



Perkins Chase and  
Dundy Counties  
Headquarters in Imperial

Upper Republican  
NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

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October 4, 2013

Laura Paeglis, Office Services Manager  
Nebraska Department of Natural Resources  
301 Centennial Mall South  
Lincoln, NE 68509

Dear Laura:

Enclosed is the Upper Republican Natural Resources District's Long Range Implementation Plan for the next five fiscal years as required by Nebraska Revised Statute 2-3277. Please file it appropriately within the Department of Natural Resources and feel free to call me with any questions

Regards,

Nate Jenkins

Assistant Manager

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DEPARTMENT OF  
NATURAL RESOURCES

# ***Upper Republican NRD 2013-2014 Long Range Implementation Plan***

## ***Introduction***

The Upper Republican Natural Resources District is one of 23 natural resources districts created in 1972. The Nebraska Legislature enacted Legislative Bill 1357 in 1969 to combine 154 special purpose agencies and entities into twenty-three natural resource districts. In 1972 the NRDs were created. The boundaries of the NRDs are formed from the natural boundaries of the river watersheds of Nebraska. Nebraska Statutes require that Natural Resources Districts develop a Long Range Implementation Plan that summarizes planned district activities and needs for the current year, and projects said activities and needs for the next five years. Additionally, the plan is intended to help guide decisions for the district, inform the public of the district's plans and help with budget preparations.

## ***Authority and Responsibilities***

In accordance with section 2-3229 in the Revised Statutes of Nebraska, the purposes of Natural Resources Districts shall be to develop and execute, through the exercise of powers and authorities contained in this act, plans, facilities, works and programs relating to: (1) erosion prevention and control; (2) prevention of damages from flood water and sediment; (3) flood prevention and control; (4) conservation; (5) water supply for any beneficial use; (6) development, management, utilization, and conservation of groundwater and surface water; (7) pollution control; (8) solid water disposal and sanitary drainage; (9) drainage improvement and channel rectification; (10) development and management of fish and wildlife habitat; (11) development and management of recreational and park facilities; and (12) forestry and range management.

## ***Description of the District***

The Upper Republican Natural Resources District is located in the Upper Republican River Basin in southwestern Nebraska and includes 1,728,070 acres of land. The District includes all of Chase, Dundy and Perkins Counties. There are twelve communities and villages in the District. The Republican River, Frenchman Creek, Spring Creek, Stinking Water Creek, and Rock Creek are some of the streams that flow through the District. The population of the District is approximately 9,000 in the three counties.

Average annual precipitation in the district ranges from about 17 inches to 20 inches, with about 75 percent of the precipitation occurring between April and September. The district is geologically diverse with a range of soil types including silt loam, sandy loam and sand.

About 50 percent of the land in the district is cultivated, and 46 percent grassland. Less than 4 percent of the land is used for nonagricultural purposes.

### ***Governing Body***

The Upper Republican Natural Resources District (URNRD) is governed by an 11-member Board of Directors. The directors are elected at the general election for a term of four years.

The district is divided into ten (10) sub districts. One board member is elected from each of the ten sub districts. One board member is elected at large every four years. The district operates by a set of rules and regulations which are kept on file at the NRD office in Imperial, Nebraska.

### ***General Goal***

The general goal of the Upper Republican NRD is to responsibly manage the natural resources of the District for the benefit of the people of the District and the State.

### ***Goals***

The following goals and objectives have been adopted by the URNRD and NDNR in the Integrated Management Plan.

- To assist the State of Nebraska, in cooperation with the other Districts, in maintaining compliance with the Compact as adopted in 1943 and as implemented in accordance with the Settlement Agreement approved by the United States Supreme Court on May 19, 2003.
- To ensure that ground water and surface water users within the URNRD assume their share, but only their share, of the responsibility to maintain compliance with the Compact.
- To provide that the URNRD's share of that responsibility be distributed within the URNRD in an equitable manner and to minimize, to the extent possible, adverse economic, social and environmental consequences.

