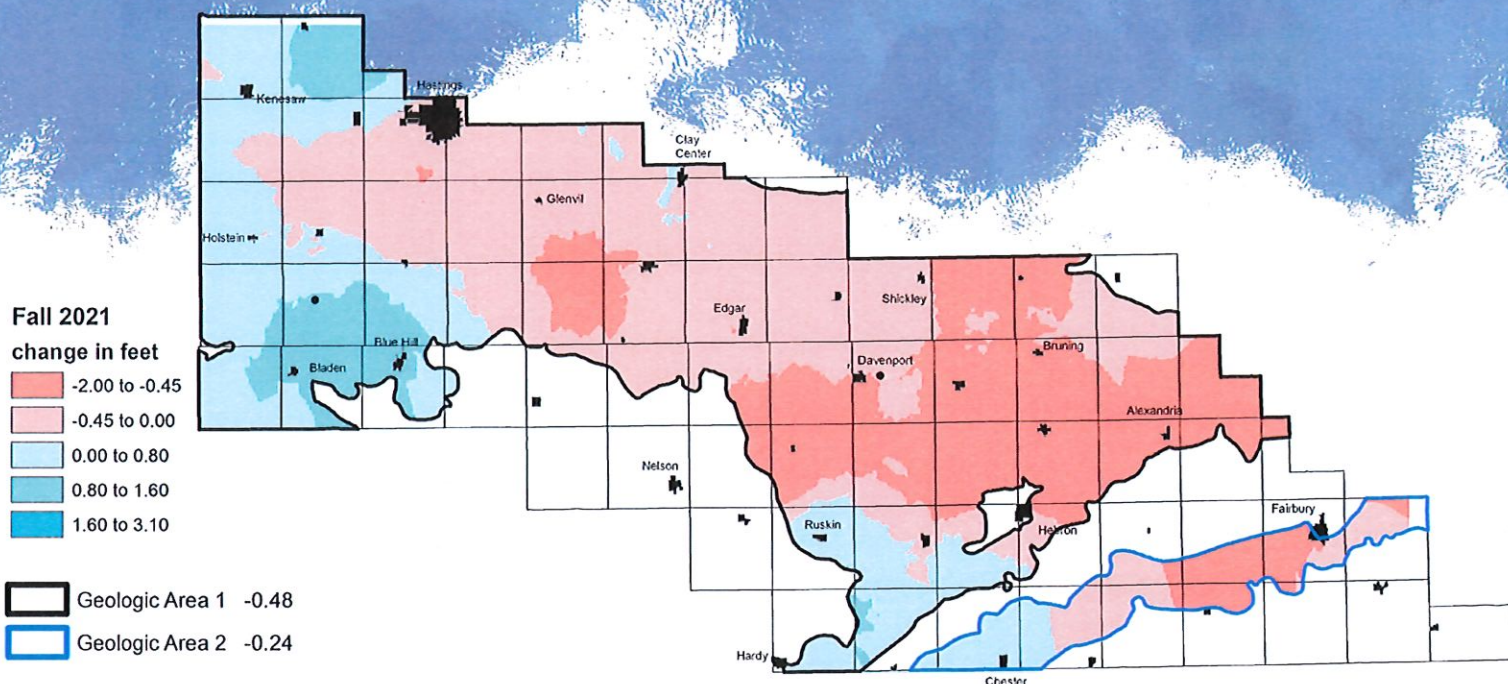


Out of the Blue

Newsletter for Little Blue Natural Resources District



2021 Fall Static Water Levels by: Kevin Orvis

Fall 2021 water levels show a decline in both Geologic Area 1 and 2. Area 1 being a weighted average decline of -0.48 and Area 2 a weighted average decline -0.24. Most of the geographic area of the District saw a decline from 0 to -2.0 feet. There were clusters of wells around Blue Hill, Chester, and between Kenesaw and Hastings that experienced rises of between 0 to 1.60 feet. Some were up by 3 feet but only a couple, they did not influence the shading on the color change map.

