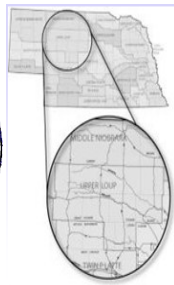


NRD



Upper Loup Scoop

July 2011

Nebraska Supreme Court Reverses Fully Appropriated Designation on Portion of Niobrara River Basin

One of the requirements of section §§46-713 of the Ground Water Management and Protection Act requires The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to report annually on the expected long-term availability of hydrologically connected water supplies. This assessment is required for every river basin, sub-basin, or reach that has not either initiated the development of an integrated management plan (IMP) or implemented an IMP. An IMP is created to manage all hydrologically connected ground water and surface water.

This annual evaluation by DNR is performed to determine if a basin is fully appropriated or in some instances over-appropriated. As a general concept, a basin is fully appropriated when existing uses of both surface water and hydrologically connected ground water supplies are equal to but do not exceed the available water supplies over the long term. If a basin is fully appropriated, any new use will in time take water away from an existing use. Once a basin is designated as "fully appropriated" it is subject to the rules and regulations of LB 962, which will include a moratorium on all high capacity well development (those pumping greater than 50 gal/min) and no new irrigated acres.

The Nebraska Supreme Court has reversed a January 2008 determination made by DNR regarding a fully appropriated designation made on a large portion of the Niobrara River Basin. . The reversal was largely based on concerns related to the methods used in the current determination process.

Department of Natural Resources Director Brian Dunnigan stated, "The Department has been working with local natural resources districts for over a year and a half to address some of the shortcomings of the current methodology. We believe the collaborative process we have been pursuing will lead to a more effective determination process that will further assist state and local water managers in most effectively managing hydrologically connected waters of the State. This new process would have been pursued regardless of the outcome of this case."

The current stay will remain in effect until the NRD adopts rules and regulations in regards to limiting the number of new ground water irrigated acres annually for this area where the reversal has taken place. The Upper Loup NRD will more than likely default to their current Ground Water Rules and Regulations in regards to the expansion of new irrigated acres and the issuance of new well permits. The Upper Loup Natural Resources District has a total of 105,600 acres in Brown County and 289,280 acres in Cherry County that this reversal will impact. The reversal may also allow new surface water appropriations to be granted by the Department of Natural Resources, with limits on new irrigation appropriations during the next four years.

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Board of Directors

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Sub district 4
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Sub district 5
Darwin Frey
Tom Johnson

At large
Patrick Wright



2011 Scholarship Recipients

The Upper Loup NRD provides a variety of scholarships and grants for teachers and students with an interest in natural resources.

ACE Camp recipients are:

Allison Kramer, Mallory Baum, Emily Kramer, Brodie Baum, and Wyatt Sabata.

Range Camp recipients are:

Sydney Doyle
Blake Johnson
Chelsea Nollette

Domestic Well Owner, Is Your Drinking Water Safe?

In Nebraska about 95 percent of rural residents get their household water supply from private or domestic wells. If they are not properly protected, these wells are at risk of being contaminated from several sources. The potential for contamination in our area is also increased because of the sandy soil. The only way you know if nitrates and or bacterial are present in your drinking water is by testing because both are colorless, odorless, and tasteless. A water test for nitrate is highly recommended for households with infants, pregnant women, nursing mothers, or elderly people, as these groups are most susceptible to nitrates. Coliform bacteria are microscopic, generally harmless organisms that live in the intestinal tract of many warm blooded animals including humans and are excreted into the environment through feces. Although most coliform bacteria are not directly disease causing, some are often found with other, more dangerous strains of bacteria like E. coli, shigella and salmonella. Some strains of E. coli are known to cause vomiting, diarrhea, and other serious gastrointestinal problems.

Domestic wells were not required to be registered with the state prior to September 1993, therefore thousands of domestic wells exist that are not registered with the NDNR. Unlike public water supplies, the quality of private water sources in Nebraska is unregulated by federal or state mandate. Thus, well owners are encouraged to have their well water tested and make sure their well is properly maintained to help protect their health and safety.

The potential for water contamination is always present therefore water quality requires long term monitoring. The Upper Loup NRD recommends that all domestic wells, either registered or unregistered, get tested at least once every five years. We are starting our five year cycle in Sub District I which includes all of Grant County and the southwest third of Cherry County. We are glad to offer this important safety service to you AT NO CHARGE.