## ***Objectives***

The URNRD Board of Directors will initiate and execute plans and programs as appropriate under the powers and authorities granted by the legislature and according to the priority needs of the District as related to:

- Ground water management, utilization and conservation
- Soil erosion prevention and control
- Range management
- Wildlife habitat and recreation
- Pollution control
- Prevention of damages from floodwater and sediment

(URNRD Master Plan)

## ***Purpose***

The members of the Board of Directors of the URNRD recognize that the underground aquifer partially underlying the District is a laterally confined aquifer and that there have developed, and will continue to develop, conflicts among users. Such conflicts among users have been partially based on a steadily declining water table within the aquifer in the URNRD. Therefore, the actions of the Board are of utmost importance in protecting all uses of groundwater, which include domestic, agricultural, municipal, industrial, wildlife, and recreational uses from unmanageable declines and degradation in quality.

## ***FY 2013-2014***

### ***Republican River Basin Objectives***

- With limited exceptions, prevent the initiation of new or expanded uses of water that increase Nebraska's computed beneficial consumptive use of water within the URNRD, as required for Compact compliance.
- Continue efforts to reduce groundwater use within the URNRD, on average, by 20 percent from the 1998-2002 baseline pumping figures and from the 1998-2002 baseline depletion

figures, as computed through use of the Republican River Compact Administration Ground Water Model.

- Consider new rules and regulations designed to reduce water consumption.
- After taking into account any reduction in beneficial consumptive use achieved through basin-wide incentive programs and increases to stream flow achieved through augmentation projects, make such additional reductions in ground water use in compact call and water short years as are necessary to achieve a reduction in beneficial consumptive use in the URNRD in an amount proportionate to the total reduction in consumptive use required by the Settlement Agreement in Nebraska above Guide Rock in such years. The need for such additional regulations has been significantly reduced by the implementation of the Rock Creek Augmentation Project and will be further reduced by the NCORPE augmentation project, which will be constructed in 2013.
- Should reductions in water use be needed for Compact compliance in addition to augmentation, achieve such reductions through a combination of regulatory and incentive programs designed to reduce beneficial consumptive use, relying on incentive programs available to as many of the URNRD water users as possible.
- For the URNRD, other NRDs in the basin, irrigation districts and NDNR to investigate and explore methods to conjunctively manage ground and surface water to maximize its availability for Compact purposes.
- Continue efforts to retire irrigation uses on a willing seller/buyer basis utilizing, to the extent possible, federal and potentially other sources or revenue.
- Utilize District and grant funds to incentivize the use of water-saving technology by producers within the District.

### ***FY 2013-2017***

### ***Long Range Republican***

### ***River Basin Objectives***

- Monitor, provide testimony on, and inform citizens of the impact of pending legislation; and work with legislators to introduce and support legislation that will promote conservation and management of ground water available to the District ground water users.

- Cooperate with other agencies and ground and surface water users in the Republican River Basin.
- Continue study of the conjunctive nature of ground and surface water in the Republican River Basin and implement projects that achieve conjunctive management objectives.
- The URNRD is involved with ongoing invasive weed management in stream channels. As a member of the Southwest Weed Management area, the URNRD supports invasive plant removal along stream channels and will continue to seek funding and partnerships to further this effort.
- Operate, when necessary, the Rock Creek and NCORPE augmentation projects to achieve Republican River Compact Compliance in a manner that protects the local economy and manages water resources responsibly.
- Continue an irrigation retirement program initiated in 2011 aimed at increasing stream flow by retiring those acres where pumping has significant and more immediate impacts on stream flow. The program will be partially dependent on federal funding for the program that is jointly administered and funded by the URNRD and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.
- Promote and encourage the use of tools and technology that have the capability of reducing water use in the District through financial incentives and educational outreach.
- Monitor water quality through continued and regular testing of water throughout the District.
- Monitor and record irrigation water applications on all high-capacity wells in the District and static water levels on all observation wells in the District.

