

# KNOW YOUR NRD



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

Fall, 2011



## Studies Lead to Better Decisions

by NRD General Manager Glenn Johnson



A well-conceived study can be a valuable tool in protecting lives and property. The NRD is currently involved in a study of the formation of Platte River sandbars to try and help endangered species. We're studying ecoli levels in streams, new technology for locating aquifers, and we're studying the overall availability of water in the District to protect current agricultural, industrial and domestic users.

The need for a study is always carefully considered, weighing the cost of the study against the value of the needed information toward better protecting our natural resources. If, for instance, the NRD Board makes a series of decisions based on study results confirming high nitrate levels in an areas ground water, it is vitally important those decisions are rooted in reliable, professionally administered research. Having people with appropriate expertise evaluate alternatives helps the NRD Board find the best, most cost-effective solutions.

**Upper Antelope Creek Project** - The first phase (27th to "A" streets) of the NRD's and City of Lincoln's Upper Antelope Creek project, to provide additional flood protection between 27th and 44th streets near Normal Boulevard, is nearing completion. Pictured are new retaining walls along the relocated Billy Wolff Trail. The walls help prevent erosion under the Lincoln Children's Zoo. The final phase of the project includes replacing the South Street Bridge, channel stabilization, water main relocation and sanitary sewer construction between "A" and South streets. Completion is expected late in 2012.

Protecting Lives • Protecting Property • Protecting the Future

### Missouri Flood Leaves Destruction, Lessons

We knew weeks ahead it was coming, so residents and businesses along the Missouri River had time to evacuate AND take their belongings with them; time to beef up some levees and even build new ones in strategic spots; time to plan for the unthinkable. The amount of advance notice and knowing the river would be maintained at record high levels for most of the summer was information flood victims don't usually get. The rest was painfully routine. The flood brought all of the danger, all of the de

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### NRD Budget Focused on Maintenance

The NRD's Fiscal Year 2012 Budget shows a commitment to maintaining infrastructure that protects lives and property District wide. In August the NRD Board approved expenditures and revenues totaling \$30.9 million, slightly more than last year's \$28.9 million. The property tax levy decreased to \$0.039848/\$100 of actual valuation.

The NRD is in the process of closing-out the Antelope Valley project. NRD General Manager Glenn Johnson explained the NRD's ac

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### Subdistricts Reorganized

Changes in the District's population have caused some shifting of NRD subdistrict boundaries. The District continues to be divided into ten subdistricts, each with two elected representatives on the NRD Board. There is also an at-large Board member. The NRD keeps the subdistricts as balanced in population as possible, so some shifting of boundaries is usually needed following each federal census.

In September, the Board of Directors approved changes. The lat

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# Flood Management

## Missouri Flood Leaves Destruction, Lessons

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struction and all of the heartache that comes with every major flood.

Most affected in the Lower Platte South NRD were the communities of Plattsmouth, at the confluence of the Missouri and Platte Rivers, and Lake Waconda, about ten miles downstream. The extent of damage from the three month flood is still being revealed by the slowly receding river, but the total in these two communities alone will be significant.

While the Lower Platte South NRD doesn't manage any Missouri River levees, we do manage hundreds of dams and levees throughout the District. There is much to be learned from the record-breaking Missouri River flood of 2011 about levee design and how they operate under extreme conditions. We're anxious to apply those lessons wherever we can to better protect lives and property.



Many watched from this vantage point, on the east edge of Plattsmouth, as the Missouri River inched its way into town last spring.

## Rich Lodes Remembered



The NRD staff and directors were saddened by the passing of NRD Forester Rich Lodes on September 2nd, after he courageously battled cancer. Rich had served as NRD Forester since 1978. He was also employed by the University of Nebraska. Rich was instrumental in the development of the NRD's Conservation Forestry, Community Forestry and other tree programs and helped landowners plant millions of trees and shrubs throughout the District.

Wherever Rich worked will be more beautiful for generations to come and those of us who knew him as a friend, as a professional and as a gentleman want the family to know he is greatly missed.

