



LOWER PLATTE SOUTH natural resources district

Know Your NRD • Spring 2026

PROTECTING OUR NATURAL RESOURCES FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

3125 Portia St, Lincoln, NE



402-476-2729

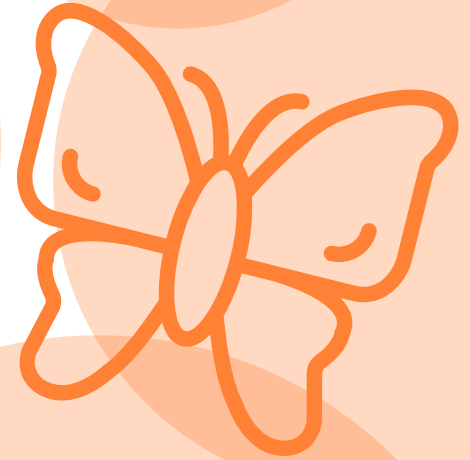
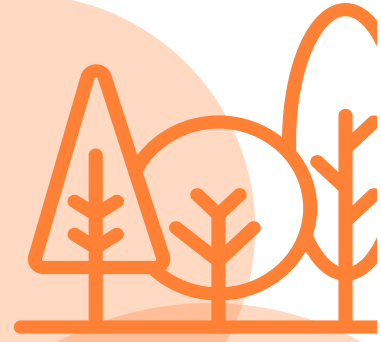
DID YOU KNOW?

Nature Nights

One of our largest Nature Nights in recent years took place this winter at Roper Elementary School, where more than 440 attendees joined us to learn about nature and the environment!

There are several more Nature Nights scheduled this spring. Families from St. Peter Catholic School, West Lincoln Elementary, and Huntington Elementary should watch for a Nature Night flyer coming home with students soon.

We are already scheduling Fall 2026 Nature Nights, so if your school is interested in hosting this engaging and educational event, please check out the contact information below.



MORE UPCOMING SPRING PROGRAMS

Spring Field Trips

Thanks to a Watchable Wildlife Grant received from the NE Game and Parks Commission, the LPSNRD was able to purchase additional boots and nets for the upcoming field trip season! This spring, District-led biology field trips will take place on select days through the end of the school year. Students will dive deeper into shoreline exploration, discovering the diverse species that live in our local lakes, creeks, and ponds.

Arbor Day Program

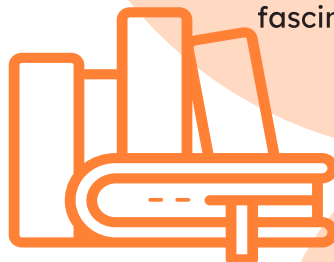
Leading up to Arbor Day, LPSNRD Educators will be visiting elementary classrooms throughout the month of April to help celebrate the importance of TREES! Students and their teacher will each receive a free seedling to take home and plant following a tree presentation provided to the class.



Butterflies and Worms in the Libraries

Lincoln Libraries will be participating in Worms and Butterflies in the Classroom. When visiting one of the eight Lincoln City Library locations, be sure to look for the butterfly habitat or worm bins to explore the life cycle of butterflies and discover how worms break down organic matter to help create healthy soil.

These hands-on displays offer a fun and interactive way to learn even more about the natural world while observing these fascinating creatures up close.



If you would like to participate in any of these programs, please contact Adam Sutton at asutton@lpsnrd.org.

MOPAC STUDY UPDATE

The MoPac Connector Project continues to move forward toward completing the connection from Wabash to the Lied-Platte River Bridge. Despite prior setbacks, the Board of Directors took steps to begin constructing 2.25 miles of

trail east of Wabash on the existing railbed owned by the District. Although the full connection is not yet complete, this represents significant progress. Nebraska Digging, based in Cass County, was awarded the contract to remove trees in preparation for construction scheduled for later this summer. We anticipate this portion of the trail to be completed by the end of this year.

Following recent changes in project coordination, we have identified new opportunities that may provide significant benefits to the State—most notably our partnership with Nebraska Game and Parks to explore connections between Platte River State Park, Louisville State Recreation Area, and the City of Louisville. This alternative has the potential to do more than simply complete the trail connection; it could expand recreational access and enhance tourism opportunities for thousands of park visitors and trail users.

Another recent challenge involves the governor's budget bill, which proposes reallocating funds originally appropriated by the legislature for this project in 2022. The District has been actively working with senators and the Appropriations Committee to support the continuation of these funds. General Manager David Potter spent much of February at the Capitol providing testimony before the Committee.

