



Upper Loup Scoop

Upper Loup NRD

January 2024

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Calendar of Events

January

- 11** Board Meeting:
ULNRD Office 3PM CT
- 15** Martin Luther King Jr.
Day: Office Closed

February

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

March

- 14** Board Meeting:
ULNRD Office 3PM CT

Tree Orders for Spring

The Upper Loup Natural Resources District continues to sell and plant trees and shrubs to property owners across the district.

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 or shrubs and machine planted orders of at least 200 trees. Anyone who makes a machine planting plan for the 2024 planting season will get their first 100 trees free courtesy of Executive Travel.



The benefits of windbreaks are numerous; they provide protection for livestock, crops, wildlife, and your home. Resources Technician, Justin Sprague, will assist you with deciding which tree species will work best for your needs, draft planting plans, and assist in filling out the cost-share forms. Early planning and tree ordering is encouraged for cost-share funds, as they are distributed on a first come, first serve basis. Cost-share funds are also available for fabric mulch and drip line irrigation which are great tools to help your trees survive. If you are planning on ordering trees, please call our office ASAP to ensure availability and cost-share opportunities.

Help your Trees Grow!

Irrigation can help establish successful tree plantings and helps them become effective windbreaks at an earlier date than non-irrigated trees. Drip irrigation is a common method to irrigate new conservation tree plantings. This method is beneficial as it can help reduce soil evaporation, requiring less water application.

Watering recommendations will vary depending on soil type and weather. Depending on the location, trees should be irrigated with 4-8 gallons of water per week per tree the first year. The amount of water should be increased by 2-4 gallons per week per tree each year in succeeding years. Frequent watering of short duration is not desirable for windbreaks because this tends to produce shallow root systems.

The NRD is now offering planning and installation services for drip irrigation systems. Both of these services are eligible for cost-share opportunities.

District Water Quality Overview

The District is on a scheduled water quality testing cycle that rotates through each of the sub-districts every five years. During this scheduled cycle, the main focus is testing nitrate levels in domestic wells while also performing bacteria tests when requested. These are all important to test for due to the health risks that they may impose. Nitrates in high quantities and prolonged exposure may result in adverse health issues to the general public especially infants, elderly, pregnant or nursing women. The EPA has a standard guideline that is considered safe for drinking water; nitrates should remain in the range of 0-10 ppm (parts per million).

Over the course of the year, approximately 91 wells were tested in Sub-District 3, which was the sub-district scheduled to be tested in 2023. This sub-district includes part of Cherry and Thomas Counties. Our results showed that Sub-District 3 had a manganese average of 0.034 ppm and a nitrate average of 1.05 ppm in domestic wells. Overall, the District averages fall well below the EPA Recommended Guidelines for Drinking Water Safety. The next sub-district in rotation will be Sub-District 4. This includes the lower half of Brown County, the eastern half of Thomas County, and all of Blaine County. All registered domestic wells within this sub-district will be tested to determine the nitrate concentrations.



Pesticide Training Dates

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. Listed below are the counties that are holding training and testing events. To register for an in person local training, please call the UNL–Central Sandhills Extension office at 308-645-2267.



- January 5:** Grant County Courthouse, Hyannis, 1pm
- January 12:** Thomas County Courthouse, Thedford, 1pm
- January 19:** Hooker County Courthouse, Mullen, 1pm
- January 23:** Blaine County Courthouse, Brewster, 1 pm
- January 24:** Logan County Courthouse, Stapleton, 9 am

Hazard Mitigation Plan Survey

Disasters are devastating for communities. Effective mitigation planning can break the cycle of disaster: damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. The ULNRD is currently working on the required 5-year update to its Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) which will expire in January 2025. Hazard Mitigation Plans are a requirement for any community, county, or other eligible jurisdiction to be qualified for FEMA disaster mitigation funding- for up to a 75% cost-share. For every \$1 spent on hazard mitigation, \$6 in post-storm cleanup and rebuilding is saved. A HMP is a community driven document that addresses how communities intend to build resilience and mitigate against hazards such as flood, drought, severe weather and wildfire. The plan sets priorities for mitigation activities that protect people, their property and the environment from the impacts of those hazards.

Public input will be gathered throughout the duration of the plan development through online tools and public meetings. All taxing authorities including the county, communities, and school districts are eligible to participate and provide feedback. Other entities such as healthcare facilities, chamber of commerce, utility providers, businesses, or non-profits can also provide critical input as stakeholders.