## Your NRD Board

Here is a listing of your NRD Board representatives. The Board meets regularly on the third Wednesday of each month at the NRD office in Lincoln. More information is available at [Ipsnrd.org](http://Ipsnrd.org), click on About Us, then Board.

### Subdistrict

- 1 Don Jacobson, W Lincoln  
David Potter, Valparaiso
- 2 Marsha Babcock, Elmwood  
Roger Gaebel, Louisville
- 3 Larry Swanson, NE Lincoln  
Ron Case, NE Lincoln
- 4 Phyllis Hergenrader, SE Lincoln  
Dean Petersen, SE Lincoln
- 5 Greg Osborn, W Lincoln  
Steve Larrick, W Lincoln
- 6 Doug Samuelson, NW Lincoln  
Elaine Hammer, NW Lincoln
- 7 Russell Barger, NE Lincoln  
Richard Bolte, NE Lincoln
- 8 Larry Hall, SE Lincoln  
Ron Svoboda, SE Lincoln
- 9 Larry Zimmerman, SE Lincoln  
Bob Andersen, SE Lincoln
- 10 Ken Reitan, SW Lincoln  
Karen Amen, SW Lincoln

### At-large

David Landis, Lincoln

# Protecting Lives, Property, Future

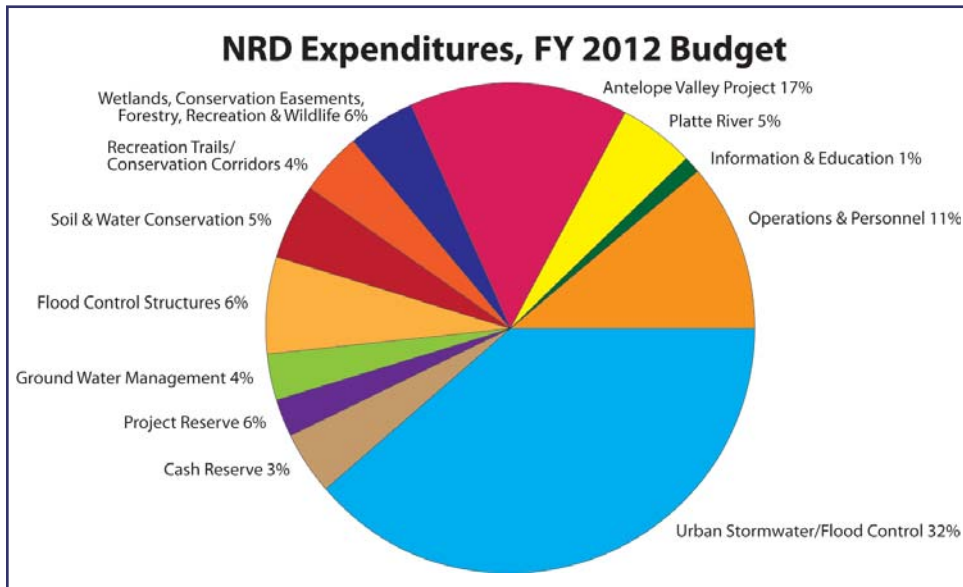
## NRD Budget Focused on Maintenance

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tual expenditures on Antelope Valley “will be very limited during the Fiscal Year, with less than \$250,000 to be spent on construction.” Other Antelope Valley funds in the budget will go to other partners in the project, as the NRD, City of Lincoln and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln balance obligations according to agreements made before the project began. “We’re settling-up with the other project partners,” said Johnson.

It’s No Trick  
to Get Our Tweets!

