



LOWER PLATTE SOUTH natural resources district

Know Your NRD • Fall 2024



PROTECTING OUR NATURAL RESOURCES FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

3125 Portia St, Lincoln, NE



402-476-2729

EXPLORING NATURE:

Exciting Field Trips & Family Fun with NRD!

As the school years kicks into high gear, we are excited to offer students and families in our District some fantastic opportunities to explore the wonders of nature!

Field Trips to Remember

Between August 28th and November 13th, our dedicated NRD staff will be leading over 1,400 high school students on educational field trips across the District. These excursions promise to be a dynamic departure from textbook learning, offering students a hands-on experience with nature.

During these field trips, students will explore the rich biodiversity of aquatic habitats through dip-netting for macroinvertebrates, gaining firsthand insights into water quality. They will also embark on invigorating hikes through diverse ecosystems, including woodlands, wetlands, and prairies, providing a deeper understanding of different habitats and their interconnections.



Family Nature Nights: A School Community Experience

We are also excited to announce our partnership with seven elementary schools for Family Nature Nights! These special events are designed to foster a love for the outdoors and provide educational fun for students and their families. They are a fantastic opportunity for families to learn together, engage with nature, and strengthen the school community. The NRD works closely with each school to pick a date and time that works best for the families. Then, local resource professionals, agencies, and organizations are invited to set up engaging, hands-on activity stations. These events are very popular and are often scheduled a year in advance. It is not uncommon to have up to 300 students and their families participate! Teachers, PTOs, and students often contribute by hosting their own activity stations, helping with setup and running the event.

We are looking forward to a season full of exploration and learning! Whether it is through our immersive field trips or our school-driven Family Nature Nights, there are many ways to connect with and enjoy the beauty of nature.

Stay tuned for more updates, and we hope to see you out in nature soon!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Shoots & Roots event at James Arthur Vineyards, September 26th from 4pm-6pm

EXPLORE YOUR NRD

TRAILS

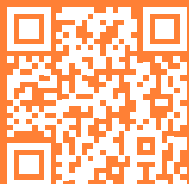
- MoPac East Trail
- Homestead Trail
- Oak Creek Trail
- Lied Bridge - Platte River Connection

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



SCAN TO SEE ALL
OF THE LPSNRD
RECREATION
OPPORTUNITIES!

Or visit: www.lpsnrd.org/recreation

With autumn in full swing, it is the perfect time to embrace the crisp air and vibrant foliage while discovering the hidden treasures of the Lower Platte South NRD!

Our 15+ recreational areas offer a wealth of opportunities for adventure all year round. Whether you're looking to enjoy the serene beauty of our trails, lakes, and wetlands, or you are in search of that perfect fall backdrop for a relaxing day of fishing, hiking, biking, or horseback riding, the LPSNRD has something for everyone.

Best of all, our recreation areas are open to the public, so you can take full advantage of them without needing a park pass! So, why not dust off that old fishing pole, pump up your bike tires, or grab your binoculars? Fall is a wonderful time to explore the natural beauty right in your own backyard.

The Lower Platte South NRD is dedicated to preserving the natural splendor of our district. We are continually working to maintain a sustainable environment through the conservation of land, water, and wildlife, ensuring that these beautiful outdoor spaces can be enjoyed by future generations.



DEADMANS RUN FLOOD REDUCTION PROJECT UPDATE

The LPSNRD and City of Lincoln announced an updated plan for the Deadmans Run Flood Reduction Project designed to reduce costs and mitigate potential flood risk for the community.

