

From: Megan Grimes, NARD Public Relations Director
RE: Natural Resources Districts Weekly News Update
Date: Jan. 17, 2025

Upcoming Workshops/Conferences /Webinars

All Year | Webinar – Nebraska Forest Service Tree Planting and Care 101 Webinar Series. **Read more:** <https://nfs.unl.edu/nfs-tree-planting-and-care-101-webinar-series/>

January 2025 | Statewide – Beginning Jan. 8, the 2025 Nebraska Crop Production Clinics will feature live presentations and present research updates and information tailored to regional crop issues and grower interests. The programs will be held on eight days throughout January, with the final clinic offered on Jan. 28. **Read more:** <https://ianrnews.unl.edu/2025-crop-production-clinics-begin-jan-8>

Now through Feb. 18, 2025 | Statewide – Prescribed fire workshops will be hosted across Nebraska on various dates between Jan. 15 and Feb. 18. **Learn more:** https://nebraskapf.com/calendar-2/cat_ids~253/

Now through March 13, 2025 | Webinars – The Nebraska Statewide Arboretum will be hosting Winter Plant Talks starting Jan. 16 and continuing to March. Topics include native plants and trees. **Learn more:** <https://plantnebraska.org/resources-events/events/plant-talks.html>

Jan. 28-29, 2025 | Lincoln, NE – NRD Legislative Conference. **Register here:** <https://www.nrdnet.org/events/01-28-2025/nrds-2025-legislative-conference>

Jan. 29, 2025 | Hastings, NE – 2025 Soil Health Conference-Central. **Read more:** <https://cropwatch.unl.edu/soil-health-program/events>

Jan. 29, 2025 | Lincoln, NE & Webinars – The Nebraska Water Center presents the Spring Water Seminar series starting in January. The 2025 seminars dates are January 29, February 12, February 26, March 12, April 2, April 16, and April 23. **Learn more:** <https://watercenter.unl.edu/news/nebraska-water-center-seminars-feature-innovations-driving-safe-and-secure-water/>

Feb. 6, 2025 | Grand Island, NE – 2025 Rainwater Basin Joint Venture Informational Seminar includes discussions on private land projects, public land projects, and groundwater quality.” **Learn more:** https://host.nxt.blackbaud.com/registration-form/?formId=d10e089f-36f8-4e39-8e20-c411eca9627e&envId=p-pJ2_SSaH40-8ZQdXmSumnw&zone=usa

Feb. 11, 2025 | Grand Island, NE – Central Platte NRD to host annual Water Programs. **Learn more:** <https://www.nrdnet.org/news/12-18-2024/central-platte-nrd-host-annual-water-programs-update-feb-11>

Feb. 11, 2025 | West Point, NE – 2025 Soil Health Conference-Eastern. **Read more:** <https://cropwatch.unl.edu/soil-health-program/events>

Feb. 9-12, 2025 | Salt Lake City, UT – Details on the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Annual Meeting can be found here: <https://www.nacdnet.org/news-and-events/annual-meeting/>

Feb. 19, 2025 | Gering, NE – North Platte NRD will host their second annual Ag Symposium. **Learn more:** <https://www.nrdnet.org/news/12-17-2024/north-platte-nrd-hosts-second-annual-ag-symposium>

Feb. 24-27, 2025 | Lincoln, NE – FEMA L0273: Managing Floodplain Development Through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). FREE 4-day course presented bi-annually by the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources. **Learn more:** <https://dnr.nebraska.gov/floodplain/training-and-workshops>

Feb. 26-27, 2025 | Omaha, NE – The Nebraska Environmental Education Conference hosted by NACEE will be at Mahoney State Park. **Details here:** <https://www.nacee.org/conference>

April 28-May 2, 2025 | Lincoln, NE – Water for Food Global Conference “A Resilient Future: Water and Food for All. **Learn more:** <https://news.unl.edu/newsrooms/today/article/water-for-food-institute-hosting-global-conference-in-april-2025/>

Legislature Related News

109th Legislature, First Session – The following articles are related to the Unicameral:

- [Gov. Pillen’s State of the State Address](#)
- Lincoln Journal Star reports, “[Report: New Nebraska property tax law mostly working, but needs small fixes.](#)”
- Farm Progress reports, “[What farmers can expect from Nebraska’s unicameral session. Property tax relief remains one of the top challenges facing the 109th Nebraska Legislature.](#)”
- Nebraska Examiner reports, “[The ‘GOAT’: Lawmakers unveil plan to update Nebraska regulations, cut red tape. ‘The senators introducing legislation in this package have decided not to wait on an advisory body to make recommendations and instead are taking the ‘goat’ by the horns,’ said Laura Ebke, senior policy fellow at the Platte Institute.](#)”
- Nebraska Public Media reports, “[Ending death penalty, rule changes among legislative proposals.](#)”
- Unicameral Update reports, “[Government spending, school funding and winner-take-all top governor’s priority list.](#)”

