



# Upper Loup Scoop

January 2011

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## 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 technician, Kyle Yrkoski, is 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 2011 to contact Kyle immediately. 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](http://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.



## Board of Directors

**Sub district 1**  
Chris Vinton

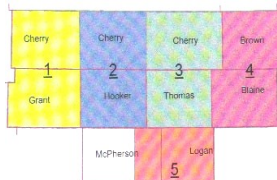
**Sub district 2**  
Judy Ridenour

**Sub district 3**  
Gary Schaeffer  
Chris Higgins

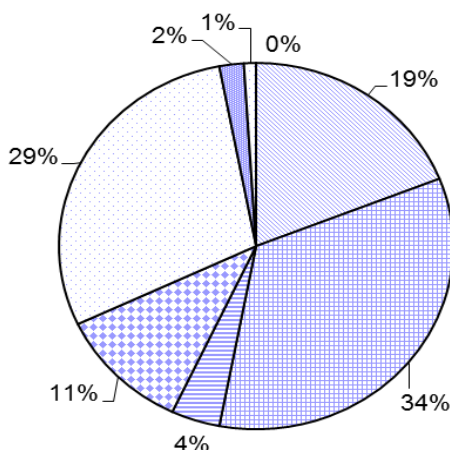
**Sub district 4**  
Byron Cox  
Gordon Simonson

**Sub district 5**  
Darwin Frey  
Tom Johnson

**At large**  
Patrick Wright

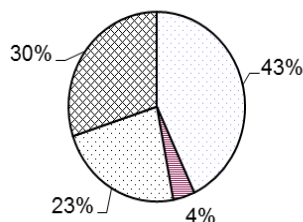


ULNRD 2010 EXPENSES



- Operations 19%
- Personnel 34%
- Groundwater Quality Mngt 4%
- Groundwater Quantity Mngt 11%
- Conservation Mngt 29%
- Information & Education 2%
- District Projects 1%
- Capital Expenditures 4%

ULNRD 2010 Revenues



- Property Taxes 44%
- State 4%
- District 23%
- Grant Dollars 30%

## Budget News

In September the Upper Loup NRD Board of Directors adopted the budget for fiscal year of 2010-11. Due to state budget cuts the ULNRD continues to find other funding mechanisms to maintain your NRD. One way this has been accomplished is through increased grant funding (up from 23% in 2009 to 30% in 2010). NRD's have the ability to levy up to 4 cents per 100 dollars of property valuations. We are proud to say that since 1990 we have been able to fund our programs, studies and services with a levy rate of only 2 cents per 100 dollars valuation. As a matter of fact the levy rate dropped slightly from .024516 to .021864 cents for FY 2010-2011.



## Recycling Grant

Working under a grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust, the ULNRD was able to implement the first phase of their 3 year recycling project. Two recycling trailers were placed in the communities of Hyannis and Thedford and transportation of current recycling trailers in Stapleton and Halsey to the end market has begun. Two more trailers are planned to be placed in the communities of Dunning and Mullen in 2011. Since July over 14,000 lbs of recyclable material has been collected and transported to recycling centers located in North Platte, Lexington and Broken Bow.



It is no longer required to separate plastics into either # 1 or #2. Tin and aluminum can also be combined. To help make recycling more convenient, personal recycling containers are now available at no charge at the ULNRD office in Thedford. Please feel free to stop by the office and pick one up during regular business hours. Limit one per household. Thank you to all that have helped in making this program successful thus far!



## Groundwater Monitoring Well Network

The Upper Loup Natural Resources District (ULNRD) is located above one of the most important aquifer systems and it is essential that we learn as much about it as possible. As part of our efforts in gaining this knowledge the ULNRD has been apart of a 3 years cooperative effort. Tools used in this study include a network of test holes, dedicated monitoring wells, and geophysical surveys, Scientists from the Geology and Water Resources Disciplines of the USGS, and hydrologists and geologists from Conservation and Survey Division-UNL have worked together in order to collect, process, and interpret both geophysical and hydrogeological data.



Chris Hobza, geologist with the USGS, will be presenting an initial summary of this 3 year project to the ULNRD Board of Directors on February 10, 2010 at 1:00 CT at the ULNRD office in Thedford. The public is welcome and anyone interested please plan to attend.



## Water Quality Grant

The 319 Water Quality Project comes to a close at the end of December. The funds that the Upper Loup NRD received by the Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Program, through the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, has helped in its efforts of becoming more effective in the management of groundwater quality within the District.

At the beginning of the project we had concerns over water contamination by agricultural run-off, organic material, fertilizer, and other potential contaminants. Due to the higher rates of percolation through sandy soils, our District's primary soil type, versus finer-textured soils, the potential for pollution in our area is increased. The goal of this project was to obtain a good base of information about the district as well as develop a long-term comparable data base system that would support sound management and policy decisions in regards to nitrate contamination. We are happy to report that we were able to collect, and are currently reviewing and logging a significant amount of information in regards to any point and nonpoint contamination problems within our district. We do want you to know that our initial findings show from 2008 to 2010 the District's average nitrate levels were 1.97 ppm in Domestic wells and 1.92 ppm in Irrigation wells, both well below the federal safety standards of 10 ppm.