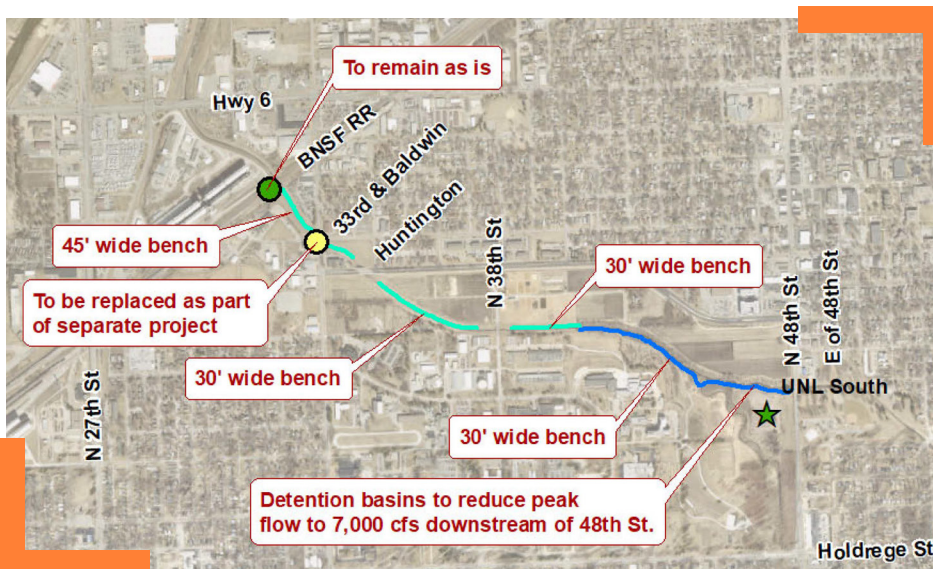
The Deadmans Run Flood Reduction Project is expected to remove an estimated 480 homes, businesses, and other structures out of the floodplain. The project will provide flood protection for residences near North 33rd, North 48th, along with Holdrege Street, Leighton Avenue, and Huntington Avenue. The project was originally proposed and led by the United States Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) and expected to cost \$25.5 million. USACE planned to invest \$10 million and the City and LPSNRD planned to split \$15.5 million for the project. However, due to increased design costs, material prices, and rising interest rates, the original cost of the

project would have needed to more than double to \$60 million to keep the original plan. Under the updated plan, USACE is no longer involved in the project, and LPSNRD and the City will fund the project by splitting costs evenly. Further, the revised plan reduces the total cost of the project from \$60 million to an estimated \$26 million while continuing to remove 480 structures out of the floodplain as planned.

Changes in the plan include not widening the channel as much as originally planned but rather investing in detention basins to help manage flood risks. This new plan removes the need to construct an additional two bridges and reduces the overall cost of the project. The Deadmans Run Feasibility Report was reviewed and resulted in not only decreased costs but a path that will provide the same flood mitigation benefits as before

and save approximately \$34 million. Aspects of the updated project include detention basins, channel widening, and replacement of the 33rd Street bridge. The project is in coordination with the Railroad Transportation Safety District's 33rd and Cornhusker Highway Viaduct Intersection Improvement Project that is expected to improve travel efficiency and safety in the area. LPSNRD Manager Mike Sousek said the LPSNRD and the City will continue to work with Houston Engineering and WSP Engineering on the project. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln is also a partner in this collaborative community project.

Additional community engagement opportunities will be planned in the future. For more information on the Deadmans Run Flood Reduction Project, visit lpsnrd.org/projects/major-projects/deadmans-run-flood-reduction-project.



*Scan QR Code
to Access More Information
on the DMR Project*

HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

The LPSNRD is moving forward in the plan update process of the Multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP). All taxing authorities including counties, cities, villages, and school districts, are eligible to participate as jurisdictions. Other entities such as health care facilities, chamber of commerce, utility providers, businesses, or non-profits can also provide critical input as stakeholders regarding projects and strategies to reduce risk to natural storm events. The NRD encourages all stakeholders and anyone who lives or works within Lancaster and Cass County or the surrounding areas to take the Hazard Mitigation Plan Survey: <https://tinyurl.com/4pn8n9ym>

HMPs identify vulnerabilities and possible impacts and losses to various hazard events such as flooding, wildfire, or severe storms. The plan then identifies projects and strategies aimed at enhancing community resilience and preparedness for specific hazards. The second round of meetings held in

September focused on identifying and evaluating these projects and activities; reviewed information regarding local capabilities and opportunities for plan integration; identified and updated mitigation alternatives to reduce local vulnerabilities; and reviewed previously collected data. Having an approved HMP is a requirement of FEMA for jurisdictions to become eligible for grant funding options. These plans need to be updated and approved every five years to ensure they remain relevant and effective. To learn more, visit: www.lpsnrd.org/survey-lpsnrd-hazard-mitigation-plan-2025-update.



