

SOUTH PLATTE NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

551 Parkland Drive, PO Box 294 Sidney, Nebraska 69162
(308) 254-2377 FAX (308) 254-2783 www.spnrd.org

August 20, 2013

Kent Zimmerman
301 Centennial Mall South
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4676

Re: Master Plan
South Platte Natural Resources District

Dear Kent:

Attached please find the above referenced document, approved on August 13, 2013 by the South Platte Natural Resources District Board of Directors.

Sincerely,

Linda L. Suhr, Administrative Manager

Copy: Rod L. Horn, General Manager

Attachment: (1)

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AUG 26 2013

DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES



Master Plan

Approved by the Board of Directors on September 14, 1999

Updated and approved by the Board of Directors on August 13, 2013

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AUG 26 2013

DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

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INTRODUCTION

Vision Statement

Manage, protect and enhance natural resources.

Mission Statement

The Mission Statement was originally adopted by the District Board of Directors in 1991 and revised in the Long-Range Plan on September 12, 2000.

The mission is to formulate and investigate forward-looking plans and programs through a cooperative process that will provide for the long-term protection and enhancement of the District's natural resources while ensuring that major economic and social impacts are fully considered.

Master Plan and Long Range Plan are Required

Preparation and adoption of a Master Plan was required in Nebraska Revised Statutes, Chapter 2, Section 3276 by August 1, 1979. The plan is to include but not be limited to a statement of goals and objectives for each of the purposes stated in section 2-3229. The master plan shall be reviewed and updated as often as deemed necessary by the District, but in no event less often than once each ten years. A copy of the master plan as adopted and all revisions and updates thereto shall be filed with the Department of Natural Resources.

The South Platte NRD (District) submitted the initial Master Plan to the State of Nebraska in 1979, followed by updates in 1989 and 1999. This document will be the next sequential update when it is adopted by the District Board of Directors.

Nebraska law charged the NRDs with 12 areas of responsibility that must be addressed in the Master Plan:

- erosion prevention and control;
- prevention of damages from flood water and sediment;
- flood prevention and control;
- soil conservation;
- water supply for any beneficial uses;
- development, management, utilization, and conservation of Ground Water and surface water;
- pollution control;
- solid waste disposal and drainage;
- drainage improvement and channel rectification;
- development and management of fish and wildlife habitat;
- development and management of recreational and park facilities; and
- forestry and range management.

The South Platte NRD has consolidated the areas of responsibility into seven key program planning areas: 1) Ground and Surface Water Management; 2) Land Treatment; 3) Forestry and Range Management; 4) Recreation, Fish and Wildlife; 5) Waste Disposal and Pollution Control; 6) Flood Prevention and Control; and 7) Drainage Improvement and Channel Rectification. Each of the seven areas will be expanded upon later in the document. (See Key Planning Areas.)

The Master Plan is also essential to the District since Section 2-3280 of the Statutes requires that “no state funds shall be allocated or disbursed to a District unless that District has submitted its master plan...and until the disbursing agency has determined that such funds are for plans, facilities, works, and programs which are in conformance with plans of the agency.”

Additionally, Section 2-3277 of the Nebraska Statutes requires each NRD to prepare and adopt a Long Range Implementation Plan and under Section 2-3278 to “prepare and adopt any individual project plans as it deems necessary to carry out projects approved by the District.” The Long Range Plan will specify work to be completed from the goals and objectives in the Master Plan in five year segments.

The Long Range Implementation Plan will be filed with the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the Nebraska Policy Research Office.

Natural Resources in Nebraska

The natural resources of Nebraska are important factors in the history, present and future of our state, affecting the economic, social and physical development of the state. The potential of the land was recognized by Native American Indians and the early white explorers. Many dismissed the area as “The Great American Desert.” Striving to develop Nebraska’s natural resources to their potential, Nebraskans learned to cooperate on soil, water and wildlife management issues, developing plans to conserve the resources and to be wise stewards so that future generations might also benefit from these resources.

Today, Nebraska’s farms and ranches utilize 45.6 million acres or 93% of the state’s total land area. There are nearly 23 million acres of rangeland and pastureland in Nebraska, half of which are in the Sandhills.

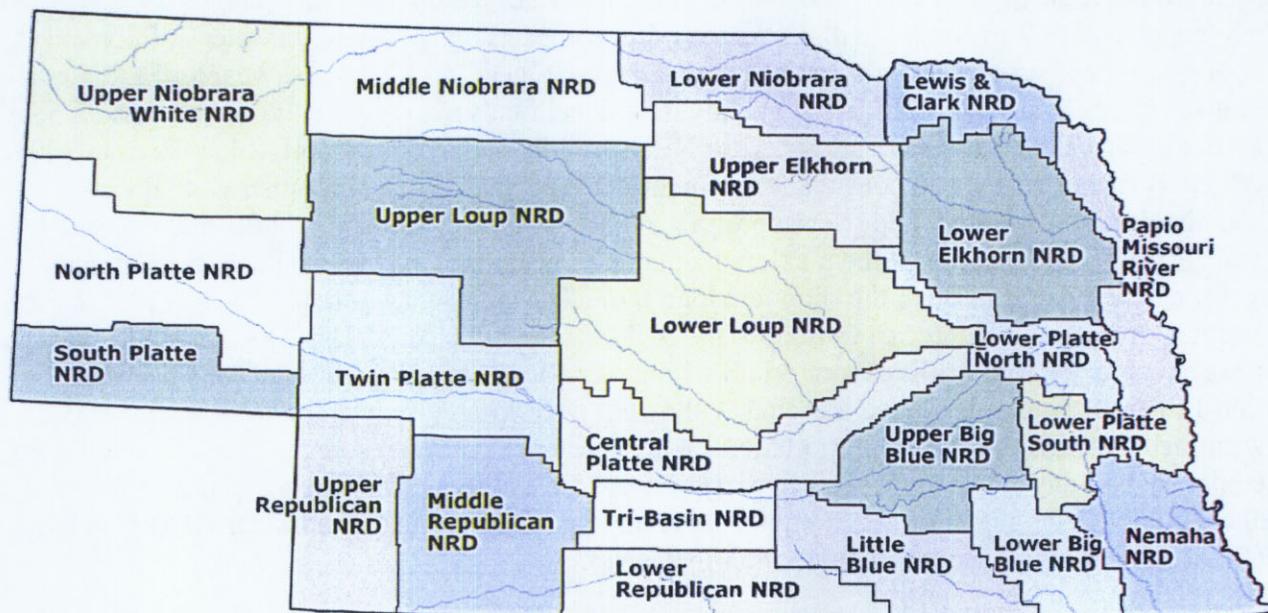
Nebraska is fortunate to have aquifers below it. If poured over the surface of the state, the water in those aquifers would have a depth of 37.9 feet. The state, as of 2012, has 128,000 registered, active irrigation wells supplying water to over 8.7 million acres of cropland and pasture. Of the total cropland harvested during 2007, 46 percent was irrigated. Nearly 24,000 miles of rivers and streams in 13 watersheds add to Nebraska’s bountiful natural resources.

Natural Resources Districts

In 1972, the Nebraska State Legislature, through Nebraska Revised Statutes, Chapter 2, Section 32, created 24 NRDs. The Papio-Missouri River NRD was created in January 1989 when the Papio NRD and Middle Tribes NRD merged to leave 23 active NRDs. The purposes of NRDs are to develop and

execute, through the exercise of powers and authorities granted by law, plans, facilities, works, and programs relating to resource conservation and development.

NRDs help Nebraskans respond to natural resource challenges with local control and local solutions. Often, they build partnerships with other agencies and organizations, other state and federal agencies, municipalities, counties and private organizations. The importance of sustainable solutions for Nebraska's resources is paramount. NRDs are committed to involvement with partners and producers to obtain positive and long lasting results. Many NRDs employ specialists for soil, water, wildlife and trees in order to meet overall state conservation goals. Below all of the Nebraska NRDs and their boundaries are shown.



The Legislature gave authority for NRDs to provide effective planning, development and management of natural resources, as well as a means to fund those efforts.

In order to carry out the mandated areas of responsibility NRDs were given the power and authority to levy a tax not to exceed four and one-half cents on each one hundred dollars of taxable valuation annually on all of the taxable property within such District unless a higher levy is authorized pursuant to section [77-3444](#).

