



Upper Loup Scoop

Upper Loup NRD

January 2018

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Calendar of Events

January

1	Office Closed: Observance of New Year's Day
11	Board Meeting: ULNRD Office 3PM CT
15	Office Closed: Martin Luther King Jr. Day
23-24	Legislative Conference Lincoln

February

8	Board Meeting: ULNRD Office 3PM CT
19	Office Closed: President's Day

March

8	Board Meeting: ULNRD Office 3PM CT
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NRD Director Filing Open for the 2018 Election

NRDs are local government entities with broad responsibilities to protect our natural resources. Major Nebraska river basins form the NRD boundaries, enabling districts to respond best to local needs.

Upper Loup NRD is governed by an 11-member Board of Directors. The district is divided into 5 sub-districts; two board members are elected from each sub-district, and one at-large member is elected. Candidates for sub-district board positions must reside in the sub-district for which they are elected; the at-large board member must reside within the boundaries of the ULNRD. Directors serve four-year terms, with half of the Board seats up for election every two years.

Citizens interested in serving on the Upper Loup Board of Directors or learning more information can contact the office at 308-645-2250. Interested persons must file with their local County Clerk by the following dates: Incumbents February 15, 2018 and non-incumbents March 1, 2018.

Upper Loup NRD's Efforts to Decrease Eastern Red Cedar Invasion

The Eastern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) is a tree native to much of Nebraska and is one of the few conifer species that grows well in our sandy soils. Historically, cedar windbreaks have been used in the Sandhills as protection around houses and as protection for livestock from storms. However, it has been rapidly expanding into locations and habitats where it was formerly rare or unknown. When this happens, it can threaten livestock production, grassland, wildlife, water resources as well as public safety from wildfires. Thus, becoming an increasing ecological and economic issue.

Cattle production declines as much as 75 percent after grasslands are invaded by cedars. Cedars shade out grasses beneath their canopies, directly removing grass available to cattle, while also reducing grass health and species diversity. Cedar infiltration also affects the ability to reduce the risk of, and suppress, wildfires. Invasion reduces water availability because of its increased water use and interception compared to range grasses and forbs. Cedar may also change stream and river channels and alter flows.

There are several methods to control or kill cedars that the Upper Loup NRD provides cost share assistance for. Eligible practices include: biological (grazing or insects), mechanical (use of hand methods and or larger equipment), chemical (only those approved by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture may be used, and in accordance with label directions), and prescribed burns (in accordance with NRCS burn policies and procedures). *(Cont. on Page 2)*

(Cont from Page 1) Another option is not planting cedars. At the December board meeting, the Directors voted to discontinue cost-sharing on cedar trees, planting, mulching and providing drip line for cedar trees. The NRD understands that there are some producers that like the cedars and want to continue to plant them. Therefore, the Upper Loup will continue to order, sell, plant and mulch cedars for those producers however, all costs associated with the cedars will be at the producer's expense.

Local Student Wins Conservation Poster Contest with Creative Drawing

(Thedford, NE) The Upper Loup Resources District (NRD) is excited to announce the regional winner of the NACD Poster Contest. In the 7-9th grade category, Sandhills Public School student Miriam Ganoung of Halsey is the winner!

This year, the poster contest theme is "Healthy Soils are Full of Life!". Different grade levels are grouped together from Kindergarten through 12th grade. One winner is selected in every division. Each division is K-1; 2-3; 4-6; 7-9; 10-12. Those winners are sent to the Nebraska Association of Resources Districts state competition. The state winners are then selected to compete at the national competition in Greenfield, Indiana.

Typically, teachers bring the poster contest to their classrooms and encourage their students to compete. But if individual students want to participate outside of the classroom, contact your local Natural Resources District for information. All students K – 12 are welcome to compete.



Tree Orders for Spring

The Upper Loup Natural Resources District continues to sell and plant trees to property owners across the district as it has for the past 40+ years. Anyone wishing to plant trees in the spring should be making plans now. The Upper Loup NRD cost-shares on hand plant orders of at least 100 trees (excluding cedars) or shrubs and machine planted trees or shrubs of at least 200 trees.



Early planning and tree ordering is encouraged for cost share funds, as they are distributed in a first come, first serve basis. The benefits of windbreaks are numerous. They protect your home and livestock, and when planted along cropland edges they increase crop production. Orders are now being accepted for spring planting. Call Shane at our office and he will assist you with deciding which tree species will work best for you, draft planting plans, and assist in filling out the cost-share forms. **The order deadline for**

trees and shrubs is February 1, 2018.

CONSERVATION JEOPARDY

1. What is the name of the most famous geyser in the world?
2. True or false: the process of water in the soil that soaks back into the groundwater supply is known as precipitation.
3. Water can absorb _____ times as much heat as land before changing temperature. A. Ten B. Two C. Five
4. True or false: the four cloud groups are cirrus, cumulus, nimbus and stratus.
5. Which of these forms does water occur in? A. Gas and liquid B. Solid, gas and liquid C. Liquid and solid

Answers on page 4

Clean Diesel Rebate Program

The Department of Environmental Quality's Nebraska Clean Diesel Rebate Program is offering rebates to replace eligible agricultural irrigation pump diesel engines with electric motors.