The District recognizes that the MoPac East Trail is a significant investment in Nebraska's future. This trail promotes economic development by attracting tourism and supporting local businesses, while also enhancing the quality of life for Nebraskans through safe, accessible outdoor recreation and stronger community connections. As part of the Great American Rail-Trail, this project contributes to a nationally significant, coast-to-coast network, and the funds in question are critical to completing the essential link between Lincoln and Omaha. The District remains committed to realizing this connection, a vision that began over 20 years ago.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Here are your LPSNRD Board representatives. Regular board meetings are held the third Wednesday of the month at 5:30pm.

SUBDISTRICT 1

Don Jacobson, SW Lincoln
Gary Hellerich, Valparaiso

SUBDISTRICT 2

David Hibler, Plattsmouth
Mark Spangler, Murray

SUBDISTRICT 3

Melissa Baker, NE Lincoln
Ken Vogel, NE Lincoln

SUBDISTRICT 4

Gary Aldridge, SE Lincoln
Larry Ruth, Walton

SUBDISTRICT 5

John Yoakum, W Lincoln
Suzanne Mealer, W Lincoln

SUBDISTRICT 6

Anthony Schutz, NW Lincoln
Deborah Eagan, NW Lincoln

SUBDISTRICT 7

Chuck Hassebrook, C Lincoln
Luke Peterson, C Lincoln

SUBDISTRICT 8

Christine Lamberty, SE Lincoln
Tom Green, SE Lincoln

SUBDISTRICT 9

Lisa Lewis, SE Lincoln
Bob Andersen, SE Lincoln

SUBDISTRICT 10

Stephanie Matejka, S Lincoln
Susan Seacrest, S Lincoln

AT-LARGE

Dave Landis, Lincoln



The Prairie Corridor at Haines Branch properties showcase the beauty and restoration of Nebraska's native tallgrass prairie across a diverse and expanding landscape. From future trailhead access at Steifel Johnson to the expansive 300-acre Bobcat Prairie, these properties offer opportunities to walk among native grasses and wildflowers, explore riparian woodlands, observe wildlife, and experience prairie restoration in various stages. For more information about these properties, please scan the QR code.



STEIFEL JOHNSON TRAILHEAD

This small parcel of parking lot and prairie will one day be an active trailhead for the future Prairie Corridor on Haines Branch trail. Until then, the spot offers an opportunity to park and take a quick walk around the prairie or enjoy a car-side picnic while staring across a sea of grass.

TWO CREEKS PRAIRIE

Two Creeks Prairie offers an opportunity to explore the tallgrass prairie intermixed with riparian woodlands and flowing creeks. This property holds “islands” of prairies, and prairie enthusiasts get an opportunity to see prairie restoration in various stages. Don't miss the new parking lot recently installed off W Old Cheney Road and SW 77th Street. Mowed access paths help users traverse the area.

DENTON PRAIRIE

Located adjacent to the Village of Denton, this popular birding hotspot offers recreational enthusiasts the opportunity to explore wide-open prairie landscapes in an “urban” setting. This area is popular with bird watchers, with many unique species observed throughout the year. It offers a quick trip through a tallgrass ecosystem.

1871 PRAIRIE

This property, located just SE of Denton, features an expansive reconstructed native prairie in the floodplain adjacent to the intersection of Haines Branch and Spring Creek. This property has over 100 acres of native prairie, with over 100 different native grass and wildflower species. Come out and enjoy the beautiful sights and sounds the prairie has to offer.

BOBCAT PRAIRIE

Bobcat Prairie is an approximately 300-acre property that boasts a reconstructed native tallgrass prairie, woodlands, creeks, and ponds. Various access paths throughout the property make walking more accessible. Come check out the famous “old boxcar” that lies in the center of the property. This area is open to hunting, so please be aware of hunting seasons and respect the space of other recreational users.

TEST YOUR WELL WEEK MARCH 30 - APRIL 3, 2026 PRIVATE WELLS ONLY

Are you concerned about the nitrate concentration in your drinking water?

If the primary source of your drinking water supply is from a private domestic well located within the Lower Platte South NRD boundaries, you are eligible to participate in this event. Private wells are not regulated by the EPA, so it is the responsibility of the well owner to have their well water tested. This nitrate screening service is provided free of charge by the LPSNRD to inform you of the nitrate levels in the water you primarily use for drinking and cooking.

