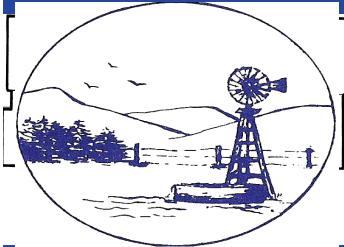


Upper Loup Scoop

Volume 1, Issue 4
October 2007



ULNRD Visits Local Fairs

Pictured: Technician Kyle Yrkoski at Grant County.



New Groundwater Management Area Rules and Regulations coming your way soon!

One of the ULNRD's long-term goals is to extend the aquifer life as long as possible. The District wants to be consistent with beneficial uses of groundwater and the highest efficiency of use possible and to protect groundwater quality and quantity from further degradation.

In an attempt to stem the loss of ground water and to ensure the above goal is met the ULNRD has been working on groundwater rules and regulations to include in its Ground Water Management Plan since January of this year. The purpose of these rules and regulations is to help facilitate the proper management of groundwater for quality, quantity and integrated management.

Any revisions must first be approved by the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources. Next, State statutes require that the NRD hold public hearings to obtain testimony on any proposed changes. The date for that hearing has not yet been set but please be looking for the announcement in the upcoming months. The NRD hopes to implement new rules and regulations beginning January 1 of 2008.

Cost Share Funds Available for Fall 2007 Leafy Spurge Control

The Upper Loup Natural Resources District will provide cost share funds for fall treatment of Leafy Spurge to land-owners in the NRD area. Funds are available to cover 45% of the cost of approved chemicals up to \$400 per land-owner. Currently the only approved fall chemical is plateau, plus any surfactant that may be used. The cost of labor will not be cost shared. The appropriate chemical herbicide can be applied by a landowner with private pesticide certification or by a certified commercial applicator. Applications for cost share assistance can be obtained by contacting Upper Loup NRD at Box 212, Thedford, NE or calling 308-645-2250. Upper Loup NRD includes all of Grant, Hooker, Thomas, Blaine and Logan Counties and parts of Cherry, Brown and McPherson Counties.

The use of herbicides for leafy spurge control is just one part of long term management that should include good grazing strategies and can include grazing by sheep or goats or biological control by the release of insects. It's important to continue yearly management as skipping a year can allow leafy spurge to re-infest rapidly. Extension educators and county weed supervisors are very good resources for weed management.



Upper Loup NRD Staff

Anna Baum	General Manager
Jack Brummet	Resources Technician
Kyle Yrkoski	Resources Technician
Angie Jensen	Administrative Secretary
Cleo Jacobs	Thedford Field Office Clerk

Upper Loup Board of Directors

- Subdistrict 1 Ginger Fouse & Eric Storer
- Subdistrict 2 Steve Boyer & Judy Ridenour
- Subdistrict 3 Gary Schaeffer & Wayne Eatinger
- Subdistrict 4 Byron Cox & Gordon Simonson
- Subdistrict 5 Louis Jacobson & Travis Hansen
- At Large: Wynn Wiens

Soil Testing – to do or not to do?!

The soil test is an excellent measure of soil fertility. It is an inexpensive way of maintaining good plant health and maximum crop productivity. Soil fertility fluctuates throughout the growing season each year. The quantity and availability of mineral nutrients are altered by the addition of fertilizers, manure, compost, mulch and lime or sulfur, in addition to leaching. Furthermore, large quantities of mineral nutrients are removed from soils as a result of plant growth and development and the harvesting of crops. The soil test will determine the current fertility status. It also provides the necessary information needed to maintain optimum fertility year after year.

Most soil nutrients are readily available when soil pH is at 6.5. When pH rises above this value, nutrient elements such as phosphorus, iron, manganese, copper and zinc will become less available. When soil pH drops below 6.5, manganese can reach a toxic level for some sensitive plants.

The soil test takes the guesswork out of fertilization and is extremely cost effective. It not only eliminates the waste of money spent on unnecessary fertilizers, but also eliminates over-usage of fertilizers and prevention of leaching through the sandy soils and into the groundwater, thus helping to protect the environment.