Scan
QR Code
to
Access
HMP
Survey
Online

AL'S RETIREMENT

Al Langdale, Operations and Maintenance Coordinator, will retire at the end of September after 38 years with the LPSNRD. Starting his career with the district in 1986 as a corrections supervisor, Al has steadily advanced through the ranks. Throughout his tenure, he has navigated two major floods in 1993 and 2015 and played a crucial role in numerous significant projects, including the 20-year Antelope Valley Project.

Reflecting on his early days, Al recalls a time when the NRD staff was just seven strong, with a primary focus on flood control. He notes, "A lot of dams were built during that time," and mentions how the MoPac, Homestead, and Oak Creek trails were yet to be developed.

When asked about what he will miss most, Al cited the people of the NRD. We, too, will miss Al and extend our heartfelt thanks for his invaluable service, dedication, and contributions to the district!



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Here are your LPSNRD Board representatives. The Board meets regularly on the third Wednesday of each month at the NRD office in Lincoln.

DISTRICT 1

- Don Jacobson, W Lincoln
- Gary Hellerich, Valparaiso

District 2

- Seth Hawkins, Plattsmouth
- Mark Spangler, Murray

DISTRICT 3

- Melissa Baker, NE Lincoln
- Ken Vogel, NE Lincoln

DISTRICT 4

- Gary Aldredge, SE Lincoln
- Larry Ruth, Walton

DISTRICT 5

- John Yoakum, W Lincoln
- Stacie Sinclair, Lincoln

DISTRICT 6

- Anthony Schultz, NW Lincoln
- Deborah Eagan, NW Lincoln

DISTRICT 7

- Chelsea Johnson, NE Lincoln
- Luke Peterson, NE Lincoln

DISTRICT 8

- Christine Lamberty, SE Lincoln
- Tom Green, SE Lincoln

DISTRICT 9

- Lisa Lewis, SE Lincoln
- Bob Andersen, SE Lincoln

DISTRICT 10

- Ray Stevens, S Lincoln
- Susan Seacrest, S Lincoln

AT-LARGE

- Dave Landis, Lincoln

MOPAC STUDY UPDATE

evaluation. The four alignments were presented to the public in July for a second round of public workshops. Over 160 comments were received from the public during the comment period, providing input on the routes and how they align with community-informed study goals. We greatly appreciate the amount of participation from all stakeholders!

The next steps will be for Cass County and the LPSNRD MoPac Subcommittee to identify one route to bring back to the public for another round of input. This public workshop is scheduled for September 25th at Round the Bend Steakhouse, near South Bend, Nebraska. We encourage those interested to attend and provide feedback as we near the end of the study.

**PHASE 1. DISCOVERY:
GATHER INFORMATION
TO DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING
OF THE STUDY AREA AND
COMMUNITY NEEDS.**