- Omaha World-Herald reports, "[University of Nebraska president says governor's budget would harm growth, state's economy.](#)"
- Omaha World-Herald reports, "[Nebraska Gov. Jim Pillen proposes less state spending, no new tax relief in State of the State.](#)"
- Nebraska Public Media reports, "[Pillen proposes budget tightening in State of State speech.](#)"
- Nebraska Examiner reports, "[Gov. Pillen proposes his answer to \\$432 million projected budget shortfall.](#)"
- Nebraska Examiner reports, "[Gov. Pillen touts 'second shot at life,' need to shrink spending in State of State speech.](#)"
- Lincoln Journal Star reports, "[Nebraska Gov. Jim Pillen outlines conservative budget, social policies in speech to lawmakers.](#)"
- News Channel Nebraska reports, "[Governor lists DNR merger among 'critical' bills for agriculture.](#)"
- NTV News reports, "[Pillen, lawmakers take aim at lab-grown meat, propose NDEE-DNR merger.](#)"
- Omaha World-Herald reports, "[Nebraska Gov. Jim Pillen targets lab-grown meat in 2025 legislation.](#)"
- Nebraska Examiner reports, "[Pillen, some Nebraska lawmakers seek to banish lab-grown meat from shelves.](#)"
- Nebraska Public Media reports, "[Lab-grown meat, post-disaster looting among topics discussed by legislature.](#)"
- Gov. Pillen, "[Governor Pillen and Senators Introduce Legislation to Benefit Nebraska Agriculture.](#)"
- Nebraska Examiner reports, "[Time to tell hard truths about Nebraska state spending and finance.](#)"
- Nebraska Public Media reports, "[Senator introduces proposal to create Nebraska Office of Climate Action.](#)"
- Lincoln Journal Star reports, "[Nebraska lawmakers will consider changing rules to weaken filibuster.](#)"
- Nebraska Examiner reports, "[First-time homebuyer savings accounts, new sales taxes proposed by Nebraska senators.](#)"
- Nebraska Public Media reports, "[Legislature proposes rebalancing taxes, social media safety measures.](#)"

NRD & Conservation Related News

****NARD**** North Platte Post reports, “NRD Legislative Conference Brings Together Elected Leaders, Highlights Partnerships.” **Read more:** <https://northplattepost.com/posts/dafa987f-4e75-4672-9b66-4d2c1c21e4d9>

****Nemaha NRD**** Many Signals Communication reports, “Nemaha NRD Board approves policy changes.” **Read more:** <https://www.msnews.net/news/?nk=78828>

****Republican River Basin**** Colorado Sun reports, “Kansas looks on as farms retire thousands of acres in water-short northeastern Colorado. With the help of \$30M in state and federal funding, it has retired some 10,000 acres of irrigated farm lands, with another 7,000 acres contracted for dry up.” **Read more:** <https://coloradosun.com/2025/01/17/republican-river-compact-colorado-farmland-wells-retired/>

****Platte River Basin**** Lincoln Journal Star reports, “Lied Platte River Bridge in Cass County closed due to debris build-up.” **Read more:** https://journalstar.com/news/state-regional/lie-d-platte-river-bridge-in-cass-county-closed-due-to-debris-build-up/article_6f2987c6-d200-11ef-a794-3bdd92207640.html

****NDEE**** NDEE reports, “NDEE releases report on statewide Nitrate in Drinking Water Study.” **Read more:** <https://dee.nebraska.gov/news-events/press-releases/ndee-releases-report-statewide-nitrate-drinking-water-study>

****UNL**** The following articles are related to Mike Boehm stepping down at UNL:

- Nebraska Today reports, “[Boehm to step down as IANR leader.](#)”
- Lincoln Journal Star reports, “[Boehm to step down as UNL's ag leader after nearly a decade.](#)”
- IANR News reports, “[Boehm to Return to Faculty After Nearly a Decade at the Helm of IANR.](#)”

