



Lower Republican NRD Review

Protecting Lives, Protecting Property, Protecting the Future

FALL 2017

Volume 52



New LRNRD General Manager

The Lower Republican Natural Resources District (LRNRD) welcomed Todd Siel to the staff as its new General Manager on September 1, 2017.

Siel grew up working on the family farm near Franklin, then transitioned to management with Siel Construction Inc., a company his father founded and his family operated for more than 60 years. Early on, Siel Construction worked extensively on many of the land leveling projects which were needed because of the construction of the irrigation canals below Harlan County Reservoir. Later they focused on agricultural development and land improvement, as well as larger commercial projects.

Even though Siel is new to the NRD system and public service, he is familiar with agriculture and the Republican River basin. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science with a minor in Biology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Siel and his wife, Melinda, live in Franklin and have two grown children. Shane, 26, lives and works in Lincoln and Kassandra, 24, lives and works in Franklin.

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 9 — Columbus Day, Office Closed

October 12—Board Meeting 7 pm, LRNRD Meeting Room

November 5—Daylight Savings Time Ends

November 9—Board Meeting 2 pm, LRNRD Meeting Room

November 10—Veteran's Day Observed, Office Closed

November 23—Thanksgiving, Office Closed

December 14—Board Meeting, 2 pm, LRNRD Meeting Room

December 15—RCPP Application Deadline

December 25—Christmas, Office Closed

January 1—New Year's Day, Office Closed

January 11—Board Meeting, 2 pm, LRNRD Meeting Room

January 15—Martin Luther King Jr Day, Office Closed

Range Judging & Land Judging Contests

The Area 3 Range Judging contest, one of six statewide, was held on September 20th near Hayes Center. Eleven schools, from Chase County to Red Cloud, participated bringing over 50 teams. The district schools involved were Arapahoe, Red Cloud, and Southern Valley. A total of 189 students and six adults competed this year. The participants identified 24 individual plants, and evaluated three ecological sites and one ranch map.

Five Senior Division teams from the LRNRD made the top ten with one of the Southern Valley teams placing second overall. The LRNRD also had three Junior Division teams placing in the top ten. A Southern Valley Junior Team placed third. To see the full results from this year's contest, go to <http://www.nesrm.org/RangeJudging>.

The Southwest Region Land Judging Competition was held October 4th near Imperial. It was one of seven contests statewide. 208 students and 11 adults were registered. 48 teams from 13 schools across the region. District Schools who competed include Alma, Arapahoe, Cambridge, Franklin, and Southern Valley.

The contestants evaluated the soil's thickness, texture, and particle size. They look at the slope of the land and determine the possible erosion and flooding potential. They classify the soil based on those and many other factors. Land judging is a great introduction to understanding the balance between the soil, water, and air, and how that sustains the life of plants and animals in the area.

Congratulations to all the students competing. To see the full contest results, go to <https://www.nrdnet.org/nebraska-land-judging-soil-evaluation>.

Spring Tree Planting

Ordering Deadline is March 9, 2018

It is time to make plans for planting trees next spring. The LRNRD cost-shares on tree orders of 100 trees or more and their planting.

The benefits of windbreaks are numerous. They protect your home and livestock, and when planted along cropland edges they increase crop production.

Early planning and tree ordering is encouraged. Orders are now being accepted at your county Natural Resources Conservation Service for spring plantings. They will assist you with deciding which tree species will work best for you, draft planting plans, and filling out the cost-share forms. Check with your local NRCS office now. **The deadline for ordering trees is March 9th.**



NSWCP Funding Available

Funding is currently available in the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Program (NSWCP) fund. Contact your local NRCS office to apply for cost share. Applications will be approved in order of priority:

1. Water; 2. Range; 3. Erosion.

Flow Meter Readings

The LRNRD technicians are currently reading irrigation flow meters in the District. These meter readings will be used to determine water usage from the 2017 irrigation season. If you are not done irrigating or there is a possibility that you irrigated after your meter was read, please contact our office at 308-928-2182.

Please remember that it is the water user's responsibility to have operational flow meters on every well. The LRNRD provides assistance to water users to make sure that flow meters are reading properly. The LRNRD staff is certified and trained by McCrometer to make necessary repairs. Additionally, we can provide ultrasonic testing to assist water users with their water management decisions. Contact our office if you believe your meter is not working properly. Please have your flowmeter serial number handy when you call.

Irrigation Efficiency

Funds Available

We are pleased to announce that agricultural producers in the LRNRD are again eligible to receive funds from the U.S.D.A. Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grant. Interested producers should apply by December 15th in their county NRCS office.

This funding is available for improving irrigation water management, creating wildlife habitat, and reducing soil erosion on cropland.

Within the LRNRD, we will focus primarily on three areas of irrigation improvements; conversion from gravity to sub-surface drip irrigation, permanent end-gun retirement and high-end soil moisture sensors.

Applications are presently being taken through December 15th at your County NRCS office. Contracts will be awarded by the end of February for 2018.

If you have any questions about this exciting opportunity, please contact your County NRCS office or the LRNRD at 308-928-2182.

2017 Allocation Usage

The LRNRD board set a 13" cap on water usage for 2017. There will be a **3 to 1 penalty** for usage that exceeds the 13" cap. These caps were set to control the amount of water used this year in an effort to stay in compliance with the Republican River Compact. Water used this year will be deducted from the inches remaining for the 2013-2017 allocation period. The 2018-2022 allocation period begins next year with a total of 45" divide over the 5 years, with up to a 9" carry over.

LOWER REPUBLICAN NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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LRNRD Fun Facts

How long can a person live without food? one month

How long can a person live without water? one week, depending upon conditions

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Todd Siel: General Manager

Scott Dicke: Assistant Manager

Shirlee Poyser: Administrative Assistant

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