The final grant report is currently being written as well as maps being created. When this is completed this information will be shared with constituents of the ULNRD.



## Mullen Outdoor Classroom is Groundbreaking

The retaining wall is in, let the groundbreaking begin. October 30th was the start of the first phase of the Mullen outdoor classroom. In 2009, Mullen High School was chosen to receive a grant from the Arbor Day Foundation and Dimensions Education Research Foundation to develop the first secondary Outdoor Classroom for the Nature Explore Program. Work on the outdoor classroom began with sod cutting and dirt removal which was utilized in other parts of the project. An underground irrigation system has been installed to help efficiently maintain the areas. There has been a tremendous amount of support for this classroom from the school, local businesses and individuals. We would like to thank everyone who has donated their time, supplies and labor. It is greatly appreciated!



Photo Courtesy of Hooker Co. Tribune



## 34 Participants Complete Hunters Safety

Thanks to volunteers Dane Petersen and Ted Bonesteel, 34 participants were able to attend and complete the Hunter Safety class held on Oct 30-31. Participants ranged in age from 11-43 and came from several communities that included: Gothenburg, Mason City, Seneca, Tryon, Brewster, Mullen, Thedford, Crookston, and Valentine.

Firearm Safety Education is a program ensuring that safe, respectful and responsible hunters participate in the sport of hunting in Nebraska. Proof of completion of this course is required for everyone 12 years of age or older, or born on or after January 1, 1977 who hunts any species of game, game animal or game bird in Nebraska using a firearm or cross-bow.



## Students Learn Geocaching

The ULNRD and UNL Sandhills Extension once again joined efforts in teaching local students in both Mullen and Thedford on using GPS units and geocaching. Geocaching is basically a scavenger hunt using technology. Students were given GPS units and had to find hidden caches using the units and a set of clues. The weather was wonderful both days and fun was had by all!



## Dripal Pursuit.

### Test your water knowledge:

1. The opposite of evaporation is called what?
2. What common chemical is found in acid rain?
3. About how much snow makes up one inch of water?
4. How many atoms are there in a molecule of water?
5. Burning what substance puts sulfur in the air and forms acid rain?
6. The Clean Water Act became law In what year?

Answers found on page 4

## Available pocket guides

- Trees
- Nebraska Birds
- Animal Tracks
- Wilderness Survival
- Edible Wild Plants
- Roadside Wildflowers
- Invasive Weeds
- The Night Sky
- Butterflies & Moths
- House & Garden Pests
- NE Trees & Wildflowers
- Field Dressing Guide

## Pocket Guides Available



Pocket guides are available at the Upper Loup NRD office in Thedford for a cost of \$6.00 per guide. The field dressing guide is \$8.00. If you have any questions please stop in the office or call 308-645-2250.

Upper Loup NRD  
39252 Hwy 2  
Thedford, NE 69166  
Phone: 308-645-2250  
Fax: 308-645-2308

**We are on the web!**  
[www.upperloupnrd.org](http://www.upperloupnrd.org)

### Calendar of Events

#### January

- 1 Holiday—Office Closed
- 13 Board Meeting 3:00 CT -  
Thedford
- 17 Holiday—Office Closed
- 23-26 Legislative Conference—  
Lincoln

#### February

- 10 USGS Public Presentation on  
Well Drilling Network 1:00  
CT—Thedford  
ULNRD Board Meeting 3:00  
CT—Thedford
- 21 Holiday—Office Closed

#### March

- 10 ULNRD Board Meeting 3:00  
CT—Thedford

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## TO: POSTAL CUSTOMER

### Upper Loup NRD has Director Openings

Natural Resource Districts (NRDs) have local leadership responsibility for protecting groundwater from overuse and pollution; soil conservation; planting trees and wildlife habitat; flood control; improving urban conservation; and recreation.

The Upper Loup Natural Resources District (ULNRD) is seeking individuals to fill vacancies on the Board of Directors from sub-district 1 and 2. Sub-district 1 includes all of Grant County and the southern portion of Cherry County located north of Grant County. Sub-district 2 includes all of Hooker County and the southern portion of Cherry County located north of Hooker County.

The ULNRD Board is responsible for aiding in establishing district and conservation policies (NSWCP), rules and regulations, and adopting the necessary budget, in order to fulfill the responsibilities of the District as authorized and required by law.

Applicants are encouraged to send a letter of interest to the Upper Loup NRD, 39525 Hwy 2, Thedford, NE 69166. For more information about being a director you can call us at 308-645-2250.

#### Dripal Pursuit Answers:

1. Condensation
2. Sulfur
3. 10 inches
4. 3
5. Coal
6. 1972

#### Upper Loup Staff

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

### 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. Dates and locations for training are as listed:

#### DATES:

January 4  
January 12  
January 18  
February 3  
February 10

#### LOCATION:

Thedford, Courthouse  
Mullen, Sandhills RC&D  
Brewster, Courthouse  
Stapleton, Courthouse  
Hyannis, Courthouse

#### TIME:

2:00-4:00 pm CT  
2:00-4:00 pm MT  
1:30-3:30 pm CT  
1:30-3:30 pm CT  
11:00-2:00 pm MT