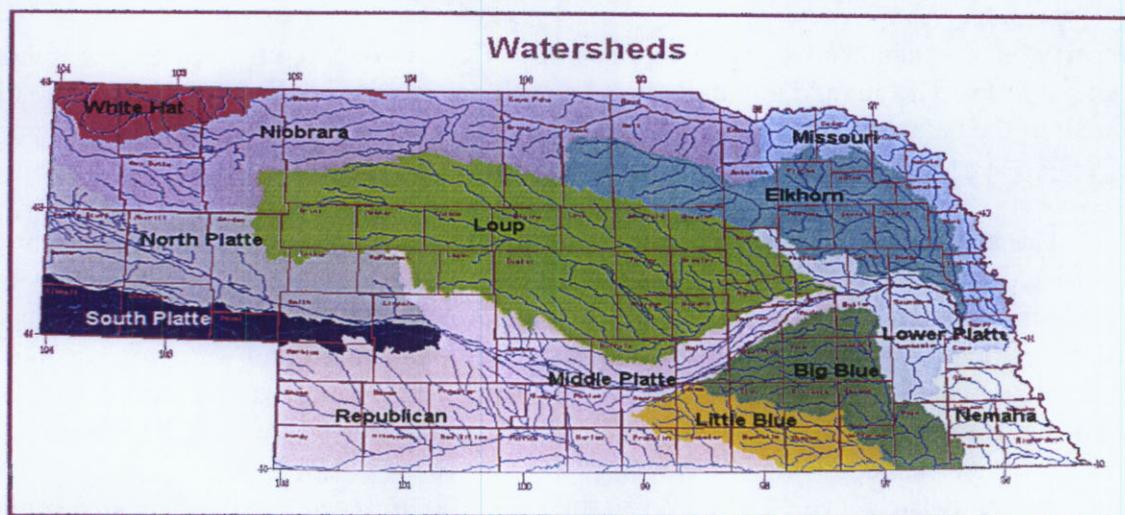
Each District shall also have the power and authority to levy a tax equal to the dollar amount by which its restricted funds budgeted, to administer and implement ground water management activities and integrated management activities under the Nebraska Ground Water Management and Protection Act, exceed its restricted funds budgeted to administer and implement ground water management activities and integrated management activities for FY2003-04, not to exceed one cent on each one hundred dollars of taxable valuation annually on all of the taxable property within the District.

For natural resources districts located in a river basin, sub-basin, or reach that has been determined to be fully appropriated over-appropriated, the measure increases the levy authority by 3 cents to administer and implement ground water management activities and integrated management activities. The levy is in addition to the 4.5 cent levy and the extra 1.0 cent levy authority granted by LB 962 in

2004. The additional authority to exceed restricted funds budgeted was scheduled to phase out over 3 years.

LB701 was passed by the legislature, providing additional authorities to address water management activities. The key changes include: 1) Allowing NRDs in areas that are covered by an interstate compact to lease or purchase water to enhance stream flows and pay for such by issuing bonds. The NRDs were granted new taxing authority of up to 10 cents from property tax and/or up to \$10/irrigated acre occupation tax to pay for the bonds. The NRDs in the Republican Basin leased over 30,000 acre-feet of water in 2007 under this provision. A lawsuit has been filed regarding the constitutionality of this provision which stopped the issuance of the bond to pay the water right holders for the lease of the water; 2) Establishment of a Water Resources Cash Fund to be administered by DNR to comply with interstate water compacts and to conserve water in fully and over-appropriated basins. This provision of the bill appropriates \$2.7 million per year to the Water Resources Cash Fund. The NRDs are providing more local funds than required to access these funds; 3) An extension of the 3 cent levy authority for NRDs in fully and over-appropriated areas from 2008 to 2012; 4) Requires DNR, in consultation with the effected natural resources district, to do an annual determination in fully and over-appropriated basins, starting January 1, 2008, and every January 1 thereafter, to estimate the maximum amount of water that may be available from stream flow for a beneficial purpose in the short and long-term. The language would not be an "order" by the department, rather only a forecast developed by DNR and the affected NRDs; 5) Allows NRDs to impose a temporary well drilling moratorium without a notice or hearing, but requires a hearing within 180 days. Similar language is included allowing DNR to impose a temporary 180-day stay on new surface water natural-flow appropriations in areas where a natural resources district has imposed a temporary 180-day stay on new well construction and the addition of new irrigated acres. Water wells of public water suppliers are exempt from temporary moratoriums. The Lower Platte North NRD used this provision of law in 2007 (non-inclusive).

The NRDs were established to deal with a wide variety of natural resource-related issues and replaced 154 special purpose Districts using Nebraska's watershed boundaries.



The [Nebraska Association of Resources Districts](#) (NARD) is the trade association for Nebraska's 23 NRDs. NARD has four full-time employees, and is governed by a Board made up of directors from

individual NRDs and is funded by contributions from the NRDs. NARD assists NRDs in a coordinated effort to accomplish collectively what may not be accomplished individually to conserve, sustain, and improve our natural resources and environment.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DISTRICT

Type of Entity, Location, Population and State and NRD Borders

The South Platte NRD is a political subdivision of the State of Nebraska located in the southern portion of the Nebraska Panhandle, encompassing from west to east, all of Kimball, Cheyenne and Deuel counties. The District covers 2,587.99 square miles or 1,656,314 acres representing 3 percent of the state's land base. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the population of the District is 15,760: Kimball County, 3,821; Cheyenne County, 9,998; and Deuel County, 1,941. There are 10 cities and villages in the District. The state of Wyoming borders the District on the west, and the state of Colorado on the south. The North Platte NRD borders on the north in Kimball and Cheyenne Counties and the Twin Platte NRD on the east and north of Deuel County.

Climate

The climate is characterized by relatively light precipitation. The average rainfall from 2009-2012, according to the SPNRD 2012 Water Usage Report, was as follows: Kimball County, 15.10"; Cheyenne County, 17.33"; and Deuel County, 15.69". There is a high evaporation rate and a wide range of temperatures. The winters are cold and the summers are short and hot. About 80 percent of the precipitation is received as rain during April through September. Snow pack is relatively light. Recharge, the addition of water to the ground water reservoir, is derived mainly from precipitation. Some recharge is received through over irrigation.

Predominant Land Type

Two distinct regions characterize the District. The Upland Plains make up the largest portion; and the Platte Valley Lowlands make up the area along the Lodgepole Creek Valley and the South Platte River. Soil blowing and water erosion are the main hazards affecting the soils on Upland Plains. The Platte Valley Lowlands are affected by drought, increased irrigation and intermittent flood events.

Land Use

Agriculture dominates the economy of the District and is directly related to the need to enhance the District's natural resources. Non-irrigated croplands are the largest land use, followed by rangeland and irrigated cropland. The District's 1,656,314 acres consist of 1,561,124 acres in farmland of which 419,644 acres are rangeland according to the 2007 U.S. Census of Agriculture which is the latest statistic available.

Predominant Water Sources

Limited surface water is found along flowing sections of the Lodgepole Creek, in Oliver Reservoir, Goldeneye Wildlife Management Area and in the District's small section of the South Platte River. The Lodgepole Creek is the predominant watercourse of the District, beginning in the Sherman Mountains of southeastern Wyoming and running east across the District where it enters the South Platte River near Ovid, Colorado. The District owns Oliver Reservoir in Kimball County on the Lodgepole Creek. Oliver Reservoir is mainly a recreation area. The South Platte River crosses the southeastern corner of the District in Deuel County.

The Ogallala Aquifer and the Brule formation are the main sources of potable ground water followed by the Alluvium.

Irrigation

The District contains 132,894 certified irrigated acres based on the information outlined in the 2012 Basin-Wide Report shown on the following page.

	Kimball	Cheyenne	Deuel	Total
Active Overappropriated	16,226	18,743	14,647	49,616
Inactive Overappropriated	783	1,257	485	2,525
Active Fully-Appropriated	25,520	43,654	9,465	78,639
Inactive Fully-Appropriated	476	1,180	458	2,244
Total Certified	43,005	64,834	25,055	132,894
Total Cert. Acres in Nebraska New Depletion Plan 28%/40-year Area	0	56	10,577	10,633

Both ground water and surface water are used for irrigation. The chart above shows the District's total certified irrigated acres and inactive acres (temporary deferment, etc.). It also lists the total certified irrigated acres in the District that are included in the Nebraska New Depletion Plan 28%/40 year area.

Ground water irrigation accounts for the majority of irrigated acres in the District. The District has 128,478.5 actively irrigated acres. For 2012, agriculture used 58,122,747,340 gallons, municipal used 1,218,103,616 gallons and industrial uses total 608,380,959 gallons.

Irrigation from surface water in the District is mostly from the Western Irrigation Canal in southeastern Deuel County and is co-mingled with ground water irrigation. Western Irrigation District has 6 surface water rights ranging from May 1897 to August 1950 and diverts water from the South Platte River into their canal approximately one mile downstream from the Nebraska-Colorado border. Lodgepole Creek has seven irrigation surface water rights in Kimball County, ten in Cheyenne County and four in Deuel County, dated from May 1883 to December 1993. There are also stock and other use rights on the Lodgepole Creek in Kimball and Deuel County. The South Platte NRD holds 3 active irrigation rights on Lodgepole Creek in Kimball County, in Section 35, Township 15 North, Range 57 West of the 6th PM.

Other Water Uses

Domestic, municipal and industrial water use is strictly from ground water. Livestock water can be derived from either ground water or surface water. As a result, the impact of water quality and quantity issues is very important.

