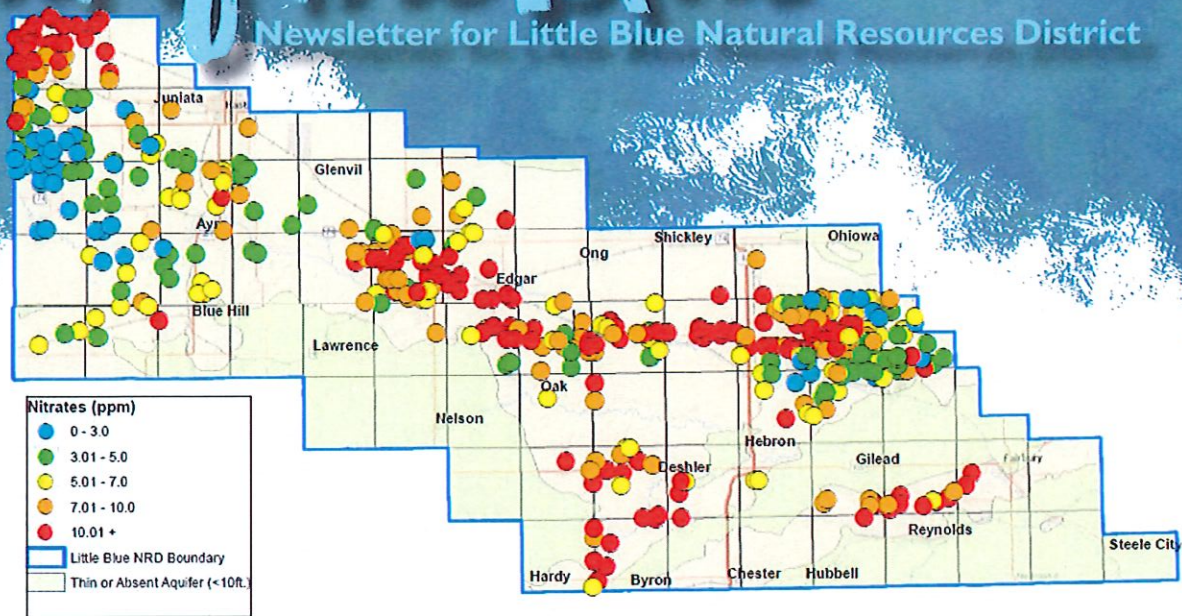


Out of the Blue

Newsletter for Little Blue Natural Resources District



Summer 2022 Nitrate Testing

by: Tyler Goeschel

The Little Blue Natural Resources District (LBNRD) sampled over 460 irrigation wells for nitrates from June to September.

Nitrate results are up from last year and the long-term upward trajectory continues. Average nitrates throughout the LBNRD's Water Quality Sub-Areas can be seen in the table accompanying the map. Ten parts per million (ppm) is considered to be the safe maximum contaminant level (MCL) regarding drinking water, and you can see that all sub-areas are above that level -- luckily for us, these are irrigation wells and not domestic wells used for drinking. That being said, every farmer irrigating with nitrates present in their irrigation water, should be thinking about the nitrogen credit they are receiving through their water. One ppm of nitrate in water is equal to .23 lbs. of nitrogen for every inch that is applied. As an example, if you have 10 ppm of nitrates in your water, you are applying 2.3 lbs. of nitrogen for every inch you irrigate. If you irrigate ten inches with 10 ppm of nitrates, you are putting 23 lbs. of nitrogen on your crop with your water alone. With current prices of agricultural inputs, this can equate to a significant savings if you account for the nitrogen credit received through your water.

Almost 4% of all wells tested were over 20 ppm,

WATER QUALITY SUB-AREA	NITRATE AVERAGE (PPM)
BRUNING	13.5
CARLETON/DAVENPORT/SHICKLEY	11.7
CLAY/NUCKOLLS	10.2
DESHLER/BRYON/RUSKIN	11.5
FAIRBURY	11.9
HASTINGS WELLHEAD	8.4
KENESAW/PROSSER	15.4
SUPERIOR/HARDY	11.8

twice the MCL, and another 29% of all wells tested were between 10 – 20 ppm. On the other side of that equation, this translates into 67% of all wells assessed coming in below 10 ppm.

