



Upper Loup Scoop

Upper Loup NRD

January 2014

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Calendar of Events

January

1	Office Closed: New Year's Day
9	Board Meeting: ULNRD Office 3pm CT
20	Office Closed: Martin Luther King Jr. Day
28-29	Legislative Conference-Lincoln

February

13	Board Meeting: ULNRD Office 3pm CT
17	Office Closed: President's Day

March

13	Board Meeting: ULNRD Office 3pm CT
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Attention Groundwater Irrigators in the Upper Loup NRD District

Funds are still available but time to reserve flowmeters is running short.... Flow meters are a valuable tool for providing producers with information about the total amount of irrigation water being applied. With rising input costs and uncertain markets, eliminating guesswork is a top priority for irrigators. Knowing the exact amount of irrigation water applied to a crop through its growing season can aid the producer in making money-saving management decisions. Flowmeters accurately record the amount of water pumped from a well or through an irrigation system. This information can be used to check efficiency, and can serve as a watchdog device by detecting well and pump problems.

Data collected from the flowmeters also helps the NRD determine the amount of water being withdrawn from the aquifer across the district and provide information useful to future groundwater modeling efforts. Due to the increasing demands of water for irrigation it is important that long-term water usage is managed in a sustainable and equitable way. Effective groundwater irrigation management begins with accurate water use measurements. Quantifying the amount of groundwater utilized for irrigation is essential for water and nitrate management. Currently most of the data is manually recorded by farmers which could result in irregular reporting and is subject to human errors.

With help from a Nebraska Environmental Trust Grant, the Upper Loup has cost share dollars devoted to the purchase of flowmeters for producers in our District. Any legally registered and actively pumping irrigation **(continued on page 3)**

UNL Crop Production Clinics

The sixth annual Crop Production Clinics will be held at nine locations across Nebraska in January 2014. The clinics will provide valuable information to help crop producers and agribusiness professionals improve their profitability and safety. The clinics focus on soil fertility, soil water and irrigation management, crop production, ag business management and policy, pesticide safety, and disease, insect and weed pest managements. Additional topics will focus on *Management of Center Pivots for High Efficiency* and *Using Moisture Monitoring Equipment to Manage Soil Water*.

License renewal is available for commercial and non-commercial pesticide applications in Ag Plant (01), Regulator (REG) and Demonstration/Research (D/R) as well as private applicators. Certified Crop Advisors may earn CEUs.

Pre-registration for the 2014 Clinics is \$60. This fee (continued on page 3)

Time to Order Trees for 2014

Do you have enough protection for you and your livestock against the wind and snow? Trees provide important benefits such as sheltering livestock, helping to reduce heating and cooling costs, preventing soil erosion, increase crop yields, and providing wildlife habitat. The Upper Loup NRD offers tree program services including: planning, planting, weed barrier installation or weed control, and drip irrigation.

ULNRD technicians are available to work with landowners to determine the type and number of trees and shrubs needed. If you are needing to work on a shelterbelt plan, the cost for tree planning is free but it needs to be done within the next few months.

The ULNRD provides a 65% cost-share and funds will be distributed on a first come, first serve basis for those practices that meet requirements. Trees and shrubs (excluding small acreage package), planting, weed mulch, and drip irrigation systems are all eligible for the cost-share program. Tree and shrub orders are now being taken through March 31st 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 Kyle at 308-645-2250.

The Small Acreage Package that can be ordered through the Upper Loup NRD contains 10 of each of the following species: Colorado Blue Spruce, Rocky Mountain Juniper, Swamp White Oak, Chokecherry, Skunkbush Sumac. The small acreage package is not available for cost-share. The price for the small acreage package is \$50.00. For more information on any of these services or to order trees and shrubs, please contact Kyle at 308-645-2250.

Spotlight on Soil Testing

Have you ever had your soil tested? Here are some good reasons why you should.

1. Soil testing is an important diagnostic tool to evaluate nutrient imbalances and understand plant growth.
2. Testing the soil provides a basis for intelligent application of fertilizer and lime.
3. Testing also allows for growers and homeowners to maintain a soil pH in the optimum range (6.0-7.0), which keeps nutrients more available to the plant for growth.
4. Protection of our environment for we cannot afford to pollute our surface and ground waters by indiscriminate application of phosphorous or nitrogen fertilizers, for example.
5. Cost savings - Why apply what you don't need? Soil test results provide information about the soil's ability to supply nutrients to plants for adequate growth, and are the basis of deciding how much lime and fertilizer are needed.

