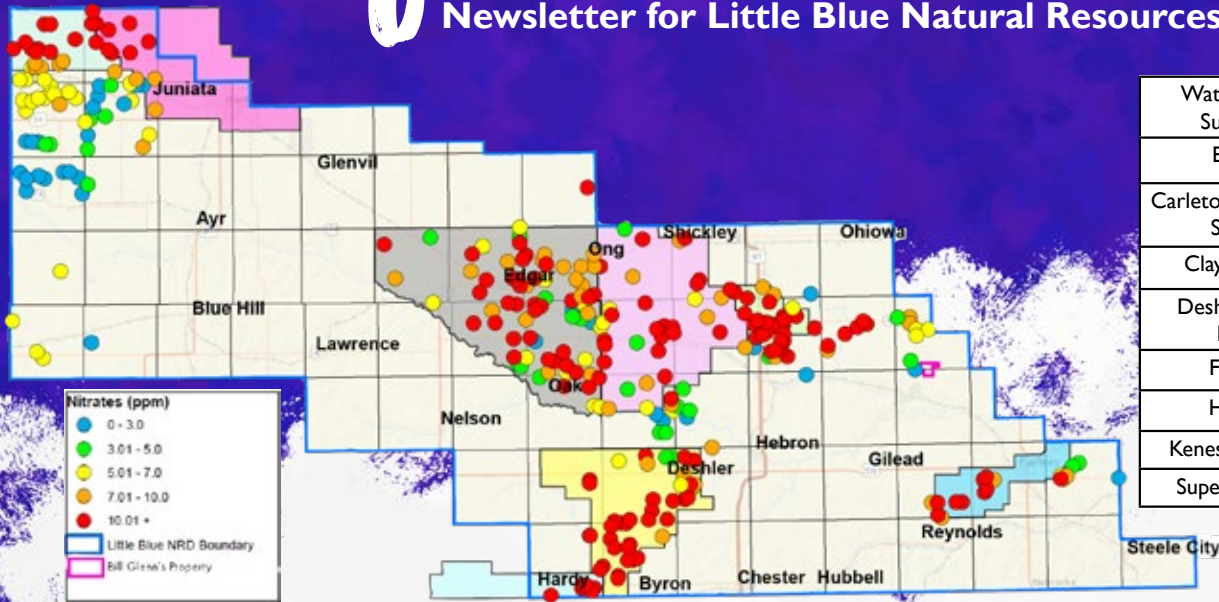


Out of the Blue

Newsletter for Little Blue Natural Resources District



Water Quality Sub-Areas	Nitrate Average (ppm)
Bruning	16.2
Carleton/Davenport/Shickley	12
Clay/Nuckolls	10.3
Deshler/Byron/Ruskin	13.5
Fairbury	11.3
Hastings	11.8
Kenesaw/Prosser	13.4
Superior/Hardy	15.6

Summer 2023 Nitrate Testing

The Little Blue Natural Resources District (LBNRD) sampled 316 irrigation wells for nitrates from June to September.

Nitrate results were a mixed bag compared to last year's levels with most areas with known high nitrates testing higher than the year prior, but both Fairbury and Kenesaw/Prosser sub-areas tested a bit lower than last year. The long-term upward trajectory of nitrates in the groundwater continues, however, we hope to see less increases in the years ahead, and eventually more declines, as producers become more aware of how their land management decisions play a role in the health of the aquifer.

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.

More than 6% of all wells evaluated were over 20 ppm, twice the MCL, and another 42% of all wells assessed were between 10 – 20 ppm. Testing this year was focused on areas with already known high nitrate levels, so those numbers aren't a complete surprise.

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, Please contact Tyler Goeschel at the LBNRD office 402-364-3712 or email him at tgoeschel@littlebluenrd.org.

This Issue:

- Nitrates | Pg. 1 Budget | Pg. 2
- Pumpage Reports | Pg. 2 Tree Sales | Pg. 3



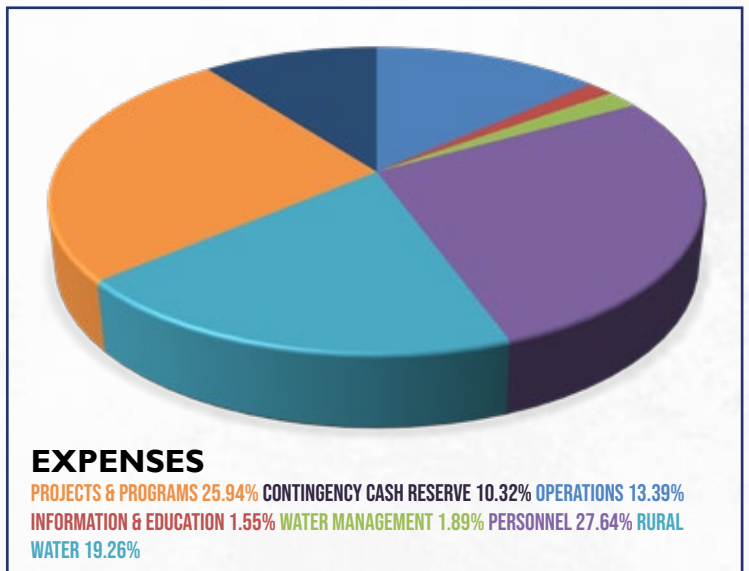
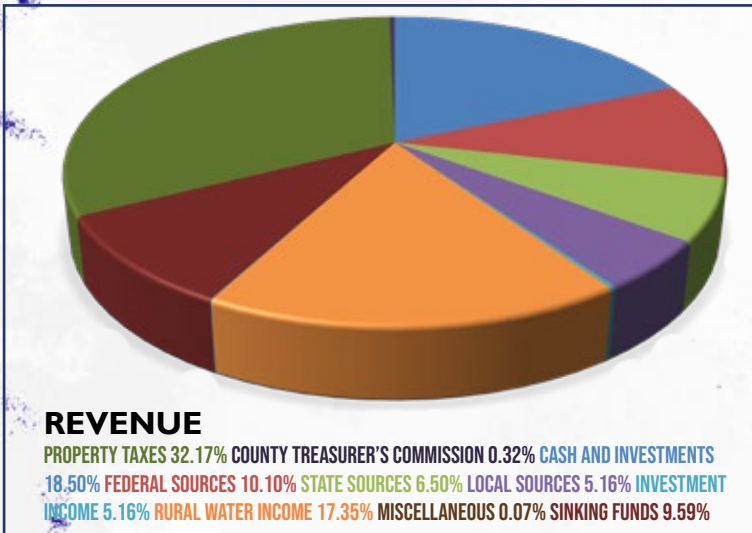
2024 Fiscal Year Budget Review

Success in obtaining federal and state grants has bolstered the FY 2024 budget to the highest amount ever, totaling \$4,843,618. This in turn has reduced the property tax request by nearly \$150,000 resulting in a FY 2024 tax levy of 0.017509. A \$3,919,500 Water Sustainability Fund (WSF) grant from the State of Nebraska and a \$2.6 million-dollar federal grant from USDA Rural Development (USDA-RD) will help fund a \$10 million-dollar Little Blue Public Water Project (LBPWP) which involves the construction of 2 new municipal supply wells and 14 miles of water main.

Another federal grant from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) in the amount of \$800,800 was approved for putting

together a watershed plan for the 32-Mile Creek Watershed located in Adams County. This plan will identify projects to reduce or eliminate flooding problems in the Villages of Kenesaw and Juniata and will improve water quality in Prairie Lake.

Other grant funded projects include updating the District's Hydro-Geologic report funded by a WSF grant in the amount of \$54,000; utilizing a \$12,000 Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE) grant to install rubber mulch at District owned playgrounds and a \$42,900 grant from the Nature Conservancy to promote soil health projects such as the planting of cover crops and nutrient management.



THE PUMPAGE REPORTS DEADLINE IS NOW DECEMBER 15TH, 2023!!!!

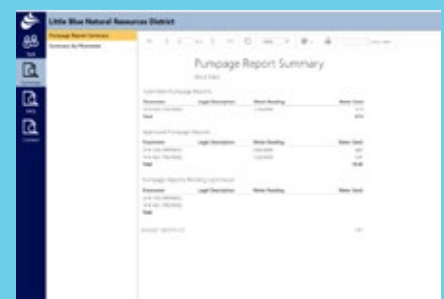
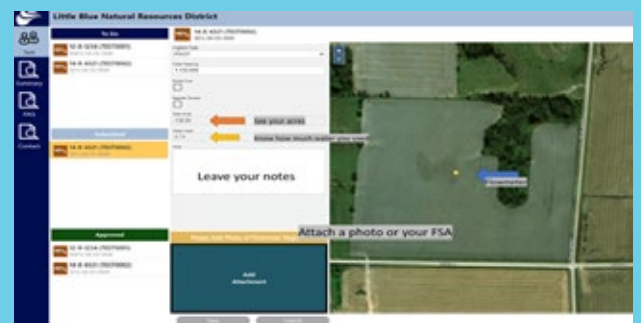
Online Submission for Reports

Guess Whats New!

You now have the opportunity to report your water usage online, 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!

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





Little Blue NRD 2024 Tree Program

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

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 hand planted trees."

Hand Plants

- 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.

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

CONNECT WITH US



Little Blue Natural Resources District



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www.littlebluenrd.org



@littlebluenrd

lbnd@littlebluenrd.org

Oct

Oct 4th: South Central Land Judging
 Oct 9th: Office Closed (Columbus Day)
 Oct 10th: LBNRD Board Meeting

Nov

Nov 10th: Office Closed (Veterans Day)
 Nov 14th: LBNRD Board Meeting
 Nov 21st: Fillmore Scrap Tire Recycling
 Nov 23rd: Office Closed (Thanksgiving)
 Nov 24th: Office Closed (Friday after Thanksgiving)

Dec

Dec 12th: LBNRD Board Meeting
 Dec 15th: **PUMPAGE REPORT DEADLINE!**
 Dec 22nd: Office Closed at 12pm (Christmas Eve)
 Dec 25th: Office Closed (Christmas)

Jan

Jan 1st: Office Closed (New Year's Day)
 Jan 9th: LBNRD Board Meeting
 Jan 15th: Office Closed (MLK Day)



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Todd Leiningner - Natural Resources Technician
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Sub-District 7: Alan Kenning, Hebron
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Sub-District 8: Jay Meyer, Daykin
At Large: Russ Ochsner, Roseland

“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.