The takeaway is to be mindful of nitrates in your irrigation water when making management decisions. Doing so will help your pocketbook and the health of the groundwater alike. If you have further questions or would like to discuss more about this with me, I'm happy to talk. You can reach me 402-364-3712. I can also be reached by email at tgoeschel@littlebluenrd.org.

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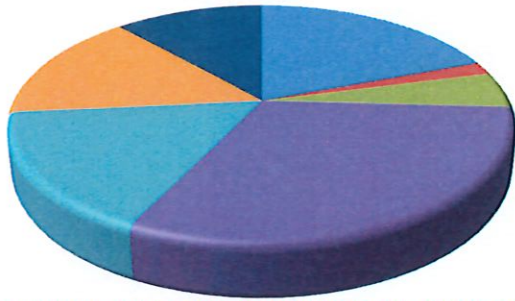


Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Review

by: Marie Herbek

The FY 2023 budget was approved by the LBNRD board of directors at their September 13, 2022 meeting in the amount of \$4,330,782 with a tax levy of 0.020621, which is a slight decrease from last year's levy of 0.020879. The Rural Water Project North budget of \$364,332 and the Rural Water Project South budget of \$343,980 is included in the NRD's budget.

An update to the district's Hydrogeologic Study which was originally completed in 2011 is a main

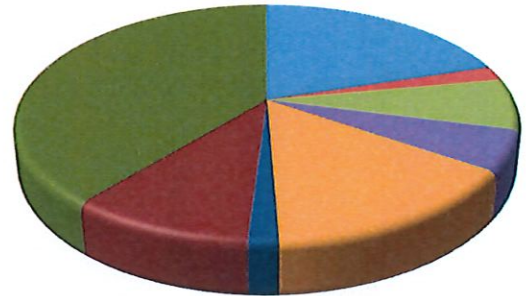


component of the new budget. A grant from the Water Sustainability Fund (WSF) has been submitted and must be approved before work can begin on the update.

The Prairie Lake Watershed Update project to help prevent flooding near Kenesaw and improve water quality at Prairie Lake is also planned. A grant from the Nebraska Department of Environmental and Energy (NDEE) will assist with the cost of the

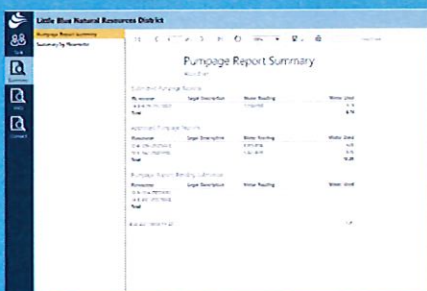
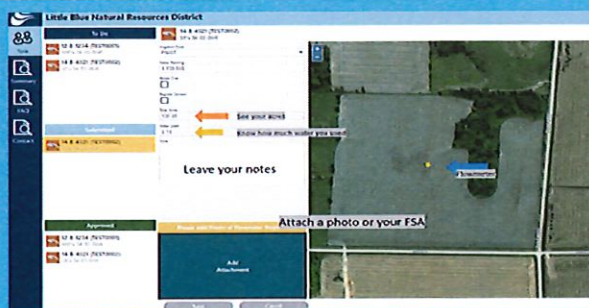
project.

Also included in this year's budget is the purchase and installation of playground equipment at Prairie Lake, Lone Star and Liberty Cove Recreation Areas. The project will move forward only if grants from the Land & Water Conservation (LWCF) and NE Department of Environment & Energy (NDEE) are approved which would pay 50%.