A public survey to gather local priorities or concerns from hazards is available at <https://forms.office.com/r/EZrUtrtyTg> . All those completing the survey, and leaving their name, will be submitted for a drawing to win a high grade rain gauge.

The 2024 Election Year is upon us

Citizens interested in serving a four year term on the Upper Loup NRD Board of Directors must file with their local County Clerk by the following dates:

Incumbents: February 14, 2024

Non-Incumbents: March 1, 2024

A seat will be filled in each of the five sub-districts. For more information, feel free to contact the Upper Loup NRD office.

Recycling Reminder

Recycling reminder! The Upper Loup NRD only accepts plastics that have a triangle with a number 1-7 on them. The NRD also accepts aluminum, tin, paper, cardboard, glass, and electronics. Please do not leave any items on the ground in front of trailers or around totes. Please remember to rinse out your recyclables that have any food residue before placing them in the trailers. It is also helpful for trailer space to break down cardboard boxes and empty plastic/tin/aluminum recyclables out of any plastic bags. Caps and labels are okay to remain on items.



Local Poster Contest Winners

One Water: that was the theme in which participants needed to communicate through their artwork for the National Association of Conservation District's Poster Contest. The 2023 theme represented watersheds and their importance to the environment. Participants were asked to create a poster that represented the theme.

The NRD chose 2 student's posters from our District wide contest to compete at the state level competition. Those individuals were Georgianna Rooney (Halsey 4th grader) and Paizley Zutavern (Dunning 8th grader). Congratulations!



Poster by Georgianna Rooney



Poster by Paizley Zutavern

Projects in Progress

Static Water Level Readings

Lexi and Kyon will be out this spring conducting annual static water level checks on area wells.

Learning Center

Don't forget, the ULNRD's Learning Center is available for use! The Center is free to non-profits and schools, donations are appreciated. Call our office to reserve the space.

Flowmeter Maintenance

Reminder, inspect your flow meters for any odd behaviors such as unusual noises or if the meter has stopped. Producers are responsible for flowmeter maintenance and repairs. If you have recently had your meter repaired please call our office so that our technicians can inspect it.

Tree Netting

We have tree netting available to help protect young tree tops from hungry scavengers. Netting is available for 5¢/foot at the NRD office.

ULNRD Staff

General Manager

Anna Baum

Administrative Secretary

Jamie Green

Information & Education,

Resources Technician

Lexi Spurlin

Resources Technician

Justin Sprague

Resources Technician

Kyon Neal

Recycling Coordinator

Earl Rowley

Field Office Secretary

Pam Petersen

ULNRD Board of Directors

Sub-District 1

David Vinton

Vacant

Sub-District 2

Judy Ridenour

John Kraye

Sub-District 3

Chris Higgins

Miles Maseberg

Sub-District 4

Tony Ruhter

Max Fay

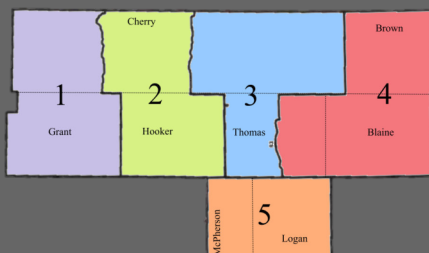
Sub-District 5

Tom Johnson

Richard Burnside

At Large

Patrick Wright



Winter Trivia

1. What is the pigment trees stop producing causing colors to change in leaves?
A) Cellulite B) Chlorophyll C) Chloroform
2. Which tree loses its leaves in the winter?
A) Deciduous B) Conifer
3. A Ptarmigan's feathers will turn white during the winter months.
True or False
4. 70% of Earth's freshwater is locked in glaciers.
True or False
5. In the northern hemisphere, the Earth is closest to the Sun during the winter months.
True or False

Cozy Comforts

Rotisserie Prime Rib

- Prime Rib Roast
 - Olive oil
 - Dry rub seasoning blend:
 - Kosher salt
 - Black pepper
 - Garlic powder
 - Onion powder
 - Oregano
 - Thyme
 - Rosemary
 - Sage
 - Paprika
 - Au Jus
 - Horseradish
1. Remove excess fat as desired from prime rib
 2. Rub generously with oil and seasonings
 3. Secure roast on spit and place in rotisserie
 4. Cook the prime rib 15-17 minutes per pound depending on preference
 5. For medium rare, cook roast until internal temp is 130F and let rest
 6. Serve with horseradish, au jus, and sides of your choice!

Winter Trivia Answers

1. B) Chlorophyll 2. A) Deciduous 3. True 4. True 5. True