When do I soil test? Sampling can be done at any time, but fall and winter 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 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 at 308-645-2250.

CONSERVATION JEOPARDY

1. True or False: Nebraska has more miles of river than any other state.
2. Approximately how many trees are saved by 1 ton of paper being recycled? A. 75 B. 29 C. 17
3. Which river was named for the French word for "flat"?
4. How many gallons of water does it take to make one pound of plastic? A. 3 gallons B. 15 gallons C. 24 gallons
5. What percentage of the earth's water is suitable for drinking? A. 21% B. 1% C. 55%

Answers on page 4

(Attention Groundwater Irrigators continued from page 1) well that was drilled prior to 2008 and is not associated with new irrigated acres for years 2013 and 2014 are eligible. Producers have until April 30, 2014 to install the flowmeter but need to make requests for the meters as soon as possible so that we may properly allocate the funds for the flowmeters. **This is a first come first serve program and only has funding for approximately 30 more meters. The NRD will reimburse you 100% of the actual cost of an impeller driven flowmeter up to \$1,700.00.** As a condition of receiving a flowmeter, the participating landowner agrees to pay for taxes on the meter, installation fees and allow the District access to the monitoring site so that the meter can be read in the fall or at the end of the irrigation season. If you would like to reserve your meter(s) please call our office at 308-645-2250 or contact us by email at abaum@upperloupnrd.org.

(Crop Productions Clinic continued from page 1) includes a noon meal, refreshments, the *2014 Guide for Weed Management in Nebraska* and the *2014 Crop Production Clinic Proceedings*.

Online registration is strongly encouraged. On-site/day-of registration will be \$75. Registration is available online (credit card or invoice) or at the door (cash, check or credit card \$75). On-site registration is from 8:00-8:45 a.m. Please make checks payable to: University of Nebraska.

The UNL Crop Production Clinic in North Platte will be held on January 8, 2014. For more information and other clinic dates and locations please visit <http://cpc.unl.edu>.

UNL Irrigation, Soil Courses Online

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension provides two online short courses on the topics of irrigation and soils available at <http://marketplace.unl.edu/extension/programs>. The courses combine the convenience and flexibility of online learning with the opportunity to obtain continuing education unit credits. You can sign up at any time and work at your own pace, says Chuck Burr, UNL Extension educator. Formal admission to UNL is not required to enroll in the short courses.

The modules are intended for crop consultants, agency personnel, crop producers and others interested in improving their soil science or soil fertility management and irrigation management skills. UNL Extension educator Keith Glewen adds, "The courses are designed to assist online learners in acquiring new knowledge. This in turn can result in management decisions which have a positive impact on financial and environmental outcomes."

Registration is available online. The registration fee for each course is \$50. "Continuing education credit" credit is available for an additional \$10 per credit with a maximum of 13 credits per course. Contact Chuck Burr at cbur1@unl.edu for details on the irrigation short course and Keith Glewen at kglewen1@unl.edu for information on the soils short course.

Projects in Progress

Attention Irrigators:

Water use reports need to be returned. Please return or call in water use reports by the end of January 2014. If you did not irrigate please let us know that as well. Thank you to those who have already returned reports to us.

Recycle Update

From July 1 to September 30, 2013, the Upper Loup NRD has recycled 44,540 pounds of materials with MDK ZeroLandfill. This amount of materials has impacted the environment in multiple ways. The illustration below demonstrates the positive outcomes that originated from our recycling efforts.

Thank you for recycling!

67 Cubic Yards of
Landfill Saved



89,080

Kilowatts of Electricity Saved

155,890

Gallons of Water Saved



379

Trees Saved

27

Barrels of Oil Saved



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REMINDER

Any time you have a change in owners of any irrigated ground you need to let the ULNRD office know so that we can update our records to provide you with the correct information.

Any time there is a change of ownership of ground with an irrigated well there is also a form that needs to be filled out and turned in to the State of Nebraska Department of Natural Resources. This will also ensure that we have the correct information for our files. The ULNRD office can assist you with this form also.

CONSERVATION JEOPARDY ANSWERS

1. True 2. C. 17 3. Platte River 4. C. 24 gallons 5. 1%