

UPPER ELKHORN The Oracle

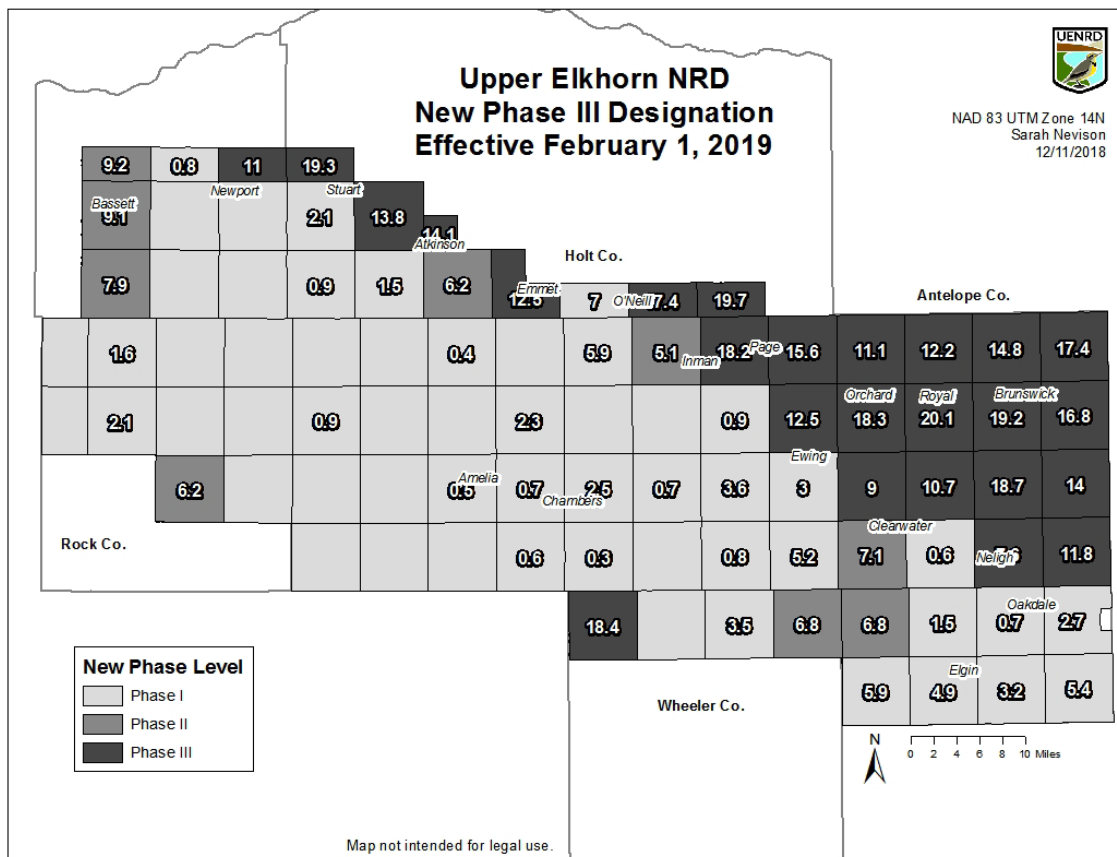
“Making Wise Decisions Concerning Our Natural Resources”

<http://www.uenrd.org>



New Phase III Rules and Regulations take Effect February 1, 2019

NRD Finalizes New Water Plan for Integrated Management



At the December 17, 2018 Board of Directors Meeting the Directors voted 7-5 to pass the Phase III Controls and designating the Phase III area in the district. The controls will be effective starting February 1, 2019. A summary of the controls is as follows:

1. The controls establish a Phase III Groundwater Quality Management Area (see map)
2. The controls are limited to the controls in Phase III Groundwater Quality Management Areas.
3. The controls authorize randomized soil sampling on lands located within Phase III areas to determine residual nitrate-nitrogen levels. The soil samples will be collected in the fall from fields that have been harvested. Depending on the levels of nitrate-nitrogen collected from the samples, future management in the application of nitrate-nitrogen may be required along with meetings with District staff and board.
4. The controls authorize the District to issue orders to cease the application of nitrogen, cease irrigation, reduce or remove certified irrigated acres and such other measures as authorized by law for persons who fail to attain the necessary nitrate-nitrogen levels after 3 years.
5. The controls repeal prior Phase III rules regarding Fertility, Pest, and Irrigation Management Plans.

Copies of the full text of the controls may be obtained at, or by contacting, the Upper Elkhorn NRD, 301 North Harrison Street, O'Neill, Nebraska 68763, telephone number 402-336-3867 or at <https://www.uenrd.org/>.