Second Year of Funding Approved

The ULNRD has been approved for the second year of a 3 year Environmental Trust recycling grant to expand their recycling program. Two recycling trailers will be purchased and placed in the communities of Dunning and Mullen sometime in late July or August. Earlier this year the ULNRD acquired an additional trailer from the Thedford's FCCLA group which has been placed in the community of Seneca. To date, the ULNRD has collected and transported 67,789 lbs of recyclable material to the end market and is looking forward to having an even more successful year in 2011.



Dunning's trailer will accept #1 and #2 plastics, aluminum, tin, paper, magazines, newspaper and will be located at the southeast corner of the high school.

Mullen's trailer will be located at their Drop-Off Site during regular business hours of Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, 8 am to 6 pm MT. Because Mullen already recycles cardboard, aluminum, newspapers, paper, and magazines they will be collecting only #1 and #2 plastics and tin in their trailer.

For those who have not yet picked up a collection bin for your home use, they are still available at the ULNRD office in Thedford.

If you have any questions regarding the trailers or recyclables please feel free to contact our office at 308-645-2250, Monday-Friday, 7:30 am to 4:00 pm CT or your Village Office. We have recycling information and locations of recycling trailers on our website at www.upperloupnrd.org under **SERVICES**.

Community Wellhead Protection Plans Underway

We often take the quality of our drinking water for granted, and may not fully realize how important safe drinking water is. Everyone in the Upper Loup NRD relies on groundwater as our only source of drinking water, it's easy to see why it must be protected. By participating in a Wellhead Protection Program, communities in the district can help safeguard their drinking water supplies now and in the years ahead.

Sometimes, especially in the area of drinking water protections, it is better to be proactive than reactive. The Wellhead Protection Program is a proactive approach to groundwater protection. Wellhead protection is cost effective. A modest investment in a wellhead protection program can save a community tens to hundreds of thousands of dollars by preventing contamination. If a well becomes contaminated, a community can be faced with costs to clean up groundwater, treat groundwater, drill a new well, and provide an alternate source of water to its customers or some combination of actions. An ounce of prevention is truly worth a pound of cure.

The Upper Loup NRD has taken the lead in contacting the communities of the district with municipal water wells and teaming them up with Mike Lucas, a Source Water Specialist with Nebraska Rural Water Association, to develop "local" Wellhead Protection Plans, at no cost to the community.

There are several steps to develop a wellhead protection plan. First is to form a local planning committee. Second is to delineate the wellhead protection area. Step three is to inventory potential groundwater contamination sources. Besides rain and snow, pollutants from a variety of activities on the land can seep into the ground and move toward your wells. The last step is managing the wellhead protection area. Action is taken to minimize the potential for contamination of your community's wells.

NATURAL RESOURCES CAMP PROVIDES EDUCATION AND FUN FOR YOUTH

(Halsey, NE) – Campers from across the state of Nebraska participated in the second annual Adventure Camp about the Environment (ACE). ACE was held at the State 4-H Youth Camp near Halsey June 5th-8th. The camp was sponsored and organized by Nebraska Natural Resources Districts (NRDs) and the Nebraska Association of Resources Districts (NARD). The four-day adventure drew 30 campers from across the state; many of the campers had scholarships from their local NRD. The camp focused on increasing knowledge about water resources, soil and land, forestry, rangeland and wildlife.

During the ACE, campers had the opportunity to roll up their sleeves and dig into nature and form a new understanding of the environment through interactive participation. In addition, campers had the chance to experience nature through activities such as canoeing, zip line, water rockets, the water slide and other adventures. Campers also learned about possible careers in the area of natural resources from the professionals who work there every day.



Kyle Yrkoski giving tree planting instructions

“This is a great opportunity for our youth to learn and get excited about natural resources through hands on learning activities taught by experts who are passionate about natural resources” said Larry Schultz, Lower Loup NRD Information and Education coordinator and ACE committee member. “Campers really took an interest in what NRDs do to protect Nebraska’s natural resources and how they can get involved at home and in their communities to protect our resources.” said Schultz.

Nebraska NRDs and NARD partnered with several organizations to help make the camp a success. Partnering organizations included: University of Nebraska Extension Services, Nebraska Natural Resources Conservation Service, University of Nebraska – School of Natural Resources, Nebraska National Forest, Nebraska State 4-H Camp, Chadron State College, and Nebraska Pheasants Forever. For more information about ACE and other natural resources learning opportunities contact the Upper Loup NRD at 308-645-2250 or visit our website at www.upperloupnrd.org.

The Nebraska Association of Resources Districts (NARD), the trade association for Nebraska's 23 natural resources districts, works with individual NRDs to protect lives, protect property, and protect the future of Nebraska’s natural resources. These districts are unique to Nebraska. NRDs 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 conservation and resource management needs. To learn more about Nebraska NRDs visit www.nrdnet.org.

