

Natural Resources News

Winter 2009 A Newsletter of the Twin Platte Natural Resources District Vol. 24

Visit our web page to find out more about what we can do for you: <http://www.tpnrd.org>

Last Chance to Certify Irrigated Acres!!!

The Twin Platte Natural Resources District has certified 80% of the estimated 318,493 acres irrigated with ground water. The District is now finalizing the process of certifying these acres.

On July 1, 2004, the District began limiting new ground water wells pumping in excess of 50 gallons per minute and new irrigated acres. This was expanded to all of the District in 2007. During 2004, low level infrared photography was obtained and the District began the process of certifying the acres irrigated with ground water. Irrigated acres for each field were calculated, forms and maps were then sent to each landowner in 2006 and 2007. In previous attempts to certify ground water irrigated acres, signed forms were requested to be returned to the District office, but it was not required to have a signature. **Now it is mandatory that the District has signed forms from all landowners irrigating with ground water. THIS IS TO PROTECT YOUR RIGHTS.**

Twenty percent of the estimated 318,493 acres irrigated with ground water do not have signed forms on file in the District office. During the first three months of 2009, forms and maps will again be sent to the landowners not previously returning a signed form to the District, as a courtesy to give those owners a final opportunity to certify land irrigated with ground water. **This will be the last opportunity to certify acres irrigated with ground water in the Twin Platte Natural Resources District.**

The District allows for the certification of any acres that were irrigated during 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, or 2004, and any post-2004 acres that have been legally irrigated using a ground water well. In certain circumstances, lands that were not irrigated between 2000 and 2004 may be certified if they were irrigated any time between 1990 and 2000. Any lands that have not been irrigated since 1990 cannot be certified.

If you are an owner of land irrigated with ground water and are not sure if you have a signed form on file in the District office and you do not receive a letter from the District in early 2009, you need to contact the District office.

Status of the Twin Platte IMP

The Twin Platte NRD Stakeholder's have been meeting for over three years working in conjunction with the state and the Twin Platte Board of Director's on developing an Integrated Management Plan. In that time, the stakeholders have made a lot of forward progress. The law requires an IMP be in place by 2009. Watch for information and notices for public hearings during the summer of 2009.

Funds for Soil Moisture Probes Now Available

The Nebraska Soil & Water Conservation Program, Irrigation Water Management Practice (NC-17), has been expanded to allow cost-share on soil moisture sensors and data readers for three applications, based on Natural Resources Commission Advisory No. 26, per producer per year. An end of season report is also required from the producer to be eligible for this cost-share. Contact the local NRCS office for more information.

Drought Management Workshop *Adapting Your Ranch to the Changing Environment*

Vet's Memorial Hall — Arthur
January 29 — 11:00-3:00 MST

Registration **FREE**

(includes lunch & refreshments)

RSVP required by Jan. 23 for meal

Call NRCS at 308.284.2048 ext #3

For additional info—308.535.8080 - Bill

Sponsored by:

TWIN PLATTE
NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

USDA  NRCS

United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

 NEBRASKA
Grazing Lands Coalition

The Nebraska Buffer Strip Program

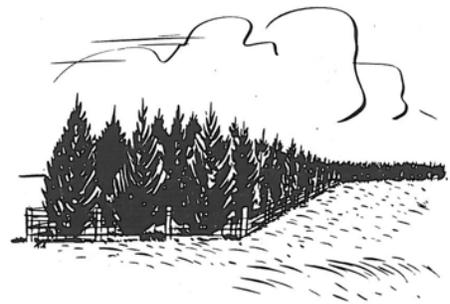
The Nebraska Department of Agriculture recently announced that annual payments are available for those who enroll acres in the Nebraska Buffer Strip Program. Buffer strips are cropland areas planted to grasses in strips from 20 to 120 feet in width. Buffer strips are effective at reducing the amount of sediment and other pollutants reaching surface water when placed next to seasonal or perennial streams, wetlands, or ponds. Significant drainage-ways through cropped fields also qualify.