GOVERNMENT OF DISTRICT

Board of Directors (At the date of the adoption of this Master Plan)

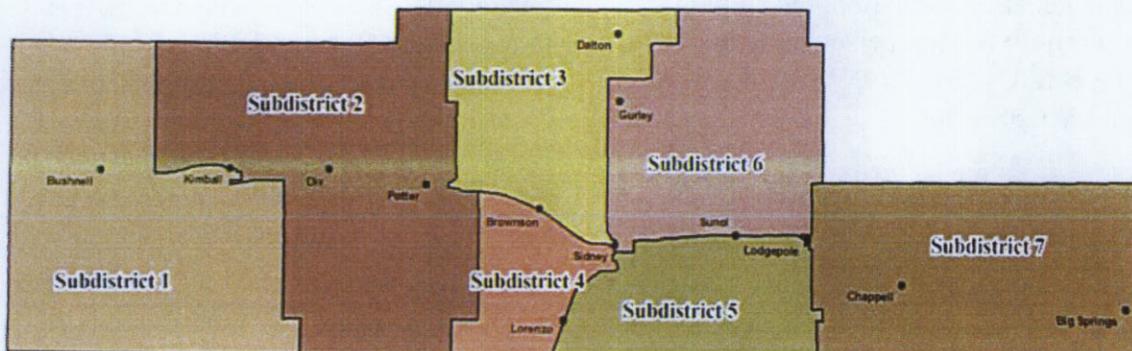
Seven locally elected Directors govern the District and establish resources management policies and procedures. Their authorities include taxing and staffing for resource planning, programs and projects. The District is partially funded by property tax, grants and budgeting decisions. Monthly board meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month unless otherwise necessary. The Directors and their Subdistricts are listed below.

- Subdistrict 1 Bill Halligan, 270 Railroad Ave, Bushnell NE 69128
- Subdistrict 2 James Johnson, 6742 Road 34 N, Dix NE 69133-8905
- Subdistrict 3 Timothy Maas, 8352 Road 50, Potter NE 69156
- Subdistrict 4 Paul Hutchison, 9727 Road 18, Sidney NE 69162
- Subdistrict 5 Keith Rexroth, 2478 Parkview Dr, Sidney Ne 69162
- Subdistrict 6 Tom Biggs, 11956 Road 26, Sidney NE 69162
- Subdistrict 7 Larry Rutt, 2234 Road 181, Chappell NE 69129

Subdistrict Boundaries (At the date of the adoption of this Master Plan)

The seven Subdistricts are based on population distribution and are realigned as necessary after each ten-year census. Changes to District Director Subdistricts will have constituents in some areas represented by different directors. The changes are a result of realignments due to population shifts, documented by the 2010 census. By law, representative Subdistricts can have no more than a 10 percent variation between the most and least populated areas. The optimum target is a 1:1 ratio. With the realignments, the variance between the largest and smallest Subdistricts is seven percent.

South Platte NRD Board Subdistrict Area Map



CITIZEN AND PRODUCER ADVISORY GROUPS

The District understands the value of input from citizens and producers across the District. Ground water matters are addressed by the Deuel County, Cheyenne County and Kimball County Ground Water Advisory Committees. The Allocation Subcommittee, the Variance Advisory Group (VAG) and the newly formed Oliver Reservoir Advisory Committee (ORAC) are the current sub committees. During the formation of the IMP, a Basin-Wide committee was also formed. The Citizens Advisory Committee (CMC) is the advisory group for the Clean Harbors facility in Kimball. The Board and Staff understand the value of grassroots input and considers carefully those recommendations.

STAFF OF THE DISTRICT

District personnel are employed to direct the operations and policies set by the Board or mandated by the State of Nebraska or other government entities. The staff coordinates land and water programs and projects with federal, state and local resource organizations. At the date of this revision to the Master Plan, the staff is listed below.

General Manager, Rod L. Horn
Assistant Manager, Galen Wittrock
Administrative Manager, Linda L. Suhr
Natural Resources Coordinator, Chris Kaiser
Information and Education Coordinator, Don Ogle
Water Resources Specialist, Ryan Reisdorff
Water Resources Coordinator, Travis Glanz
Water Resources Technician, Tyler Sanders
District Secretary, NaManet Keller
Field Office Secretary - Sidney NRCS FO, Jane Joyce
Conservation Technician/Field Office Secretary - Kimball NRCS FO, Hilary Cook

PARTNERS

The NRD works with the Nebraska Departments of Natural Resources, Environmental Quality and Agriculture, the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum, the Nebraska Environmental Trust, the Nebraska Emergency Management Association, the LEOP in Kimball, the Platte Basin and Panhandle NRDs, the District's County Extension personnel, environmental groups such as Pheasants Forever, the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, Western Irrigation District and others to improve and enhance the Districts natural resources.

The NRD also works closely with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The NRCS provides technical assistance to landowners to help solve conservation problems while carrying out the NRD's programs. The NRD assists by providing personnel to NRCS to assist with their activities and to help administer the NRD's programs. Currently, one employee is assigned as Secretary to the

Sidney NRCS Field Office (FO) and one is assigned as Conservation Technician/Secretary to the Kimball NRCS FO.

Landowners, also referred to as cooperators, and municipalities throughout the District are important partners to accomplish the mission of the District.

NEBRASKA LAWS IMPACT THE DISTRICT

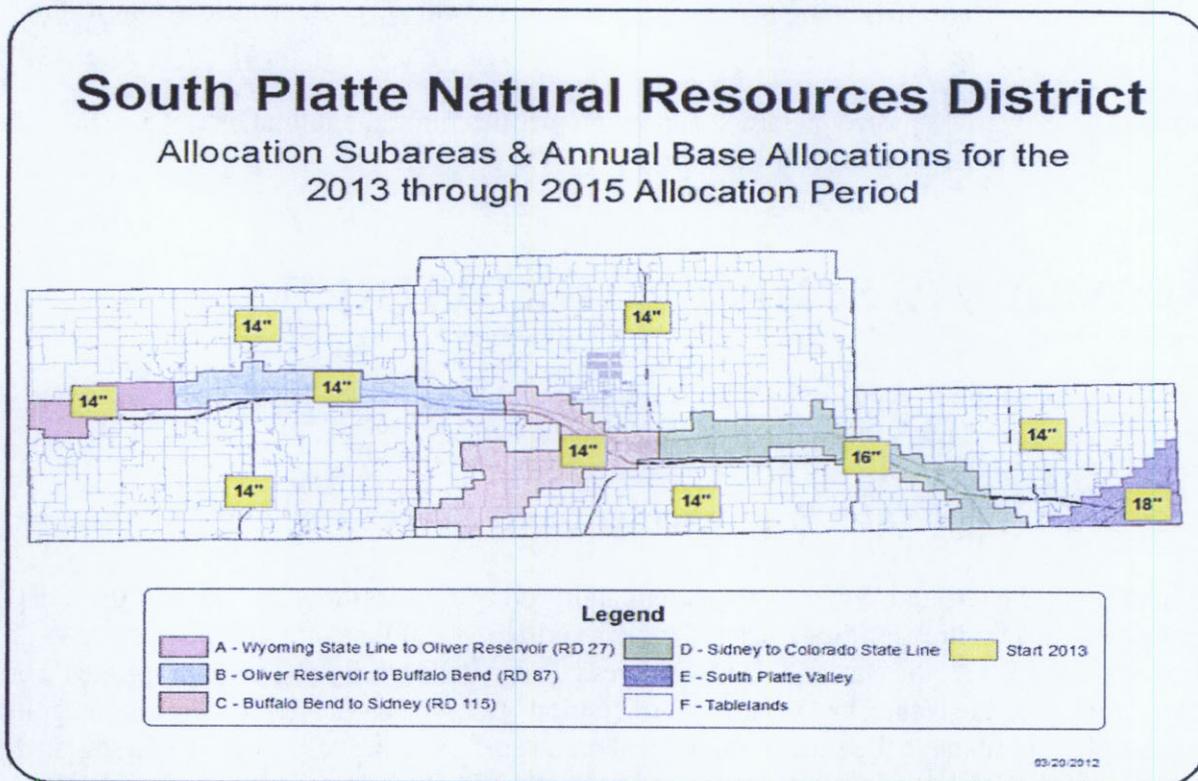
The District works within many laws both state and federal that impact the District. Below are a summary of these laws, however the list is not all inclusive.

Nebraska Ground Water Management and Protection Act

Implementation of the Ground Water Management and Protection Act (the Act) is one of the most important planning activities for the District. Under requirements of the Act with incorporated legislation such as LB962, the state's NRDs with areas designated as fully or overappropriated were required to work with the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (NDNR) to develop integrated management plans to manage the state's ground water and surface water resources. The Integrated Management Plan was jointly developed by the District and NDNR, in accordance with Neb. Rev. Stat. 46-715, 46-716, 46-717, 46-718 and 46-720.

