebraska in 1999. She has lived with her husband, Matt Coble on a ranch in Cherry County since 2001. They have three children; Samuel, Callie and Jack. They consider the Mullen community home. In Jill's spare time she enjoys reading and spending time with family and friends. Keeping up with events on both sides of the state and their potential impacts to each areas agricultural producers is what lead to her interest in serving on the NRD board. She is very honored to help represent Sub-District 2.



## Calendar of Events

### January

|                          |    |
|--------------------------|----|
| New Years Day            |    |
| (Office Closed)          | 1  |
| Board Meeting @ 3pm CST  | 9  |
| Martin Luther King Day   | 20 |
| (Office Closed)          |    |
| Prescribed Fire Workshop |    |
| @ 9 am to 3pm CST        | 29 |

### February

|                             |    |
|-----------------------------|----|
| Local Working Group Meeting |    |
| @2 pm CST                   | 13 |
| Board Meeting @3 pm CST     | 13 |
| President's Day             |    |
| (Office Closed)             | 17 |

### March

|                          |    |
|--------------------------|----|
| Board Meeting @ 3 pm CST | 13 |
|--------------------------|----|

## Needing Volunteers for our NeRain Program

The NeRain program records and monitors precipitation trends across the state. The program is funded by the Nebraska Environmental Trust and the information gathered is used for decision making in the agriculture industry, home water use, utility providers, insurance companies, resource managers and educators. If you are interested in volunteering to report rainfall on a daily basis, you will receive a high-quality precision rain gauge from the ULNRD, at no cost. You can report the information collected to a website, phone app or report it to our office. Please contact Matt, at the ULNRD office, for more information or to sign up to become a volunteer at (308)645-2250.



## Chemigation and Permit Training



Chemigation is the practice of applying agrichemicals through an irrigation distribution system. Each year several irrigators across the Upper Loup NRD district use chemigation to apply fertilizers and pesticides to their fields. All chemigation systems must be fitted with the proper safety valves and equipment to prevent potential risks to our natural resources and public safety. The equipment must be inspected by the Upper Loup NRD prior to use to assure functionality and compliance. State law also requires the irrigator to obtain a chemigation permit from their local NRD on an annual basis. Permit fees are due on June 1st, before 4p.m.(CST) Permit fees are: Renewal Permit is \$30 and New Permit is \$60. If you plan to apply chemicals, you must attend one of the courses and pass a written exam. Certification is good for four years. Training dates and locations for 2025 will be announced at a later date. Please watch the newspaper or visit our website for any updates.

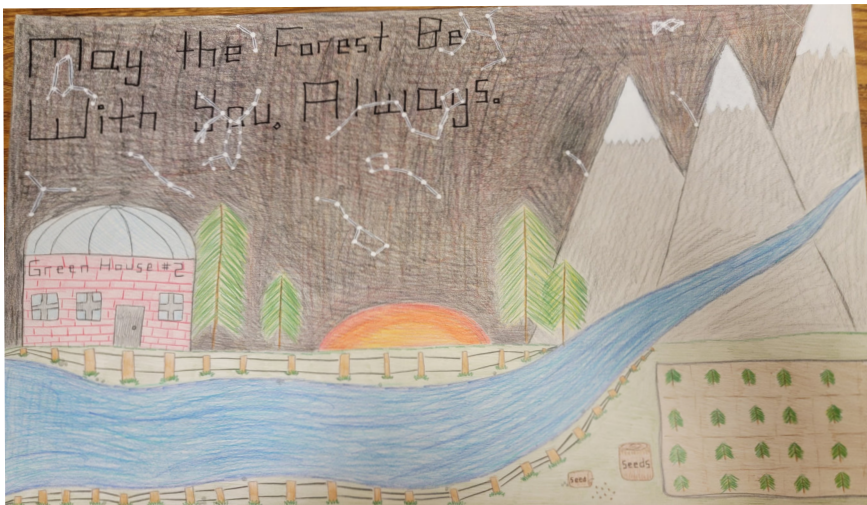
## NACD Poster Contest State Winners

Five students take state in the conservation poster contest, students winning the state competition include:

- K-1: Charlotte Rardon, Norfolk, Nebraska (Lower Elkhorn NRD)
- 2-3: Elise Ekberg, Norfolk, Nebraska (Lower Elkhorn NRD)
- 4-6: Connor Pojar, Scribner, Nebraska (Lower Elkhorn NRD)
- 7-9: Kiersten Hans, Wynot, Nebraska (Lewis & Clark NRD)
- **10-12: Rylyn Moody, Purdum, Nebraska (Upper Loup NRD)**

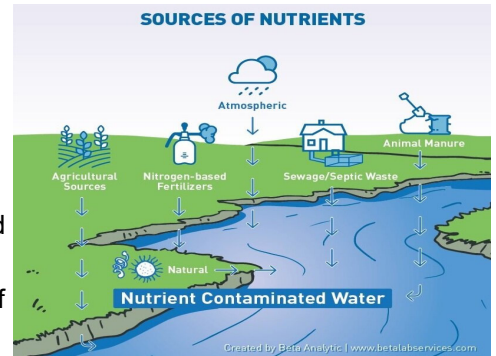


The state winners will receive a \$25 prize and go on to compete in the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) poster contest for the chance to win \$200. The national winners will be selected at the NACD annual conference in February.