****State Government**** Nebraska Examiner reports, “Nebraska state employees union reaches tentative agreement.” **Read more:** <https://nebraskaexaminer.com/briefs/nebraska-state-employees-union-reaches-tentative-agreement/?emci=e2daa5df-54d0-ef11-88d0-0022482a9d92&emdi=e62e1afa-a5d1-ef11-88d0-0022482a9d92&ceid=388881>

****NACD**** NACD reports, “Working Lands Conservation Corps Partners Announce Request for Proposals for Host Organizations.” **Read more:** <https://www.nacdnet.org/newsroom/59313/>

****National Fish & Wildlife Foundation**** NFWF reports, “NFWF Announces \$14.7 Million in Grants to Bolster Regenerative Agriculture on Working Lands. Historic investment from Conservation Partners Program to improve soil health, water quality, carbon storage and wildlife habitat across 21 states.” **Read more:** <https://www.nfwf.org/media-center/press-releases/nfwf-announces-14-7-million-grants-bolster-regenerative-agriculture>

****Conservation**** Farm Progress reports, “Fewer acres and conservation practices ease burden on water. Ag Water Stewardship: Decreasing farmland acres plus implementing more conservation practices results in smaller farmland footprint.” **Read more:**

<https://www.farmprogress.com/commentary/fewer-acres-and-conservation-practices-ease-burden-on-water>

****Conservation**** Omaha World-Herald reports, “Conservation Nebraska will address how to reduce food waste on Saturday.” **Read more:** https://omaha.com/news/local/conservation-nebraska-will-address-how-to-reduce-food-waste-on-saturday/article_d7dba4a2-d2af-11ef-adb0-53b480624427.html

****Groundwater Quantity**** NPR reports, “Development is taking a toll on Florida's precious springs.” **Read more:** <https://www.npr.org/2025/01/17/nx-s1-5214642/florida-development-endangered-springs>

****Ice Jams**** KETV News reports, “Nebraska DNR and National Weather Service urge people to be aware of ice jams this winter. Local officials discuss the warning signs and what to do if you encounter ice jams this winter.” **Read more:** <https://www.ketv.com/article/nebraska-dnr-and-national-weather-service-urge-people-to-be-aware-of-ice-jams-this-winter/63399850>

****Floodplains**** KIOS Public Radio reports, “4% of Nebraskans Live in a Floodway or Floodplain, Are You One of Them? Jamie Reinke Explains How to Know.” **Read more:** <https://www.kios.org/live-and-local/2025-01-10/4-of-nebraskans-live-in-a-floodway-or-floodplain-are-you-one-of-them-jamie-reinke-explains-how-to-know>

****Drinking Water**** Newsweek reports, “Map Reveals US States with the Worst Drinking Water.” **Read more:** <https://www.newsweek.com/worst-drinking-water-map-usa-states-2013078>

****Aquifer**** Farm Progress reports, “Forage sorghum is next chapter in the aquifer story. Sorghum Focus: Conserve water and meet the needs of growing dairies with forage sorghum.” **Read more:** <https://www.farmprogress.com/sorghum/forage-sorghum-is-next-chapter-in-the-aquifer-story>

****Irrigation**** Irrigation Leader Magazine reports, “Leading Nebraska Water Attorney Lee Orton Assesses the State’s Success in Wise Water Resources Management.” **Read more:** <https://irrigationleadermagazine.com/volume-16-issue-1-january-ne/>

****Irrigation**** Farm Progress reports, “Can solar power-based irrigation tech improve efficiency? A Michigan State University researcher has received a \$394,600 grant from the Natural Resources Conservation Service to develop the technology.” **Read more:** <https://www.farmprogress.com/technology/can-solar-power-based-irrigation-tech-improve-efficiency->

****Soil Health**** Midwest Messenger reports, “Nebraska farm finds informed confidence that soil health is the future of farming.” **Read more:** https://agupdate.com/midwestmessenger/news/crop/nebraska-farm-finds-informed-confidence-that-soil-health-is-the-future-of-farming/article_c6fec492-cdfb-11ef-8a11-f73bcb06aac7.html

****Soil Health**** No-Till Farmer reports, “No-Till Highlights: Jan. 16, 2025.” **Read more:** <https://www.no-tillfarmer.com/articles/13972-no-till-highlights-jan-16-2024>

****Pollinators**** Nebraska Public Media reports, “The U.S. could protect monarch butterflies as a threatened species.” **Read more:** <https://nebraskapublicmedia.org/en/news/news-articles/the-us-could-protect-monarch-butterflies-as-a-threatened-species/>