Each District located in a river basin, subbasin, or reach that has been determined to be fully appropriated pursuant to section [46-714](#) or designated overappropriated pursuant to section [46-713](#) by the Department of Natural Resources has the power and authority to levy a tax equal to the dollar amount by which its restricted funds budgeted to administer and implement ground water management activities and integrated management activities under the Nebraska Ground Water Management and Protection Act exceed its restricted funds budgeted to administer and implement ground water management activities and integrated management activities for FY 2005-06, not to exceed three cents on each one hundred dollars of taxable valuation on all of the taxable property within the District for FY 2006-07 and each fiscal year thereafter through FY 2017-18.

On July 16, 2004, the NDNR made a preliminary determination designating the entire District as fully appropriated. On September 25, 2004, the Department issued an order designating the South Platte River Basin including Lodgepole Creek as overappropriated.



On June 20, 2008 District chairman Keith Rexroth and NDNR acting director Brian Dunnigan exchanged letters of agreement approving the District's Integrated Management Plan (IMP). The IMP became effective on July 20, 2008.

Another goal is to ensure District conditions would not cause noncompliance by Nebraska with any interstate compact or other agreements, or noncompliance with the Nebraska New Depletions Plan or the Platte River Implementation Plan Program. The amended IMP went into effect September 14, 2009.

The District and four other Platte River Basin NRDs worked with NDNR to develop the Basin-Wide Plan for Joint Integrated Water Resources Management of Overappropriated Portions of the Platte River Basin, Nebraska.

The Basin-Wide Plan covers portions of the Platte River Basin upstream of the Kearney Canal Diversion designated as overappropriated by the NDNR on September 15, 2004, and also defines the area in which ground water is hydrologically connected to the overappropriated surface water basin.

Basin-wide Plan goals include: Incrementally achieving and sustaining a fully appropriated condition; preventing reductions in the flow of a river or stream that would cause noncompliance with an interstate compact or decree or other formal state contract or agreement; and working cooperatively to identify and investigate disputes between ground water users and surface water appropriators and, if determined appropriate, implementing management solutions to address such issues. The Basin-wide Plan went into effect on September 11, 2009

The Act provides the authority for the Districtwide Ground Water Management Rules and Regulations, the District's primary regulatory tool. First approved by the District Board of Directors in October of 2002, the Rules and Regulations were adopted in accordance with authority granted in Neb. Rev. Stat. 46-701 to 46-754.

The purpose of the Rules and Regulations is to implement the District's Ground Water Management Plan (Plan). The goal of the Plan is to facilitate the proper management of ground water for quality, quantity and integrated management of ground and surface water. The District was among the first NRDs in the state to create ground water quality management areas. The Sidney Ground Water Quality Management Area was created in 1990 to help curb elevated ground water nitrate levels in the Sidney area, and similar ground water quality management areas soon followed in the Lodgepole Valley east of Sidney and South Platte Valley.

On June 10, 2011, the Board Order giving approval amending the Rules and Regulations went into effect. The action also repealed three other ground water management documents that were incorporated into the District's Rules and Regulations.

The Platte River Recovery and Implementation Program (PRRIP), developed by agreements with Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming and the U.S. Department of Interior, designed to develop a recovery program for endangered species (Endangered Species Act signed by President Richard Nixon on December 28, 1973) in a critical habitat area on the Platte River between Lexington and Grand Island by addressing the habitat needs of specific species, including the whooping crane, interior least tern, piping plover and pallid sturgeon, to address existing and new water uses in the Platte River Basin to proceed without additional action under the Endangered Species Act. The Nebraska New Depletion Plan was implemented to comply with the PRRIP. Each state was asked to offset or mitigate the impact on the Platte River of all new consumptive uses of water that would adversely affect the endangered species. "New uses" of water include any irrigation, municipal or industrial surface or ground water use developed after July 1, 1997.

A small area in the southeast corner of the District where the South Platte River crosses in and out of the District is in the PRIPP. The District works with the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, Twin Platte NRD and Western Irrigation District to comply with the requirements of the PRIPP.

Nebraska created the Interrelated Water Management Plan Program (IWMPP) fund in 2006 with the passage of LB 1226, Section 20. These funds are intended to facilitate the duties of NRDs arising under the Act.

Nebraska Chemigation Act

The District adopted and amended rules and regulations as necessary to carry out its responsibilities under the Nebraska Chemigation Act (§§ 46-1101 thru 46-1148). The District provides permit applications, collects application fees and inspects all new applications and a portion of the renewal applications and meets other requirements set by the Department of Environmental Quality.

Erosion and Sediment Control Act

The District adopted rules and regulations as necessary to carry out its responsibilities under the Nebraska Erosion and Sediment Control Act (§§ 2-4601 to 2-4613). This program is carried out by the District in cooperation with the counties, municipalities, and other local governments, the NRCS and political subdivisions of the state and other public and private entities to reduce damage from wind erosion and storm water runoff.

PLANNING AREAS TO BE ADDRESSED

The District emphasizes three planning areas to enable the directors and staff to visualize the future and annually structure a course of action to move in the right direction. These planning areas are the framework for all District activities, programs and regulations. The planning areas are:

- 1) Key Program Planning Areas;
- 2) Information and Education; and
- 3) Personnel, Organizational Structure and Operations Management

The District's directors, staff and conservation partners play a fundamental role in the District's priorities, goals and objectives under the three planning areas. The District's Long Range Plan will provide the actions necessary to accomplish the District's goals. Staff goals are linked to the Long Range Plan to carry out the direction of the Board of Directors. This plan is reviewed periodically and evaluated to determine accomplishments, further needs and weaknesses.

SEVEN KEY PLANNING AREAS

(consolidation of the authorities and responsibilities mandated to NRDs by law)

The authorities and responsibilities granted by law have been consolidated into seven key program planning areas:

- 1) Ground and Surface Water Management;
- 2) Land Treatment;
- 3) Forestry and Range Management;
- 4) Recreation, Fish and Wildlife;
- 5) Waste Disposal and Pollution Control;
- 6) Flood Prevention and Control; and
- 7) Drainage Improvement and Channel Rectification

Goals and objectives for each segment of the planning areas will be addressed. Conservation and environmental information, education and training goals and objectives are listed in the Information and Education sections. The section on Personnel, Organizational Structure and Operations Management contain goals and objectives that relate to short and long term personnel needs, contractual services, administrative responsibilities, operating issues, equipment/material needs and land/buildings.

KEY PLANNING AREAS-GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Ground and Surface Water Management

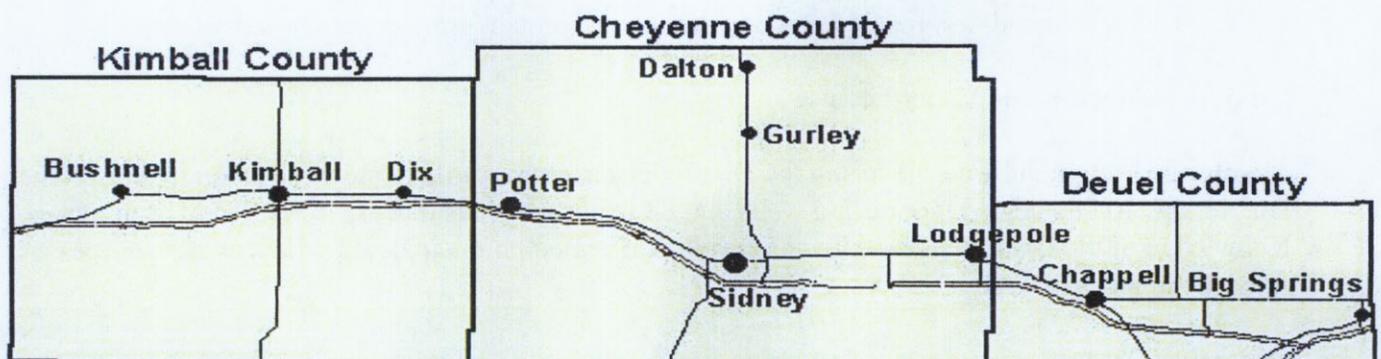
Goal Implement the South Platte Natural Resources District's Ground Water Management Plan

The District's Ground Water Management Plan is essential to carry out the requirements of the Ground Water Management and Protection Act and serve to enhance the integrity of the District's water quantity, quality and integrated surface and ground water. The Districtwide Ground Water Management Area Rules and Regulations, first approved by the SPNRD Board of Directors in October of 2002, were adopted in accordance to authority granted in Neb. Rev. Stat. 46-701 to 46-754.

The goal of the Plan is to facilitate the proper management of ground water for quality, integrated (ground water and surface water) and quantity.

The South Platte NRD was among the first NRDs in the state to create ground water quality management areas. The Sidney Groundwater Quality Management Area was created in 1990 to help curb elevated ground water nitrate levels in the Sidney area, and similar ground water quality management areas soon followed in the Lodgepole Valley east of Sidney and South Platte Valley. The primary goal of the South Platte NRD's groundwater quality management areas is to improve groundwater quality to within federal EPA and Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality standards. In May of 2011, the SPNRD board of directors repealed separate quality management area documents and incorporated them into a new set of rules and regulations covering both water quantity and water quality.