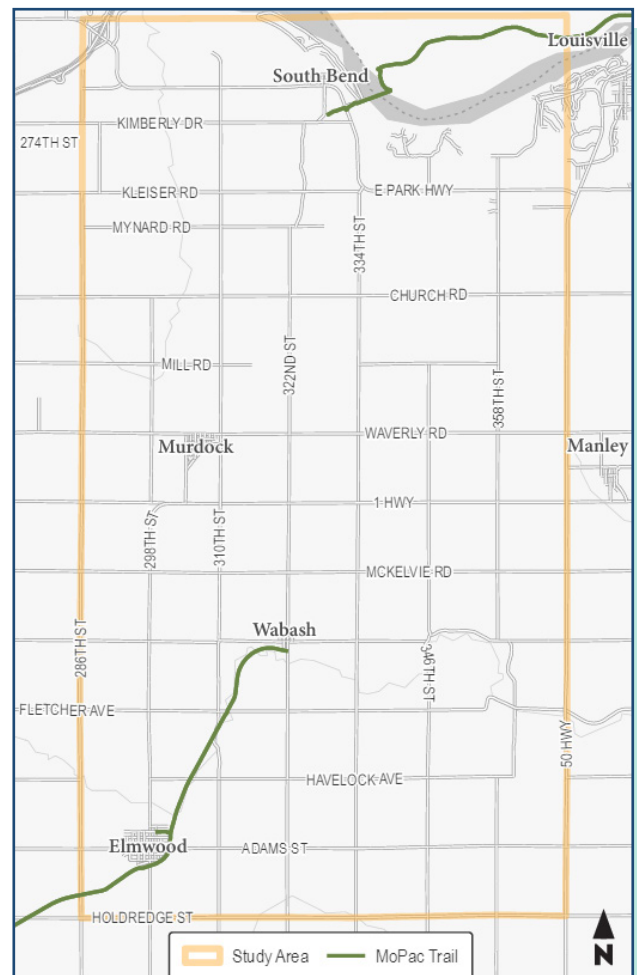
**PHASE 2. ALTERNATIVES
PLANNING: IDENTIFY POTENTIAL
ROUTES AND SELECT UP TO
FOUR OPTIONS FOR IN-DEPTH
EVALUATION AND PUBLIC INPUT.**

**PHASE 3. DOCUMENT PREFERRED
ROUTE: DETERMINE & SEEK
PUBLIC INPUT ON PREFERRED
ROUTE AND PROVIDE FINAL
RECOMMENDATION TO
LPSNRD & CASS COUNTY.**

The Lower Platte South Natural Resources District (LPSNRD) and Cass County are currently working with Nebraska-based JEO Consulting Group and Toole Design to complete a study to identify and evaluate potential routes to finish the MoPac East recreational trail from the Elmwood/Wabash area to the Lied Platte River Bridge.

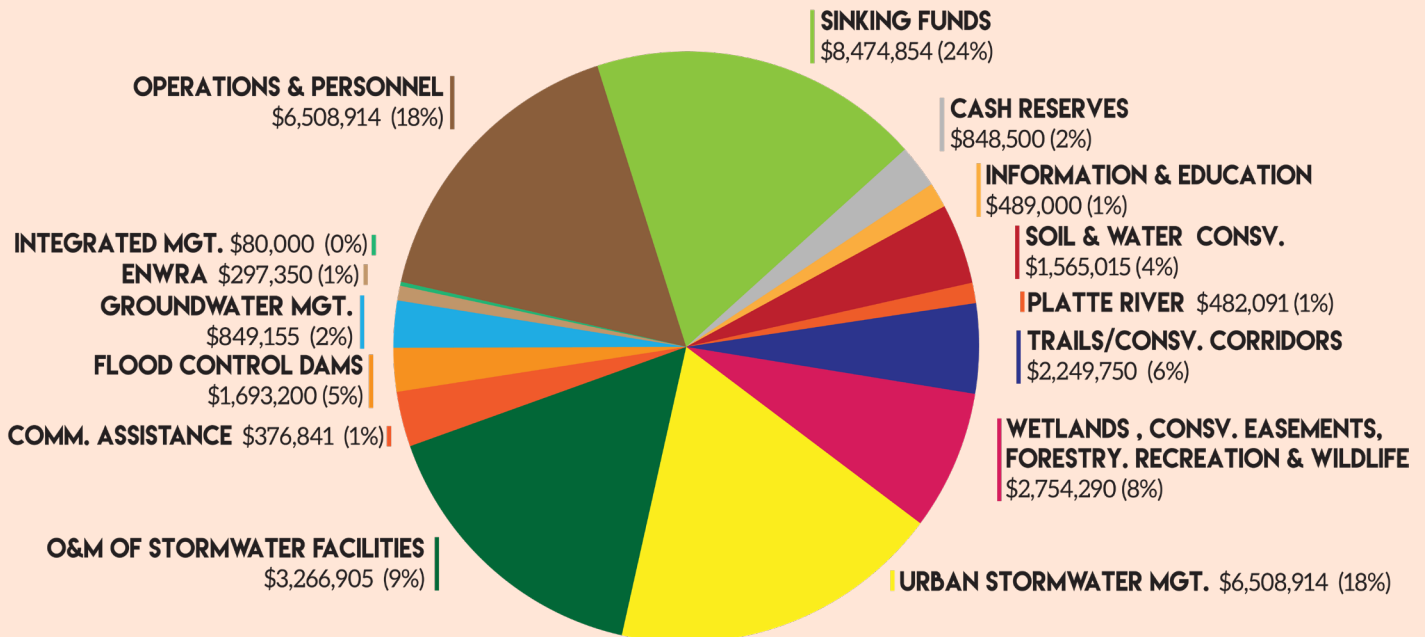
The State of Nebraska has invested \$8.3M to construct the trail connection in Cass County. The trail connection study kicked off November 2023 and is anticipated to be completed in December 2024. Several public workshops were held across the study area to help identify potential community impacts and solutions that balance the interests of all stakeholders.

