

# IN THE LOUP

## New Irrigated Acres Approved for 2019

Applications for new irrigated acres in three river basins in the Lower Loup Natural Resources District in 2019 will be accepted from land-owners in the NRD September 1-20, 2018.

The Lower Loup NRD Board of Directors approved the new irrigation at its meeting July 26th. In the North Loup Basin, 1,250 irrigated acres will be granted; in the Middle Loup Basin, 500 acres will be offered; and in the Plum Creek, Beaver Creek and lower portion of the Loup Basins, 750 new irrigated acres will be available.

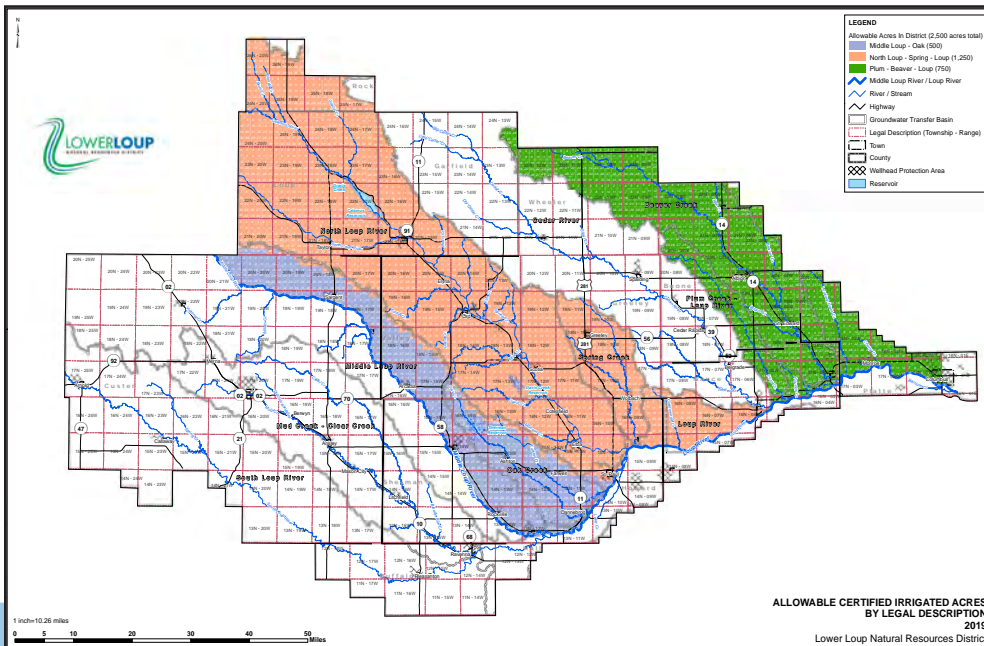
A detailed map, a list of the sections approved for development, and the application form are on the NRD's web site, [www.llnrd.org](http://www.llnrd.org).

NRD General Manager Russell Callan said that the new irrigation development was approved after a review of the available water in the district. He said that studies still showed a "surplus" in the water budget created for the approved sub-basins of the Loup River Basin. Water quality was also a consideration.

Applications will be accepted Sept. 1-20, 2018 only. A non-refundable fee of \$500 will be required with

each application and only one application will be allowed per field. Application forms are available to potential applicants online as well as at NRCS offices in the district, and at the NRD headquarters office, 2620 Airport Drive, in Ord.

Counties where acres will be allocated include portions of Boone, Custer, Garfield, Howard, Loup, Nance, Platte, Sherman, Rock, Valley, and Wheeler. New irrigation is not allowed for areas south of the Middle Loup and Loup Rivers as well as in the Cedar River Basin and South Loup River Basin due to negative changes to the groundwater and surface water supplies. No new acres will be granted in wellhead protection areas. Applications for new irrigation will be ranked using previously approved criteria.



*Applications for new irrigated acres will be accepted in shaded areas.*

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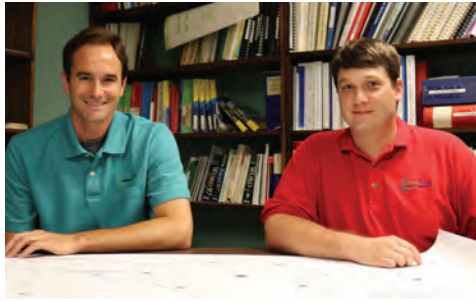
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# Three New Employees Join LLNRD Staff

The Lower Loup NRD has welcomed three new staff members to its Ord headquarters office.

Cam Conrad is the NRD's new Water Modeling Coordinator. Conrad is an Iowa native, who comes to the NRD from an Iowa consulting firm. He and his wife, Chelsea, have a 14 year old boy, Sonny. Conrad has previously worked in Nebraska for the Lower Platte North NRD.