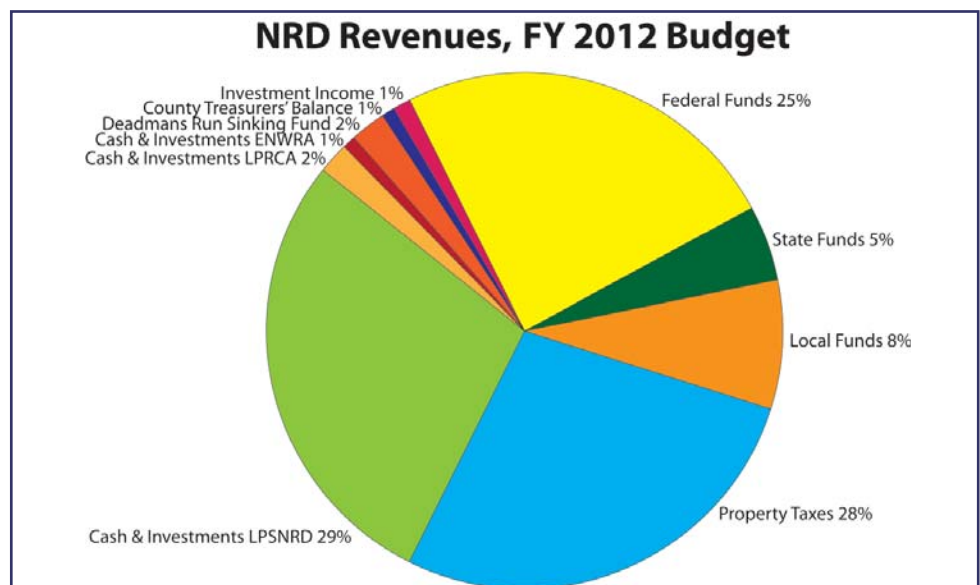
Look for the Lower  
Platte South NRD on  
Facebook and get our  
tweets from LPSNRDEE.



As the NRD moves on from the Antelope Valley Project, some of the nearly 200 watershed dams the District operates are in need of maintenance and upgrading to effectively and sufficiently protect downstream lives and property. Two such upgrades have been completed by the NRD recently; Hedgefield Dam southeast of Hickman and Upper Salt 35-A, just north of Hickman. The NRD plans to try and take further advantage of federal funding to upgrade other dams that now protect businesses or homes that were not there when the dams were built.

In Lincoln, the NRD operates and maintains over thirteen miles of levees protecting homes and businesses along Salt Creek. The District is working with the US Army Corps of Engineers and plans to inspect the levee drainage structures this fiscal year, then make any needed improvements. A sinking fund has been established for future improvements and maintenance of this flood protection infrastructure.

The NRD’s 21-member elected Board of Directors is vitally involved in the entire budget process. As part of that process, the Board offered several opportunities for public input, starting in June, when the first budget draft was introduced. The Annual Budget Public Hearing was held on August 11th. A summary of planned expenditures for the fiscal year is available at [lpsnrd.org](http://lpsnrd.org), click on About Us, then Budget.



# Reducing the Floodplain

## Subdistricts Reorganized

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*NRD Assistant Manager  
Paul Zillig*

est census figures show the District's population up approximately 36,000 in the last ten years, putting the current total at about 314,000. Assistant Manager Paul Zillig said three of the ten subdistricts lost residents between the 2000 Census and the 2010 Census and four gained significantly. The new subdistrict map can be viewed at [Ipsnrd.org](http://Ipsnrd.org), click on About Us, then Board. If, from the map, it is unclear what subdistrict you live in, contact Paul Zillig at the NRD.

## Beal Slough Work Underway

The latest project to help ease the potential for flooding in Lincoln's Beal Slough watershed is along the south side of the Nebraska State Penitentiary. A 100-year storm in the watershed would flood the stream to the point that much of the penitentiary would be under several feet of water. The NRD accepted a bid of \$5.15 million from Commercial Contracting this summer to replace the 14th Street bridge just southeast of the penitentiary, widen the channel, replace a service road bridge with a low-water crossing and remove a railroad bridge downstream (west) from the penitentiary.

Work began in September. Traffic on 14th Street will be maintained (one lane in each direction) throughout the project. Under terms of a federal hazard mitigation grant that was obtained for the project, the



*Work along Beal Slough, near the Nebraska State Penitentiary, began in September and completion is expected in the summer of 2012.*

## Visit & Win!



Six lucky visitors to NRD public use areas won \$100 Scheel's gift cards this summer. Winners in the NRD's Visit & Win! Contest included:

- Celeste Luedtke, Martell
- Scott Luedtke, Martell
- Joshua Masek, Valparaiso
- Rachel Potter, Valparaiso
- Kaitlin Sunday, Lincoln, and
- David Svik, Lincoln

Entrants were required to print entry forms from the NRD web site or our [MomsEveryDay.com](http://MomsEveryday.com) page, then visit at least six listed NRD or related family-friendly recreational sites. We hope the contest enhanced the summer for all participants and made them more familiar with NRD recreational opportunities.