In June, Toole Design investigated and evaluated corridors that were identified at the March public workshops. From their investigation, four alignments were identified as preferred routes needing further



MOPAC STUDY AREA

LPSNRD 2025 EXPENDITURES



SCAN TO VIEW
THE ENTIRE REPORT ▶



or visit
https://www.lpsnrd.org/sites/default/files/files/83/15_budget.pdf

LPSNRD provides a variety of cost-share programs for landowners & producers. Below is a list of some of these programs, with more cost-share opportunities to be highlighted in future newsletters. In addition, LPSNRD has community cost-share programs for forestry, trails, flood control, stream stabilization, etc. A complete list of cost-share programs, descriptions, requirements, and applications can be found at:

<https://www.lpsnrd.org/programs/landowner-cost-share>

Spring Nitrogen Application Program (SNAP) This program promotes the best management practice of applying fertilizers to cash crops in the spring, closer to planting time. The deadline to apply for the spring application cost-share opportunity is November 15th of the year prior to spring fertilizer application. A field is eligible for this cost-share if it has not been fall and/or winter fertilized. Contact LPS staff for additional information.

Cover Crop Program The District will cost-share with producers in selected areas up to 80 acres and up to \$2,500 per producer (tenant or owner) to plant cover crops. Contact your NRCS Field Office to check your eligibility and apply. The application deadline is October 1st of each year.

Terraces, Grassed Waterways, Diversions & Basins This program will assist landowners with the planning, design, and cost of installing soil and water conservation practices on their property. These practices will reduce the loss of topsoil and control small gullies that contribute to the siltation of streams and lakes. LPSNRD will reimburse the landowner for a portion of the installation cost paying a cost-share unit percentage that is typically 60% of the average LPSNRD cost or 75% of the actual cost, whichever is less. The maximum amount for untargeted areas is \$15,000 and in targeted areas the average unit cost-share is increased to 75% with a maximum amount of \$20,000. Our summer cost-share program (May 1st to September 15th) is set at a higher percentage and maximum amount. Contact your NRCS Field Office for more information and to apply.

COST-SHARE CORNER



ENVIROMENTAL EDUCATION ASSISTANTS



From left to right; Thomas Wheeldon, Zoe Edlund, Charlie Stansbery, Grace Belter, Kylie Mangers, Maddie Thompson. Not Pictured; Nia Kaufman, Sophia Rojas.

NEW EMPLOYEES



Jodi Delozier
Communications Coordinator
& Adult Enviromental Education



Eric Zach
Resources
Conservationist

SUMMER HELP



From left to right; Emerson Dolph, Criston Pena, Kylie Mangers, Dillon Beachy, Ryker Starr.



Aaron Clare
NRD
Forester



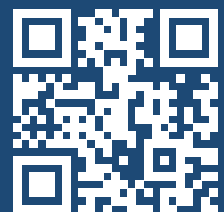
Sam Elofson
Public Communications
Specialist

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 regulaurlly by subscribing to our monthly emailed updates.

LPSNRD shall not discriminate because of 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