

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



ELKHORN RIVER BASIN

Elkhorn River Basin Facts:

- Population: 106,806
- Total Acres: 4,479,980
- Irrigated Acres: 1,083,725
- Registered Wells: 21,325
- Active Irrigation Wells: 11,080
- Monitoring Wells: 147

The Elkhorn River Basin has conservation tree seedlings available each spring. Contact your local NRD for more information.

Protecting Lives

Protecting Property

Protecting the Future

Bazile Groundwater Management Area Established

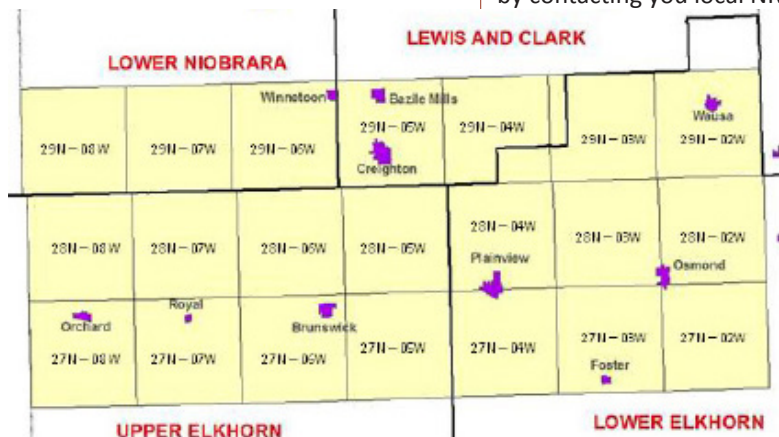
The Bazile GWMA project was developed by local residents along with the Lower Niobrara, Lewis and Clark, Upper Elkhorn and Lower Elkhorn NRDs to promote the use of BMPs and increased irrigation efficiency to curb the rising nitrate concentration of the area's groundwater. The project received grant funding from the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality and the Nebraska Environmental Trust earlier this year to provide the funding for cost-share programs. Funds are still available and applications are approved on a first-come, first-served basis with producers who are not currently practicing these BMPs receiving precedence.

Area producers also have other avenues of cost-share funding to help implement BMPs in their management plans.

Currently the project is looking for sampling sites and interested producers should contact Stephanie at the Upper Elkhorn NRD, 402-336-3867, for more information.

Funding for activities such as well decommissioning, cropland to irrigated grassland or alfalfa conversion and manure analysis are funded through local NRD offices. Funding is also available through the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) through the National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI). Through these programs producers can receive funding for numerous BMPs including cover crops, filter strips and advanced irrigation tech-

nology. The NWQI is a localized program covering an area along the Bazile Creek where producers are eligible for local funding and are ranked only against other producers in the area. The NRCS has approximately \$500,000 to be spent in the NWQI area and that goal has been met for 2015 practices. However, producers will be able to sign up for 2016 practices this coming year and are encouraged to contact their local NRCS office for more details. Detailed maps of the NWQI area can be found online at www.uenrd.org or by contacting your local NRCS office.



Helicopter Flight Data helps to better Understand Groundwater

In October, residents of northeast Nebraska may have seen a low-flying helicopter over areas of the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources District (LENRD).

Instruments mounted below a helicopter collected and recorded geologic measurements to learn more about buried sand and gravel aquifers. The scientific equipment is towed about 100 feet below the helicopter in a 'spider web' array and is designed to map beneath the earth's surface.

The LENRD, along with the Eastern Nebraska Water Resources Assessment (ENWRA), the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, and the University of Nebraska Conservation & Survey Division planned and sponsored the flights. According to Katie Cameron, coordinator of ENWRA, the flights "will improve our understanding of the available groundwater resource and potential groundwater and surface water connections in this area of the state."

LENRD Water Resources Manager, Rick Wozniak, said, "Exploration Resources International LLC. (XRI) will process the data and information, and produce a final report by sometime in early 2015." He added, "We will be very interested in the new data. The technology used allowed them to explore and collect data at the depth of around 1,300 feet."

This fall, the helicopter flew lines spaced 3 miles apart over much of Wayne, Pierce, and Madison Counties and the western edge of Stanton County. The remaining flight lines were 12 miles apart and covered the northern part of eastern Nebraska in the Lewis & Clark, Lower Elkhorn, and Papio-Missouri River NRDs.

Helicopter flights are planned across the LENRD over the next several years.



Your Elkhorn River Basin NRDs

We Care about what you think!
Stop in or give us a call. We are here to work with YOU!

Lower Elkhorn NRD
601 E Benjamin Ave
Norfolk, NE 68701
(402) 371-7313
www.lenrd.org

Upper Elkhorn NRD
301 N Harrison Street
O'Neill, NE 68763
(402) 336-3867
www.uenrd.org

The Upper and Lower Elkhorn NRDs along with several other NRDs and state agencies are working together on various projects to further understand the water resources of Nebraska. The ELM model is designed to study the relationship between ground and surface water as well as aquifer recharge. The ENWRA project will study the geophysical characteristics of the aquifers underlying eastern Nebraska.

Created by the Nebraska Legislature in 1969 with the passage of LB 1357, Nebraska's NRDs began operating on July 1, 1972. NRDs were formed using Nebraska's 13 major river basins to offer local solutions to local problems. Locally elected officials establish District policies to address the needs of our specific area. This unique form of local government assures that the concerns of the Elkhorn River Basin are addressed by the people being affected. Locally led conservation for your future.

The NRDs inform Nebraska's young people by supplying information, education and other outreach efforts. It is vital that future generations understand the importance of securing Nebraska's Natural Resources.

UENRD Expands Phase II Groundwater Management Area

Due to rising levels of nitrate-nitrogen in the irrigation water samples collected by the UENRD, the Board of Directors have voted to expand the Phase II Groundwater Quality Management Areas throughout the district. As of October 1, 2012, anyone farming within a Phase II area will now be required to accomplish a deep soil analysis for nitrate-nitrogen on each field larger than 40 acres with more than 50 pounds of actual nitrogen fertilizer applied; and, submit a Phase II report to the Upper Elkhorn NRD by December 31 of each year as well as continuing Phase I activities. A complete copy of the UENRD

Groundwater Management Plan Rules & Regulations as well as the list of Groundwater Quality Management Area controls is available on the NRD web-site at www.uenrd.org.