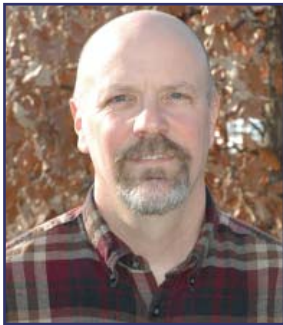
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is paying 75% of the cost. The remainder is being split between the state, city and NRD. The project will result in the penitentiary not only being removed from the 100-year floodplain, but also from the 500-year floodplain, as specified in the grant agreement. Other properties upstream (east), mostly commercial, will also benefit from the project. Completion is expected next summer.

Beal Slough was the first watershed in Lincoln to have a master plan for stormwater management. The plans are developed by the city and the NRD, then the two share costs to complete prioritized projects as funding becomes available.

## Look Out Below

### New Ground Water Phase Areas Added

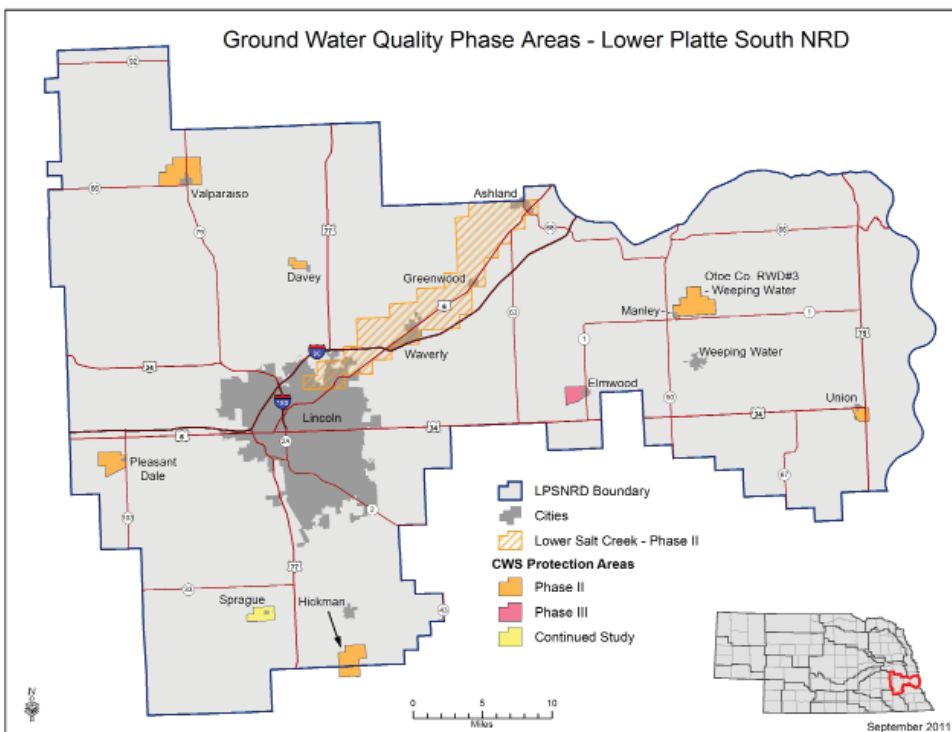
Provisions for two new phased ground water areas have been added to the NRD's Ground Water Rules and Regulations. The additions are part of several changes in the regulations that took effect October first, after a series of public hearings. The Otoe County Rural Water District #3/Weeping Water Community Water System Protection Area is made a Phase II area and the Elmwood Community Water System Protection Area is a Phase III area. The new rules also establish special NRD cost-sharing programs for each, to try and lower ground water nitrate levels. Each cost-sharing package was drafted by an advisory group of water users from within the area. The NRD's three-phased approach is designed to address both ground water quality and quantity issues before they reach federal regulation thresholds. NRD Water Resources Specialist Dick Ehrman said the addition of these two new areas, "are probably the most notable of the new ground water rules." He said the NRD expects to approve rules for several other Phase II areas in the next year, as it continues to establish and work with advisory groups in Hickman, Pleasant Dale, Davey and Union.



