

Upper Loup Scoop

January 2010

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Board of Directors

Sub district 1

Chris Vinton
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Sub district 2

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Judy Ridenour

Sub district 3

Gary Schaeffer
Wayne Eatinger

Sub district 4

Byron Cox
Gordon Simonson

Sub district 5

Darwin Frey

At large

Wynn Wiens

Now is the Time to Order Trees

Do you have enough protection or in need of replacing some existing trees in your shelterbelts? Trees provide important benefits such as sheltering livestock, preventing soil erosion, and crop damage due to wind. They also help to reduce heating and cooling costs to homes and shop buildings. ULNRD technicians are available to work with landowners to determine the type and number of trees and shrubs needed, planting, weed control, and care following planting.



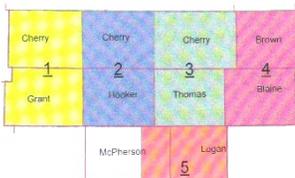
To help promote tree planting, the ULNRD provides a 65% cost-share, but due to State budget cuts the total overall funds available will be reduced. Funds will be distributed on a first come, first serve basis for those practices that meet requirements; as a result we are encouraging anyone wanting to plant trees in spring 2010 to contact Kyle. Trees, shrubs, planting, and weed mulch are all eligible for the cost share program. Orders are now being taken through March 1st or until inventory runs out. To view a complete list of trees and shrubs available, along with pricing information, you can either visit our website at www.upperloupnrd.org or contact our office at 308-645-2250.

REMINDER: Many miles of the black fabric mulch have been applied to tree windbreaks in Nebraska over the last 15 years. The woven fabric has greatly increased tree and shrub survival and growth rate by inhibiting weeds and retaining soil moisture. The fabric is expected to slowly degrade after five years, but it does not degrade as well in the shade of the tree. This may cause the trees to grow into the fabric and become girdled, thus decreasing the health of trees. To prevent damage to plantings, landowners need to inspect their mulched windbreaks and enlarge openings, as needed. If you have any questions please call Kyle at our office 308-645-2250.

ULNRD Offers Grant Dollars for Neighborhood Restoration and Enhancement

The Upper Loup Natural Resources District (ULNRD) is pleased to offer a *Nature in Neighborhoods Restoration and Enhancement Grant* to nonprofit organizations residing in the District. This grant program, funded by the ULNRD, is designed to distribute funds in amounts up to \$1,000 to organizations interested in developing or enhancing a current outdoor learning site or for developing or enhancing an outdoor area in their community.

The ULNRD's Nature in Neighborhoods grant program supports hands-on activities and environmental education programs that protect and contribute to watershed health in the District. The program connects community-minded people to their neighborhoods, natural areas, backyards and beyond. In addition, this program is intended to encourage awareness, appreciation, knowledge and active conservation of natural resources. Any nonprofit organizations such as schools, 4-H clubs, FFA Chapters, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, business groups, etc. that are located within the Upper Loup NRD's boundaries, which includes the counties of Grant, Hooker, Thomas, Blaine and Logan. Schools and clubs are limited to submitting one application per school year. The maximum grant request is \$1,000 per application. Applicants are limited to submitting one application per year. Applications must be turned into the Upper Loup NRD by December 31, 2010 for the following years funding. Applications will be evaluated on the projected environmental benefits and awards to be announced by January 31, 2011. For more information contact the ULNRD at 308-645-2250 or visit our website at www.upperloupnrd.org.



ULNRD Applies for Two Grants for 2010

Recycling Program

A survey had been done by the ULNRD, with the villages of the District, to determine interest and need for recycling efforts. The results of the survey, in general, found that the villages understand the importance and benefits of recycling, but have stated that without help from a partner it is not feasible. It also found that opportunities for District residents to recycle locally are very limited or in some areas non-existent. Up to this point, there have been no dedicated programs designed for reducing solid waste over the **entire** District. The main challenges for the villages are limited resources being money, labor, time, and equipment. At this time, most residents and villages have to travel, on the average, 156 miles round trip to get their recyclable materials to the nearest regional recycling center. To promote conservation, water quality, and waste reduction in the Upper Loup District, the ULNRD is requesting funds to implement new programs and expand current recycling efforts in the District. Our overall goal is to establish a sustainable recycling program District-wide. By the end of the 3 year grant period our target goal is to reduce the amount of municipal and rural solid waste disposed by 608 tons (25%). The objectives we have determined to help reach this goal include providing a 6-bin trailer to the communities of Hyannis, Mullen, Thedford, Dunning, & Stapleton, as well as transportation of the trailers to the end market.

