



**LOWER ELKHORN NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT**

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"Strive to improve the quality of life for all citizens of the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District by promoting and demonstrating sound methods of stewardship which conserve, develop and manage all natural resources."

"Equal opportunity employer and provider."

[www.lenrd.org](http://www.lenrd.org)

*Protecting Lives - Protecting Property - Protecting the Future*

To:

**Summer interns help with LENRD projects**



*Kendra Nelson (left) and Kreg Schlautman were summer interns for the LENRD this year. Kendra is from Newman Grove, NE and graduated from Wayne State College with a Bachelor's degree in Biology and a minor in Environmental Studies. Kendra will be working at the Norfolk Veterinary Clinic this fall. Kreg's hometown is West Point, NE. He is currently a sophomore at Northeast Community College where he is triple majoring in Mechanized Agriculture, Agronomy, and Precision Agriculture. Upon graduation in the spring of 2018, Kreg plans to move back to West Point and begin his own business in the Agriculture Industry. Kendra and Kreg assisted with a variety of projects this summer, including the sampling of nearly 300 irrigation wells in primarily Madison and Stanton Counties.*

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Looking for more? If there's something you can't find on the website please send a message to [lenrd@lenrd.org](mailto:lenrd@lenrd.org) and we'll try to help. We will be adding more information, including updates on irrigated acre certification, water sampling results, cost-share information and more.

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Summer 2016



LOWER ELKHORN NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

**Directions**

**Flow meter cost-share available on first-come, first-served basis**

All irrigation wells in the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District (LENRD) will need a district approved flow meter installed by January 1, 2018. The LENRD has received a grant from Nebraska's Water Sustainability Fund (WSF), administered by the Nebraska Natural Resources Commission, to assist landowners with the expense of this requirement.



At their August board meeting, the LENRD Board of Directors voted to allow producers who installed meters at any time after November 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015, to be eligible for the cost-share dollars. This is a change to the original policy. Therefore, cost-share is now available for producers who have installed flow meters on their irrigation wells on or after **November 25<sup>th</sup>, 2015**, or for producers who have yet to install their flow meters.

The LENRD will

provide financial support of \$500 per flow meter. Application for the flow meter cost-share can be completed by visiting your local NRCS office or the LENRD office in Norfolk.

LENRD water resources manager, Brian Bruckner, said, "These incentives are available for producers on a first-come, first-served basis. The maximum payment that a producer can receive is \$5,000 per year for irrigation practices."

Nebraska's Natural Resources Commission approved nearly \$11.5 million in projects

through the WSF, with \$900,000 being awarded to the LENRD for water and soil conservation. The LENRD will provide a match of \$600,000. This will allow the district to have \$1.5 million available for cost-share assistance on irrigation flow meters.

**Note: There is enough grant money to cost-share on 3,000 meters across the district. Therefore, it is very important that producers apply at their local NRCS office or the LENRD office as soon as possible.**

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*New Trail Map for Norfolk Area now available:*

The Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District has a variety of helpful materials available to the public, free of charge. One of the most popular booklets available is the *Backyard Conservation* guide with tips on tree planting, wildlife habitat, wetlands, composting, mulching, nutrient management, terracing, and water conservation. Other brochures available include tree planting tips, maps of Nebraska's recreation areas, a new trail map for the Norfolk Area, and much more.



## LENRD receives grant for conservation projects

The Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District (LENRD) received one of 6 Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grants in Nebraska to fund area projects. The RCPP was created by the 2014 Farm Bill and is administered by the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

The RCPP grant will help the LENRD fund even more projects through the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), including more incentive payments for the installation of irrigation flow meters, irrigation water management, and nutrient management. In addition, the LENRD will offer incentive payments of \$250 per flow meter to producers who are approved for the EQIP funding.

It is important to note that to be eligible for the RCPP grant funds, landowners must first apply and be approved for reimbursement, prior to purchase and installation of the flow meter. Application for the flow meter incentive payment can be completed by visiting your local NRCS office.