## ***Ground and Surface Water***

### ***FY 2012-2013 Groundwater Activities***

#### ***Groundwater Management Area***

Commencing in 1978, the URNRD has adopted and enforced rules and regulations for the purpose of managing the ground water resources within the URNRD. On July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2004 the URNRD voted to extend Order No. 26 until September 1, 2005. Rule 9A of

the Rules provides for a basic allocation of ground water to certified irrigated acres within the URNRD of 72.5 inches for the five (5) year period between January 1, 2003 and December 31, 2007, an annualized allocation of 14.5 acre-inches. In accordance with the Integrated Management Plan, the allocation was

reduced to 13.5 acre-inches per year in 2005.

January 1, 2013 commenced a new allocation period. The current allocation period is January 1, 2013 – December 31, 2017. The allocation is 65 inches over the allocation period, which is 13 inches per year annualized. The Board imposed a 7.5 inch limitation on the use of carry-forward during the allocation period and also implemented penalties on those who borrow allocation from the subsequent allocation period. The Board also limited the amount of carry-forward that a tract can add to a pool to three years of annualized allocation.

Since 1978, with adoption of its Order #1, the URNRD has required the metering, data collection and reporting of ground water use, resulting in actual pumpage and use data, and has imposed allocations and regulation on ground water users within the URNRD. In May 2005 the URNRD adopted an Integrated Management Plan, effective for the 2005 through 2007 irrigation seasons, pursuant to LB 962. The IMP was updated March 13, 2008 when the URNRD Rules and Regulations were revised, and again with the adoption by the Board August 3, 2010, effective November 1, 2010. In March 2012, the Board approved Revised Rules and Regulations that codify Compact Call Year procedures. The revisions contain other changes not directly related to the IMP, including modifications to pooling rules and regulations.

### ***Groundwater Quality Sampling***

The URNRD has had a continuous water quality sampling program in the District since 1974, but more sampling sites were added in 1980. These sites are still sampled once a year in the winter. Domestic wells were sampled for nitrate results in February and March of 2013.

At each water sample site with a nitrate concentration above 6.0 ppm, twelve more samples are collected in a three-mile diameter of the sample site. If there are municipal or village water wells in that area, those nitrate levels are also used.

### ***Chemigation***

Chemigation is the practice of applying fertilizers or other agricultural chemicals to land or crops through an irrigation system. To protect Nebraska's ground water from possible back-flow of chemicals into irrigation wells, the Legislature enacted LB 284, the Chemigation Act. The act requires the operator of a chemigation system to obtain a permit prior to use. To obtain this permit, the irrigation must be properly equipped, inspected and approved by the NRD before applying any chemicals. In fiscal year 2012-2013, the NRD issued 21 new chemigation permits and renewed 2,635 permits for a total of 2,656 permits. A total of 2,656 chemigation inspections were completed.

### ***Decommissioned Wells***

Nebraska is one of several states in which more than 90% of the people rely on

ground water for domestic use. Abandoned wells can be a threat to this water supply because they provide a direct link for contamination from the surface to the groundwater.

An abandoned well is a well that has not been properly decommissioned. Decommissioned means the act of filling, sealing and plugging a water well in accordance with Rules and Regulations of the Nebraska Health and Human Services. The URNRD has a decommissioning cost share program. Reimbursement will be 75% of actual cost not to exceed a maximum in cost-share of \$500 for all wells except \$1,400 for a hand-dug well.

### ***Groundwater Well Measurement Sites***

The URNRD has maintained a ground water well measurement database since 1972. There are over 400 wells measured twice every year for the static water level. The wells are measured in the spring and in the fall once irrigation season has been completed.

### ***USGS/URNRD Continuous Recorder Wells***

The USGS has partnered with the URNRD for many years to measure and maintain continuous recorder wells in the District. The URNRD measures all fourteen recorder wells nine times during the year.

There are some wells that do not actually have recorders in them now but the URNRD still measures them three months out of the year.

### ***Registered Irrigation Wells***

The URNRD has copies of all irrigation well registrations in the District on file at the Imperial office. There are 3,276 registered irrigation wells in the District. In Chase County there are 1,374 irrigation wells, in Dundy County there are 987 irrigation wells and in Perkins County there are 915 irrigation wells.