The Upper Elkhorn NRD has finalized their Voluntary Integrated Management Plan (V-V-IMP) with the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (NeDNR) to jointly manage surface and groundwater. The V-V-IMP has been a year in the making and should be voted into action at the December 17, 2018 Board Meeting. If approved, this new water plan will become effective February 1, 2019.

Every NRD in Nebraska has worked with the NeDNR to create an V-V-IMP for their District to manage water uses and water demands. The ultimate goal of the V-V-IMP is to protect current water users while allowing for economic growth and well-being across the District. The V-V-IMP assesses how much water is available, how much water is being used, and how much water could be developed in the future. As part of the planning process, UENRD and NeDNR hosted a Stakeholder Advisory Committee made up of irrigators, municipalities, and other persons interested in water management. Stakeholders played a crucial role in providing input on goals, objectives, and action items, as well as provided questions, concerns, and discussion. The Stakeholder Advisory Committee met three times between May and August, and a formal Public Hearing was held in November.

The V-IMP has four goals: 1) Understand water supplies and water uses within the District, by collecting data (static water levels, water use reporting, stream gauges, etc.), and evaluating variability in water supplies. 2) Prevent or mitigate water related conflicts within the District, by assessing V-IMPacts on current water users and by maintaining rules and regulations to enhance water management. 3) Plan for sustainable growth in water uses and demands, by determining sustainable use and evaluating new ways to V-IMPprove water supplies. 4) Inform the public of the District's water resources and efforts, by use of educational materials and public outreach.

continued on page 2

Upper Elkhorn NRD Welcomes New Water Resources Manager

Joslynn Vanderslice joined the UENRD on October 15. She will be taking over the reigns from Sarah Nevison who has relocated to the Lincoln area. Joslynn is a 2016 graduate of Chadron State College with a Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Sciences with a Geoscience option and Water Resources Management minor. She will be working with the



District Water Programs and helping to administer the UENRD Groundwater Management Plan and Voluntary Integrated Management Plan.

Upper Elkhorn NRD Welcomes New Board Members



John Vogel - Atkinson
Subdistrict 2 Representative



Marv Fritz - O'Neill
Subdistrict 3 Representative



Kevin Blair - Brunswick
Subdistrict 5 Representative

Newly elected board members will be sworn in to office prior to the January Upper Elkhorn NRD Board meeting.

Upper Elkhorn NRD Board of Directors Decreases Property Tax Asking for FY 18-19

The Upper Elkhorn NRD Board of Directors in September approved the 2018-2019 fiscal year budget with a decrease in the mill-levy and property tax asking. The FY 18-19 budget request is only 1.54 cents per \$100 of valuation for a total of \$755,985 in property tax asking. A decrease of \$6,120 from fiscal year

17-18. The Upper Elkhorn NRD continues to maintain a responsible budget to lessen the property tax burdens of its friends and neighbors. This has been accomplished by obtaining additional funding through the Nebraska Environmental Trust and the Department of Environmental Quality 319 Grants.

**Nebraska's Natural Resources Districts
Protecting Lives
Protecting Property &
Protecting the Future Since 1972**

Notice:

Anyone Applying for an Application for a Permit to Construct a Water Well within the Upper Elkhorn NRD for a new or replacement irrigation well MUST have their groundwater irrigated acres certified prior to receiving approval!

Integrated Management Plan Continued

The V-IMP also has two groundwater controls and four surface water controls to meet the goals of the water plan. Groundwater Controls: 1) Certification of groundwater irrigated acres; and 2) Establish a limit on the expansion of groundwater irrigated acres. Surface Water Controls: 1) Restriction on addition of surface water irrigated acres in the Lower Niobrara Basin. 2) Education requirements for new sur-

face water users in the Upper Missouri Tributaries Basin. 3) Limitation on expansion of surface water irrigation in the Lower Platte Basin. 4) Temporary stay on development of surface water irrigation in the Middle Niobrara Basin.

A copy of the Upper Elkhorn NRD Voluntary Integrated Management Plan can be found on our website at www.uenrd.org.



Get Your Groundwater Irrigated Acres Certified

The Upper Elkhorn NRD continues its Groundwater Irrigated Acre Certification. One of the goals of certifying irrigated acres, is to have all acres certified within 2 years after the effective date of the V-IMP. This plan becomes effective February 1, 2019.