When do I soil test? Sampling can be done at any time, but late October or early November is usually preferable. Avoid sampling when the soil is very wet or recently limed or fertilized.

What tests are performed? The basic soil test results will tell you the pH of the soil, organic matter (nutrient holding capacity), available phosphorous (P), and available potassium (K). The soil may also be tested for Nitrate (N), magnesium (Mg), calcium (Ca), sulfur (S), boron (B), manganese (Mn) and zinc (Zn).

Who takes the soil samples? Your local

County Extension offices can instruct you on how to take samples yourself. There are also businesses that you can contact that will obtain the sample for you, one such group is your local Farmer's Coop.

The Upper Loup NRD understands the importance of soil testing and has a cost-share program to help land owners defray part of the costs associated with testing. For more information or to obtain a cost-share application you can contact our office or visit our website.



District Applies for 2 Grants

The Hazard Mitigation Plan Grant

What is hazard mitigation? Any action taken to reduce or eliminate future risk to lives or property from natural disasters.

What is a hazard mitigation plan? The all-hazard mitigation plan is a community guided document that identifies vulnerability to all natural or man-made hazards (tornado's, hail, wind, drought, wildfires, thunderstorms, blizzards, etc) and assesses the potential losses associated with each hazard. The plan also identifies critical facilities and projects to decrease the threat from identified hazards.

Why should communities have a plan? Only those communities that have a FEMA approved Hazard Mitigation Plan in place are eligible

for several grant dollars to help cover community mitigation projects (community safe rooms, generators, slope stabilization, public education and warnings, and many other possible solutions) as well as additional FEMA funds following a disaster.

What communities can participate?

All the full counties within the ULNRD District (Logan, Grant, Hooker, Thomas, Blaine as well as McPherson) have been invited to participate. Participation in the planning process is voluntary. However, if your community does not participate, you will not be eligible for future mitigation funds. If you would like to know if your community has already indicated an interest in partaking you can either contact our office or your local village office or county commissioners.

The Development of a Hydrogeologic Framework for Areas of the Upper Loup River Basins Grant

The Sand Hills holds one of the most important aquifer systems in the state with sensitive and fragile ecosystems. Concerns about changes in water availability, groundwater-surface water relationships and water quality have prompted us to try and expand on our data collection and analysis for continued good quality water management.

The ULNRD is requesting funds to help facilitate a collaborative project, with USGS (United States Geological Survey) and UNL Conservation and Survey Division, to drill test holes and install monitoring wells with related geophysical surveys to gather information on aquifer properties and to provide long term monitoring in vital areas of the District.

Lets get Acquainted: meet the last of the ULNRD directors from the 5th Sub-District

The Upper Loup Board is made up of 11 Directors, two elected from each of the five subdistricts that make up the NRD, and one At-Large. You can find a map of the subdistricts on the back page of this newsletter.

The Board is responsible for establishing District policies, programs, rules and regulations and adopting the necessary budget in order to fulfill the responsibilities of the District as authorized and required by law. The Board is also responsible for overseeing management to insure that the policies, programs, regulations and budget are carried out as intended and approving District expenditures. The day-to-day management is the General Manager's responsibility. In general, the Board sets policy and the staff carries it out.

The Board holds regularly scheduled monthly meetings on the second Thursday of every month at the NRD office in Thedford.

Since January of this year we have slowly introduced all the Sub-district directors (Sub1= Ginger Fouse & Eric Storer; Sub2= Steve Boyer & Judy Ridenour; Sub3= Gary Schaeffer & Wayne Eatinger; Sub4= Byron Cox & Gordon Simonson) to you. This issue will be our last for introductions.

Have you been to the ULNRD website yet?

Come and check out our website at
www.upperloupnrd.org

The site provides information on the Upper Loup Office, directors and staff as well as the services the district provides, cost-share programs, educational activities and resources available to the public. You can download various applications and forms as well as read up on all the latest district activities and news.

Subdistrict 5 contains all of Logan County and the eastern 1/3 of McPherson County. Travis Hansen and Louis Jacobson are the directors that represent that district.