South Platte Natural Resources District



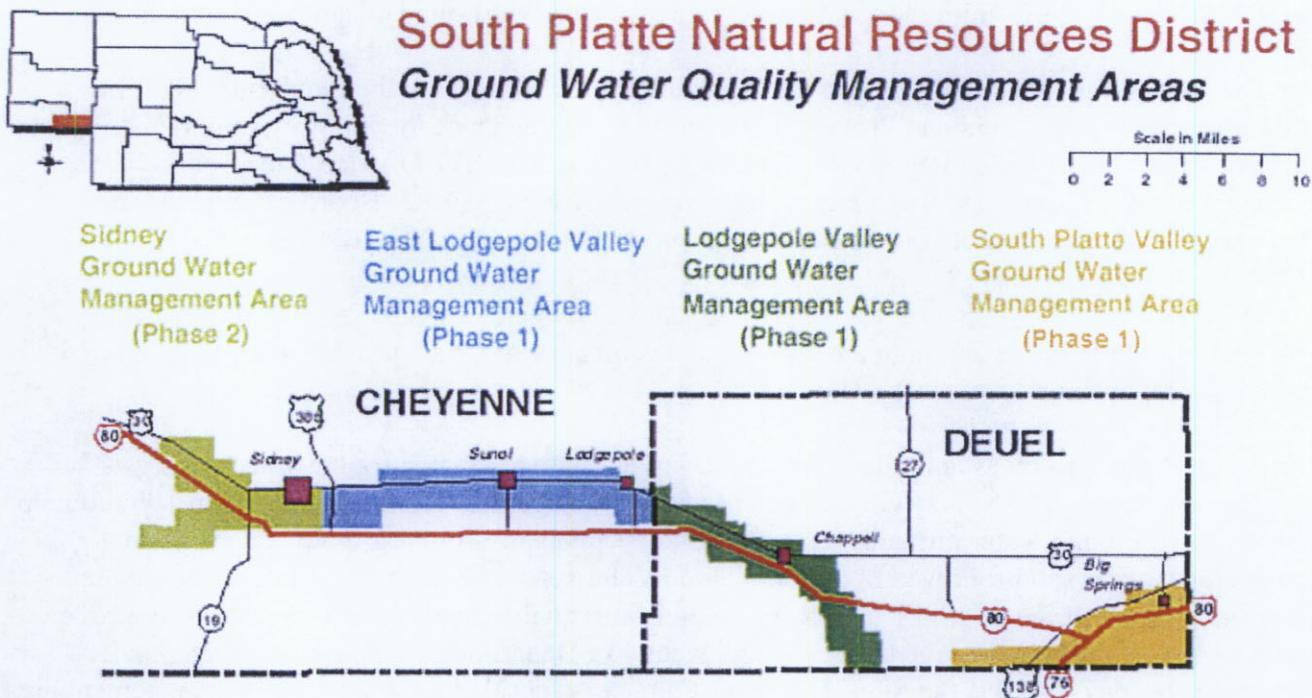
The districtwide groundwater management area covers all of Kimball, Cheyenne and Deuel counties.

Objectives

- A. Administration of the Rules and Regulations
- B. Data Gathering and Analysis
- C. Modeling

D. Planning Options

Goal Improve ground water quality to within federal EPA and Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality standards



Objectives

- Administer the Quality Controls within the Districts Districtwide Ground Water Management Area Rules and Regulations
- Evaluate Phases of each Area
- Change/amend designated areas as necessary to protect ground water quality

Goal Monitor Ground Water Levels

Monitoring the ground water levels in the District is a necessary tool to guide decision making. The District has 102 dedicated monitoring wells and 88 irrigation wells that are measured bi-annually. Knowledge of the District's ground water levels also protect municipal and village water sources from the impacts of excessive uses.

Objectives

- Continue to monitor ground water levels
- Plan for expansion of the monitoring well network

Goal Surface Water Sampling

The SPNRD is currently in an agreement with NDEQ to collect surface water sample for the NDEQ's Ambient Water Quality Network and Public Beach Monitoring Program. The Ambient Water

Quality Network Primary Objective is to provide long term information on the status and trends of water quality in rivers and streams within Nebraska. The Public Beach Monitoring Primary Objective is to provide current information on the suitability and safety of public swimming beaches with bacteria and microcystin toxin analysis and provide this information weekly to the public through the recreation season. The NRD also has the ability to test for E. Coli/bacteria in-house. This allows individuals to bring in water samples that can be tested free of charge to them.

Objectives

- A. Work with NDEQ to continue Surface Water Sampling
- B. Continue to add long term information on water quality in rivers and streams within Nebraska.

Goal Administer the Chemigation Program

Nebraska law requires anyone who chemigates (applies fertilizer or other agricultural chemicals through an irrigation system) to follow several regulations including certification by the Department of Environmental Quality after the applicant attends an educational course sponsored by the UNL Extension Office. A chemigation permit, issued by the NRD, is also required before chemicals are applied through an irrigation system. The chemigator is also responsible to list the amount and type of chemicals used from the prior year when the annual permit is renewed. The NRD collects the fees and submits a portion of each fee to NDEQ in Lincoln.

Objectives

- A. Administer the Program
- B. Inspect Systems
- C. Issue Permits
- D. Report to NDEQ

Goal Manage Oliver Reservoir

Oliver Reservoir, which lies eight miles west of Kimball, is owned by SPNRD. The reservoir is a long-standing recreation area in Kimball County. The 917-acre property features a 264-acre lake originally designed as an irrigation impoundment on Lodgepole Creek and is now a recreation area, currently operated by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. Currently, the SPNRD reimburses a portion of the expense incurred by the Game and Parks Commission.

Objectives

- A. Establish Advisory Committee to develop work plan and operations of the property
- B. Determine management strategies for Oliver Reservoir and exploration of water supply

Goal Comply with the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program (PRRIP)

One of PRRIP's purposes is to mitigate the adverse impacts of certain new water related activities through implementation of the New Depletion Plan. The goal of the Nebraska New Depletion Plan is to mitigate, offset or prevent any new depletion to the river's target flows and State protected flows.

The responsibility is shared by the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources and the NRDs. Depletions by new ground water irrigation uses begun between July 1, 1997 and December 31, 2005 also needed to be determined.

Efforts have been made in the SPNRD to reduce the consumptive use of water, enhance stream flows, recharge ground water and support wildlife habitat. Other efforts are decertification of irrigated acres, regulatory actions and retiming of irrigation water in the South Platte Valley.

Objectives

- A. Administration of the Rules and Regulations
- B. Data Gathering and Analysis
- C. Modeling
- D. Planning Options
- E. Monitoring and Tracking

Goal Participate in recharge projects in the PRRIP area of the District

The SPNRD has the opportunity to work with Western Irrigation District, NDNR and the Twin Platte NRD in the southeastern corner of the District in order to evaluate possibilities of water recharge to the South Platte River.

Objectives

- A. Data collection, analysis and estimated accretions to the Platte River stream flow
- B. Maintain Memorandum of Agreement with the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (NDNR), Twin Platte NRD and the Western Irrigation District
- C. Expanding project with additional Western Irrigation District ponds and reuse pits.
- D. Conduct studies
- E. Cost-share opportunities

Goal Implement the South Platte NRD's Integrated Management Plan (IMP)

On June 20, 2008 South Platte NRD chairman Keith Rexroth and Nebraska Department of Natural Resources acting director Brian Dunnigan (appointed Director in late 2008) exchanged letters of agreement approving the District's Integrated Management Plan (IMP). The IMP became effective on July 20, 2008. On August 13, 2009, the District adopted the order for the IMP and Associated Surface Water Controls. The District also adopted the Order for the overappropriated area and the Nebraska New Depletion Plan on that date.

The Integrated Management Plan was jointly developed by the District and NDNR. It was prepared in accordance with Neb. Rev. Stat. 46-715, 46-716, 46-717, 46-718 and 46-720. As stated in the IMP, its goal is: to work together for the greater good of all the citizens of the South Platte Natural Resources District to cooperatively develop and implement a local Integrated Surface Water/Ground Water Plan that has an acceptable degree of certainty of 1) maintaining a sufficient water supply for use by present and future generations, 2) maintaining and protecting the region's agricultural

economy and the viability of cities and villages and 3) promoting the growth of economic activities while seeking to avoid adverse impacts on the environment.

It will also be necessary for the District to contribute to the definition of what full appropriated and over appropriated mean.

