

IN THE LOUP

Applications for New Irrigation Now Accepted

Applications for new irrigated acres in three river basins in the Lower Loup Natural Resources District (LLNRD) are now being accepted. The Lower Loup NRD Board of Directors approved the 2,500 acres of new irrigation in June.

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 map and forms are available on the NRD web site - 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 NRD. 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 for new irrigation will be accepted Sept. 1-20, 2019 only. A non-refundable fee of \$500 will be required with each application and only one application will be allowed per field. LLNRD Assistant Manager Tylr Naprstek said that application forms for new irrigated acres 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. Landowners will be notified of their application’s score and overall outcome by December 1st.

Bonus points will be awarded for applications in an area of rising groundwater. Counties where acres will be allocated include portions of Boone, Custer, Garfield, Howard, Loup, Nance, Platte, Sherman, Rock, Valley, Greeley, and Wheeler. New irrigation allocation is not allowed for areas south of the Middle Loup and Loup Rivers, as well as in the Cedar River Basin, the area east of Columbus, and the South Loup River basin due to negative changes to the water supplies.

Nelson Retires From NRD Board After 47 Years

Jim Nelson of Cairo has retired as the Lower Loup NRD’s last original Board member, beginning his service when the NRD system started in 1972. Nelson is the last Director in the entire State of Nebraska to serve from day one of the NRD system.

The LLNRD Board of Directors passed a resolution honoring Nelson for his dedication to the NRD and to the conservation of natural resources and presented him with an award for his 47 years of service. LLNRD General Manager



Jim Nelson

Russ Callan thanked Nelson for his service and said that the District has benefited from Nelson’s many years of leadership and experience on the

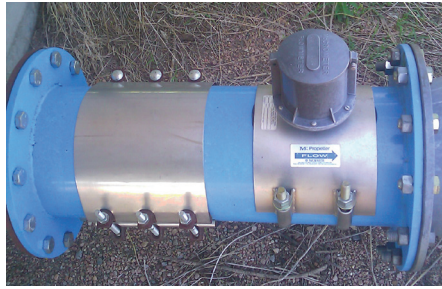
NRD Board as well as his passion and commitment to protecting water and land resources for future generations.

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Flow Meter Program Okayed for SubArea 29

The Lower Loup NRD has approved new water meter requirements as part of Phase II groundwater quality management for SubArea 29 in Wheeler County. A flow meter shall be installed on every irrigation system in that high nitrate area by December 31, 2022.



Cost-share is available for meters

To ease the burden on individual irrigators, the Lower Loup NRD will offer a three-tiered cost-share program for meters. The first year (2020), cost-share will be 100%, the second (2021) 75%, and the third year (2022) 50%. The flow meters must be a District-approved brand and be installed to manufacturer's specifications. The landowner will have nine months following the

approval of cost-share to purchase and install the flow meter.

Maintenance of the new meters will be at the NRD's expense and the cost of any needed parts will be the responsibility of the landowner. The LLNRD will contract with a company to undertake flow meter maintenance.

SubArea 29 is located in Township 23 North, Range 9 West, in Wheeler County. Other Phase II requirements include supplying an annual water analysis, one composite deep soil nitrate analysis, and submit the results of the analysis prior to February 1st. An analysis for total nitrogen for each manure source applied to irrigated corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, and potatoes is required.

An annual report including yearly water tests, flow meter reading, water applied, soil tests, crops planted, yield goals, nitrogen applied, and other information is required prior to January 31st.

Pibel Lake Dam Outlet Project Is Complete

Leaking auxiliary outlet pipes in the dam at Pibel Lake Recreation Area in Wheeler County have been replaced. The project was completed in August over a six-week time period.

The pipe replacement meant a portion of the dam and the road overlying it had to be removed. LLNRD General Manager Russ Callan

said the work was done to ensure the safety of the dam structure.

Lake water levels had been lowered during the project, but will be returned to normal pool later this year. The road over the dam has been replaced with a new concrete segment and is now open.



LLNRD Board Approves FY2019-2020 Budget

The Lower Loup Natural Resources District Board of Directors adopted its FY2019-2020 Budget by a vote of 15-4 at its meeting in August. The budget expenditure is set at \$16,831,760.

In September, the Board is expected to set the property tax request and

set the levy. This action was delayed because updated property tax valuations were not available in time to be published prior to the August meeting.

LLNRD General Manager Russ Callan said the NRD budget has historically fluctuated up and down based

on the number of projects being undertaken. He said that widespread flooding around the District in 2019 meant that funding needed to be in place to provide assistance across the Lower Loup NRD.