****Forestry**** NebraskaLand reports, “Ode to Nebraska’s State Tree.” **Read more:** <https://magazine.outdoornebraska.gov/blogs/in-the-wild/ode-to-nebraskas-state-tree/>

****Recreation**** News Channel Nebraska reports, “Nebraska Game and Parks warns of ice safety after ATV incidents. The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is urging residents to exercise caution on frozen lakes and ponds after two incidents involving all-terrain vehicles breaking through the ice on Saturday in Nebraska.” **Read more:** <https://panhandle.newschannelnebraska.com/story/52158589/nebraska-game-and-parks-warns-of-ice-safety-after-atv-incidents>

****Land Acquisition**** DNT Progressive Farmer reports, “Iowa Lawmaker Eyes Minnesota Counties. GOP State Lawmakers in Iowa, Indiana Propose Annexing, Buying Neighboring Counties.” **Read more:** https://dtnpf.com/agriculture/web/ag/news/article/2025/01/15/gop-state-lawmakers-iowa-indiana?itm_source=parsely-api

****Rural Poll**** Nebraska Today reports, “Most rural Nebraskans are positive about their communities, poll shows.” **Read more:** <https://news.unl.edu/article/most-rural-nebraskans-are-positive-about-their-communities-poll-shows>

****Low Carbon Fuel**** Lincoln Journal Star reports, “Local View: Carbon, Corn and Cash.” **Read more:** https://journalstar.com/opinion/columnists/local-view-carbon-corn-and-cash/article_76ea69dc-d1cc-11ef-acbd-6b794d6cda82.html?fbclid=IwY2xjawH3l05leHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHd00X4F5l4fCVt0Rd3jR5ycTn4dpwN6y0a5lxmz5aUFuELFgw2oZYVYQmQ_aem_fxCsuoTrKDs1eUBQRhsv4w

****Low Carbon Fuel**** Progressive Farmer reports, “Ethanol Blog: Green Plains Announces Progress on Carbon Capture Project in Nebraska (Central City, Wood River & York).” **Read more:** <https://www.dtnpf.com/agriculture/web/ag/blogs/ethanol-blog/blog-post/2025/01/16/green-plains-announces-progress>

****Agriculture**** Harvest Public Media reports, “Federal aid for farmers aims to offset losses on farms. Will it help?” **Read more:** <https://www.kcur.org/news/2025-01-15/federal-payments-farms-income-weather>

****Agriculture**** Farm Progress reports, “Treasury Department announces new clean fuel tax credit guidance. Latest 45Z information leaves many questions unanswered.” **Read more:** <https://www.farmprogress.com/farm-policy/treasury-department-announces-new-clean-fuel-tax-credit-guidance>

****Agriculture**** NTV News reports, “Ranchers call for balanced immigration reform to meet Nebraska's ag labor needs.” **Read more:** <https://nebraska.tv/news/local/ranchers-call-for-balanced-immigration-reform-to-meet-nebraskas-ag-labor-needs#>

****Agriculture**** Lincoln Journal Star reports, “Farm and Food: 2025 rural economy will be 'squeezed, hobbled, slowed,' CoBank says.” **Read more:** https://journalstar.com/agriculture/farm-and-food-2025-rural-economy-will-be-squeezed-hobbled-slowed-cobank-says/article_7b8f8540-cdf7-11ef-ad89-9fb4879809fe.html

****Agriculture**** Rural Radio Network reports, “55 Nebraska farms, businesses to receive over \$10.2 million for renewable energy projects.” **Read more:** <https://ruralradio.com/kbear/news/55-nebraska-farms-businesses-to-receive-over-10-2-million-for-renewable-energy-projects/>

****Agriculture**** Agriculture Dive reports, “Farmland values increase despite income declines. Farmers National Company said its agricultural listings are down 25% compared to recent years, showing strong demand for available farmland.” **Read more:** https://www.agriculturedive.com/news/farmland-values-increase-despite-income-declines-FNC/736648/?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Newsletter%20Weekly%20Roundup:%20Agriculture%20Dive:%20Daily%20Dive%2001-11-2025&utm_term=Agriculture%20Dive%20Weekender

****Farm Bill**** Farm Progress reports, “When will farmers get a new Farm Bill?” **Read more:** <https://www.farmprogress.com/farm-policy/when-will-farmers-get-a-new-farm-bill->

****Farm Bill**** UNL Center for Ag Profitability reports, “How to Navigate the Latest Federal Farm Relief Package.” **Read more:** <https://cap.unl.edu/news/how-navigate-latest-federal-farm-relief-package-lubben-250113/>