Stream Gaging Stations

The ULNRD wants to use the best scientifically-based management practices to deal with current and future groundwater management needs. Future changes, whether caused by climatic or anthropogenic on hydrology and land use potentially can change the amount of water present in these streams leading to a transformation of the river, its tributaries and adjacent wet meadows. These changes can affect riparian habitat structure, and the sustainability of meadows to support livestock, migratory and resident birds and other regional plants and animals. Pumping from aquifers that are hydrologically connected with surface-water bodies can have a significant effect on those bodies by reducing the groundwater discharge to surface water and in the Sand Hills most streamflow is produced by groundwater discharge. Continuous streamflow information provided by gaging stations allows resource managers and hydrologists to analyze streamflow patterns, both temporarily and spatially, and separate the groundwater discharge component of total streamflow, called base flow. Data can also provide critical information on current conditions and provide a foundation to relate future streamflow conditions to long-term changes in water use and groundwater recharge.

Water Quality Grant

Working under a grant from the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, the NRD has focused on testing registered domestic and irrigation wells over the last two years to help determine the health and safety of drinking water within District boundaries. Two of the most common tests performed were for bacteria and nitrates. Coliform bacteria test indicate the presence of microorganisms in the water that are potentially harmful to human health. Nitrate is also a common contaminant found mainly in groundwater. High nitrate concentration can be particularly dangerous to babies under six months since nitrate interferes with the ability of blood to carry oxygen. The testing portion of the grant is now complete and data is now being mapped and analyzed for any patterns, trends, or problems.

Once the data is analyzed the information will be released to District residents. The ULNRD will continue to offer this service free to residents of the District. If you would like this service please contact our office by calling 308-645-2250 or email the

ulnrd@upperloupnrd.org. To register a domestic well, contact the Department of Natural Resources at www.dnr.state.ne.us



Groundwater Monitoring Well Network

The Upper Loup Natural Resources District (ULNRD) is located above one of the most important aquifer systems in the state. Among the most important tools under development by the ULNRD are a network of test holes with supporting geophysical surveys for hydrogeologic framework studies and the installation of dedicated monitoring wells for collecting long-term water-level and water-quality information. The current framework study uses interdisciplinary approach bringing together local managers from the Upper Loup Natural Resources District, scientists from the Geology and Water Resources Disciplines of the USGS, and geologists from Conservation and Survey Division-UNL in order to collect, process, and interpret both geophysical and hydrogeologic data, the results of which will be presented as interpretive reports and updates to existing test hole log books. Chris Hobza, geologist with the USGS will be presenting an update of the hydrogeologic framework study on January 14, 2010 at 3:00 at the ULNRD office in Thedford. The public is welcome and anyone interested please plan to attend.



Hazard Mitigation

FEMA has been approved the District's Hazard Mitigation Plan. Any communities wishing to start on one of their identified projects can contact either the ULNRD office at 308-645-2250 or Sheila Hascal at the NEMA office at 402-471-7421

Adventure Camp about the Environment (ACE)

The ULNRD is excited to announce the first Adventure Camp about the Environment (ACE) to be held in June of 2010. ACE Camp is for 6th-8th graders who want to learn more about natural resources and have an adventure at camp. There will be lots of hands-on activities while they learn about soils and land, water, forestry, range and grassland, and wildlife. There will be time for other activities such as the zipline, water slide, climbing, repelling, and a River Stomp. The camp dates are June 20-23, 2010 at the State 4-H Camp, Halsey, Nebraska. The camp cost is \$175. **The ULNRD will provide one scholarship per sub-district.** If you are interested in attending and would like a scholarship application please contact our office at 308-645-2250 or visit our website at www.upperlounprd.org.



Partnering agencies: Nebraska's Natural Resources, Nebraska Association of Resources District, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, university of Nebraska Extension Services, Nebraska Natural Resources conservation Service, Nebraska Pheasants Forever.



Bow Hunter Class Scheduled for March 20-21

Bow hunter education is a highly successful program ensuring that safe, respectful and responsible hunters participate in the sport of bow hunting in Nebraska. This program is mandated by the Nebraska Legislature, administered by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and taught by volunteer instructors. All archery hunters, of deer, antelope, elk, or mountain sheep, age 12 through age 29 must have completed a bow hunter education course AND must carry some form of proof showing completion of the required course on your person while hunting. A crossbow is considered the same as a firearm in Nebraska, and crossbow hunters 12 years of age or older born on or after January 1, 1977 must have proof of completion of firearm Hunter Education on their person while hunting any game, game animal or game bird with a crossbow. The Upper Loup NRD along with certified instructor Mike Lucas are planning on sponsoring a bow hunter education class for students 11 years old or older to be tested and certified. The course will be held at the Upper Loup NRD Thedford office. It is scheduled for Saturday March 20 and Sunday March 21, 2010. Saturday's session will run from 9am to 2pm CST and Sunday's session will run from 1pm to 6pm CST. Attendance is required for both sessions to become certified. **If you are interested in participating please contact our office at 308-645-2250 before March 10, 2010.**