Lower Niobrara River Basin: Landowners who own groundwater irrigated acres within the Lower Niobrara River Basin and can show proof that they irrigated them at least once between the years 2003 and October 16, 2007 will be able to certify their acres at 100%. Acres irrigated prior to 2003 will be considered Historically irrigated and with the proper documentation will be certified at 95%.

Lower Platte River Basin: Landowners who own groundwater irrigated acres within the Lower Platte River Basin and can show proof that they irrigated them at least once between the years

2004 and December 16, 2008 will be able to certify their acres at 100%. Acres irrigated prior to 2004 will be considered Historically irrigated and with the proper documentation will be certified at 95%.

Area Outside the 10/50 Line (Northern Antelope County): Landowners who own groundwater irrigated acres within the area outside the 10/50 line and can show proof that they irrigated them at least once between the years 2008 and October 1, 2012 will be able to certify their acres at 100%. Acres irrigated prior to 2008 will be considered Historically irrigated and with the proper documentation will be certified at 95%.

Historically irrigated acres: Historically irrigated acres shall consist of groundwater irrigated acres which were irrigated prior to 2003 for the Lower Niobrara River Basin, 2004 for the Lower Platte River Basin and 2008 for the area outside the

10/50 line or are currently enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program, Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, Environmental Quality Incentive Program or other federal, state or local conservation program must also be certified if there is any possibility of future irrigation.

Documentation for Acre Certification: Proper documentation for the certification of irrigated acres will include either county assessor records noting the year and irrigated acres or an FSA 578 form. Any irrigated acres that are not certified during the specified dates would not be allowed to have groundwater applied to them for any purpose. Final acre certification will be based off of County Assessor and/or FSA records.

If Groundwater Irrigated Acres are not certified with the Upper Elkhorn NRD, there is a chance that they will not be allowed to be irrigated in the future.

Conservation Tree Seedling Orders are now being taken for Spring Planting

Due to a number of issues over the past few years, a number of trees have been removed to develop areas for crop production. The Upper Elkhorn NRD would like to encourage all those landowners who removed trees to consider replacing them this upcoming spring.

There are several incentive programs to help offset the cost of installing a new windbreak on the federal, state and local level. Contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Service or your local NRD to find out what programs are available.

The Upper Elkhorn NRD will be taking orders from now until March 1st. Trees are available on a first come first serve basis and are available

in a variety of species consisting of conifers, broadleaves and shrubs. Hand plant trees should be ordered in bundles of 25 while machine plant orders will be based on the windbreak design. The NRD can also provide technical assistance to cooperators who would like help designing a new windbreak or renovating an old one. The technician will suggest the type of trees best suited for your soil type and design a layout beneficial to your needs.

The NRD also offers two practices to help increase the survival rate of new seedlings, drip irrigation and conservation weed mulch. Drip irrigation is available for cooperator installation and is used when there

is a water source at the site. Conservation weed mulch is installed over the seedlings to help control weeds and retain moisture. Both practices can be very beneficial to young windbreaks and should be considered when placing your order.

Remember, the Upper Elkhorn NRD is also your one-stop shop to order trees and weed mulch. The NRD can plant and install the trees and fabric as we have for the past 40+ years. Trees and mulch purchased from the Upper Elkhorn NRD could be eligible for local or state funds. For further information or to place an order contact your local NRCS office or the Upper Elkhorn NRD at 301 N. Harrison Street, O'Neill or (402) 336-3867.

Bazile Groundwater Management Area Update

This past spring the BGMA Group sent out a survey to landowners and operators in the BGMA. The purpose of the survey was to get a better understanding of the current management and beliefs in the BGMA. 900 surveys were sent out and 271 were returned (32%); 98 from landowners and 173 from operators. Some of the findings of the survey were:

- About half, 52%, of operators have confidence in the UNL Algorithm for calculating recommended nitrogen fertilizer application rates. 31% of operators said they are not familiar with the algorithm.
- Of the 74% of operators who would like to improve their nitrogen fertilizer efficiency, the most commonly indicated interests were in employing variable rate application, nitrogen stabilizers, slow release nitrogen, and nitrogen inhibitors.
- 51% of operators DO NOT plant cover crops.
- Of the operators that plant cover crops, 76% plant single species and 24% plant multi species.
- 57% of operators in the BGMA manage some livestock in their operations.

If you would like to see more survey results visit the Bazile Groundwater Management Project page on the Upper Elkhorn NRD website at www.uenrd.org.

The BGMA Group also held a meeting with the crop consultants and fertilizer dealers who work in the BGMA on October 30, 2018. The purpose of this meeting was to get the crop consultants, fertilizer dealers, and the agencies involved in the BGMA in the same room and have a discussion about nitrogen management. About 15 crop consultants and fertilizer dealers attended.