NRCS State Conservationist, Craig Derickson, met recently with the LENRD staff to sign the documents for the RCPP grant. Pictured from left to right are: Robin Sutherland, District Conservationist; Derickson; Mike Sousek, LENRD General Manager; Curt Becker, LENRD Water Resources Specialist; and Kristie Olmer, LENRD Land Use Certification Specialist.

Producers are encouraged to sign up immediately at their local NRCS office. The RCPP application period will be available until **October 21**. Contact your local NRCS office for more information.

NRCS State Conservationist, Craig Derickson, said, "NRCS has a long, successful history working with the NRDs. We look forward to working with our partners to help protect Nebraska's natural resources."

## A lower tax levy approved for fiscal year 2017

The 2017 fiscal year budget for the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District (LENRD) was approved by the board of directors at their August 25<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The tax request for 2017 is \$4,390,132. The budget of all expenditures shows a 10.5% decrease of over \$1 million from last year, due to the grant funding secured by the district.

The estimated levy based on the property tax request is 2.401 cents per \$100 of valuation, a decrease of 0.2% from the fiscal year 2016 levy of 2.406 cents per \$100 of valuation. For example, if a person

owns a \$100,000 house, the taxes owed to the LENRD would have been \$24.06 in 2016, and will be approximately \$24.01 in 2017.

The funds received by the LENRD are returned to the citizens of the district, through projects, programs, and studies across all or parts of 15-counties in northeast Nebraska. Some of these conservation benefits include: water quality and quantity programs such as groundwater management, flood control, and nitrate management; as well as erosion control, cost-share to landowners who apply for conservation

practices, recreation areas and trails, urban recreation and community forestry programs, and many other benefits that protect our natural resources.

LENRD General Manager, Mike Sousek, said, "We are working together to create a budget that not only addresses our 12 responsibilities, but that also focuses on improving the quality of life for the citizens across our district. We are doing more with less, by focusing on efficiencies and streamlining processes to protect our natural resources for the benefit of everyone."

## Scrap tire collection was one of the largest

On August 19<sup>th</sup>, a free scrap tire collection was held in West Point at the Cuming County Fairgrounds. Thirty-three volunteers from the local sponsoring agencies were on hand to help unload the tires. 345 loads of tires were collected in 4 1/2 hours, making the collection the largest 1-day event this year, according to Champlin Tire Recycling of Concordia, KS.

Champlin Tire Recycling will process the tires collected during the event. This processing includes repair and retread of salvageable casings, reclamation of tires meeting used tire specifications, and the production of park benches, picnic tables and feed bunks. All other tires will be shredded and stored in Kansas for future projects.

The 10 county collection area included Burt, Colfax, Cuming, Dakota, Dodge, Douglas, Sarpy, Stanton, Thurston and Washington counties.

Funding for this free collection is provided through a grant from the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality. Sponsors for the event were: The Lower Elkhorn NRD, Papio Missouri River NRD, the Loess Hills RC&D Council, the City of West Point, Cuming County, and the Nebraska Extension in Cuming County.



Mike Murphy, GIS Specialist for the LENRD, unloads tires at the scrap tire collection day in West Point.

## Dallas Dorey joins LENRD staff



Dallas Dorey is the newest member of the Lower Elkhorn NRD staff. Dallas started this summer as one of the district's Water Resources Technicians. Dallas grew up in Chambers, NE and graduated from Chambers Public Schools. Following high school, he graduated from Wayne State College. After college, he worked in the private sector for 9 years. The last 7 1/2 years he was employed with the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality. He lives in Wayne with his wife and 3 children. His hobbies include coaching youth sports, music, fishing, and attending his children's school activities.

### Lower Elkhorn River Basin Water Quality Management Plan

The Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District (LENRD) is in the process of developing its *River Basin Water Quality Management Plan*.

Chapters are posted on the LENRD's website for public review, as they become available.

Visit: [www.lenrd.org/water-studies](http://www.lenrd.org/water-studies)