Objectives

- A. Data collection and analysis
- B. Education
- C. Encourage conservation practices
- D. Conduct studies
- E. Monitoring and Tracking
- F. Continue modeling efforts through the Western Water Use Management Model

Goal Incrementally achieve and sustain a fully appropriated condition

A portion of the SPNRD was determined to be overappropriated in the IMP and in relation to the Nebraska New Depletion Plan. This order was adopted by the Board on August 13, 2009. Within the first 10 year increment, determine and address depletions to the Platte Basin after July 1, 1997, determine steam flow depletions to surface water appropriations prior to July 1, 1997 and once a fully appropriated condition is achieved, maintain that condition throughout the implementation of the IMP. The SPNRD would need to offset about 150 acre-feet to the North Platte River, and about 400 acre-feet to the South Platte River. It would also be necessary to offset 150 acre-feet to the Lodgepole Creek for the period 2043-2048 (estimates and subject to change based on forthcoming data).

Objectives

- A. Data collection and analysis
- B. Conduct studies
- C. Monitoring and Tracking
- D. Continue modeling efforts through the Western Water Use Management Model
- E. Incrementally achieve and sustain a fully appropriated condition
 - a. Irrigated acre buyout programs
 - b. Other accretions to the North and South Platte Rivers and Lodgepole Creek

Goal Ensure that no act of omission of the SPNRD would cause noncompliance by Nebraska with any interstate compact or decree or other formal state contract or agreement

- A. Monitor compacts, decrees or agreements with Colorado and Kansas if applicable to the SPNRD
- B. Work with those involved in the Nebraska New Depletion Plan and the PRIPP

Goal Carry out the Basin-Wide Integrated Management Plan

The South Platte NRD is one of five natural resources districts North Platte, South Platte, Twin Platte, Tri-Basin and Central Platte NRDs worked with the Nebraska Department of Natural

Resources and stakeholders to complete the Basin-Wide management plan, which had to be approved by all entities. Following final approval by NDNR and the NRD boards within the overappropriated portion of the Platte River Basin, the Basin-wide Plan went into effect September 11, 2009.

Objectives

- A. Incrementally achieve and sustain a fully appropriated condition
- B. Prevent reductions in the flow of a river or stream that would cause noncompliance with an interstate compact or decree or other formal state contract or agreement
- C. Keep the Plan current
- D. Work cooperatively to identify and investigate disputes between ground water users and surface water appropriators and, if determined appropriate, implement management solutions to address such issues

Goal Implement Practices for Urban Best Management

Urban dwellers can contribute to the quality and quantity of water within the village or municipality. Use of rain barrels, rain gardens, lawn irrigation timing and low water use laws are a big plus to the community.

Objectives

- A. Education
- B. Encourage conservation practices
- C. Cost-share funds

Goal Comply with the Platte River Basin-Wide Plan

The South Platte NRD and four other Platte River basin NRDs worked with NDNR to develop the Basin-Wide Plan for Joint Integrated Water Resources Management of Overappropriated Portions of the Platte River Basin, Nebraska. It covers portions of the Platte River Basin upstream of the Kearney Canal Diversion designated as overappropriated by the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on September 15, 2004. This defined in DNR's Order also defines the area in which ground water is hydrologically connected to the overappropriated surface water basin. The Basin-Wide Plan went into effect on September 11, 2009. Basin-Wide Plan goals include: Incrementally achieving and sustaining a fully appropriated condition; Prevent reductions in the flow of a river or stream that would cause noncompliance with an interstate compact or decree or other formal state contract or agreement; and working cooperatively to identify and investigate disputes between ground water users and surface water appropriators and, if determined appropriate, implementing management solutions to address such issues.

Objectives

- A. Incrementally achieve and sustain a fully appropriated condition
- B. Prevent reductions in the flow from the SPNRD's standpoint that would cause non-compliance with South Platte River Compact
- C. Work to keep the plan current

- D. Work cooperatively to identify and investigate disputes between ground water users and surface water appropriators and, if determined appropriate, implement management solutions to address such issues

Goal Wellhead Protection Area Plans

To enhance and protect drinking water, it is important to develop Wellhead Protection Area Plans for the public wells of the District's communities. A contaminant source inventory identifies potential contaminants and their sources, along with possible activities that could pollute the public ground water wells. It is important to manage the protection area by local or county ordinances or zoning, closing abandoned wells and working with toward best management practices on urban and agricultural land in the protected area. Developing emergency and contingency plans assists the communities to look ahead for possible well failure due to contamination, natural disaster, mechanical problems, etc., providing for both short and long-term needs. New wells may eventually be needed as a community grows or as wells age. Public awareness and involvement is essential to make the whole process work.

Objectives

- A. Assist communities in the District to develop Wellhead Protection Area Plans
- B. Education regarding wellhead protection
- C. Funding for well abandonment
- D. Assist communities to update their current plans as needed

Goal Licensed Water Operator

Due to the size of communities in the District there could be times when no licensed water operator is available in their community. The District will poll the communities to determine the need for a licensed water operator.

Objectives

- A. Assess need for a licensed water operator
- B. Proceed with process if applicable

2. Land Treatment, Soil Conservation and Erosion Prevention and Control

Goal Carry out the District's Erosion and Sediment Control policies based on the Nebraska Erosion and Sediment Control Act of 1986

The policies accelerate the rate at which additional conservation land treatment was applied to the land, and to strengthen the District's efforts in erosion and sediment control. The program addresses current problems, and develops a revised course of action aimed at our goals

The program established a system for the filing and processing of complaints concerning land where erosion is exceeding the soil loss limits established by the District. The second component of the program is the District's comprehensive and coordinated erosion and sediment control programs. The complaint process will serve as a significant part of these comprehensive, coordinated programs,

but the positive efforts that are generated by the programs will also be necessary to meet the objectives of the Act and the goals established herein. The plan includes the District's soil loss limits, recommended erosion and sediment control practices, and soil and water conservation practices and programs, procedures, and methods the District will use to implement the program. The cooperation of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has been essential to the program.

Objectives

- A. Cooperate with local government entities and the NRCS to implement necessary erosion control practices when necessary
- B. Cooperate with entities regarding conservation practices
- C. Cost-Share Funding - Grants to Establish Land Conservation Practices
- D. Education
- E. Promote No-till Practices

Goal Administer the District's Buffer Strip Program

The program encourages landowners to plant buffer strips of grasses, trees or shrubs along vulnerable surface water resources. Buffer strips slow water runoff, trap sediment and prevent fertilizers, pesticides and other pollutants from reaching ground and surface water.

Objectives

- A. Promote new practice plantings
- B. Budget for funding

3. Forestry and Range Management

Forestry

Although no forest exists in the District, trees are an important part of both agriculture and urban life. When Nebraska Territory was created in 1854, a vast tract of public land became available for settlement. During the ensuing half century, much of this land passed to private ownership under the Preemption Act of 1841, the Homestead Act of 1862, the Timber Culture Act of 1873, and the Kinkaid Act of 1904. Additional large acreages were reserved to the state as educational endowment land or granted to railroads as construction subsidies and subsequently sold to settlers across the District. Many of those areas that were homesteaded are still family farms today. The communities across the District have many trees that add to the aesthetics. Three cities in the District have the distinction of being acknowledged as a Tree City by Tree City USA.

Goal Administer the District's Conservation Tree Program Policy

The program was developed to assist farmers, ranchers and other landowners with conservation windbreak establishment upon the land. Windbreaks conserve soil and moisture and prevent erosion. Tree sales and distribution for farmstead, livestock windbreaks, wildlife habitat plantings and field shelterbelts comprise the conservation tree program of the District.

Services provided to meet conservation needs of the District include: a tree/shrub distribution program, tree/shrub planting training program for contractors, tree planter available to rent, tree/shrub site preparation/mechanical weed control program, grass drills for rent to plant in the rows, cost-share assistance for tree/shrub plantings and technical assistance in developing windbreak planting plans.

Objectives

- A. Seedling Distribution Program
- B. Maintain Certified Arborist on staff
- C. Provide rototilling service
- D. Provide tree planters and grass drills for rent by cooperators
- E. Education to promote windbreak practices
- F. Certification of independent contractors for tree planting and barrier installation

Goal Administer the District's Community Forestry Program

The Community Forestry Program provides cost-share funding to urban homeowners, neighborhood groups, villages and cities to help pay for the cost of purchasing, planting, maintaining and removing trees. Neighborhoods will be improved and dead and diseased trees will be removed. A portion of the program is the Re-Tree Nebraska Program that the SPNRD promotes each year in various small communities. Members of the District staff participate on the local City of Sidney tree board.

Objectives

- A. Urban tree planting projects with in-kind donations and labor
- B. Participation by staff on the local tree board
- C. Education through Workshops

Range Management

Goal Enhance the efficiency, profitability, sustainability, and aesthetic value of grasslands

Rangeland and pasture land comprise about a third of the NRD or 419,644 acres. Although not as fragile as the rangeland in the Sand Hills, the District's range and pasture land are in need of proper grassland management. Planned grazing systems, in cooperation with funding from the Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Program (NSWCP), help to reduce soil erosion, improve water and soil quality, improve plant cover, grazing uniformity, improve wildlife populations and foster teamwork.