Dan Ruterbories grew up in the Ord area and now serves as the Range Management Specialist for the Lower Loup NRD. He and his



*Cam Conrad & Dan Ruterbories*

wife, Michelle, have two daughters, Norah, 4, and Mira, 3 months. Ruterbories worked previously for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Department of Agronomy and

Horticulture; and the North Platte NRD.

Ken Dawson joined the LLNRD as the new Assistant Recreation/Shop Manager. Dawson and his wife, Corrine, are Ord residents and have two adult children, daughter, Karyn Gross, and son, Kurtis Dawson. The Dawsons also have one grandchild, Scarlett Gross.



*Ken Dawson*

## NRD Board Approves Drought Plan Creation

The Lower Loup NRD Board of Directors has approved a contract with JEO Consulting Group to assist with development of a plan to determine where the district might be vulnerable in future drought events.

NRD General Manager Russell Callan said the plan would help the district manage resources during a drought such as the one in 2012.

JEO will develop an operational response framework of monitoring and forecasting tools to specific local triggers and actions for the district to consider during a drought.

Mitigation efforts will be identified and prioritized to determine which responses will be utilized during future drought events.

Funding through the Nebraska Water Sustainability Fund will pay for 60 percent of the project cost.

The total project will cost approximately \$87,100, meaning \$52,260 will come from the state funding.

## Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Is Complete

The 59 participants in the Lower Loup NRD Hazard Mitigation Plan update have all passed resolutions adopting the plan that was the final step to participation.

The communities, counties and other government entities are now eligible for federal funding to complete projects to offset potential damage from disasters and other events.

Both the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) had given final approval of the plan last year.

Participation in the HMP makes each entity eligible for up to a 75% cost-share for a wide variety of projects listed in the plan. Hazard mitigation

plans are required to be updated on a five-year cycle and the LLNRD's HMP will need its next update in 2022.

For every \$1 spent on hazard mitigation, \$4 in post-storm cleanup and rebuilding is saved, according to FEMA.

# A Message From The Manager

As you may know, the Lower Loup NRD has been planting trees since its creation in 1972. The conservation tree program is a very important tool: it aids in soil conservation, creates livestock and farmstead windbreaks, provides wildlife habitat, and improves the general quality of life.

One of the components of that program has been the planting

of eastern redcedar trees. This species offers a considerable contribution to windbreak functionality.

The eastern redcedar is a native species



*Eastern Redcedar*

that is rarely affected by disease and has been growing well in this Nebraska environment far longer than the NRD has been planting trees. It provides great control of wind and snow and provides habitat for wildlife.

However, let me use the old adage that “a cedar in the windbreak is a great assist, but a cedar in the wrong place is a weed.”

With that being said, the determination of whether or not that cedar is in the wrong place is in the eye of the beholder, and fully depends on the intended purpose for the cedar on that piece of property.

What we do know is, that in certain areas, cedars will spread; and if left unmanaged may mature and spread



*LLNRD General Manager  
Russell Callan*

to an unacceptable level. There are multiple tools available to help us control the spread of cedars.

The method of control, and level of control, is again based on the intended purpose for the property and should be a decision made by that landowner.

## Buffalo County Lake Is Site of Water Study

Lower Loup NRD staff has studied Buffalo County Lake at Ravenna for both water quality and quantity since early this year.

The water quality studies have measured a number of parameters, including nitrates, pH, temperature, chlorophyll and E. coli bacteria in the lake water.

The quantity of water available for groundwater recharge was also studied. The possibility that the lake might serve as a potential location for recharge in the South Loup River Basin was considered. However,

a consultant’s report showed that the lake’s storage capacity would provide little benefit for groundwater recharge.

The South Loup River Basin has been a point of interest as groundwater levels have not rebounded from low points during recent droughts.

Lower Loup NRD officials plan to continue to monitor groundwater quality on the South Loup and to search for a location for a groundwater recharge project in that basin.



*Buffalo County Lake at Ravenna*



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**Protecting Lives, Protecting**

**Property, Protecting the Future.**

\*\*\*\*\*ECRWSSDDM\*\*\*\*\*

POSTAL PATRON

# Pibel Lake Dam Repair Set For December

The Lower Loup Natural Resources District will hire a contractor to make repairs to the outlet structure on the Pibel Lake Dam this December. The outlet pipe has a leak and will be replaced with a new pipe.

The work means the Pibel Lake road will be closed during construction and lake water levels will be lowered. The dam repair is the latest in a series of renovations and improvements made at the lake and recreation area since its ownership was transferred from the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission to the Lower Loup Natural Resources District in 2012.

Several options for the outlet pipe were considered, including sliplining, to allow for a lessened effect on traffic through the area. After examination by HDR Engineering, Inc. of Omaha, it was determined replacement of the outlet pipe was the best option.

Pibel Lake Recreation Area is located south of Bartlett in southeast Wheeler County, just east of Highway 281. The outlet pipe replacement project should be completed by the spring of 2019.



*Water jets into the outlet pipe in the dam at Pibel Lake Recreation Area. The LLNRD plans to begin replacement of the outlet pipe in December.*