### ***Groundwater Allocation – Flowmeters***

Each well requiring a permit is equipped with a flowmeter. The flowmeter is installed, operated and maintained in accordance with the specific Rules and Regulations of the URNRD. The flowmeters are required to be sealed in. URNRD technicians have a servicing program for each of the three counties. Flowmeters are serviced and read annually.

Flowmeters that need to be repaired or replaced will be picked up by the technicians after the irrigation season is finished. The URNRD does have an in-house flowmeter repair shop.

Flowmeters that need to be repaired and have failed to work during the irrigation season will need to have the landowner provide information such as energy usage to help determine the water pumpage from the irrigation season.

### ***Ultrasonic Flowmeter***

The URNRD has ultrasonic flowmeters available for use in the district. The ultrasonic flowmeters are available to check the accuracy of regular flowmeters.

### ***Irrigation Runoff Complaints***

The NRDs have statutory authority to handle all irrigation runoff complaints. When landowners receive irrigation runoff water on their property from another landowner, a complaint to resolve the problem may be issued to the NRD. Usually the NRD is able to resolve these situations without going through the formal complaint process.

### ***Wellhead Protection Program***

The URNRD has continued to work with the cities and villages of the District with their wellhead protection programs.

## ***FY 2013-2014 Ground and Surface Water***

### ***Objectives***

- Continue with URNRD Ground Water Management Area programs.
- Continue to work with the United States Geological Survey (USGS) in monitoring groundwater levels with the continuous recorder well sites.
- Continue water sampling rural domestic wells for nitrate results.
- Continue water sampling in the greater than six mg/L nitrate level areas each summer.
- Continue sampling of approximately fifty-five irrigation wells in our District that are part of the Nebraska State-wide Network.
- Administer state and local cost-share funds to decommission abandoned water wells, and provide 100% cost-share assistance within Wellhead Protection Areas.
- Continue working with area communities to develop State approved Wellhead Protection Area; offer assistance to gather data for delineation of Wellhead Protection Area maps, perform Contaminant Source Inventories, and produce and implement management plans.
- Continue to be a member of the Imperial Groundwater Guardian Team to help inform citizens of the District about ground water quality current and changing issues.
- Provide guidance to communities in producing Source Water Assessment Protection Plans for the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality.
- Continue to implement the Chemigation Program to inspect safety equipment on

each permitted irrigation system in the District.

- Continue with the District's Well Permitting Program.
- Provide guidance and be a member of the Southwest Area Weed Management group.
- Continue to site registered and unregistered wells in the District using GPS.
- Continue to monitor changes in ground water levels and quality in the District.
- Continue to implement the Flowmeter Servicing and Repair program for all the flowmeters in the District.
- Continue to read the flowmeters in all three counties and update the water usage database.
- Continue to measure the static water levels in 400+ wells.
- Continue to administer the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Program in the District.
- Continue to update and keep the water quality database current.
- Continue to mail out water usages to owners and operators after the flowmeters and usages have been calculated.
- Continue to mail out water sample results to landowners after the sampling has been completed.

- Continue to collect surface water samples from Enders Reservoir and other impoundments as requested by the state to test for coliform bacteria and toxic algae.

### ***FY 2013-2017 Groundwater Management Activities***

#### ***Long Range Objectives***

- Develop, promulgate and enforce rules and regulations that provide for: appropriate protection of the aquifer; incentives to use water efficiently; conservation of ground water; and maintenance and enhancement of ground water quality.
- Conduct monitoring and other data collection activities and research necessary for interpretation of changes in ground water levels and actual and potential pollution of the aquifer.
- Cooperate with other agencies to plan and conduct data collection activities related to ground and surface water quantity and quality.
- Reduce the potential for non-point contamination of ground and surface water through education, research, management practices, incentives and rules that protect the water but also minimize adverse effects on the economy of the area.
- Carry out provisions of the Nebraska Chemigation Act by annually

inspecting all chemigating systems in the District.

