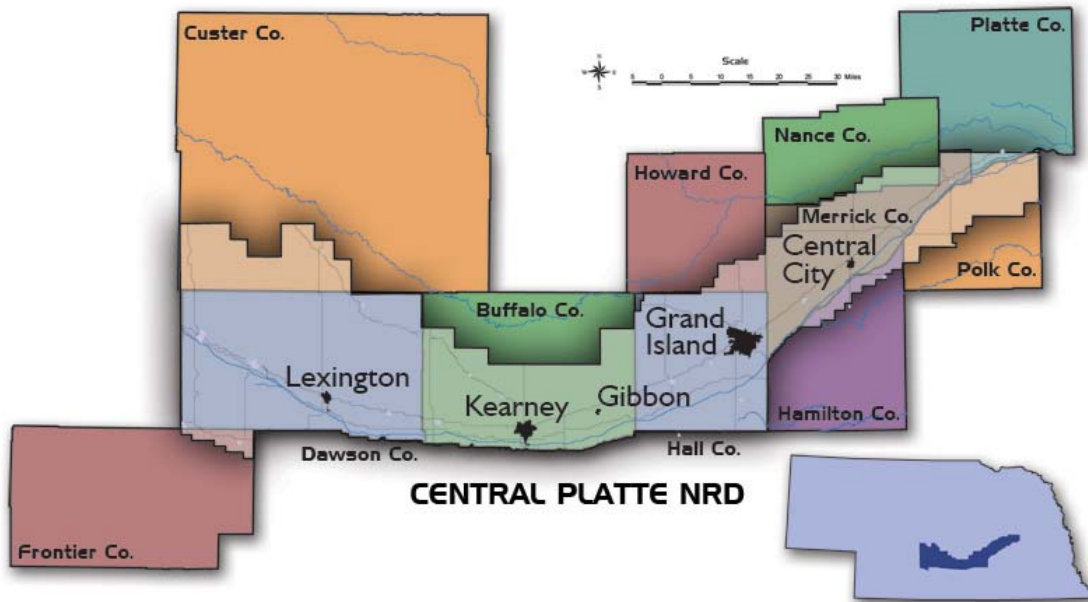




Central Platte Natural Resources District

2009 Annual Report



The Central Platte Natural Resources District presents this 2009 annual report. The NRD strives to protect groundwater and surface water, reduce flood threats, reduce soil erosion, create and protect wildlife habitat, and educate children and adults to use natural resources wisely. The Central Platte is one of 23 separate NRDs created by the Nebraska Legislature to protect our natural resources. Central Platte boundaries reach from the Lincoln-Dawson county line near Gothenburg to Hwy 81 near Columbus. Parts of the 11 counties represented include: Dawson, Custer, Buffalo, Hall, Howard, Nance, Merrick, Hamilton, Platte, Polk & Frontier. The board of directors is elected to protect & preserve a wide scope of natural resources within the district. There are 21 members on the CPNRD Board, each serving a four-year term. The board consists of one at-large member and two directors in each sub-district who are elected in alternate election years.

2009 Board Members Chairman: Barry Obermiller Vice-Chair: Ed Kyes Treasurer: Jerry Wiese Secretary: Jim Bendfeldt LeRoy Arends, Mike Dobesh, Alicia Haussler, Brian Keiser, Dwayne Margritz, Dick Mercer, Ladd Reeves, Marvin Reichert, Jay Richeson, Mick Reynolds, Bob Schanou, Steve Schuppan, Steve Sheen, James Shiers, Ed Stoltenberg, Bill Vasey, D Scott Woodman

Budget

The NRD's total operating Fiscal budget from July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008 was \$12.9 million with the levy set at 0.05850 per \$100 valuation. An owner of a house valued at \$100,000 paid \$58.50 for many natural resources benefits found throughout the district. Flood control, water quantity, water quality, tree planting and wildlife restoration are areas where the NRD strives to conserve and preserve natural resources for the residents of central Nebraska. The NRD is committed to education, coordinating the statewide Nebraska Children's Groundwater Festival annually at the Central Community College and College Park in Grand Island. Major projects and expenditures included the CPNRD Water Banking Program, and the Prairie/Silver/Moores Flood Control Project.