Travis grew up on a farm/ranch and graduated from Hyannis. He obtained a BA in Diversified Ag from UNL and moved to the Stapleton area. Travis farms and ranches with his wife Melody and two young daughters Trinity and Tessa.

Louis was born in Alliance and raised on the family farm in Morrill County. He graduated from UNL and spent from 1972-1976 in the National Guard. Louis moved to the Tryon area in 1993 where he farms and has a cattle feeding business. He enjoys collecting toy tractors.

The district's "**At Large**" **Director** is Wynn Wiens who was elected to the ULNRD board last November. He has been involved in ranching in the sandhills since 1992. Wynn and his wife Crystal are busy raising two young sons Justin and Adam.

Attention 2007 spring tree planters:

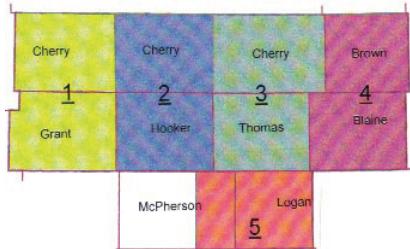
Resources Technician Kyle Yrkoski, started tree planting survival checks the end of September. He will be out and about visiting all NRD machine tree plantings to determine the number of replants that will be needed for next years spring planting.

The ULNRD has gopher bait on hand for purchase by those individuals that have a current pesticide applicators license. The District also has a gopher machine available for rent. If interested please contact the office for information.
308-645-2250

Dripial Pursuit. Test your water knowledge:

1. What common chemical is found in acid rain?
2. What are smaller streams which flow into a larger stream called?
3. True or False, groundwater flows in vast underground lakes and streams?
4. Name the large aquifer underlying parts of Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas?
5. Applying agricultural chemicals with a center pivot irrigation system is called what?
6. The Platte River Valley is part of the migratory route of what ENDANGERED species?
7. What is the source of both groundwater and surface water?
8. On average, what percentage of water used in your home goes down the drain?

Answers found on page 4 of this newsletter



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UPPER LOUP NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

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Phone: 308-645-2250
Fax: 308-645-2308
www.upperlouprnd.org

Calendar of Events

October

- 2 Stapleton Satellite Office Open
- 8 Holiday Office Closed
- 9 Mullen Satellite Office Open
- 11 ULNRD Board Meeting, Thedford
- 16 Hyannis Satellite Office Open
Clients Day—Bessey Nursery

November

- 6 Stapleton Satellite Office Open
- 8 ULNRD Board Meeting, Thedford
- 13 Mullen Satellite Office Open
- 20 Hyannis Satellite Office Open
- 22-23 Holiday Office Closed

December

- 4 Stapleton Satellite Office Open
- 11 Mullen Satellite Office Open
- 13 ULNRD Board Meeting, Thedford
- 18 Hyannis Satellite Office Open
- 25 Holiday Office Closed

TO: POSTAL CUSTOMER

Employment Opportunity.

The district will be contracting conservation mulch fabric installation for the '08 spring season. Anyone interested in being a mulch contractor please contact our office immediately and direct your questions to Jack Brummet.



NERain Volunteers this is the time for reactivation if you have been inactive. It is very important to provide consistent monitoring and reporting. We understand you are busy however, if you cannot provide regular reporting it would be best to pass your gauge to someone who has more time to enter the data. If you would like to reactivate or have decided to quite volunteering please contact Kyle at our office.

District Irrigation Groundwater Users:

You should have received a water use postcard in the mail from the ULNRD. Please fill it out as soon as possible and return to the district. The cards will provide us with much needed data in regards to fully understanding the water needs of users within our district. Should the basin be determined as "fully appropriated" anytime in the future by the Department of Natural Resources it will be important to have data to support producer requests. If you should have received a postcard and did not please call our office and we will send you one immediately.

Dripial Pursuit Answers:

1. Sulfur
2. Tributaries or branches
3. False
4. Ogallala or High Plains
5. Chemigation
6. Whooping Crane
7. Precipitation
8. 84%