The crop consultants and fertilizer dealers indicated there is probably about 40% of operators they don't work with, which correlates with data gathered in the survey. They feel these operators may or may not be managing nitrogen as well as the operators they do work with. When asked how to get operators to better manage their nitrogen some crop consultants and fertilizer dealers said one way is to regulate nitrogen more. Good conversation also took place on macro & micro nutrients which can make nitrogen uptake more available to the plant.

Available Tree Species

Conifers		
Eastern Red Cedar	Rocky Mountain Juniper	Colorado Blue Spruce
Black Hills Spruce	Norway Spruce	Jack Pine
Ponderosa Pine		
Broadleaves		
Native Cottonwood	Swamp White Oak	Bur Oak
Black Walnut	American Elm	Silver Maple
Hackberry	Honeylocust	Black Cherry
Catalpa	Crabapple	Amur Maple
Red Oak	Red Maple	Hybrid Poplar
Shrubs		
Caragana	Sumac	Chokecherry
Chokeberry	Sandcherry	Elderberry
Dogwood	Hazelnut	Cotoneaster
Lilac	American Plum	Buffaloberry
Serviceberry	Golden Current	Nanking Cherry

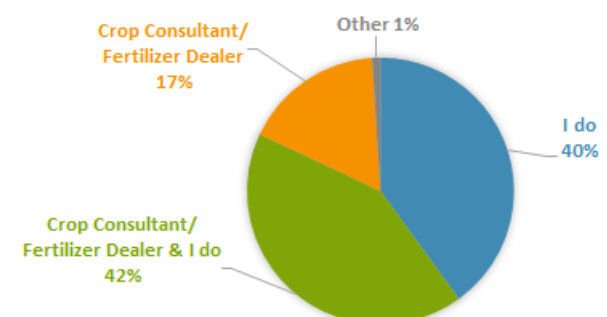
Cost of Trees & Materials

Handplant Trees	\$ 1.00/Tree plus tax
Machine Plant Trees	\$ 170.00/100 plus tax
Weed Mulch (Installed)	\$.75/foot plus tax
Weed Mulch 500 Foot Roll	\$ 200.00/Roll
Weed Mulch Squares	\$ 2.75 Each plus tax

Prices Subject to Change

Nitrogen Certification Dates will be announced in January 2019. Landowner/Operators needing to re-certify in Nitrogen Management will be notified by mail.

WHO DETERMINES NITROGEN APPLICATION



Reminder: Renewal Chemigation Applications are due by June 1. Pre-printed renewal applications from 2018 will be mailed out to cooperators in January 2019.

UENRD Approves New Irrigated Acre Expansion for 2019 Growing Season

The Upper Elkhorn NRD held an expansion of groundwater irrigated aces during the month of October. The Board of Directors had voted back in July to allow up to 1000 new groundwater irrigated acres for the 2019 growing season. During the month of October, seventeen applications were received ranging from 2 acres to 136 acres in Antelope County. The applications were ranked on various water quality and quantity criteria; the amount of acres to be expanded; soil classifications; location; establishing conservation practices; incorporating best management practices; and, whether or not the applicant was complying with the UENRD Ground-water Management Plan Rules and Regulations. The UENRD Board of Director voted November 26, 2018 to approve the expansion of 793 groundwater irrigated acres for the 2019 growing season. These new acres will have to be developed and irrigated prior to October 1, 2019. These new irrigated acres must also be certified following the 2019 growing season with documentation from either the FSA or County Assessor. The UENRD will continue to monitor the water resources of the district to determine if the expansion of groundwater irrigated acres will continue or be suspended in the future.

UENRD Offers Scholarships to High School Seniors

Each year, the Upper Elkhorn Natural Resources District offers three \$500 scholarships to graduating High School Seniors from the District. These scholarships are available for students who are planning to further their education in a field related to natural resources or agriculture. Seniors who are interested should contact the Upper Elkhorn NRD or visit the website at www.uenrd.org/education.html for further information, eligibility requirements and applications. The deadline for all scholarship applications is April 5, 2019.



