

Improving water quality is the goal of Bazile Project

Located in parts of Antelope, Knox and Pierce Counties, the Bazile Groundwater Management Area (GWMA) has been identified as an area of concern for nitrate levels in the groundwater. Groundwater provides the main source of drinking water for the 15 communities and 16,500 people in the area. High nitrate levels have created a challenge for area communities to provide water for residents under the safe drinking standard of 10 mg/l.

Improving water quality is the goal of the project. Four NRDs, along with the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality are providing funding for the project. Best Management Practices



A rain garden was installed in June at the Lied Lincoln Township Library in Wausa, as one of the Bazile Project's urban demonstration sites. Sponsors of the project are: the Lewis & Clark, Lower Elkhorn, Lower Niobrara, and Upper Elkhorn NRDs; and the University of Nebraska Extension. Funding was provided from the Nebraska Environmental Trust and the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality.

Acre Certification hearing to be held on September 3

On September 3 at 7:30 p.m. the LENRD will conduct its 4th Acre Certification hearing at the Life-long Learning Center on the campus of Northeast Community College in Norfolk.

The LENRD currently has 856 parcels for the hearing. The Board will consider finalizing its determination of certified irrigated acres for those fields submitted. Landowners do not need to be present at the hearing unless they feel the staff's preliminary determination of the land is incorrect.

The LENRD's goal is to have Acre Certification completed in 2017 and after certification is complete, the LENRD will only allow irrigation on certified fields. Staff will soon be mailing follow-up letters for those fields to be included in the hearing and a summary of the hearing process. Staff is concentrating on the western half of the district and plans to have all certification letters sent out by May 2016. If you have not

received a certification letter do not be alarmed as staff are mailing letters one township at a time. The LENRD intends to conduct hearings on a quarterly basis until the board has determined the final certification for all irrigated land within the district

The LENRD also has a new website to view all past certified acres and those preliminary certified acres that will be presented at the hearing. You may view the parcels of land that will be included in this hearing on the district website at <http://map.lenrd.org>. The website has a map showing the locations and information for each parcel. Features include searching by map or tract information, Certification ID, Name, Parcel ID, and Well Registration. Search results identify the owner contact information, Irrigation Source and Method, and the acres.

If you have any questions, contact Mike Murphy at the LENRD office 402-371-7313.

(BMPs) are being funded across the project area. Contact your local NRD for more information.

Along with encouraging the BMPs, various education projects are being conducted across the three counties. Some of this summer's projects included: Nebraska Environmental Trust funds provided cost-share on 31 flowmeters; 30 fields utilized cost-share on tissue analysis across the Bazile GWMA; urban demonstration sites were installed in the form of a rain garden and turf plots at the Lied Lincoln Township Library in Wausa as well as providing pet waste bag dispenser stations for 5 communities.

In June a field day featured a tour of the reverse osmosis plant in Creighton as well as visiting three farms in the Creighton/Brunswick areas. These farm stops showcased producer perspectives on technology to increase irrigation and fertilizer application efficiencies. Various types of soil moisture probes were also featured on the tour.

For more information on the Bazile Groundwater Management Area Project, like them on Facebook or visit www.uenrd.org

Nucor sponsors recycling contest with the LENRD

Nucor and the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District (LENRD) in Norfolk teamed up again this year to create further awareness in the schools about the importance of recycling. They developed a contest in 2013 called, "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle & Beyond." Students in grades K-4 were invited to tell their story about how they recycle, in the form of a poster, video, radio spot, coloring book, song, news column, or any other medium. This year's winners were Erica Heying's 4th grade class from Washington Elementary in Norfolk. The class won a trip to the Tree Adventure at Arbor Day Farm in Nebraska City.

On May 6th a chartered bus carried the children and staff to Arbor Day Farm for a fun-filled day of learning. They toured the farm and were able to enjoy the Tree Adventure as well as the guided trails and tree houses. Nucor also provided sack lunches for the day and each student was given a t-shirt that they wore on the trip.

LENRD Information & Education Specialist Julie Wragge said, "Taking the students to Arbor Day Farm is always inspiring for me. Not only did the students learn a lot about J. Sterling Morton and his legacy, but they were able to use their 5 senses to understand how important trees are to our world. Our goal with this project was to instill the practice of taking care of our own backyards and striving to help others do the same in the future, through recycling and growing green programs."

Each classroom that entered the contest also received 2 recycling bins to use at their school. Most schools have a recycling program and the bins can be used to carry paper and cardboard to the larger bins outside.