In Geologic Area 1 the greatest decline was -3.63 feet in a well by Oak, the greatest rise was +3.10 feet in a well by Ruskin. Even though the high and low ranged about the same above and below "0", 65% of the wells measured were lower than last spring.

In Geologic Area 2 there was a decline of -3.45 feet in a well by Fairbury, while another well near Fairbury had a rise of +1.87 feet. 80% of the wells in Area 2 were down, most clustered right in that 0.00 to -0.45 range.

This information compares fall of 2020 to fall of 2021 water levels. Spring 2022 data will be collected beginning in April and will compare water levels to spring of 2021.

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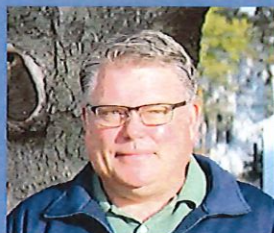
CONNECT WITH US

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Letter from the Manager

by: Scott Nelson



As the General Manager of the Little Blue NRD, I wanted to share my management style with you and let you know that the decisions we make together will impact the lives of future generations.

Through the years I've learned that life can be challenging, and that balance is key to getting through the tough times or better yet to help you succeed in life. My approach to managing natural resources stems from communication through personal interaction with board members, staff, partner agencies and the public. Listening to other ideas and looking at both sides of an issue is an important trait that doesn't come naturally but is learned with time.

As we struggle through tough times such as Covid-19, natural disasters, crime, commodity markets, inflation, politics, it's important to keep an open mind and know that better days are ahead of us. Hard work, compromise and balance will certainly help us to preserve and protect the natural resources that we are so very blessed with.

Tree Sales

by: Erika Brinegar

Producers should start contacting local NRCS offices to get tree plans complete as soon as they can. Please do some research on tree species to choose what best fits their situation.

The producer must do adequate site preparation in the fall AND spring if they want cost-share on windbreaks.

It is recommended to elongate the slits in the weed barrier in the third year after the weed barrier has been installed to prevent girdling.

Scholarship Opportunities

by: Jessica Hedges

The Little Blue Natural Resources District will offer three \$500 scholarships to qualified High School Seniors and three \$500 scholarships to qualified College Juniors that reside within the Little Blue Natural Resources District. The student must be attending a two-year or four-year college, majoring in a conservation or environmental field, in good academic standing and live in the district.

This is a one-time scholarship that will be sent in August directly to the college you are planning to attend. Please have the application, a transcript of grades and a letter of recommendation sent to the Little Blue Natural Resources District by the first Friday in March. (March 4th, 2022) The Little Blue Natural Resources District Project and Planning Committee will evaluate the applications and forward the most qualified applicants to the entire Board of Directors. Winning recipients will be notified in April and will receive a certificate.

Send Application, transcript, and letter of recommendation to: Little Blue Natural Resources District, Attn: Jessica Hedges, PO Box 100, Davenport, NE 68335 or jhedges@littlebluenrd.org.



Go to: <https://littlebluenrd.org/forestry/tree-program/> for more information under "Helpful Documents" or Contact your local NRCS office or Erika at NRD for more information.

Feb

Feb 8th: Regular Board Meeting
Feb 14th: Valentine's Day
Feb 21st: President's Day (Office Closed)
Feb 24th: Municipal Water Use Report

Mar

Mar 4th: Scholarship Deadline
Mar 8th: Regular Board Meeting
Mar 13th: Daylight Savings Time Begins
Mar 17th: St. Patrick's Day

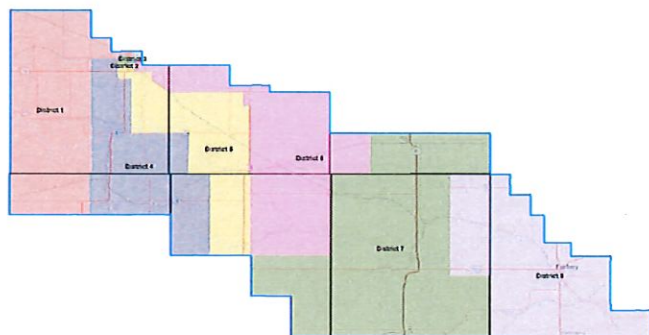
Apr

Apr 1st: April Fool's Day
Apr 1st: Annual Water Quality Management Report Deadline
Apr 12th: Regular Board Meeting
Apr 15th: Good Friday
Apr 17th: Easter
Apr 29th: Arbor Day (Office Closed)