- Through education programs and cost-share assistance, encourage proper decommissioning of water wells that are no longer used.
- Initiate, with the Natural Resource Conservation Service, County Extension Educators, and the UNL West Central Research and Extension Center, irrigation efficiency research and education programs.
- Disseminate to citizens, agencies, and organizations information regarding changes in water quantity and quality in the District.
- Inform citizens and furnish materials to schools for educational programs about District activities and principles of water conservation and pollution prevention.
- Assist communities to plan and delineate appropriate wellhead protection areas.
- Establish contracts for residents of the District with agencies associated with or responsible for water related issues.

### **Soil Conservation**

In response to the Erosion and Sediment Control Act (LB 474), passed in 1986, the Natural Resources Commission developed the Nebraska Soil and Water

Conservation Strategy. This strategy outlines a course of action for efficiently conserving and managing the state's natural resources.

The goal of soil conservation in the URNRD is to maintain, and where possible improve the quality and long-term productivity of soil resources of the District, and prevent on-site and off-site damage from sediment caused by wind and water erosion.

### ***Erosion and Sediment Complaints***

The URNRD responds to occasional erosion and sediment complaints. In most cases, these complaints are resolved before going through the formal complaint process.

### ***FY 2013-2014 Soil Conservation Objectives***

- Cooperate with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to develop conservation plans and to provide cost-share assistance to landowners for eligible voluntary soil management practices that will reduce wind and water erosion.
- Administer \$25,000 of State NSWCP to landowners for the construction of terraces, waterways, diversions and the planting of permanent vegetation.
- Continue to promote conservation tillage measures, pasture and range management, sustainable agriculture, the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and the Conservation Reserve

Enhancement Program (CREP), through the District's newsletter.

- Continue to assist landowners in resolving soil erosion and sediment complaints.
- Provide financial support and staff time to conservation education activities.
- Continue to work with the Buffer Strip program and perform on-site inspections.

### ***FY 2013-2017 Soil Conservation***

#### ***Long Range Objectives***

- Maintain existing land treatment practices and programs.
- Continue to work with all counties in the district to reduce roadside erosion.
- Look for new and innovative soil and water conservation methods.
- Continue to support the Land and Range Judging Contests.
- Promote the use of and make available soil surveys and land use information.

### ***Flood Control and Drainage Reduction***

The URNRD has one Flood Control Project that it has supported, the Wauneta Flood Project.

The URNRD in FY 08-09 began investigating the need for a flood control project or projects west of Champion, located in Chase County. After the late spring flood in 2007, several small dams, with limited surface water storage, were washed away or filled with sediment.

### ***Hazard Mitigation Project***

The Upper Republican NRD has participated in a multi-jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan with several entities in all three counties of the District. A Hazard Mitigation Plan is a pre-disaster planning document that provides a pro-active approach to reduce damages from disasters through planning. By having a Hazard Mitigation Plan the jurisdictions involved are eligible for Federal grant funding for mitigation projects. Pre-disaster mitigation projects are designed to reduce or eliminate damages that occur due to natural disasters such as wildfire, tornados, blizzards, drought, and flooding. JEO Consulting Group, Inc. has worked with the jurisdictions involved in Chase, Dundy and Perkins counties to develop the Hazard Mitigation Plan.

### ***FY 2013-2014 Hazard Mitigation Objectives***

- Participate in two Mitigation Alternative Meetings in each of the three counties.
- Revise Hazard Mitigation Plan as needed.

### ***FY 2013-2017***

#### ***Hazard Mitigation Long Range Objectives***

- Work as needed with entities in Chase, Dundy and Perkins counties to implement hazard mitigation projects identified in Hazard Mitigation Plan to reduce or eliminated damages from natural disasters such as wildlife, tornados, blizzards, drought, and flooding.
- Ensure that Hazard Mitigation Plan objectives and projects are achieving Upper Republican NRD Legislative goals and objectives for flood prevention and control.
- As needed, identify and submit FEMA revisions needed in Chase and Perkins counties Hazard Mitigation Plans.

#### ***Forestry, Range and Wildlife Habitat***

The URNRD administers several programs designed to enhance the region's forest, range and wildlife land including the conservation tree program and WILD NE program. The URNRD sponsors Range Judging and Land Judging contests, and other school-oriented activities.

