

Nebraska's NRDs . . .

Protecting Lives, Protecting Property, Protecting the Future.

IN THE LOUP is a publication of the Lower Loup Natural Resources District. It is published quarterly by the LLNRD and is distributed to the residents of the 16 counties that make up the District. IN THE LOUP is edited by Alan J. Bartels, Information & Education Coordinator.

2022-2023 Conservation Tree Sales

Conservation tree sales have begun in the Lower Loup NRD. Planning for trees can start at your local NRCS office. You may also order trees online at www.llnrd.org. For more information, call (308) 728-3221.

Lower Loup Natural Resources District Tree Order Form

Conifers

- ___ Austrian Pine
- ___ Black Hills Spruce (6 cu. in. contain.)
- ___ Black Hills Spruce (20 cu. in. contain.)
- ___ Colorado Blue Spruce (bare root)
- ___ Colorado Blue Spruce (6 cu. in. contain.)
- ___ Eastern Redcedar
- ___ Jack Pine
- ___ Norway Spruce
- ___ Ponderosa Pine (6 cu. in. container)
- ___ Ponderosa Pine (20 cu. in. container)
- ___ Ponderosa Pine (bare root)
- ___ Rocky Mountain Juniper
- ___ South Western White Pine

Broadleaves

- ___ Black Walnut
- ___ Bur Oak
- ___ Bur Oak (20 cu. in. cont.)
- ___ Cottonwood (Hybrid)
- ___ Cottonwood (Native)
- ___ Crabapple
- ___ Hackberry
- ___ Honeylocust
- ___ Manchurian Apricot
- ___ Red Oak
- ___ Silver Maple
- ___ Swamp White Oak

Shrubs (Cont.)

- ___ Elderberry
- ___ False Indigo
- ___ Golden Currant
- ___ Hazelnut
- ___ McKenzie Chokeberry
- ___ Nanking Cherry
- ___ Red Osier Dogwood
- ___ Sandcherry
- ___ Serviceberry
- ___ Skunkbush Sumac
- ___ Vilosa Lilac

Small Acreage Packages
(\$65 per package)

- ___ West
- ___ East
- ___ Flowering
- ___ Wildlife
- ___ Total trees ordered x \$1.10
- ___ Small Acreage Packages
- ___ An invoice with order total, including state and local sales tax, will be sent when order is received.

Shrubs

- ___ American Plum
- ___ Amur Maple
- ___ Buffaloberry
- ___ Caragana
- ___ Common Lilac
- ___ Chokecherry
- ___ Cotoneaster (Peking)



2620 Airport Drive
Ord, Nebraska 68862
Telephone (308) 728-3221
FAX (308) 728-5669
www.llnrd.org

All trees and shrubs are \$1.10 per seedling plus sales tax. Each species must be ordered in lots of 25. Container trees should be ordered in lots of 20. Container tree pricing: 6 cu. in. \$1.10 and 20 cu. in. \$2.75. Please do not pay for your order until confirmed by your field office or an invoice is received.

The machine planting charge is \$75/100 (minimum charge \$200) plus sales tax. Orders for machine planted trees must be received by April 1st. Spraying is \$45.00 plus \$3.00/100 foot of row. Conservation tree seedlings are not guaranteed.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Zip Code _____ Phone _____

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IN THE LOUP

Fall NRD Field Technician Work

Fall is one of the busiest times for the ag industry. Harvest goes into full swing, the last bit of hay is put up, calves weaned, and cattle are moved to wintering pastures. For NRD field technicians, the transition to fall also marks a very busy time.

During summer, chemigation inspections and irrigation water sampling dominate the work schedule. After harvest, LLNRD technicians begin collecting fall static water levels to assess the overall stress on the aquifer and take end-of-the-year flowmeter measurements. While decisions on groundwater are based on spring readings, fall readings allow an evaluation of how much irrigation and drought may have impacted the aquifer going into winter. Flowmeter totals allow

the LLNRD and producers utilizing this essential tool to assess how crop growth and yield compares to the amount of irrigation used, and allows for year-to-year analysis of irrigation. Additionally, more cover crops are being planted across the LLNRD and much of that is grown and irrigated in late fall following harvest. At this time, field technicians begin to collect domestic water samples.

This water quality sampling allows the LLNRD to examine if any nitrate contamination has impacted the drinking water supply. Results are mailed to cooperators in late winter. The final task of a field technician is tree sales and assistance with tree site preparation. Fall is the perfect time to prepare for spring



Water Resources Technician Harold Benton sampling a domestic well in Valley County.

plantings of shelterbelts and conservation trees. It's also the ideal time to sign up for cost-share and get orders placed.

NRD field staff are right alongside the ag industry completing essential work to protect our most important natural resources.



Water Programs Specialist Jason Moudry and Water Resources Technician Ken Dawson sample a domestic well in the northeast portion of the Lower Loup NRD.

So as everyone takes to the field to finish up these last tasks before the snow flies, the Lower Loup

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Lower Loup NRD Hosts Land Judging & Range Judging

The 2022 Area 4 Range Judging Contest took place Sept. 21 near Weisvert. Twenty-one schools from the Lower Loup and Central Platte NRDs brought 433 students to the contest.