Objectives

- A. Promote public awareness of the role of grasslands through education opportunities
- B. Work with the current grant, Preserving CRP Grasslands in Western Nebraska, and seek further grant funding for grassland preservation
- C. Work cooperatively with NRCS to cost share on planned grazing systems
- D. Promote area range judging and camp opportunities for youth

4. Recreation, Fish and Wildlife Management and Development

Many agencies partner with the SPNRD to develop and manage fish and wildlife habitat and recreational and park facilities. During FY 2013, the Nebraska Department of Roads signed a lease with the District for the management of Goldeneye and Goldenrod Wildlife Management Areas in Deuel County. Due to inaccessibility, Bittersweet was not included in the lease. The District owns Oliver Reservoir in Kimball County. The District is in an Interlocal Agreement with Nebraska Game and Parks Commission to manage that recreation area and provides quarterly funding to the Commission. Oliver Reservoir Dam is classified as high hazard by the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources (NDNR), Dam Safety Division. An Emergency Action Plan was compiled for the dam and filed with NDNR. The District works with programs such as Pheasants Forever to provide habitat and funding for the District's wildlife. The District is open to further development of the recreation areas owned and managed by the District. The lots west of the SPNRD tree cooler shop are undergoing planning and renovation as an urban park recreation area.

Goal Manage and Operate the Districts Wildlife Management Areas

The SPNRD recently obtained lease agreements for Goldeneye and Goldenrod Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) in Deuel County. In order to maximize the potential of these areas, it will be necessary to plan for improvements and determine the areas future uses. Goldeneye WMA, near Big Springs, features a small pond on 23 acres with fish stocked by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. Goldenrod WMA is southeast of Chappell on U.S. 385 and contains 97 acres of wooded area and open grassland. Hunting is allowed on the properties.

Objectives

- A. Planning and Evaluation
- B. Funding Sources

Goal Administer the District's Recreation Areas Rules and Regulations

During FY 2013, the District drafted and adopted rules and regulations for recreation. These not only apply to the WMAs but also to the west and south lots project. The rules were developed when it became apparent that the NRD would be able to lease Goldeneye and Goldenrod, as well as develop the west and south lots on the District property in Sidney.

Objectives

- A. Evaluate the Rules and Regulations for relevance
- B. Update as necessary

Goal Forming the SPNRD/Oliver Reservoir Citizens' Advisory Committee (ORAC), Development of Bylaws, Rules and Regulations and Work Plan

Also see Key Planning Area 1, Ground and Surface Water Management.

The purpose of ORAC will be to advise the SPNRD on matters pertaining to Oliver Reservoir, including but not limited to maintenance, improvements, recreation matters, including services, facilities and community needs. The 264 acre reservoir west of Kimball provides significant flood control, recreational benefits, wildlife habitat and ground water recharge. The reservoir brings positive economic impacts to both Kimball Count and the City of Kimball.

Objectives

- A. Planning and Evaluation
- B. Management Options
- C. Interlocal Agreements
- D. Evaluate possible funding sources

Goal Manage any possible minerals under and around Oliver Reservoir

The District owns mineral rights around Oliver Reservoir. Minerals, if any, present should be managed for optimum safety to the ground water not only for the reservoir but the Lodgepole Creek. This resource should be evaluated carefully.

Objectives

- A. Evaluate mineral income potential
- B. Protect the ground water in the area

Goal Promote Wildlife Habitat and Preservation

The wildlife in the District is a part of our natural resources. It is important to understand and actively participate in stewardship and support of understanding fish and wildlife conservation. It is important to ensure abundant habitat for these resources along with participation in wildlife education.

Objectives

- A. Promote wildlife habitat planting plans and incentives
- B. Participate in Wildlife Management workshops
- C. Participate with wildlife conservation partners that are viable in the District example:
Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited and etc.

5. Waste Disposal and Pollution Control

The Kimball Clean Harbors Environmental Services, Inc. serves the entire United States as a storage and treatment facility for a variety of industrial hazardous waste. The state-of-the-art thermal oxidation unit ("TOU") is capable of maximum destruction efficiencies of hazardous waste and is able to handle an extremely wide variety of waste feeds. Over 45,000 tons of waste per year is processed through the facility.

The Clean Harbors Citizen's Monitoring Committee (CMC), a special committee overseen by the South Platte NRD, provides third party oversight of the Kimball incinerator's operations. The consultant that the committee works with is Jacque Hughes of MILCO Environmental Services, Inc. (McCook, NE) to keep the committee up to date with quarterly reports, reviews permits and compliance issues with the facility and NDEQ and EPA. It is important to ensure that the District maintains the opportunity and ability to monitor the environmental impact on the air, water quality and soil resulting from the operations at the CHESI Kimball Facility. It is also important to work with Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, Air Quality Division to ensure the CHESI Kimball Facility achieves and maintains the ambient air quality standards, to protect the public health and environment in Kimball and the surrounding area. When CHESI is assessed a violation, a supplemental environmental project (SEP), an environmentally beneficial project, can in some cases be performed as part of a settlement of an enforcement action. The EPA allows these violations to be spent locally.

Goal Administer the Citizens' Monitoring Committee (CMC)

The Citizens' Monitoring Committee consists of five members from the community of Kimball and the surrounding area along with the District's General Manager and a District Director.

Objectives

- A. Keep current the District's Rules of Procedure for administration of the CMC
- B. Continue to provide CMC meetings throughout the year and encourage CHESI Staff participation in the meetings
- C. Utilize services of an environmental consulting company
- D. Work with the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality and the US EPA to monitor the impact and operation of the Kimball Thermal Oxidation Facility
- E. Encourage CMC input on SEP projects
- F. Periodically review the cooperative agreement between SPNRD and CHESI and revise as appropriate

6. Flood Prevention and Control

One of the responsibilities mandated to Natural Resources Districts is flood control. Each year flood control projects built by NRDs protect thousands of acres of land and hundreds of homes from damage by uncontrolled flood waters, saving millions of dollars in rebuilding costs. NRD technicians also help protect property and lives by inspecting a number of public and private dams throughout the District. Examples of flood control projects within the South Platte NRD include:

The Sidney East Dam protects the city of Sidney from drainage from 134 acres north of town. Constructed in 1957-58, the dam is designed to contain a 21-inch rainfall over six hours; Bushnell West was built in 1986 about three miles northwest of Bushnell. It controls erosion from about 1,900 acres above Bushnell, protecting the town, county roads and cropland below; the McFee Road Structure protects a highly traveled Deuel County road from flooding, and protects the Chappell Landfill from runoff and erosion. It was built in 1993 about 1 1/2 miles north of Chappell; and Oliver Reservoir Dam 8 miles west of Kimball.

The South Platte NRD and the City of Sidney are working cooperatively on the East Sidney Watershed Project, through an entity known as the Joint East Sidney Watershed Authority (JESWA). The endeavor is divided into two stages, preparation and implementation periods. Years of flooding in the east Sidney watershed area brought out this cooperative effort.

Goal Administer the Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for Oliver Reservoir

The Emergency Action Plan was mandated by the State of Nebraska because the dam at Oliver Reservoir is designated as a high hazard dam. The plan was completed and approved in FY 2012. Each year a Level 3 Notification test is facilitated by the NRD and one time during five years a periodic exercise is done to test actual emergency procedure. It is critical that the plan is overseen and carried out with all updates made each year. Lives and property will be saved in the event of a breach in the dam.

Objectives

- A. Keep a member of the NRD staff in charge of plan
- B. Update the plan as necessary but no less than annually
- C. Protect lives and property in case of a flood event
- D. Conduct annual tests as required in the plan

Goal Manage the Flood Control Structures owned by the District

The Sidney East Dam protects the city of Sidney from drainage from 134 acres north of town. Constructed in 1957-58, the dam is designed to contain a 21-inch rainfall over six hours.

Bushnell West was built in 1986 about three miles northwest of Bushnell. It controls erosion from about 1,900 acres above Bushnell, protecting the town, county roads and cropland below.

The McFee Road Structure protects a Deuel County road from flooding, and protects the Chappell Landfill from runoff and erosion. It was built in 1993 about 1 1/2 miles north of Chappell.

Objectives

- A. Conduct annual inspections
- B. Make recommendations for structure repairs
- C. Budget for repairs

Goal Work with NDNR regarding their inspections of Flood Control Structures

NDNR inspects flood control structures in the District and advises the District of problems. In order to protect lives and ground water it is necessary to keep the structures in good repair. In some cases, it is necessary to work with landowners and to provide assistance with minor problems that occur.

Objectives

- A. Comply with NDNR recommendations
- B. Budget for required repairs

Goal Promote and participate in the District's Watershed projects

All of the District's watersheds are beneficial and their drainage and flooding issues are important to the ground water across the District and in neighboring NRDs and states. Drainage from those watersheds can be beneficial and harmful. Proper management is necessary.