This testing is not for households that are supplied by any public water system, such as the City of Lincoln, Villages, Towns, and Rural Water or Sanitary Improvement Districts. Households served by public water supplies are already conducting monthly tests for contaminants, including nitrate. Why test for nitrate? Nitrate is one of the most common non-point source contaminants in Nebraska's ground water. Nitrate is linked to negative health effects, particularly for infants, pregnant women, and individuals with underlying health conditions.

Nitrate in ground water can be attributed to both organic and inorganic sources. Organic contamination is primarily caused by the decomposition of organic matter, as well as animal and human waste. Inorganic contamination is most commonly due to the leaching of excess commercial fertilizers.

Want to participate?

Collect a 2-cup sample of drinking water from your faucet in a clean, lidded container and bring it to the NRD office between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., March 30-April 3. Drop it off at the front desk and take home your sample number.

Samples will be screened for nitrate the following day, and results will be posted anonymously at www.lpsnrd.org/tywn. Simply match your sample number to view your nitrate level.

If you have any questions, please contact us at **402-476-2729**.



WELCOME SHELLY NIELSEN!

We're excited to welcome Shelly Nielsen, our new District Secretary at the NRCS Weeping Water Field Office!

Shelly brings strong Nebraska roots to the position. She was born and raised on a dairy farm near Syracuse, where she learned firsthand the value of hard work and rural life. That agricultural background gives her a natural appreciation for the work happening every day in the field office.

Shelly and her husband, Wayne, have been married for nearly 32 years and live in Avoca. Together they own Nielsen Trucking. They have two grown children, two wonderful spouses added to the family, and one grandson who keeps life fun and busy.

Outside of work, Shelly enjoys keeping up their property and spending time in her flower beds. She and Wayne also love going on adventures and traveling whenever they get the chance.

UPCOMING SPRING ELECTION

A statewide primary election will be held on May 12, 2026, with polls open from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. The Lower Platte South Natural Resources District (LPSNRD) is governed by a 21-member Board of Directors serving four-year terms, representing ten subdistricts —two directors per sub-district — and one at-large position. This spring, 12 director seats will be up for election, with one being a two-year term. The following directors' terms expire December 31, 2026:

- **Subdistrict #1** – Gary Hellerich
- **Subdistrict #2** – Mark Spangler
- **Subdistrict #2** – David Hibler (two-year)
- **Subdistrict #3** – Melissa Baker
- **Subdistrict #4** – Larry Ruth
- **Subdistrict #5** – Suzanne Mealer
- **Subdistrict #6** – Deborah Eagan
- **Subdistrict #7** – Luke Peterson
- **Subdistrict #8** – Tom Green
- **Subdistrict #9** – Bob Anderson
- **Subdistrict #10** – Susan Seacrest
- **At-Large** – David Landis

Important dates to remember:

- April 6 – Early voting by mail begins
- April 13 – Early voting in person begins
- April 27 – Postmark deadline for mailed-in voter registrations
- May 1 – Deadline for in person voter registration and last day to receive an application for early voting ballots (6:00 p.m.)
- May 11 – Last day for early voting in person at Election Commissioner's Office
- **May 12 – Statewide Primary Election, polls open 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

The LPSNRD Subdistrict Map identifies the District's ten subdistricts and their boundaries. **To find your subdistrict and its representative**, scan the QR code to access the interactive map on our website. Current subdistricts were formed based on population numbers from the 2020 census and voting precincts at that time.

District residents are strongly encouraged to know their subdistrict and take time to learn more about the candidates representing them. Please note that the above listing reflects only the current directors and does not indicate who may have filed for the position.



COST-SHARE CORNER *Summer Land Treatment Programs*

The Lower Platte South Natural Resources District (LPSNRD) is encouraging landowners to take advantage of its Summer Conservation Program, designed to promote conservation work on cropland during the summer months. By shifting more projects to this time frame, the program helps balance contractors' workloads and increases the number of conservation practices completed each year.

To receive the program's enhanced cost-share rate, projects must be

completed between May 1 and September 15. Landowners may qualify for an additional 15% cost-share, bringing total assistance up to 85% of project costs. Funding caps have also increased to \$20,000 in non-targeted areas and \$25,000 in targeted areas. Eligible practices include terrace systems and water and sediment control basins, all of which must be certified by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

To get started, landowners submit an application through NRCS.

Projects are then evaluated and approved by LPSNRD. Once approved, NRCS completes the designwork and the landowner hires a contractor to install the practice. After final verification, LPSNRD issues the cost-share payment.