She continued, "I am very excited about our partnership with Nucor. This has been an awesome opportunity for the students across Northeast Nebraska. We want to encourage our teachers and students to start thinking about ways they can help their schools and communities become greener and be prepared to tell us in next year's contest."

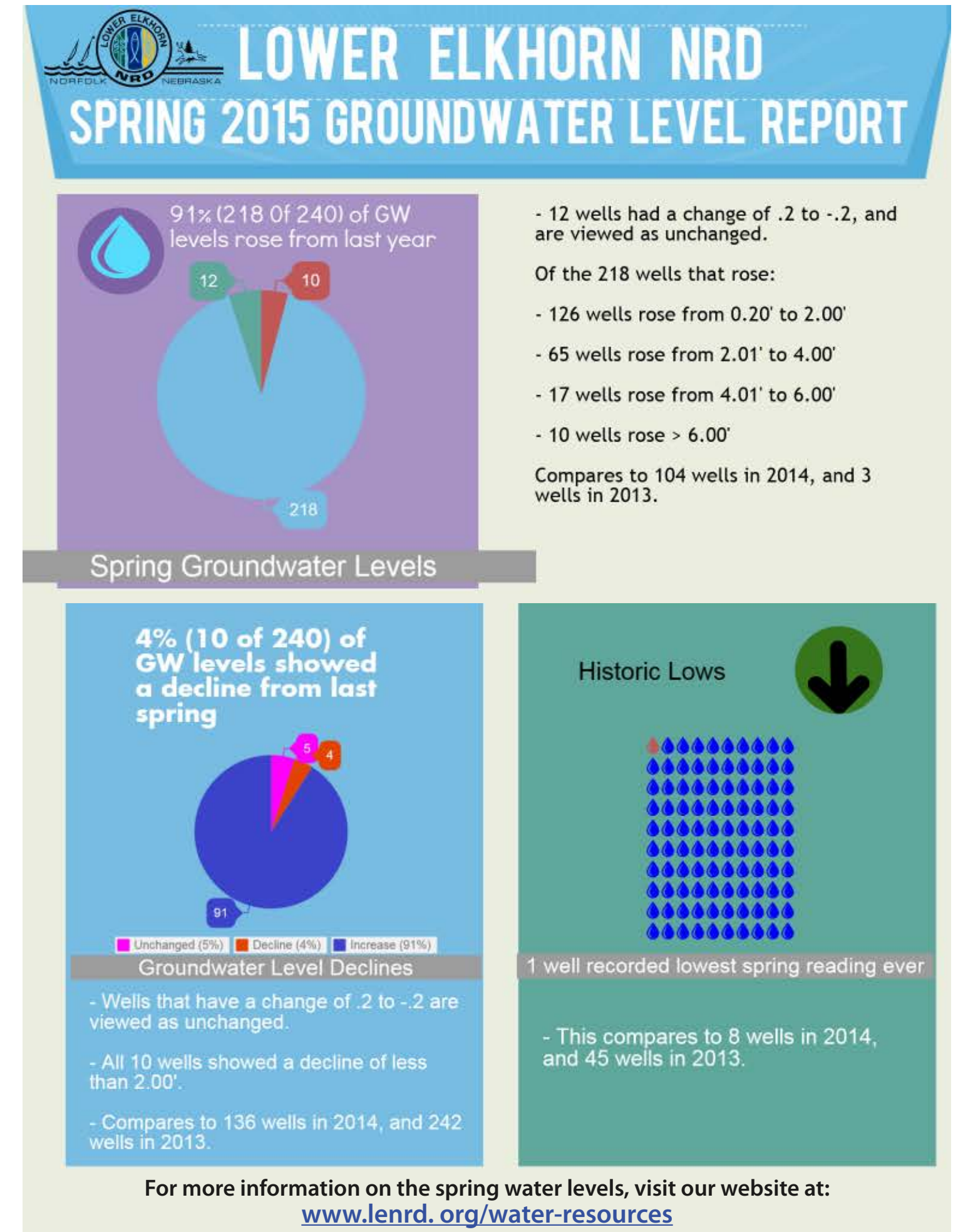


Students from Washington School explore areas of the Tree Adventure at Arbor Day Farm.

New manager, staff join the LENRD



Three staff members joined the LENRD this year. They are from left to right: Kristie Olmer of Madison, Mike Sousek of Wahoo, and Mason Bushnell of Kearney. Kristie and Mason have joined the water resources team and are currently working on irrigated acre certification. Mike is the new general manager for the district. He and his family moved here from Wahoo where he was the rural water system manager for the Lower Platte North NRD.



For more information on the spring water levels, visit our website at:

www.lenrd.org/water-resources