The landowner will receive annual payments of up to \$250 per acre for buffer strips on irrigated cropland. Dryland crop ground is also eligible, although the payment rates will be less and determined by soil type. "Riparian forest buffers" are also an option through the program. The landowner chooses the duration of the agreement, which can be from five to ten years in length. Contact Bill Carhart at the Twin Platte Natural Resources District office for more information about this program, or to enroll acres.

Chemigation Applicator Training 2009

February 17	1:30 pm MT	Valentino's, Ogallala
February 18	9:00 am CT	Logan Co. Courthouse, Stapleton
February 20	1:30 pm MT	Community Bldg, Paxton
February 24	1:30 pm MT	Perkins Co. Fairground, Grant
March 5	1:00 pm CT	WCREC, North Platte
April 7	1:00 pm CT	WCREC, North Platte
May 7	1:00 pm CT	WCREC, North Platte
May 21	1:00 pm CT	WCREC, North Platte

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Windbreaks Can Reduce Impact of Environmental Conditions

Try to imagine being caught in a snow storm with a wind chill of 10 below. What relief it would be to stumble on a windbreak providing protection from the wind and the snow.

Properly designed livestock windbreaks can reduce the impact of environmental conditions. Windbreaks reduce wind velocity effectively for ten times the height of the trees. Controlling the drift snow is another benefit, catching most of the snow within 100 feet of the windbreak. The rancher is better able to get into these areas to feed and check livestock.

The reduced cold and wet will improve your cattle performance. Studies have shown that windbreaks will increase feed efficiency and decrease mortality of newborns, compared to unprotected areas. The increase in feed efficiency is due to the fact that livestock protected against winter winds will not require as much feed for maintenance. These benefits will reduce production costs.

Heat stress can also reduce livestock performance. Summer shade can be provided by large deciduous trees in group plantings. Shade trees can be a good tool to promote uniform grazing. Nut and berry producing trees such as oak and hackberry provide desired shade, as well as food for wildlife. A dense planting is crucial for winter protection, but may block summer breezes.

For winter protection, windbreaks are primarily located to the north and west of lots, small winter pastures, and calving areas. Windbreaks in the dryland corners of center pivots reduce soil erosion and provide livestock protection when wintering on stalks. In large winter pastures, the planting location should intercept drifting livestock during a storm. The prevailing northwest winter winds in Nebraska cause cattle to move in a southeasterly direction. An L or E shaped windbreak near the southeast corner of the pasture could intercept more animals than a northwest windbreak, especially if a sudden storm arises.

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Corners for Wildlife Program

The Twin Platte Natural Resources District is currently signing up acres for landowners interested in converting their dry cropland “corners” adjacent to center pivots to habitat. The Corners for Wildlife program rewards wildlife habitat improvement with up to \$95 per acre in annual payments for the five year enrollment period.

In addition, cost-share funds provided by the Natural Resources District and Pheasants Forever will cover or significantly reduce the landowner’s cost for installing habitat materials. The minimum improvement for a \$60 per acre payment is the seeding of a grass mixture to enhance wildlife cover. Shrub plantings are required in addition to the grass seeding to receive \$95 per acre.

The Corners for Wildlife program is administered by the Natural Resources Districts in cooperation with the Nebraska Environmental Trust and Pheasants Forever, Inc. The program does not require hunting access on enrolled sites. Contact Bill Carhart at the District office for more information.

Windbreaks continued from page 2

Livestock windbreaks should consist of four or more rows of trees. The first two windward rows should be made up of eastern red cedar or rocky mountain juniper. These two species of trees provide dense year round protection.

Windbreaks are a long term investment. Careful design, adapted trees and shrubs, proper site preparation, planting, weed and grass control, and replanting are all important factors for a successful windbreak.