PROPERTY TAXES 38.96% CASH & INVESTMENTS 20.26% FEDERAL SOURCES 1.96% STATE SOURCES 6.94% LOCAL SOURCES 5.45% INVESTMENT INCOME 0.06% RURAL WATER INCOME 14.72% MISCELLANEOUS 1.65% SINKING FUNDS 10.01%

The Hazard Mitigation Plan update, which is a joint effort with the Lower Big Blue NRD, will be finalized this year. This project, which began in FY 2021, works with local communities to help reduce or eliminate long-term risks caused by hazards or disasters. The search for a new water source for the Rural Water Projects continue. Grants and loans from USDA Rural Development will fund the project, if approved.



Online Submission for Reports

by: Alicia Epps

You now have the opportunity to report your water usage on-line, even on your phone! You can see your certified acres, water usage, attach a photo, or not worry about the mail and see your pumpage report summary as soon as the readings are verified.

THIS IS NOT MANDATORY, JUST A CONVENIENCE, IF YOU CHOOSE TO USE IT!

Just email aepps@littlebluenrd.org if you are interested in signing up.



Little Blue NRD 2023 Tree Program by: Erika Brinegar

Trees can enrich your life in numerous ways. Trees provide wildlife habitat, reduces soil erosion, enhance water quality, saves energy costs, helps clear the air and add beauty to our homes and farmsteads.

- Trees may be ordered for any number of species.
- Payment is to be received at the time the order is placed.
- Ordered in bundles (multiples) of 25 trees.

District Plants

- Minimum order is 100 trees.
- All orders must be submitted before March 15th.
- Payment for the trees ordered is due when the tree plan is forwarded to the District's Office.
- Sites must be adequately tilled.
- The District has a "No-Replacement Policy on the loss of district or had planted trees."

Hand Plants

For full details go to, littlebluenrd.org/forestry/tree-program

CONNECT WITH US



Sept

13 | Board Meeting, Davenport 7pm
 21st & 22nd | Earth Jamboree
 26th & 27th | NARD Annual Conference

Oct

10 | Columbus Day Office Closed
 11 | Board Meeting, Davenport 7pm
 31 | Halloween

Nov

8 | Board Meeting, Davenport 7pm
 11 | Office Closed for Veteran's Day
 24 | Office Closed for Thanksgiving
 25 | Office Closed for Black Friday

Dec

6 | Board Meeting, Davenport 7pm
 23 | Office Closed at Noon for Christmas Eve
 26 | Office Closed for Christmas Day
 31 | Pumpage Reports Due (Reports were mailed out at the beginning of September.)
 Call the office and ask for Alicia if you didn't receive yours or if you have questions.
 January 2 | Office Closed for New Year's Day





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Jessica Hedges - Media & Communication Specialist
Erika Brinegar - Natural Resources Coordinator
Kevin Orvis - Project Manager
Jim Oltmans - Water Resources Technician
Tim Hecke - Natural Resources Technician
Lucas Slieter - Operations Supervisor

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sub-District 1: Mason Hoffman, Roseland
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Sub-District 2: Courtney Luebben, Hastings
Sub-District 3: Jessi Hoeft, Hastings
Sub-District 3: Glen Bredthauer, Hastings
Sub-District 4: Lyle Schroer, Lawrence
Sub-District 4: Warren Taylor, Glenvil
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Sub-District 5: Aaron Paus, Fairfield
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Sub-District 7: Alan Wiedel, Hebron
Sub-District 7: Alan Kenning, Hebron
Sub-District 8: Bill Glenn, Fairbury
Sub-District 8: Jay Meyer, Daykin
At Large: Marlin Kimle, Kenesaw

"Little Blue Natural Resources District is an Equal Opportunity & Provider."

The Little Blue NRD's Out of the Blue is a publication of the Little Blue Natural Resources District. Requests to be placed on the Out of the Blue mailing list and/or comments regarding information in this publication should be directed to Jessica Hedges, Media & Communications Specialist, 100 East 6th Street, PO Box 100, Davenport, NE 68335.