Participants agree to maintain installed practices for ten years, ensuring lasting conservation benefits. Through this program, LPSNRD continues to support sustainable land management and protect Nebraska's agricultural resources for the long term.

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS' INSPECTION THIS SPRING

The Lower Platte South Natural Resources District (LPSNRD) serves as the local sponsor for a federally constructed levee and channel system along Salt Creek in Lincoln. LPSNRD operates and maintains the system in accordance with its agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

USACE conducts site visits and periodic inspections of the system and will provide LPSNRD with a final report upon completion of this spring's inspection. Prior to each inspection, USACE and LPSNRD hold briefings

to identify completed projects, discuss findings from the previous report, and review additional routine maintenance activities. Inspection results are confidential and unavailable to the public.

Other LPSNRD projects receiving springtime inspections are the District's flood control dams and structures, urban creek channel projects in Lincoln, stormwater masterplan projects, and recreational trail corridors.

Salt Creek Repair Project Underway

A bank stabilization project on Salt Creek in Lincoln will be completed in the spring of 2026. The project, located near 14th and Virginia Streets, repairs erosion and installs rock riprap at the base of the creek bank.



& the Pollinator Safety Corners Program

The Pollinator Safety Corners program is helping make rural intersections safer while creating valuable habitat for pollinators. Through this program, landowners are encouraged to establish short grasses and wildflowers at cropland corners where tall crops, such as corn, can obstruct drivers' views.

By converting 1- to 3-acre corners into low-growing habitat, participants improve visibility for approaching traffic and reduce the risk of crashes

at rural intersections. A one-acre corner can provide approximately 328 feet of sight distance, meeting recommended safety standards for yield-controlled approaches.

In addition to improving roadway safety, the program enhances habitat for pollinators and other wildlife. Participants enter into a five-year contract and receive a one-time upfront payment of \$1,250 per acre, along with a \$75 per acre seed cost-share.

Landowners are responsible for site preparation, establishment, annual maintenance, and weed control.

The Pollinator Safety Corners program is available throughout the Lower Platte South Natural Resources District and offers a practical solution that benefits both drivers and conservation efforts.

For more information, contact Pheasants Forever Biologist John McClinton at 402-423-9683.

A complete list of cost-share programs, descriptions, requirements, and applications can be found at: <https://www.lpsnrd.org/resource-browser> and search the term "cost-share".

TRAILS

- MoPac East Trail
- Homestead Trail
- Oak Creek Trail
- Lied Bridge - Platte River Connection

WETLANDS

- Lincoln Saline Wetlands Nature Center
- Marsh Wren Saline Wetland
- Whitehead Saline Wetland

WMAs

- Bobcat Prairie
- Cottontail
- Little Salt Fork Marsh Preserve
- Little Salt Springs
- Meadowlark
- Merganser
- Red Cedar
- Tanglewood
- Timber Point
- Wild Plum
- Wildwood

EXPLORE YOUR NRD

With spring underway, it is the perfect time to step outside and experience the vibrant renewal of the Lower Platte South NRD. As nature awakens, our scenic trails, glistening lakes, and lush wetlands invite you to explore their beauty in a whole new way.

Enjoy a peaceful stroll, a refreshing hike, or a morning of birdwatching as wildlife returns and wildflowers emerge. Whether you are looking for

a quiet escape or an active outdoor adventure, spring is the ideal season to reconnect with nature. Best of all, our recreation areas are open to the public—no park pass required!

The Lower Platte South NRD is dedicated to preserving our natural resources. Through ongoing conservation efforts, we ensure these beautiful landscapes remain a place of discovery and enjoyment for generations to come.



**SCAN TO SEE ALL OF THE
LPSNRD RECREATION
OPPORTUNITIES!**

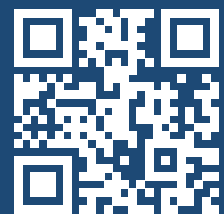
Or visit: www.lpsnrd.org/recreation

Get Digital

Know Your NRD is available in print from district newspapers and electronically by subscription through LPSNRD.org, where you can access district news and other information in a variety of languages. You can also keep up with us by subscribing to our regular email updates.

LPSNRD shall not discriminate based on race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, disability, familial status, veteran status, or marital status in any of its activities or operations.

3125 PORTIA ST, LINCOLN, NE 68521  **(402) 476-2729**



WWW.LPSNRD.ORG