

Lower Republican NRD Review



Protecting Lives, Protecting Property, Protecting the Future

Fall 2021 Volume 67

Public Meetings Planned for Turkey and Thompson Creek Projects

The Lower Republican NRD along with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will hold two public information open houses regarding the preparation of Watershed Plan-Environmental Assessments (EAs) for both the Turkey Creek watershed in Gosper and Furnas counties, and the Thompson Creek watershed in Franklin and Kearney counties. The Turkey Creek watershed meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 16, 2021 from 4:00-6:00 PM at the Hilltop Event Center in Oxford, Nebraska. The Thompson Creek watershed meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 17, 2021 from 4:00-6:00 PM at American Legion Post 328 (Ed Polka Memoria Hall) in Riverton, Nebraska. Additional information regarding the meetings will be posted on the Lower Republican NRD's website, www.lrnrd.org, project-specific websites (www.turkeycreek—lrnrd.org and www.thompsoncreek—lrnrd.org), and other publications and mailings.

The Lower Republican NRD has received funding from NRCS to develop the Watershed Plan—EAs. The purpose of the Watershed Plan—EAs is to find solutions to improve agricultural water management, provide flood prevention, and improve watershed protection. The goal is to establish a recommended Plan—EA for each watershed through an assessment of alternatives supported by the public and NRCS, the project sponsor. Potential projects and alternatives that may be evaluated include, but are not limited to, a large dam, several small dams, irrigation district conveyance structures improvements, and a variety of agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs).

These public information open house meetings are being held to provide information regarding the project, currently in planning phase, and to receive the public's input. All interested persons are invited to attend and present relevant comments and questions. Project information will be displayed and personnel from NRCS, the Lower Republican NRD and the consultant team will be present to answer questions and receive comments. The information "open house" format allows the public to come at any time during the advertised hours, gather pertinent information about the project, speak one-on-one with project personnel, and leave as they wish. A formal presentation will not be included as part of this information open house.

Any questions about these projects should be directed to:

Todd Siel, Lower Republican NRD, 30 North John Street, PO Box 618, Alma, NE 68920; tsiel@lrnrd.org; 308-928-2182

Stacey Roach, Olsson, 601 P Street, Suite 201, Lincoln, NE 68508; sroach@olsson.com; 402-474-6311

Spring Tree Planting

Ordering Deadline is March 4, 2022

Trees offer thousands of benefits like protecting livestock from the harsh winter winds in Nebraska to improving your property by reducing heating and cooling costs. They also provide wildlife with food and habitat while offering them cover from bad weather and predators. Planting trees also improves water quality by reducing soil erosion, stabilizing stream banks and filtering out pollutants.

The most successful tree plantings are those that are thought of long in advance of planting trees. It's especially important to have the site properly prepared prior to tree planting. If the site is currently in native grass, alfalfa, or in a location where trees have been recently removed, tilling the site and allowing moisture infiltration and the soil to mellow will significantly enhance tree survival rates next spring. The site should be tilled at least once this fall and again just prior to tree planting.



The Lower Republican NRD is currently taking orders for trees. Stop in and visit with the staff at your local NRCS office about various options available to you. Whether you are interested in a windbreak or planting shrubs for wildlife, there are trained personnel to assist you with your tree selection and tree plan. We also offer mulch and drip tape to help get your trees established. The Lower Republican NRD will cost-share on a minimum of 100 trees, or if the total cost is \$100 or greater. The deadline to order trees is March 4, 2022 so call your county NRCS office today.

WATER WELL DECOMMISSIONING RATES INCREASE

The Lower Republican NRD recently increased the cost-share limits for our water well decommissioning program. We will pay 75% up to \$750 maximum for irrigation, domestic, and livestock wells. The cost-share for a hand dug well is a maximum of \$1,000. We encourage the proper decommissioning of water wells that are no longer needed or used. Please contact the Lower Republican NRD for information.



Red Oak tree planted in memory of Scot Lennemann in the Lower Republican NRD's Outdoor Classroom.

Range Judging & Land Judging Contests

The Area 3 Range Judging contest, one of six statewide, was held on September 16th in Red Willow County. Ten schools participated bringing over 40 teams. District schools involved were Southern Valley, Cambridge, Arapahoe—Holbrook and Alma. A total of 179 students and 4 adults competed this year. The participants identified individual plants and evaluated different ecological sites.

Six Senior Division teams from the LRNRD made the top ten with a Southern Valley team placing third and an Arapahoe—Holbrook team placing fourth. The LRNRD also had five Junior Division teams placing in the top ten. Southern Valley placed third and Cambridge placed fourth. To see the full results from this year's contest, go to www.nesrm.org and click on Nebraska Range Judging.

The Southwest Region Land Judging contest was held on October 6th in Perkins County. The competition teaches students the physical features of soils. They also look at the slope of the land and determine erosion and flood potential. 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.

District schools competing in this years competition were Alma, Franklin, Southern Valley, and Wilcox-Hildreth. Six district teams placed in the top ten with a team from Alma placing first. For full contest results, please visit www.nrdnet.org/nebraska-land-judging-soil-evaluation.

Congratulations to all the participants.

Flow Meter Readings

The Lower Republican NRD technicians are currently reading irrigation flow meters in the District. These meter readings will be used to determine water usage for the 2021 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 Lower Republican NRD provides assistance to water users to make sure that flow meters are reading properly. Our 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.

If you have replaced your flow meter with a new one, please call our office with the new serial number.

NSWCP FUNDING

The Lower Republican NRD has funding available through the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Program (NSWCP). The program has three major categories: range, erosion, and water conservation and water quality. Some eligible conservation practices include range seeding, critical area plantings, planned grazing systems, irrigation water management, terrace systems, impoundment dams, grade stabilization structures, diversions, grassed waterways and water and sediment control basins. The projects must be designed by the NRCS in your area. The LRNRD cost shares on 50% of the average or actual cost of the project, whichever is less with a maximum of \$5000 per year. For more information on this program, please contact your local NRCS office.

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LRNRD Staff

Todd Siel	General Manager
Nick Simonson	Assistant Manager
Shirlee Poyser	Admin. Assistant/Bookkeeper
Kristi Heft	Water Resources Administrator
Mary Goebel	Water Secretary/Info. & Edu.
Jim Zimmerman	Rural Water Superintendent
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Dave Bantam	Water Resources Technician
Mark Bantam	Water Resources Technician
Deb Klingenberg	Franklin County Office Secretary
Jennifer Helms	Furnas County Office Secretary
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Lynetta Snelling	Webster County Office Secretary

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 10—Board Meeting 2 pm, LRNRD Meeting Room, Alma

November 11—Veteran's Day, Office Closed

November 16—Turkey Creek WFPO meeting 4-6 pm, Hilltop Event Center, Oxford

November 17—Thompson Creek WFPO meeting 4-6 pm, American Legion Post 328, Riverton

November 25—Thanksgiving Day, Office Closed

December 9—Board Meeting 2 pm, LRNRD Meeting Room, Alma

December 24—Christmas Day Observed, Office Closed

December 31—New Year's Day Observed, Office Closed

January 13, 2022—Board Meeting, 2 pm, LRNRD Meeting Room, Alma

January 17, 2022—MLK Jr Day, Office Closed

This is a publication of the Lower Republican Natural Resources District

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308-928-2182 Toll Free: 800-353-1297

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