Chemigation & Permit Training

There are potential risks to our natural resources and public safety issues when using chemigation therefore; all chemigation systems must be fitted with the proper safety valves and equipment. This equipment must be inspected by the Upper Loup NRD prior to use to assure functionality and compliance. If you are considering chemigation, the operator must first obtain a permit from the Upper Loup NRD. Chemigation renewal permits cost \$10 and must be submitted to the Upper Loup NRD. An irrigation system that has not been renewed prior to the June 1 deadline cannot apply chemicals through the system until a new permit is obtained. New chemigation permits cost \$30 and the applicant cannot use the system until it passes a mandatory inspection. To pass inspection the mainline check valve must not have any sort of leak when there is water in the system. This prevents chemical solution from seeping back down the well and into the groundwater. Operators must also have proper chemigation training to certify that they are prepared to apply chemicals through the irrigation system. Chemigation training is held through the Central Sandhills Extension office. For more information please contact Bethany Johnston at 308-645-2267.

Pocket Guides Available

Available pocket guides

- Trees
- Nebraska Birds
- Animal Tracks
- Wilderness Survival
- Edible Wild Plants
- Roadside Wildflowers
- Invasive Weeds
- The Night Sky



Pocket guides are available at the Upper Loup NRD office in Thedford for a cost of \$6.00 per guide. If you have any questions please stop in the office or call 308-645-2250.

Dripal Pursuit.

Test your water knowledge:

1. Does water refract or reflect light waves?
2. Name the device use to locate items under water.
3. About what percentage of the earth's surface is water?
4. How thick does ice have to be to support a human?
5. At what temperature does water freeze?

Answers found on page 4

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 Thedford, NE 69166
 Phone: 308-645-2250
 Fax: 308-645-2308

PRSR STD
 ECRWSS
 US Postage Paid
 Thedford, NE 69166
 Permit. No. 11 STD



Calendar of Events

January

- 1 Holiday—Office Closed
- 14 Board Meeting 3:00 —
Chris Hobza-USGS
Presentation—Thedford
- 18 Holiday—Office Closed
- 25-27 Legislative Conference—
Lincoln

February

- 11 ULNRD Board Meeting—
Thedford
- 15 Holiday—Office Closed

March

- 11 ULNRD Board Meeting—
Thedford
- 20-21 Bow Hunter Education
Course—Thedford

TO: POSTAL CUSTOMER

The 2010 Annual Evaluation of Availability of Hydrologically Connected Water Supplies

has been released and is available at: <http://www.dnr.ne.gov/>. The Department has evaluated all basins which are not currently designated as fully or overappropriated or for which a status change has not occurred in the past four years (lower Platte River Basin). The basins evaluated include: 1) the Niobrara River Basin downstream of the Spencer Hydropower facility; 2) the Missouri Tributary Basins; and 3) the Blue River Basins. The Department has reached a preliminary conclusion that no portions of these basins are fully appropriated at the current time.

Irrigation Water Use Reporting Update

Water use reporting is essential to the management of this vital resource. Annual reporting of water use is important to protect stakeholder interests, adopting actions in times of water emergencies, and providing data for effective farm management. To protect the farmer's interests in any litigation related to the state's right to water use in a given basin, existing uses must be able to be quantified. Knowing water use also allows a wider range of options for dealing with any future drought-related water emergencies. If you have not returned your water use reports please mail them at your earliest convenience, or if you need another form sent, please contact our office. **Thank you** to those producers that have already responded!

Water Use Return Rate

County	Total	To Date
Blaine	102	37
Brown	43	16
Cherry	63	24
Grant	20	12
Hooker	26	12
McPherson	37	8
Thomas	28	13
Logan	212	70

- Dripal Pursuit Answers:
1. Refract
 2. SONAR
 3. 80%
 4. 4 inches
 5. 32 degrees F or 0 degrees C

Upper Loup Staff

Anna BaumGeneral Manager
 Jack Brummet...Resources Technician
 Kyle Yrkoski....Resources Technician
 Leslie Reiser.....Administrative Secretary
 Denise Vinton...Information & Education
 Cleo Jacobs.... Thedford Field Office Sec.

Director Opening in Sub-district 5

The Upper Loup Board is seeking to fill an open Director position in Sub-district 5. Persons interested must reside in sub-district 5 which is located in Logan and part of McPherson Counties. The Upper Loup Board is made up of 11 Directors, two elected from each of the five sub-districts that make up the NRD, and one At-Large.

You can find a map of the sub-districts on the front 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 Board holds regularly scheduled monthly meetings on the second Thursday of every month at the NRD office in Thedford. If interested please contact Anna Baum at the NRD office in Thedford at 308-645-2250.