A Message From The Manager

What a year 2019 has been so far, with devastating blizzards, bomb cyclones, massive flooding, and high water tables. None of these events has gone unnoticed by the Lower Loup Natural Resources District. The District is working hard to be of assistance through these trying times.

We continue to communicate with Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to attempt to keep the assistance process moving as smoothly and easily as possible. However, as we all know, with most financial assistance programs, there are always numerous forms and extended timelines that must be waded through. If you are working through some of these processes,

patience is needed - don't give up.

There are also good examples of flood control facilities that worked exactly as they were designed to do during these flooding events. For example, the Columbus levee and Lost Creek bypass channel, which were partially funded by the LLNRD, protected a large portion of the City of Columbus. Other successes to mention would be the Broken Bow levees and floodway and the Duncan East drainage project.

The Lower Loup NRD Board of Directors is always interested in talking about new and innovative ways to reduce negative impacts of these types of natural disasters. The NRD works diligently to provide for the public health and safety due to flooding or any natural disaster.



LLNRD General Manager
Russell Callan

It's all part of the motto every NRD in Nebraska stands behind, that we are "Protecting Lives, Protecting Property, and Protecting the Future."

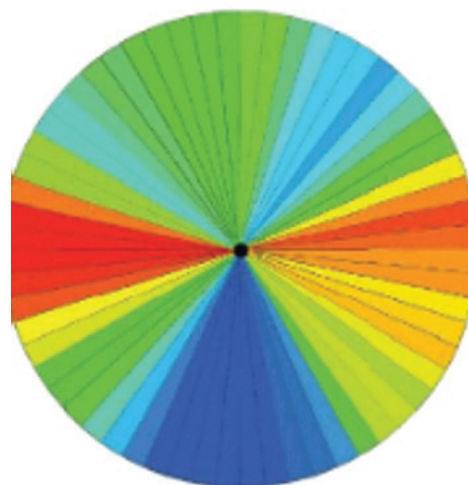
LLNRD Variable Rate Irrigation Cost-Share

The Lower Loup NRD has added new requirements to its Variable Rate Irrigation (VRI) Cost-Share Program. The cost-share program proved extremely popular in its first year. The LLNRD Board of Directors has approved new regulations to fine-tune the program.

The new guidelines for VRI include:

- Sign-up will be in March of each year (following EQIP sign-up, allowing landowners to apply there first)
- Limit of 2 approved applications per landowner
- Cost-share amount limited to no more than \$2,000 per application (rate is \$1.37 per linear foot)

- Higher priority goes to fields in Phase II and III water quality areas (Areas 28 in Nance and Platte Counties & 29 in Wheeler County)
- Areas within Watershed Water Quality Management Plan get second priority - South Loup and Clear Creek-Pibel Lake Watersheds
- Higher priority for applications on fields where water meter is in use, where irrigation monitoring equipment is in use, and for applicants who have never received VRI cost-share previously
- Higher priority will be given to landowners who applied for EQIP VRI funds, but did not receive funding due to low ranking



The colors in the above image of a field show where variable rate irrigation applies more or less water based on various factors.



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Nebraska's NRDs . . .
Protecting Lives, Protecting
Property, Protecting the Future.

*****ECRWSSDDM*****

POSTAL PATRON

Columbus Area Recharge Project Gets Grant

By Tylr Naprstek, Asst. Gen. Manager

The Lower Loup Natural Resources District has received a \$750,000 drought resiliency grant from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation for the Columbus Area Recharge project.

The grant will help offset the construction cost to implement the recharge structure in the old Lost Creek channel. A coalition, consisting of the Lower Loup NRD, City of Columbus, Platte County, Archer Daniels Midland and the Christopher's Cove Homeowners' Association, has been formed to undertake this unique project.

The coalition plans to use excess water available in the tailrace canal

and pipe it into a series of structures to refill the, now abandoned, Lost Creek Channel. That channel will have a series of water retainment structures.

Passive recharge, due to infiltration, will then be allowed to occur. An additional pumping station will be set up near the channel to pump recharge water into Christopher's Cove when needed. The two-staged system will allow independent operation at each recharge location and pumping can be controlled so that it will only occur when the conditions are favorable and warranted for recharge to take place.

The Lower Loup NRD has set up a well monitoring network

throughout the Lost Creek Channel and in Christopher's Cove Lake that monitors water levels throughout the area in real-time. The data is publicly accessible at www.llnrd.org, the NRD website.



LLNRD monitoring well installed for Columbus Recharge Project