****Bird Flu**** Lincoln Journal Star reports, “Bird flu found in Lincoln wastewater; cause unknown.” **Read more:** https://journalstar.com/news/local/government-politics/bird-flu-found-in-lincoln-wastewater-cause-unknown/article_f4201750-d459-11ef-a795-6b6c77dfa4d9.html?utm_source=journalstar.com&utm_campaign=news-alerts&utm_medium=cio&lctg=d4f30701d618878302&tn_email_eh1=540eb6386911d299e5a1fa159f52e2b88d8be85701fbd63156669a4697b77d63

****Hemp**** NPR reports, “Despite strict laws, Texas is awash in intoxicating cannabis.” **Read more:** <https://www.npr.org/2025/01/10/nx-s1-5220336/despite-strict-laws-texas-is-awash-in-intoxicating-cannabis>

****Energy**** NPR reports, “U.S. electricity demand is set to explode. That will make it harder to cut climate pollution.” **Read more:** <https://www.npr.org/2025/01/16/nx-s1-5251454/electricity-demand-data-centers-climate-change-natural-gas-fossil-fuel>

****Alternative Energy**** Lincoln Journal Star reports, “Opponents ask Lancaster County to reject special permit for huge solar farm.” **Read more:** https://journalstar.com/news/local/government-politics/opponents-ask-lancaster-county-to-reject-special-permit-for-huge-solar-farm/article_60536514-d2e1-11ef-aafd-fb97a35405e3.html?utm_source=journalstar.com&utm_campaign=news-alerts&utm_medium=cio&utm_term=01d618878302&utm_email=eh1=540eb6386911d299e5a1fa159f52e2b88d8be85701fbd63156669a4697b77d63

****Disaster Aid**** Nebraska Examiner reports, “U.S. House speaker pitches conditions on disaster aid, upending long-standing practice.” **Read more:** <https://nebraskaexaminer.com/2025/01/14/dc/u-s-house-speaker-pitches-conditions-on-disaster-aid-upending-long-standing-practice/?emci=c96c417e-b0d2-ef11-88d0-0022482a9d92&emdi=f0b07542-38d3-ef11-88d0-0022482a9d92&ceid=388881>

****Climate Change**** Omaha World-Herald reports, “Nebraska notched second warmest year on record in 2024, based on average temperatures.” **Read more:** https://omaha.com/news/state-regional/weather/nebraska-notched-second-warmest-year-on-record-in-2024-based-on-average-temperatures/article_e63fbf1e-d1e3-11ef-aa4c-ff6784c2faee.html

****Climate Change**** NPR reports, “Weird weather isn't always because of climate change — but sometimes it is.” **Read more:** <https://www.npr.org/2025/01/13/nx-s1-5251500/weird-weather-isnt-always-because-of-climate-change-but-sometimes-it-is>

****Climate Change**** NPR reports, “How climate change is reshaping home insurance in California — and the rest of the U.S.” **Read more:** <https://www.npr.org/2025/01/14/nx-s1-5251632/california-fires-home-insurance-climate-change>

****Tariffs**** NPR reports, “Some economists say Trump's promises on tariffs may be impossible to keep.” **Read more:** <https://www.npr.org/2025/01/16/nx-s1-5250192/some-economists-say-trumps-promises-on-tariffs-may-be-impossible-to-keep>

****Federal Government**** Nebraska Public Media reports, “Ricketts ready to 'get on board' with Donald Trump's agenda, including DOGE.” **Read more:** <https://nebraskapublicmedia.org/en/news/news-articles/sen-ricketts-ready-to-get-on-board-with-donald-trumps-agenda-including-doge/>

****Federal Government**** Nebraska Examiner reports, “Interior nominee Burgum promises to pursue ‘energy dominance’ in Trump administration.” **Read more:** <https://nebraskaexaminer.com/2025/01/16/dc/interior-nominee-burgum-promises-to-pursue-energy-dominance-in-trump-administration/?emci=cf280478-9cd4-ef11-88d0-0022482a9d92&emdi=4ff1a190-cad4-ef11-88d0-0022482a9d92&ceid=388881>

****Federal Government**** DNT Progressive Farmer reports, “Zeldin: Oil Industry Has No Influence. Trump EPA Nominee Zeldin Quizzed on RFS, WOTUS, Biden Electric Vehicle Mandate.” **Read more:** <https://www.dtnpf.com/agriculture/web/ag/news/business-inputs/article/2025/01/16/trump-epa-nominee-zeldin-quizzed-rfs>

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