### ***FY 2013-2014 Forestry, Range and Wildlife Habitat Objectives***

#### ***Conservation Tree Program***

The conservation tree program offered by the URNRD is one that landowners seem to rely upon year after year. Over 1.6 million trees have been planted since 1972. Trees and shrubs may be obtained from the NRD for windbreaks, shelter belts, wildlife habitat and woodlots. In addition to providing a planting service, the NRD also designs tree windbreaks, shelter belts, wildlife habitat and woodlots. In addition to providing a planting service, the NRD also designs tree plans and offers technical advice on ground preparation for tree sites. During the spring of 2013, 20,315 trees and shrubs were distributed to District residents and 50,995 linear feet of weed barrier were distributed.

#### ***WILD Nebraska Program***

WHIP (Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program) is still discontinued but existing contracts are still being honored.

WILD Nebraska, the replacement for WHIP, is intended to encourage landowners to set aside land for wildlife habitat, but payment rates and acceptable practices have been adjusted in the new program to make it more flexible.

The new program bases its payments on average county rental rates. There are numerous habitat practices eligible for funding through this program. Funding for the program is split between the Nebraska

Game and Parks Commission (75%) and the NRD (25%).

There are two WILD Nebraska contracts in the district.

***FY 2013-2014 Forestry, Range and Wildlife Habitat Objectives***

- Continue to rent and maintain grass seed drills for landowners in the District.
- Provide grass seed for resale.
- Continue to partner with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission to administer and implement the WILD NE program.
- Cooperate with Pheasant Forever chapters to enhance wildlife habitat and establish windbreaks.
- Continue to rent and maintain mechanical gopher getters for landowners to rent in the District.
- Provide gopher bait in different forms for resale.
- Continue to purchase conservation seedling trees for distribution to landowners in the District.
- Continue to sub-contract tree planting and weed barrier installation.

***FY 2013-2017 Forestry, Range and Wildlife Habitat Long Range Objectives***

- Continue to sell trees and shrubs through the conservation seedling tree program.
- Provide information and education on tree planting, woodland management, grassland management, and proper wildlife habitat enhancement through the media and schools.
- Continue to sponsor the Honor Family Tree Planter's Award in the Honor Family Award Program.

***Recreation***

*The URNRD does not have any district operated recreation areas in the district. Most recreation areas here in the District are maintained by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.*

***Drainage Improvement and Channel Rectification***

It is the general policy of the District not to provide financial assistance for drainage improvement and channel rectification unless a project has public benefit and is sponsored by a city or county.

***Waste Disposal and Pollution Control***

In recent years, Nebraska's solid waste regulations have changed. Landfills that weren't properly designed, operated or sited were required to shut down, as were unauthorized dumps. Now, all landfills must

be approved and permitted by the State. If a permit is not issued, the landfill cannot legally operate. Currently, the only permitted landfill in the Upper Republican NRD is a facility northwest of Grant.

### ***FY 2013-2014 Waste Disposal & Pollution Objectives***

- Promote recycling efforts in the District through education programs, newsletters and news releases.
- Provide information and education on water conservation and safe disposal of farm and household chemicals.
- Participate in education efforts to promote the reduction of pollution to our air, water and soil resources.
- Cooperate and be supportive of other groups' and agencies' pollution control efforts, education and/or regulation.

### ***FY 2013-2017 Waste Disposal and Pollution Long Range Objectives***

- Assist and encourage communities in establishing collection locations for recyclable wastes.
- Assist District cities and counties in establishing pickup days for hazardous household and farmstead wastes.

## ***Information & Education***

A major responsibility of the Upper Republican NRD is to keep the public aware of the District's various projects and programs and to inform and educate children and adults about the wise use and management of our natural resources.

### ***FY 2012-2013 Information and Education Activities***

The Upper Republican NRD conducted many activities to help residents learn the importance of our soil and water resources and keep abreast of natural resource issues and concerns.

### ***Publications***

Two issues of the District's newsletter "The Upper Republican Natural Resources Report" were distributed to over 6,500 subscribers in four weekly newspapers.

News releases were mailed to district and statewide radio stations, television stations, newspapers and others.

