

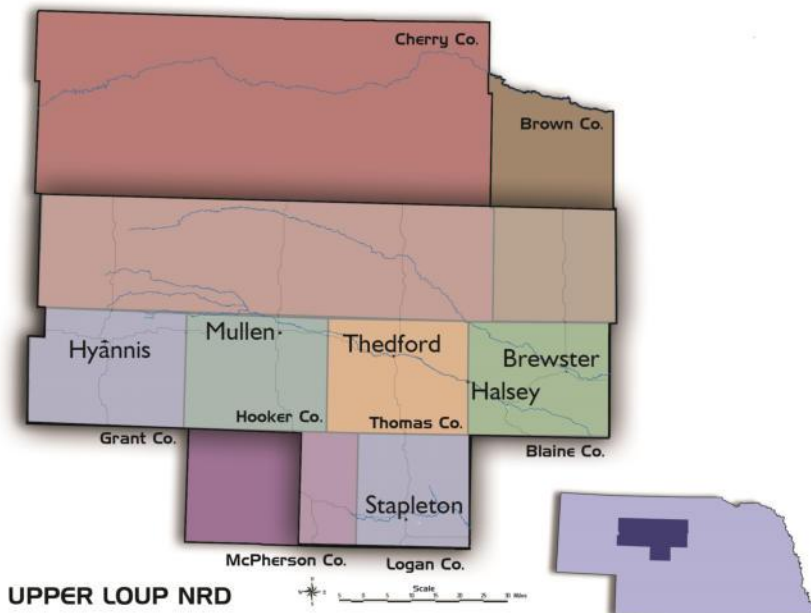
KNOW YOUR NRD



UPPER LOUP
Natural Resources District
Thedford, NE

Nebraska's Natural Resources Districts
Making the Good Life Better Since 1972

Summer 2019



ULNRD Quick Facts:

- ULNRD encompasses 4,275,000 total acres:
 - 91% grasslands
 - 5% open water & wetlands
 - 2% other ag land & barren
 - 1% forested
 - < 1% dryland
 - < 1% urban & roads
- Provides free nitrate & bacteria water testing on 550+ domestic wells across district
 - 135+ groundwater wells checked annually
 - 11 wells with continuous recording
- Collected & recycled 699 tons of material since July of 2010

Soil Conservation and Land Treatment

Conservation is vital to ensure the sustainability of our natural resources. The ULNRD offers cost-share assistance for practices that help reduce erosion, improve forage production, stabilize the soil and impound runoff. Such practices include planned grazing systems, critical area planting, range seeding, noxious weed control, and tree planting.

The District also has two no-till drills available for producers to use. One drill is a 10-foot Great Plains drill and the other drill is a 20-foot.

Wildlife Habitat

The ULNRD assists landowners with the enrollment of a variety of wildlife habitat conservation programs that provide incentives to plant native grasses, shrubs and trees. The District cooperates with the United States Department of Agriculture, Pheasants Forever, and the Nebraska Games and Parks Commission to protect our habitat for future generations.

Working Together

The ULNRD offers several cost-share programs to ease some of the monetary burdens associated with implementing various conservation procedures. We provide cost-share funding for drip wells, WILD NE, yard enhancement plantings, trees for newborns, memorial trees, planned grazing systems, shelter belt plantings, noxious weed control, soil testing and Corners for Wildlife.

Alongside our cost-share programs, we offer these services: recycling, no-till drill, gopher machine rental, deer and small rodent repellent, tree and shrub planting, weed barrier installation, water testing, chemigation permits and inspections.

Programs

Recycling Program

To promote conservation, water quality and waste reduction within the District, the ULNRD implemented a district-wide recycling program in 2010. In 2012, a baling facility was built to house two balers to bale cardboard and paper, and one aluminum/tin densifier to crush aluminum and tin. Collection recycling trailers are placed throughout the district. Materials collected are numbers 1 & 2 plastics, aluminum, tin, paper, newspapers, magazines, cardboard and electronics. In 2019, over 215,900 pounds of recycled material has been collected.

Groundwater Quality and Quantity Management

The ULNRD keeps domestic well users protected by testing their wells annually to ensure the quality of their drinking water. Domestic wells are a primary source of drinking water for many families within the District. Domestic wells are susceptible to nitrate and coliform contamination due to their construction, location, soil type and age. The District's primary soil type is sand. This type of soil allows contaminants to pass through more easily, thus increasing the potential for contamination. Average nitrate levels across the District run well below the EPA's safe level of 10ppm. A district-wide network of 135 plus observation wells is in place to help monitor static groundwater level changes in the spring. Several soil moisture sensors are located throughout the NRD to help producers see the value of irrigation performance through better scheduling and use of best management practices.

Current Projects

The District will complete its 5 year Hazard Mitigation update. Hazard Mitigation means any action taken to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk to human life and property from natural hazards. In addition, the District is in year 2 of a 3 year project that is researching the drought resilience of groundwater springs in the South Loup River. Enhanced understanding of this will lead to more informed water management decisions.

Education

The ULNRD believes that education is the key to protecting the future of natural resources and strives to provide the latest information to both adults and youth. The District provides presentations for any school or community organization. These presentations can focus on a variety of topics such as water, wildlife, pollution, forestry, land treatment, and other conservation topics.

The ULNRD partners with other districts to hold the Adventure Camp about the Environment (ACE Camp). This year marked the tenth annual ACE Camp. ACE Camp provides middle school students a fun environment to learn more about soils, water, forestry, wildlife and range. The District also provides scholarships for ACE Camp, Nebraska Youth Range Camp, as well as assisting Land and Range Judging contests. Other educational opportunities are available for district students and educators such as hunter and boater safety, and a resource library. In Spring of 2019, the construction of ULNRD's Learning Center and Meeting Room was completed. The Center is available for use for non-profit organizations, schools, etc.



Nebraska's NRD'S

- Protecting Lives
- Protecting Property
- Protecting the Future

NRD's were created by the Nebraska Legislature in 1972. They were formed using Nebraska's 13 major river basins. While all NRD's share a common set of responsibilities, each district is governed by its own locally elected board of directors. Each district sets its priorities and develops programs that best serve local needs.

The ULNRD is dedicated to the conservation, preservation, and wise use of natural resources. We are based in Thedford and cover eight counties in the Sandhills with a population under 5,000. We are governed by 11 elected directors. The NRD and its programs are locally funded through property taxes and customer sales. ULNRD continues to maintain a responsible budget to lessen the property tax burdens of its constituents. For example, on a property valued at \$50,000 the ULNRD's share is \$12.50 per year.

Concerned about your natural resources? So are we. Give us a call or stop by our office and visit with us about your needs. Find out more about Nebraska's NRD's at www.nrdnet.org