*NRD Water Resources Specialist Dick Ehrman*

Another change in the Rules amounts to a makeover for the Lower Salt Creek phase two area. Ten sections of land that were within the Lower Salt Creek were added and twenty other sections were removed. Ehrman said the changes resulted from better knowledge of the geology of the area. The phase two area was first designated by the NRD Board in 2001.

Irrigation certification and well metering regulations that were already in the Rules were slightly modified. Wells throughout the District that pump more than 50 gallons per minute must have meters showing their usage and any land in the District irrigated by ground water must first be certified by the NRD.



## See You in February

The NRD is a partner in a study of Platte River sandbars and how we can use what we learn to help endangered species. Find out more in the next issue of Know Your NRD, February, 2012! You can look for Know Your NRD every February, June and October in these newspapers:

Lincoln Journal Star  
Hickman Voice  
Plattsmouth Journal  
Ashland Gazette  
Waverly News

OR, sign-up to receive an e-mailed link to our electronic version, which features web links, enlarged maps and much more to help you better understand NRD programs and activities. Visit [lpsnrd.org](http://lpsnrd.org) and click on Publications.

A complete copy of our Ground Water Rules and Regulations is available at [lpsnrd.org](http://lpsnrd.org). Click on Programs, then Ground Water.

## Trees For Sale

### Over 300,000 Trees Sold

Each spring since 2002, Nebraska's NRDs have offered a wide variety of seedling tree and shrub species suitable for windbreaks and wildlife habitat. Tree prices are greatly reduced, since all 23 NRDs combine their orders through the Nebraska Association of Resources Districts. The trees are shipped to us in early April, mostly, from the Nebraska National Forest at Halsey. Some of the seedlings come from private nurseries. Once here, the seedlings are sorted into individual orders and stored in our custom tree cooler until landowners are ready to plant them.



*A bundle of 25 seedling conifers is sorted for distribution. The deadline to order seedlings for planting next spring is January 25, 2012.*

In those ten years, the Lower Platte South NRD has sold 318,175 seedling trees through its Conservation Forestry program! The most popular variety has been Eastern Red Cedar, due to its tolerance of many different situations and soil types. Over 30 other varieties of trees and shrubs are offered each year.

January 25th, 2012 is the deadline to order for planting next spring. Each species is sold in bundles of 25 and there is a minimum order of 100 trees and shrubs at \$0.70 per plant, plus tax. See an order form at [Ipsnrd.org](http://Ipsnrd.org), then click on Permits & Forms or contact the NRD for more information about our Conservation Forestry and other tree programs.

## Big Fish?

When you fish NRD lakes successfully, send us a digital photo of your catch. E-mail the photo to [Ipsnrd@Ipsnrd.org](mailto:Ipsnrd@Ipsnrd.org), along with your name, hometown and the NRD lake where you caught the fish, then look for it at [Ipsnrd.org](http://Ipsnrd.org)! Remember to follow all posted regulations.



## NRD Project Update

Upper Salt 35-A Dam, Hickman - Dam just north of Hickman upgraded to federal standards. Completed.

Upper Salt Dam 19-B - 9600 Saltillo Road. Landrights phase. Project to upgrade dam to federal standards.

Beal Slough, 30th & Stephanos, Lincoln - Emergency repair of streambank. Completed.

Salt Creek Levee Undercrossing at Rosa Parks Way - Trail underpass project. Request for design proposals expected to be issued by the NRD this fall.

Antelope Creek Pedestrian Bridge, 25th & Randolph - Bridge installed as part of Antelope Valley Project Completed

Weeping Water Dam 4-J - Dam Rehabilitation, two miles west and 1.5 miles south of Weeping Water. Contract to be awarded in October.

Ash Hollow Dam - Detention dam in Waverly's Ash Hollow Watershed, south of Interstate 80. Design phase.

Northbank Junction - Emergency Salt Creek streambank repair. Design phase by Alfred Benesch & Company.