Hunter Safety Class Scheduled for October

Firearm Hunter Education is a program ensuring that safe, respectful and responsible hunters participate in the sport of hunting in Nebraska. This program is mandated by the Nebraska Legislature, administered by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and taught by dedicated volunteer instructors. Students are taught to a set of standards, established by the International Hunter Education Association. By meeting these standards the Nebraska Hunter Education Program is recognized and honored on the entire North American continent.

Everyone born on or after January 1, 1977 who hunts any species of game, game animal or game bird in Nebraska using a firearm or crossbows is required to carry proof of completion on their person while hunting. Anyone under age 12 is not required to carry proof of completion. All hunters must also have a habitat stamp (except for those exempted) on their person while hunting in Nebraska.

The ULNRD has scheduled a hunter safety class for students 11 years old or older. The course will be held in Thedford Oct. 1-2 at the Upper Loup NRD office. **If you are interested please contact the ULNRD office at 308-645-2250.**

Test your knowledge:

1. About how many miles of rivers are in Nebraska?
2. What were the first water pipes in the U.S. made from?
3. In what state does the North Platte River begin?
4. About how many gallons are contained in one acre-foot of water?
5. What river in Nebraska was channelized by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers beginning in the late 1940's?
6. About how many tons of water are there in an acre-foot of water?
7. What percent of people in the U.S. rely on groundwater of drinking water?
8. How much irrigation water would typically be applied on an acre of irrigated corn?

Answers found on page 4

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We are on the web!
www.upperloupnrd.org

Calendar of Events

July

- 4 Holiday—Office Closed
- 14 ULNRD Board Meeting—
Thedford
- 26 Blaine/Thomas County Fair

August

- 1 Logan County Fair
- 4 Hooker County Fair
- 11 ULNRD Board Meeting—
Thedford
- 19 Grant County Fair

September

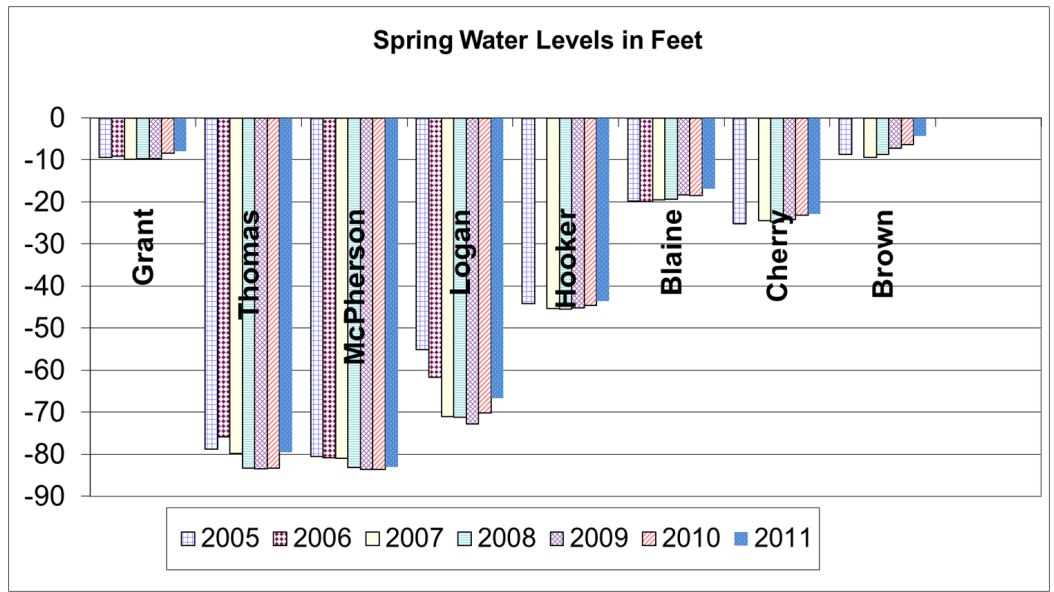
- 5 Holiday—Office Closed
- 8 ULNRD Board Meeting—
Thedford

- Dripal Pursuit Answers:
1. 24,000
 2. Logs
 3. Colorado
 4. 325,851
 5. Missouri
 6. 1400
 7. 50%
 8. About 400,000 gallons

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.

TO: POSTAL CUSTOMER



The 0 on the graph indicates ground level. The graph shows the results of monitoring of 104 wells throughout the District during the last six years.

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 at 308-645-2250.