Board Approves New Voting Subdistricts by: Tyler Goeschel

At the December 2021 board meeting, the board approved new voting subdistrict boundaries for the Little Blue NRD. (see maps)

Generally, Nebraska statutes and constitutional provisions impose three requirements on redistricting. Briefly stated, these three requirements are as follows:



- First, subdistricts of any natural resources district must have substantially equal population, and no subdistrict shall have a population greater than three times the population of any other subdistrict.

- Second, subdistricts should be divided to establish relatively equal value of the NRD's projects.

- Third, any redistricting should abide by existing lines and should strive to compose compact and contiguous territory within the boundary lines of the legislative districts.

The new subdistricts for the Little Blue NRD fully meet these requirements.

The total population of the Little Blue NRD decreased by approximately 2,000 people between the 2010 and 2020 census, down from 47,500 to roughly 45,500 people. With eight subdistricts in the Little Blue NRD, that gives the NRD a target population of about 5,700 people/subdistrict. The most populous subdistrict is district five with around 5,900 people, and the least populous district is district seven with 5,500 people. This gives the Little Blue NRD's new subdistricts a 7.5% total deviation between largest and smallest subdistrict (less than 10% deviation is considered ideal).



Additionally, 2022 is an election year so there will be one board member seat open for election in each of the eight subdistricts. There is also one at-large seat open, in which a person can live anywhere in the NRD and be elected to the board of directors. If you are interested in running for one of the open seats, filing forms are available at sos.nebraska.gov or at your local county clerk's office. The deadline for new filers to file for office for the primary election is March 1st, 2022.

Operator Training by: Jessica Hedges

The Little Blue Natural Resources District is wrapping up the 2021-2022 operator training session with about 15 farmers and operators who completed the in person training this year. This year saw smaller turn out than most years due to our rotation in training. Recertification is required every four years. As a result, the Little Blue Natural Resources District only hosted one training session, this season.

The training session consisted of a Little Blue NRD update, cost-share program information, new online reporting capabilities, along with guest speakers from UNL Extension and Hastings Utilities. Michael Sindelar, UNL Assistant Extension Educator, presented about how to improve your soil health. Michael also discussed how cover crops can improve your soil health. Marty Stange, from Hastings Utilities discussed water quality. He also discussed how the City of Hastings' water treatment facility works and why the city chose to treat the water this way.



If any farm operator is past due on their recertification or is a new operator farming in a water quality sub-area and missed one of the training sessions, they will need to complete the training online on the Little Blue NRD website at: <https://littlebluenrd.org/education/operator-training/>



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Kathy Boysen - Administrative Assistant
Alicia Epps - Database Specialist
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 Technician

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402-762-3569
Fillmore County NRCS - Sylvia Jividen
402-759-4017
Jefferson NRD/NRCS Technician - Christine Zabokrtsky
Jefferson County NRCS Secretary - Paula Schultz
402-729-6134
Thayer County NRCS Secretary - Jessica Hynek
402-768-6228
Webster County NRCS Secretary - Lynetta Snelling
402-746-2268

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sub-District 1: Mason Hoffman, Roseland
Sub-District 1: Robert Trausch, Juniata
Sub-District 2: Brent Hoops, Hastings
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
Sub-District 5: Jesse VonSpreckelsen, Clay Center
Sub-District 5: Kevin Kissinger, Glenvil
Sub-District 6: Steve Shaw, Edgar
Sub-District 6: Lyle Heinrichs, Shickley
Sub-District 7: Alan Wiedel, Hebron
Sub-District 7: Joseph Hergott, 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.