Cost Share Programs

Landowners received **\$470,320.93** in cost share funds towards conservation measures to preserve land and water in the Central Platte Natural Resources District. Programs include: streambank stabilization, tree planting, irrigation reuse, center pivot incentive, surge valves, fertilizer calibration meters, flow meters, prescribed fire, well abandonment and wildlife habitat. The NRD also administers funds through these other programs: **Natural Resources Commission** provides funds for the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Program; **Department of Agriculture** provides funds for the Buffer Strip Program; **Game & Parks Commission** provides funds for the Wildlife Habitat Program & WILD Nebraska; **Nebraska Environmental Trust** provides funds for Pheasants Forever.

Programs Not Administered by NRD include NRCS Programs such as: EQIP-Environmental Quality Incentives Program, WHIP-Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, WRP-Wetlands Reserve Program, CRP-Conservation Reserve Program, and Emergency Watershed Program.

Water Programs

Nearly 1,000 producers participate in the Groundwater Quality Management Program. The Program's goal is to lower average nitrate levels district-wide. The Program was started in 1988 when average nitrate levels were 19.24 ppm (parts per million). Levels have been lowered through management efforts by landowners, with an average of 15.21 in 2009. Each year, the producer is required to take water and soil samples, complete a usage form and provide appropriate receipts to comply with the program's rules & regulations. The feedback allows the NRD to assess the effect that best management practices are having on water quality. The goal is to reach an average of 10 ppm; the NRD has reached 40% of the goal.

Chemigation Certification Permits are obtained from the NRD to ensure proper application of chemicals through irrigation systems. By state law, a chemigation permit must be obtained before any person can legally chemigate. 829 renewal permits and 153 new permits were issued this year.

Irrigation The Irrigation Well Registration Program was set up to help landowners register irrigation wells with the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources. The NRD is helping register the 21,002 irrigation wells in the district. In 2006, the NRD began certifying irrigated acres as set by LB 962 to have all irrigated acres on record through the Certification Program. The NRD staff has completed this task by certifying 1,013,183 acres.

Moratorium on Drilling New Wells & Expansion of Irrigated Acres In September 2004, the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) declared the Platte River Basin as fully appropriated and upstream from Elm Creek as over-appropriated. At that time, 60% of the District was placed in a suspension area on drilling new wells and any expansion of irrigated acres. In January 2006, the remainder of the District was placed in the moratorium. The NRD is currently purchasing water rights through the CPNRD Water Bank in the over-appropriated basin to try to reach a fully appropriated designation.

Major Projects

Since 1972, the district has provided funds and expertise for over 70 water-related projects. Some projects were large and took several years to complete, whereas others only comprised removing trees and debris from streams. The NRD is currently involved in one major construction project- the **Prairie/Silver/Moores Flood Control Project** in Hall County.

Prairie/Silver/Moores Flood Control Project: The NRD and City of Grand Island are currently constructing this project in the upper parts of the Dry, Prairie, Silver, and Moores Creek watersheds south of Hwy 2 and east of Hwy 281. Flood control will be accomplished through the creation of upland and lowland flood control structures such as dams, building berms to keep the creeks within their banks and through the construction of water detention cells to be built on several hundred acres at the former Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plant. The 10-year, \$15.5 million project was approved by the NE Department of Natural Resources and will receive \$8.3 million in state funding. The remaining \$7.2 million will be financed by the cosponsors. Construction began in 2007 and will be completed in 2015.

COHYST: The NRD's hydrologist participates in the Cooperative Hydrology Study. The Nebraska Environmental Trust (NET) awarded funding for the Study for six years. Hydrologic databases are being used to develop regional computer models to provide a better understanding of the groundwater flow system, interrelationships between groundwater and surface water, geology of the region, and other characteristics of the groundwater aquifer. During COHYSTII model development, calibration and review were completed. This past year's work was spent using the models to develop estimates of pumping depletions on the Platte River.

Platte River Recovery Implementation Program: The Program began in January 2007. The goal of the Program is to address endangered species habitat issues in the Platte River Basin. The NRD's general manager, biologist and hydrologist continue work on a variety of fronts including the water, land, technical and Governance committees. The NRD is also participating with others involved in the process including the State of Nebraska and Downstream Water Users. A new partnership has been funded by the NET called the Platte Basin Habitat Enhancement Program that will allow acres to be purchased and set aside for wildlife habitat.

Locations

The district headquarters is located at 215 N Kaufman Avenue in Grand Island. Phone Number: (308) 385-6282 Website: www.cpnrd.org

Four other offices are co-located with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). You may contact those offices at:

Lexington: (308) 324-6314 Kearney: (308) 237-3118 Central City: (308) 946-2251 Grand Island: (308) 382-0814

Protecting Lives • **Protecting Property** • **Protecting the Future**