



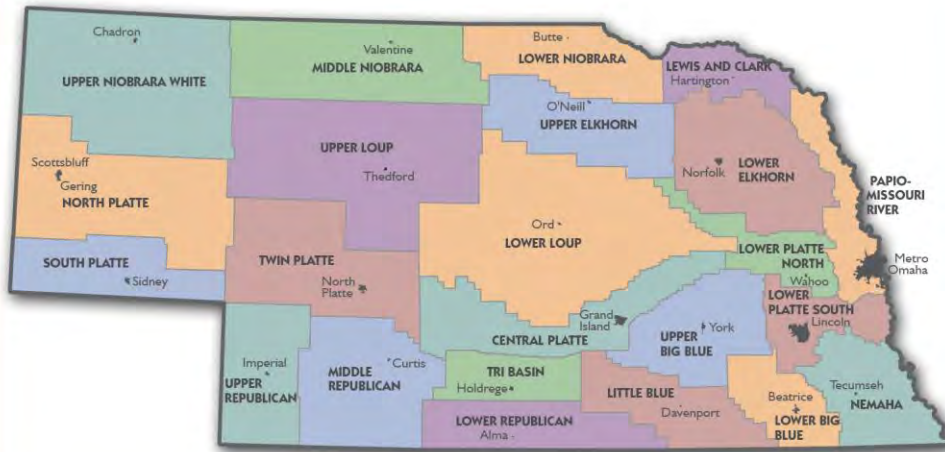
# Nebraska's NRDs

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

## From the Beginning

### NRD Facts

- Nebraska has 23 Natural Resources Districts.
- NRDs were created in 1972.
- NRDs protect lives, property and the future.
- NRDs efficiently use taxpayer dollars.
- To protect lives and property NRDs have constructed or maintain more than 700 flood control structures in Nebraska.
- NRDs have planted more than 60 million trees since 1972.



## NRDs Celebrate 40 Years!

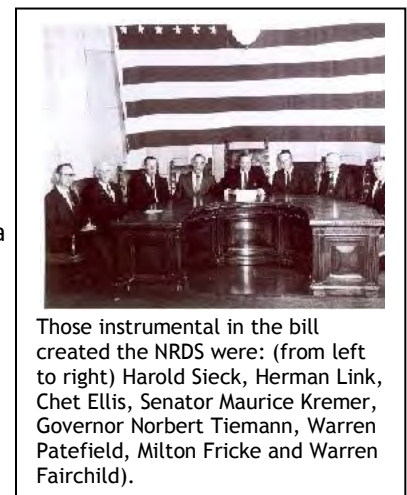
The year 2012 marks 40 years of Nebraska's Natural Resources Districts (NRDs) protecting lives, property and future. Throughout 2012, the NRDs will be celebrating the success of projects and programs that help protect Nebraska's natural resources. Natural Resources Districts are unique to Nebraska because they are governed by locally elected boards and Nebraska is the only state in the union to have this system. A handful of board members, managers and staff have been a part of the NRD system since the NRD creation in 1972.

Senator Maurice Kremer introduced and the Nebraska Legislature enacted Legislative Bill (LB) 1357 in 1969 to combine Nebraska's 154 special purpose entities into 24 Natural Resources Districts by July, 1972. The original 24 NRDs' boundaries are organized based on Nebraska's major river basins which allows for better management practices to be applied to similar topography. In 1989, the Middle Missouri NRD and the Papio NRD were merged into one, becoming the Papio- Missouri NRD which resulted in the current 23-NRD system.

***"For the last 40 years, the 23 NRDs across the state have been addressing Natural resources issues and concerns with local solutions," said Ron Bishop, who has been the manager at Central Platte NRD since 1972.***

Natural Resources Districts were created to solve flood control, soil erosion, irrigation run-off, and groundwater quantity and quality issues. Nebraska's NRDs are involved in a wide variety of projects and programs to conserve and protect the state's natural resources. NRDs are charged under state law with 12 areas of responsibility including flood control, soil erosion, groundwater management and many others.

***"While all NRDs share the 12 main responsibilities, each district sets its own priorities and develops its own programs to best serve local needs and to protect Nebraska's natural resources for future generations" said Bishop.***



Those instrumental in the bill created the NRDS were: (from left to right) Harold Sieck, Herman Link, Chet Ellis, Senator Maurice Kremer, Governor Norbert Tiemann, Warren Patefield, Milton Fricke and Warren Fairchild).

**Nebraska's NRDs: Protecting Lives. Protecting Property and Protecting the Future.**

## NRDS from the beginning. ...

A look at the events that took place in Nebraska and nationwide led to the creation of Nebraska's Natural Resources Districts,

### 1870's to 1910's

- Land agents knew that stores of groundwater lay below the ground in Central Nebraska and used it to attract settlers.
- Nebraskan J. Sterling Morton creates Arbor Day, the first holiday devoted to natural resources conservation.



### 1920's-1930's

- Much of Nebraska and the Great Plains are devastated by the twin catastrophes of the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl.
- The U.S. Soil Conservation Service was also established in 1935.

### 1940's-1950's

- Soil & Water Conservation Districts were formed across the state of Nebraska, county by county.



- Devastating floods during the 1950s caused massive property damage and spurred major flood control projects across Nebraska.

### 1960's-1970's

- The 1960's and 70's, saw a sizeable increase in wells drilled and groundwater being pumped at a remarkable rate.
- *Senator Maurice Kremer introduced and the Nebraska Legislature enacted Legislative Bill (LB) 1357 in 1969 to combine Nebraska's 154 special purpose entities into 24 Natural Resources Districts by July, 1972. The original 24 NRDs' boundaries are organized based on Nebraska's major river basins which allows for better management practices to be applied to similar topography. In 1989, the Middle Missouri NRD and the Papio NRD were merged into one, becoming the Papio-Missouri NRD which resulted in the current 23-NRD system. Natural Resources Districts were created to solve flood control, soil erosion, irrigation run-off, and groundwater quantity and quality issues. Nebraska's NRDs are involved in a wide variety of projects and programs to conserve and protect the state's natural resources.*

### 1980's-1990's

- NRDs create groundwater management plans to protect the quantity and quality of Nebraska's groundwater.
- Because of its value to farmers and urban centers, groundwater is commonly recognized as Nebraska's most precious natural resource.



### 2000 and Beyond

- Water, and effective policies to manage and protect it, is a major focus for the NRDs.
- Nebraska's NRDs continue to play the vital role for local control in natural resources policy.

## The 12 Responsibilities of Natural Resources Districts

1. Development, management, use and conservation of groundwater and surface water
2. Soil conservation
3. Erosion prevention and control
4. Flood prevention and control
5. Pollution control
6. Prevention of damages from flood water and sediment
7. Development and management of recreational and park facilities.
8. Forestry and range management
9. Development and management of fish and wildlife habitat
10. Drainage improvement
11. Solid waste disposal
12. Forestry and range management

## How are NRDs organized?

- All 23 NRDs are organized as governmental sub-divisions of the state.
- Local control is provided by a board of directors, elected by voters within each District.
- Across the state, NRDs offer a major source of assistance—and regulations where necessary—to landowners in conservation and natural resources management.

For more Information about Natural Resources Districts Visit [www.nrdnet.org](http://www.nrdnet.org) or contact your local NRD.