Several local NRDs have formed together to record a weekly radio spot "The Natural Resources Report" on the KRVN radio station out of Lexington, NE. The Upper Republican NRD has been submitting a recording every six weeks since September 2006.

The District worked with the Twin Platte NRD, Middle Republican NRD and Lower Republican NRD to educate constituents about the NCORPE augmentation project. The District also worked with the Nebraska

Association of Resources Districts to publicize the project and began working with NARD and NRCS officials to educate citizens regionally and nationally about water conservation efforts in the District and Nebraska.

### ***Web Site***

The URNRD's website has been updated and re-formatted to include information on nearly all of the District's projects and programs. Information about the board of directors and personnel, as well as minutes, agendas, and news releases are included on the web site. In 2013, the District worked with UNL to develop an online water-use calculator applicable to all types of flow meters in the District. The calculator has been posted on the NRD's website.

### ***FY 2013-2014 Information & Education Objectives***

- Publish the District newsletter quarterly and distribute 6,500 copies with the local weekly newspapers. (Imperial Republican, Wauneta Breeze, Grant Tribune and the Benkelman Post).
- Educate state and regional policy makers of District efforts to manage natural resources

- Publish the URNRD's Annual Report in the local newspapers.
- Send timely news releases to the local media on various URNRD programs, projects and activities.
- Continue with the annual Award program.
- Continue to hold Special meetings and public information hearings.
- Provide the local media with Budget Requests.
- Continue to have staff time to make conservation education programs for schools, individuals and organizations when a reasonable request is made.
- Continue to provide a display at county fairs within the District.
- Update the District's website regularly.
- Inform residents statewide about District efforts, and those of other NRDs when appropriate, to responsibly manage natural resources.

### ***FY 2013-2017 Information & Education Long Range Objectives***

- Seek to have conservation/environmental education as a part of the school curriculum.

- Support environmental education activities and events.
- Participate with the Information and Education Staff Group to coordinate statewide I&E activities and produce statewide products.
- Help to develop the Natural Resources Camp held at the Nebraska 4H Camp in Halsey, NE. This camp is for 5th-8th graders to help encourage participation in the Nebraska Envirothon, Range Judging, Land Judging and other wildlife contests when the campers become old enough to participate in the contests.
- Continue to participate with the National Drought Mitigation Center, Middle and Lower Republican NRDs to provide timely, objective information on the availability and management of water resources within the basin.
- Educate adults about the importance and effectiveness of local control of natural resources.

## ***Assessment of Needs, Current and Projected***

### ***Personnel***

Groundwater quantity and quality management and the integrated management of water resources will continue to be the primary function of the

District. The projected need of personnel for the next five years requires no changes in staffing levels.

The staff of the Upper Republican NRD includes eight full-time employees at the District office in Imperial. The NRD also has field office clerks in the Imperial, and Grant NRCS offices.

Current staff consists of:

Jasper Fanning, General Manager

Deb Hayes, Office Manager

Dirk Dinnel, Assistant Manager

Nate Jenkins, Assistant Manager,  
Communications

Mike Nesbitt, Conservation Programs  
Coordinator (Perkins County)

Todd Burrell, Conservation Technician  
(Chase County)

John Lemon, Conservation Technician  
(Dundy County)

Mike Keller, NCORPE Land Manager

Wilma Zimbelman, NRD Receptionist

Patty Clough, Field Office Clerk, Perkins Co.

Becky Spady, Field Office Clerk, Chase Co.

### ***FY 2013-2017 Personnel Objectives***

- Continue to have staff members attend meetings and conferences.

- Continue to have staff members attend meetings and conferences for Water Well Monitoring Technician certificates, Natural Resource Groundwater Technician and the continuing education hours.
- Search for new and effective ways to inform and educate the public on the NRD purpose and programs.
- Increase participation in activities sponsored by other agencies related to NRD responsibilities.

### ***Financial***

Personnel needs, salaries, program funding and other matters are reviewed each year and a working budget is then prepared to summarize the projected financial needs and resources. The board of directors must approve the budget annually. Budget reductions at the state level will continue to have an impact on the district budget.

Upper Republican NR1)  
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