The application deadline for this program has been extended to 5:00 pm on February 15, 2018.

NDEQ will reimburse 60% of the cost of the new electric motor, installation, and required electrical infrastructure (including electric service line extension) up to a maximum rebate of \$16,200.

The pump engine owner is responsible for the remainder of the project costs (mandatory cost-share). Replacement incentives offered by electric service providers may be used to pay a portion of the mandatory cost-share. No other federal grant funds may be used to cover any portion of the mandatory cost-share.

In order to ensure emissions reductions are achieved through this program, the diesel engine being replaced must be permanently disabled within 90 days of replacement. Replacement projects must be completed by August 30, 2018.

More information and application materials can be found at the following web page: <http://deq.ne.gov/publica.nsf/pages/17-016>

Chemigation and Permit Training

Chemigation is the injection of agricultural chemicals into water flowing through an irrigation distribution system for application to land, crops, or both. Each year several irrigators across the Upper Loup NRD use chemigation to apply fertilizers and pesticides to their fields. With chemigation, the rate of application can be regulated and chemicals may be applied at the exact time needed by plants to produce maximum results. The actual handling of chemicals is reduced so operator exposure is minimized and the chance for spills is diminished.

Before an irrigator can begin chemigation, state law requires a permit to be obtained from the local NRD on an annual basis. Permit fees are due by June 1st and expire on midnight May 31st the following year. Permit fees through the ULNRD are as follows: Renewal Permit: \$30.00, New Permit: \$60.00. Inspections will continue to be made on a three year cycle; new and modified systems must still have an inspection prior to injecting fertilizer or pesticides. Renewal permits and fees are due in the office of the Upper Loup NRD no later than 4pm CT on June 1st.

If you plan to apply chemicals, you must attend one of the courses and pass a written exam to be certified. Certification is good for four years, and the irrigator is required to take a renewal course. Chemigation inspections are required every 3 years. **Training dates are posted for 2018.** Visit our website at www.upperloupnrd.org or visit deq.ne.gov for area dates.

Projects in Progress

Attention Irrigators

Flow meters are a valuable tool for providing producers with information about the total amount of irrigation water being applied. Data collected from the flow meters also helps the NRD determine the amount of water being withdrawn from the aquifer across the district. Effective groundwater irrigation management begins with accurate water use measurements. Jake and Shane will be reading meters throughout the district in the next month.

If you have recently installed a flow meter, please call us at 308-645-2250 so we can send a technician to inspect it.

All high capacity wells associated with certified irrigated acres (whether actively watering or not) must be equipped with a flowmeter. Sub-District 4 (Brown and Blaine Counties) due date is **May 1, 2018**. Sub-Districts 1-3 (Grant, Hooker, Thomas and Cherry Counties) shall be metered by May 1, 2020.

Static Water Level Readings

Jake will be out and about this spring checking static water levels on area wells. Say hi if you see him around!

We Now Accept Credit Cards!

We now accept credit and debit cards! Cards can be used to purchase trees and field guides and possibly more in the future.

ULNRD Staff

Anna Baum

General Manager

Shane Young

Resources Technician

Jake Ginkens

Resources Technician

Leslie Harvey

Administrative Secretary

Jack Brummet

Recycling Coordinator

Desarae Catlett

Information & Education

Pam Petersen

Field Office Secretary

ULNRD Board of Directors

Sub-District 1

Eric Storer

Chris Vinton

Sub-District 2

Judy Ridenour

Tim Andersen

Sub-District 3

Chris Higgins

Miles Maseberg

Sub-District 4

Todd Schipporeit

Connie Cox

Sub-District 5

Tom Johnson

Richard Burnside

At Large

Bobbie Jo Christensen

Cherry	Cherry	Cherry	Brown
1	2	3	4
Grant	Hooker	Thomas	Blaine
	McPherson	5	Logan

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TO: POSTAL CUSTOMER

Upcoming Pesticide Trainings

Certification for private pesticide is needed for landowners buying and applying restricted use pesticides on their land. For more information about pesticides, chemicals and certification visit the UNL Pesticide website at pested.unl.edu

To register for local trainings, call the UNL–Central Sandhills Area office at 308-645-2267.

January 17 - Grant County Courthouse Meeting Room, Hyannis

January 22 - Cherry County Fairgrounds, Valentine

January 24 - Hooker County Library, Mullen

January 25 - Thomas County Courtroom, Thedford

January 31 - Open Bible Church, Dunning

February 14 - Blaine County Courtroom, Brewster

February 15 - Logan County Courthouse, Stapleton

CONSERVATION JEOPARDY ANSWERS

1. Old Faithful 2. False, recharge 3. C. five 4. True 5. B. Solid, gas and liquid