Cooper Phillips of Burwell won first place in the Senior Division. Cale Buss of Burwell took first in the Junior Division. Sargent and St. Paul tied for first in the Senior Division team results, followed by Burwell, another St. Paul team, and Ord, in second, third, and fourth places, respectively. Burwell, St. Paul, Wheeler Central, and Loup County – in that order – took first through third places in the Junior Division team results, with St. Paul and Wheeler Central tying for second.

Contestants must identify range plants and know their growth habits

and livestock forage value, along with concepts of proper range use, wildlife habitat management, and how to manage rangeland resources.

On Oct. 12, the Lower Loup NRD hosted the 2022 North Central Land Judging Contest near Ord. Seven schools participated. Logan Kershaw and Aiden Cuba of Twin River placed first and second, respectively, in the individual rankings, followed by Gatlin Reiners (Palmer) in third, and Hana Mamot (Palmer) in fourth. In team rankings, Twin River took first, Palmer took second and third, and Ord took fourth. Twin River, Palmer, and Ord, qualified for State.

Land Judging challenges students to gain an understanding of soil structure and land evaluation by

recognizing physical features of soil, determining land capability for crop production, and evaluating proper management practices.

The contests were successful thanks to volunteers and staff from the Lower Loup, Central Platte, Tri-Basin, and Lower Niobrara NRDs, NRCS, University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension, Nebraska State Range Judging Committee, and the State Land Judging Committee.



The Lower Loup NRD and NRCS hosted North Central Land Judging at Aagaard Farm in October 2022.

Updates made to LLNRD's Master Plan & Long-Range Plan

The LLNRD Board of Directors & Staff recently made updates to crucial planning documents that help guide NRD financial, personnel, and project focus. The Master Plan and Long-Range Implementation Plan are required for all NRDs by Nebraska state statutes. General Manager Russell Callan stated that, to qualify for state funding, a master plan must be on file with various state departments every 10 years.

The last Master Plan update

was in 2012. Callan said that the Department of Natural Resources has 30 days to review and comment to ensure that planning conforms with statutory requirements. A Master Plan ensures that any future disbursements of funding go toward additional planning, facilities, works, and programs.

State statutes also require that NRDs update their Long-Range Implementation Plan (LRIP) annually. Assistant General Manager

Tylr Naprstek stated that, like the Master Plan, the LRIP goes through a review period by state departments, the Governor's Policy Research Office, and the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, where comments can be made. Naprstek said these reviews ensure the best available studies, data, and information are considered given the projected 5-year budget used for the plan. Both plans are available at the LLNRD Headquarters in Ord and at www.llnrd.org.

A Message From The Manager

Welcome to the latest issue of "In The Loup," the Lower Loup NRD's quarterly newsletter.

As farmers are busy wrapping up the 2022 harvest, it is time to think about the planting of another valuable commodity: trees. The Lower Loup Natural Resources District began accepting orders for conservation tree and shrub seedlings on Nov. 1st.

Since its founding in 1972, the Lower Loup NRD has sold more than 12 million trees to farmers, ranchers, and other citizens of the District. Because of forward thinking land managers, these plantings are seen within the LLNRD today as mature shelterbelts, stands of trees forming "living barns," wildlife

habitat, and in the landscaping of residences and businesses across the District.

The varieties of trees and shrubs available varies from year to year and supplies of some types may be limited. Order soon to ensure the best availability to meet your needs. Trees and shrubs may be handplanted by the purchaser, or machine planted by LLNRD technicians. If needed, those same technicians can install drip irrigation systems to increase tree survival. Your local NRCS office or the Lower Loup NRD can provide more information on whether cost-share assistance is available.

Seedlings will be available in Spring 2023. Preparing your site(s) now



**LLNRD General Manager
Russell Callan**

will help improve survivability of your trees and shrubs. Preliminary groundwork will inhibit weed growth, conserve valuable moisture, and make planting easier. Site prep may include disking, and application of herbicide and/or rodenticide. Learn more about the LLNRD's Conservation Tree Program at www.llnrd.org.

New Irrigated Acres Awarded Between Middle & North Loup Basins

The Lower Loup NRD has approved applications for over 1,100 irrigated acres to be developed between the Middle and North Loup Rivers. According to Assistant General Manager Tylr Naprstek, this area has seen some of the highest groundwater level increases in the last 50 years. Naprstek said many of these areas have had groundwater level measurements dating back to the early 1970's when NRDs were just getting started, and readings have shown consistent increases throughout that time. General Manager Russell Callan stated these groundwater level increases can be attributed to the network of canals and fields supplied with surface

water acting as an artificial recharge system.

Callan stated that the Board of Directors wanted to utilize this resource in such a way that the agricultural industry benefits from the additional development and impacts of groundwater inundation are reduced. Callan said the acres granted are ranked using a tried-and-true analysis that takes into consideration soil types, topography, stream depletion factor, area irrigation intensity, and the size of each application so that only the best applications are allowed. Prior to certification, new acre applicants must file a

conservation plan with the local NRCS to ensure best management practices are employed and to lessen the likelihood of future erosion impacts. Those receiving irrigated acres are sent certification forms with approval letters. The deadline for certification of these new irrigated acres is July 1, 2023.