For additional information or to order trees, call Dave at the Twin Platte Natural Resources District at (308) 535-8080. Orders will be taken through the middle of February for spring pickup.

Photo courtesy of Jeff Headley



2008 Conservation Award Winner

Pictured from left, Janet and Paul Heinrich, Dave Slattery of the Twin Platte Natural Resources District, and Ruby Heinrich.

CONGRATULATIONS!

2008 Tree Award Winner

Pictured from left, Justin, Ceiden, Jarid, John, Maureen, and Celie Childears.



Twin Platte Natural Resources District

Board of Directors.....Sub-District

Jim Rubenthaler.....(H)584-3578.....	At-large
(Chairperson)	
Doug Stack.....(W)535-8308.....	3
(Vice-Chairperson)	
Jerry Weaver.....(W)534-9240.....	3
(Secretary)	
Jim Meisner.....(H)284-6509.....	5
(Treasurer)	
Bob Petersen.....(H)532-2689.....	2
Joe Wahlgren.....(H)537-3136.....	2
Shane Storer.....(H)764-2343.....	1
Dale Margritz.....(H)532-6711.....	4
Bob Wiseman.....(H)368-5866.....	4
Eric Hansen.....(W)532-6244.....	1
Dennis Schilz.....(W)287-2341.....	5

Staff Members.....Position

Kent O. Miller.....	General Manager
Dave Slattery.....	Conservation Programs Coordinator
Bill Carhart.....	Range Programs Coordinator
Glen Bowers.....	Water Programs Field Coordinator
Ann Dimmitt	Water Programs Regulatory Coordinator
Kevin Spelts.....	Ground Water Modeler
Phil Heimann.....	Conservation Technician
Amy Mapes.....	Administrative Assistant
Kathy Clark.....	Field Office Secretary, North Platte NRCS
Justin Lemmer.....	Range Programs Tech, North Platte NRCS

Natural Resources News is the official publication of the Twin Platte Natural Resources District. If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, or would like to be placed on our mailing list, please feel free to submit them to:

Twin Platte Natural Resources District
 C/O Ann Dimmitt, Water Programs Regulatory Coordinator
 P.O. Box 1347
 North Platte, NE 69103-1347
 Phone: (308)535-8080
 Fax: (308)535-8207
 e-mail: tpnrd4@nponline.net

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WCREC stand for West Central Research & Extension Center. For WCREC sessions, contact **Dave Boxler** at (308) 696-6721. For Ogallala, Paxton, and Grant sessions, contact **Doug Anderson** at (308) 284-6051. For Stapleton session, contact **Bethany Johnson** at (308) 645-2267.

Come visit us at the.....
Buffalo Bill Farm and Ranch Expo
Wednesday & Thursday
February 4 & 5, 2008
9am-6pm - 9am-4pm





Upcoming Events:



January

- 8 Board of Director's Meeting - 3:00 p.m. CST*
- 12 TPNRD Stakeholder's Meeting - 7:00 p.m. CST at Holiday Inn Express in North Platte
- 29 Drought Management Workshop in Arthur—11am—3pm MST at the Vet's Memorial Hall

February

- 4 & 5 Farm & Ranch Expo at the D & N Event Center South Hwy 83 & Walker Road—North Platte 9am-6pm and 9am-4 pm
- 12 Board of Director's Meeting - 3:00 p.m. CST*
- 17 Prescribed Burn Workshop at Ole's in Paxton 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. MST
- 23 TPNRD Stakeholder's Meeting - 7:00 p.m. CST at Quality Inn & Suites in North Platte

March

- 12 Board of Director's Meeting - 3:00 p.m. CDT*
- 16 TPNRD Stakeholder's Meeting - 7:00 p.m. CDT at Holiday Inn Express in North Platte

* Board Meetings are held in the TierOne Bank Center-North Platte

TWIN PLATTE

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 North Platte, NE 69103-1347

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