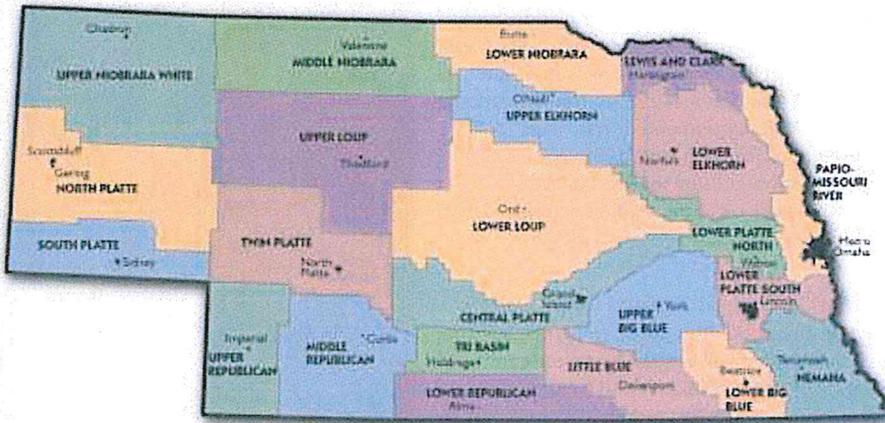


Nebraska's NRDs

2013

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



NRD Facts

- Nebraska has 23 Natural Resources Districts.
- NRDs were created in 1972.
- NRDs protect Lives, property and the future.
- NRDs efficiently use taxpayer dollars.
- To protect lives and property NRDs have constructed or maintain more than 700 flood control structures in Nebraska.
- NRDs planted more than 600,000 trees in 2013.

What's an NRD?

Nebraska's Natural Resources Districts (NRDs) serve a crucial role to protect lives, protect property and protect the future. These districts are unique to Nebraska and are local government entities with broad responsibilities to protect our natural resources. Major Nebraska river basins form the boundaries of the 23 NRDs, enabling districts to respond best to local needs and manage resources in each district.

The Nebraska Association of Resources Districts (NARD) is the trade association for Nebraska's 23 natural resources districts. NARD provides information about Nebraska's NRDs to state government and monitors federal legislation relating to natural resources. The NARD works with the NRDs to:

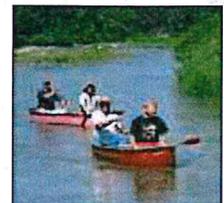
- **Protect Lives**

The NRDs work with other agencies to help protect public water supplies. Wellhead protection, rural water systems, groundwater and surface water sampling are all examples of NRD water quality projects. Monitoring the water quality across the state means your health, safety and families are protected.



- **Protect Property**

Protecting communities and rural areas from flooding is a top priority for the NRDs. Working with towns, cities, villages and partner agencies, the NRDs have built flood control structures for communities all across the state.



- **Protect the Future**

Nebraska's NRDs do a variety of projects and programs to protect all existing and future water uses. Many districts also sponsor and participate in demonstration programs on water use efficiency and sustainability, natural resources festivals, teacher workshops, classroom presentations to educate youth and adults about conservation. NRD projects and programs ensure our precious resources will be available in the future.

NRDs Protect the Future of Nebraska's Natural Resources

Republican Basin Update

Extremely dry, hot conditions in 2012 depleted surface water availability throughout the Republican Basin and triggered actions by both the state Department of Natural Resources and Republican Basin NRDs to maintain compliance with the Republican River Compact in 2013. In late 2012, the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources preliminarily determined 2013 to be a "Compact Call Year," and the determination was later finalized. It was the first test of Compact Call procedures since they were implemented. The procedures worked as planned and are expected to assure continued compliance with the three-state Republican River Compact that includes Kansas and Colorado. Chief among the procedures was administration of surface water by DNR that for a time in 2013 barred diversion or storage of surface water for irrigation. Also, the Upper Republican NRD began operating an augmentation project in Dundy County that was expected to add roughly 16,000 acre feet of water to the Republican River using water that otherwise would have been used to irrigate crops on land that has been retired from irrigation by the URNRD. And both the Lower and Middle Republican NRDs implemented "hard caps" on water-use allocations designed to help with Compact compliance. The approximately 1.1 million irrigated acres in Nebraska's portion of the Republican Basin represent what is believed to be the largest area of regulated groundwater use not only in Nebraska, but the eight-state region that overlies the Ogallala Aquifer.

Nebraska Cooperative Republican Platte Enhancement Project (N-CORPE)

Together with the Twin Platte NRD, the Lower, Middle and Upper Republican NRDs in late 2012 began pursuing an augmentation project in Lincoln County that will further guarantee continued compliance with the Republican River Compact and the Platte River Cooperative Agreement. Approximately 15,800 irrigated acres were purchased by the NRDs and retired from irrigation in the sand hills south of North Platte so that water that otherwise would have been used to irrigate crops can be piped into the Republican and Platte Rivers to maintain compliance with their respective agreements. Construction is expected to begin in 2013 and be operational, if needed, in 2014. The project is considered the most cost effective way to maintain compliance while continuing to impose water-use regulations. Lacking the project, more than 100,000 acres in the Republican Basin could face an irrigation shutdown in some years.

Working Together on Conjunctive Water Management

Central Platte NRD (CPNRD) has been proactive in creating new ways to increase irrigation efficiency, protect water supplies, and increase flows to the Platte River by working with the canal companies in Dawson County. CPNRD purchased Six Mile Canal in Gothenburg and has management/lease agreements with Cozad Canal, Thirty Mile Canal, and Southside (Orchard Alfalfa) Canal. The canal rehabs will allow the NRD to increase water flows to the river as required by the Platte River Recovery and Implementation Program to protect endangered species. Once the canal rehabilitations in Dawson County are completed, it is estimated that CPNRD will have between 3,000-4,000 ac/ft of excess flows to use for endangered species requirements and other water agreements. Another proactive plan proposed by Central Platte and Twin Platte NRDs is to convert the irrigation system managed by Central Public Power and Irrigation District (CNPPID) to a groundwater recharge system. The proposal was revealed in May 2012, offering to financially assist CNPPID on conjunctive management studies to determine the feasibility of the proposal and to assist landowners in the switch to groundwater use. CNPPID's board took the proposal under advisement.

NEW Rural Water System will provide quality water to area

The proposed system by the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District (LENRD) takes in three townships in Madison County between the Elkhorn River and the cities of Madison and Battle Creek plus several square miles of western Stanton County and a Highway 81 corridor between Madison and Humphrey. The new draft of the water system's boundary map has expanded eastward and includes properties along the Elkhorn River south of Norfolk, extending to southwest of Stanton. Funds to help build the system could come from low-interest loans or grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development. With the drought still fresh in mind, the system, while it would take several years to build, would eventually provide a dependable source of clean water to households in the country. If they choose to join, residents would pay a one-time hookup fee and a monthly water bill to get service via buried pipeline.

NRD's 8 Program Areas:

- Water
- Soil
- Trees & Wildlife Habitat
- Grazing Land
- Flood Control
- Urban Conservation
- Recreation
- Education

Why 23 NRDs?

- To address basin issues with local solutions.
- To accurately address and solve local natural resources issues that vary across the state.
- To protect lives, property and the future of natural resources.

For more
Information about
Natural Resources
Districts

Visit www.nrdnet.org or
contact your local NRD

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