Upper Elkhorn Natural Resources District Board of Directors

Gene Kelly	Subdistrict 3 ~ O'Neill	(402) 336-3681
John Meuret/Kevin Blair-elect	Subdistrict 5 ~ Brunswick	(402) 649-3976
Marv Fritz-elect	Subdistrict 3 ~ O'Neill	(402) 340-0747
Ted Hughes	Subdistrict 6 ~ Neligh	(402) 887-4942
Aaron Rice	Subdistrict 6 ~ Neligh	(402) 929-0470
Chip Whitaker	Subdistrict 4 ~ Chambers	(402) 482-5665
Chris Dierks	At Large ~ Ewing	(402) 485-2618
John Vogel-elect	Subdistrict 2 ~ Atkinson	(402) 925-5312
Michael Moser	Subdistrict 7 ~ Elgin	(402) 649-0391
Curtis Gotschall	Subdistrict 2 ~ Stuart	(402) 925-2504
Mark Carpenter	Subdistrict 5 ~ Creighton	(402) 360-3110
Jim Keller	Subdistrict 1 ~ Newport	(402) 244-5448
Keith Heithoff	Subdistrict 7 ~ Elgin	(402) 843-6499
Gary Bartak	Subdistrict 4 ~ Ewing	(402) 485-2662
Roy Stewart	Subdistrict 1 ~ Newport	(402) 244-5360

UENRD Board Meetings are held the 4th Monday of every month.

April through October at 7:00 P.M. and November through March at 2:30 P.M.

UENRD Staff

Dennis Schueth	General Manager e-mail: dschueth@uenrd.org
Joslynn Vanderslice	Water Resources Manager e-mail: JVanderslice@uenrd.org
Jake Morten	Forestry, Wildlife & Resource Coordinator e-mail: jmorten@uenrd.org
Kelly Kloppenborg	Water Resources Technician e-mail: kloppenborg@uenrd.org
Wayne Frederick	Water Resources Technician e-mail: wfrederick@uenrd.org
Andrea Fisher	Administrative Assistant e-mail: afisher@uenrd.org
Beth Walsh	Information & Education/Chemigation Coordinator e-mail: bwalsh@uenrd.org
Phil Steinkamp	Bazile Management Project Coordinator e-mail: philsteinkamp@gmail.com
Kristen Melcher	NRCS Clerk, Neligh
Vacant	NRCS Clerk, Ainsworth
Mary Zakrzewski	NRCS Clerk, O'Neill

UNL Extension Area Chemigation Training Dates and Locations

Date	Time	Location	Instructor
January 16, 2019	6:30 p.m. CST	Cherry County Fairgrounds Valentine, NE	Amy Timmerman
February 15, 2019	1:30 p.m.CST	Holt County Courthouse Annex O'Neill, NE	Amy Timmerman
March 5, 2019	1:30 p.m.CST	American Legion Hall Neligh, NE	Wayne Ohnesorg
March 12, 2019	1:30 p.m.CST	Holt County Courthouse Annex O'Neill, NE	Amy Timmerman
March 14, 2019	9:30 a.m. CST	Bloomfield Community Center Bloomfield, NE	Amy Timmerman
April 3, 2019	1:30 p.m.CST	Cherry County Fairgrounds Valentine, NE	Amy Timmerman
April 9, 2019	1:30 p.m.CST	Lutheran Church Ainsworth, NE	Amy Timmerman
April 11, 2019	1:30 p.m.CST	Holt County Courthouse Annex O'Neill, NE	Amy Timmerman

Nominate Your Neighbor

Do you know someone who has done outstanding conservation work to help protect and preserve our natural resources? The Upper Elkhorn NRD would like to reward those individuals or groups for their contribution to conservation! Award categories include: Outstanding Grassland; Outstanding Tree Planter; Outstanding Community Conservation; Agri-Business; Wildlife Habitat; and, Honor Farm/Ranch. For more information contact the Upper Elkhorn NRD.

The Oracle is the official publication of the Upper Elkhorn Natural Resources District. It is provided for the purpose of educating the public regarding natural resources issues. Any comments or questions should be sent to Beth Walsh, Upper Elkhorn NRD, 301 N. Harrison Street, O'Neill, NE 68763 or e-mailed to bwalsh@uenrd.org.

Attention Landowners- Soil Sampling Requirement!

Upper Elkhorn Natural Resources Groundwater Management Plan: Phase II Requirement

Reminder to everyone in the UENRD Phase II areas – Deep soil sampling analysis (mandatory two foot sample) for nitrate-nitrogen content applies to each field going into corn, larger than 40 acres, with more than 50 pounds per acre of actual nitrogen fertilizer applies. This soil sampling information is required on your Phase II report at the end of the 2018 growing season to be submitted to UENRD. Please visit our web-site at www.uenrd.org to verify if you are in the Phase II area, or contact the office at 402-336-3867.