## Monitoring Program for Domestic Wells

Upper Loup NRD implemented a domestic well water quality monitoring program in 2008. All registered domestic wells or non-registered domestic well (upon request) are tested on a five year rotation. Each well is tested for Nitrate-nitrogen content and can also be tested for bacteria upon request. Sub-District 4, which includes all of Blaine County, the southern portion of Brown County and Thomas County east of highway 83, was tested this past summer. There were 130 wells tested with nitrate results ranging from 0-2.9 mg/L, with the average of 1.33 mg/L. The results were well below the maximum contaminant level of 10 mg/L. In Nebraska about 95 percent of rural residents get their household water supply from privot or domestic wells. If these wells are not properly protected, they are at risk of being contaminated. Potential contaminate sources include septic tanks, animal waste, pesticides, fertilizers, and/or fuel. Potential for contamination in our area is high due to the sandy soil. The only way to know if you have nitrates or bacteria present is through testing, because both contaminates are odorless, colorless and tasteless. The Upper Loup NRD recommend testing on all domestic wells every 5 years. We are scheduled to test sub-district 5, which includes all of Logan County and eastern third of McPherson County, this summer.



## Hats Off to District Recyclers!!

Upper Loup constituents continue to do their part in protecting our natural resources by recycling! The NRD has diverted over 100 tons of materials from our landfills in the past few years! We accept plastics, that have a triangle with a number 1-7 on them. Flexible plastics and styrofoam need to be collected in the “hefty bags”, available at the NRD office. We also accept aluminum, tin, paper, cardboard, glass, and electronics. Please remember to rinse out your recyclables that have any food residue before placing them in the trailers. Also, breakdown cardboard boxes and empty plastic/tin/aluminum recyclables out of plastic bags. Please do not leave any items on the ground in front of the trailers or around the totes.



## Gopher Bait is Back

Individuals must have a current pesticide certification number to purchase bait. The ULNRD has 50 pound bags of mixed grain gopher/rodent bait (0.05% Strychnine) available for sale here at the office. \$225 per bag. We also have an Elston gopher machine available for rent. \$15.83/day.

## Notary Services

Our administrative secretary, Jamie Green, is certified to provide any notary services you may need. Just call or stop by into our office.

## Static Water Level Readings

Connie and Matt will be out this spring (starting in March) conducting annual static water level checks on area wells.

## Learning Center

ULNRD's Learning center is available for use! The center is free to non-profits and schools, and offered for private events for a donation. Call our office to reserve.

## Subscribe to our E-Newsletter

Our quarterly newsletter, The Upper Loup Scoop, has transitioned into being available online only. If you would like the newsletter to be sent to you please visit our website to subscribe or call our office with your email address to be added to the subscription list. You can view all of our past newsletters by visiting our website as well.

## Importance of Flowmeters and Keeping Them Properly Maintained

Flow meters play a very important role, as they provide accurate data on water usage, allowing the Natural Resource Districts to effectively manage groundwater resources. The data collected helps the producers to identify potential water waste, monitor the efficiency of the irrigation wells and apply proper amounts of water based on crops planted. To make wise decisions, based on the data collected each year, it is important to keep the flow meters in proper working order. The data collected helps in providing a “history” of needed water use for current irrigators and is used in statewide hydrologic models. This data helps us protect the irrigation acres already certified. Landowners and operators are responsible for ensuring that flowmeters are fully functional and properly maintained. Please contact Matt, at 308-645-2250, if you have any questions about maintaining your flow meters. We also noticed a lot of the meters are missing the rubber boot cover this year and we have some in stock. We are offering them to you at no charge (a \$50 value) to help protect your flow meters. The covers can be picked up here at the office.

### ULNRD Staff

Anna Baum  
General Manager  
Connie Knoll  
Information & Education  
Coordinator,  
Resources Technician  
Brent McIntosh  
Resources Technician  
Matt Schatz  
Resources Technician  
Jamie Green  
Administrative Secretary  
Spud Rowley  
Recycling Coordinator  
Pam Petersen  
Field Office Secretary

### ULNRD Board of Directors

Sub-District 1  
David Vinton  
Jais Connealy  
Sub-District 2  
Jill Coble  
John Krave  
Sub-District 3  
Chris Higgins  
Miles Maseberg  
Sub-District 4  
Tony Ruhter  
Max Fay  
Sub-District 5  
Tom Johnson  
Richard Burnside  
At Large  
Patrick Wright

# Prescribed Fire Workshop

**Learn the basics of applying prescribed fire to the landscape!**  
*For landowners, resource professionals, volunteer fire departments, and others interested in burning.*  
*No prior burn experience is necessary to participate.*

**JANUARY 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025**  
**9AM-3PM CST**

**Upper Loup NRD**  
**39252 Highway 2**  
**Theadford, Nebraska**

**Featuring**

- Fire Behavior
- Uses and Benefits
- Smoke Management
- Equipment and Safety
- Prescribed Burn Associations

**Fire Benefits**

- Reduce Cedar Trees
- Habitat Improvement
- Pasture Health
- Forage Production
- CRP Management

**This event is open to the public! Register at**  
**www.nebraskapf.com or contact Ryan Lodge**  
**308-750-1215 / ryan.lodge@usda.gov**  
**\$10 Fee – Includes catered lunch and workshop materials**