Objectives

- A. Studies and Analysis
- B. Planning and Evaluation
- C. Establish funding sources as appropriate

7. Drainage Improvement and Channel Rectification

The preceding goals and objectives could also be addressed here

Goal Assist with Drainage and Channel Rectification

The Lodgepole Creek surface water flows are intermittent across the District. In some areas where the creek was live in the past and is currently not running, the trees that once thrived are dead and clogging the channel of the creek. In a flood event, the fallen trees and debris in the channel have in the past caused extensive flooding to low lying areas in some villages along the creek. A small area of the South Platte River also runs across the District in the southeast corner of Deuel County. Possible channel rectification and drainage in this area should also be considered.

Objectives

- A. Encourage Mitigation
 - 1. Hazard Mitigation Plan
- B. Data gathering and studies
- C. Working with landowners
- D. Provide technical assistance

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

Information and education is the umbrella that covers all the programs of the District. The importance of this segment of the NRD cannot be understated. Education is just as important to conservation as on the ground projects. Education enhances knowledge of the District's conservation needs and gives a broader view of conservation concerns and brings about informed management decisions that are beneficial to the resources of the District. The potential of the District's resources need to be preserved for generations to come and education will help that happen.

The Information and Education Coordinator works closely with the Panhandle area NRDs as well as NRDs across the state.

Education is also addressed throughout the Key Planning Areas.

Goal Adult Education

The District provides education by use of various media including the Pipeline Newsletter, the District website, Conservation Awards, NARD Conservation Awards, social media, newspaper releases, support of conservation best management practice seminars, urban and irrigation best management practice workshops and seminars. Teacher education opportunities are also provided, often with continuing education credits.

Objectives

- A. Information and Education Coordinator on NRD staff
 - 1. Provide further education opportunities for the I&E Coordinator
 - 2. Up to date software and equipment
- B. Conduct irrigation certification sessions as necessary
- C. Relevant media coverage
- D. Work with Conservation Partners (such as UNL-Extension) for education opportunities
- E. Work with Civic organizations

Goal Youth Education

Current programs such as the Western Nebraska Children's Ground Water Festival, the Envirothon, Land Judging, Range Judging, Range Camp, ACE Camp and Outdoor Classroom are proactive methods to bring conservation concepts to the youth of the District. The District also contributes seedlings to 4-H groups.

Objectives

- A. Continue to provide and fund learning opportunities
- B. Support camp scholarships
- C. Encourage school participation in resources education
- D. Teacher education opportunities

Goal Urban and Agriculture Best Management Practices (BMPs) Education

To preserve the quality of ground water, it is important that both urban and agriculture practices use chemicals properly. Education is a tool that can change practices and prevent pollutant leaching. There are many sources that can be tapped for education resources including the University of Nebraska, the Panhandle No-till Partnership and the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum to name a few. Professionals trained in best management practices provide great sources of education for the District's public. Cost-share programs are an incentive to put practices on the ground. Irrigator certification was mentioned under adult education but could also fall in this category.

Objectives

- A. Schedule workshops for urban and agriculture best management practices
- B. Provide incentives for BMPs through cost-share resources

Goal Demonstration Sites

The SPNRD property provides a great opportunity to demonstrate urban BMPs. The rain barrels, rain garden, xeric plants, tree plantings and buffalo grass demonstration areas provide a real look at what can be accomplished in the dry western panhandle. A labor intensive project at first, the area will provide many years as an example of what can be done to preserve our ground water.

Objectives

- A. Budget for continued improvement
- B. Expansion of demonstration areas
- C. Supplemental funding

PERSONNEL, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

District Personnel

The District maintains an excellent employee base to meet the challenges of preserving the resources across the District and in the Platte Basin-Wide area in which the District is included. The quality and work ethic lend to achieving the best possible management of these resources. Continuing education hones the skills of the employees. The current upward trend in technology makes it possible to work smarter, not harder; however the tools to do the work are constantly changing.

Goal Manage and Execute the District's Mission through competent staffing decisions

In order to manage, protect and enhance the District's natural resources, personnel must be passionate about the mission. Salaries, benefits, technology and working conditions must produce satisfaction and a sense of accomplishment for the employee. The mix of personalities must also be right in order for the District to move forward.

Objectives

- A. Budget for competitive staff salaries
- B. Review policies for updates periodically

Goal Staff Certification

The District's mission will not move forward as it should unless there is staff certification. Training in each field of expertise allows the employee to grow and expand and give the public the best answers possible to conservation questions and provide the Board with qualified data.

Objectives

- A. Provide support and funding for certifications
 - 1. Certified Arborist
 - 2. Certified Ground Water Sampler
 - 3. Certified Water Well Monitoring Technician(s)
 - 4. Certified Natural Resources Ground Water Technician(s)
 - 5. Other

Goal Provide current technology to carry out the District's Mission

Ever increasing technology gives staff the edge to complete their assignments and tasks faster and with a greater degree of accuracy. Adequate training in updated technology is pertinent.

Objectives

- A. Budget to provide current hardware and software technology
- B. Provide Network and/or GIS training

Goal Outsource when prudent

The District considers tasks that need to be accomplished and looks to the private sector to accomplish those tasks. Independent consultants free staff to perform their jobs efficiently. Independent contractors from the private sector are certified to work with public needs, such as tree planting.

Objectives

- A. Provide certification for independent contractors
 - 1. Tree planter training and certification required
 - 2. Flow meter installation certification required
 - 3. Other

Goal Manage District's Records in accordance with Nebraska Secretary of State and Federal Requirements

It is a requirement of the Master Plan to include record maintenance. In case of a disaster, records need to be preserved and accessible. The Nebraska Secretary of State provides guidance for record maintenance and disposal. Records are not only on paper but are digital and in various forms such as email. It is just as important to manage these documents as paper documents.

Objectives

- A. Review and follow records management guidelines
- B. Prepare a policy for disposal of records
- C. Store and dispose of records in accordance with records management guidelines
 - 1. Scan important documents
 - 2. Schedule annual record disposal for items cycled out
 - 3. Educate staff about document disposal

Goal Safeguard District documents

Documents such as payroll and retirement records need to be kept for a long period of time. In case of disaster, it is necessary to retrieve those documents. It is also necessary to protect privacy and ensure sensitive information isn't compromised.

Objectives

- A. Locking fireproof cabinets for payroll documents
- B. Off site backup
- C. Paper shredder

Goal Employee Voluntary Wellness Program

Staff members are invaluable resources and need to be protected. One way to do that is to promote wellness through education, accountability and chemical free surroundings.

Objectives

- A. Promote wellness
 - 1. Education
 - 2. Accountability
 - 3. Programs
 - 4. Fun
- B. Wellness Coordinator
- C. Staff involvement
- D. Health insurance

Goal Safety

Safety of the staff is the number one concern and has priority over all programs and projects in the District. All employees are required to read the Safety Policy and sign the acknowledgment. All equipment is required to be operated according to safety specifications. Safe driving and equipment operation is required.

Objectives

- A. Safety Policy is updated when necessary
- B. Education and training is provided
- C. Accountability is required

Goal Integrate District's Safety and Wellness Policy

Safety and wellness are tied together and are necessary to ensure a healthy workforce. By integrating the two programs into one document, employees have access to a readily available reference.

Objectives

- A. One policy will encompass both programs
- B. One coordinator will lead both programs

Organizational Structure



Factors that comprise the District's organizational structure are strategic goals, available resources (funding and budgeting, land and equipment), staffing (addressed previously) and work ethic. The elected board must carry the vision for resources management and preservation.

It is important to review the District's strategic purpose to make sure it is clearly defined and must be able to accomplish both the District's vision and mission.

If resources (budgeting, funding, staff and other) don't match the need, management must be ready to either adjust the structure or adjust the budget. Employees need to be in tune to the structural purpose

of the District, ensuring they are assigned where their efforts will be most productive and will make the most difference in the success of resource management, protection and enhancement.

As mentioned under Personnel, anything that is not mission-critical either must await adequate resources, or should be considered for outsourcing rather than an internal structure (i.e. tree planting, flow meter installation).

The projects and programs provide cost-sharing opportunities for cooperators, trees and wildlife, education, land treatment, urban conservation, recreation and flood control, and have been expanded upon in the Key Planning Areas and Information and Education sections of the Master Plan.

Goal Efficiently and Competently Manage the District's Resources to Execute the District's Vision and Mission.

Objectives

- A. Administration of the District's Districtwide Ground Water Management Area Rules and Regulations encompassing Water Quality, Quantity and Integrated management
- B. Administration of the SPNRD/Clean Harbors Citizens' Monitoring Committee
- C. Administer and carryout the Provisions of the District's Safety and Loss Prevention Program
 - 1. Schedule quarterly Safety Committee meetings
 - 2. Review and updated program manual when needed
- D. Work with the NRCS to execute the Locally Led Conservation Concept
- E. Execute the provisions of the District's Policies for administering the NSWCP and NRD Cost-share Programs
- F. Inform and educate staff and directors about District responsibilities and authorities, natural resources issues, projects and programs, policy implications and public attitude
- G. To maintain existing District Facilities and Landscape, etc and upkeep of District Vehicle Fleet

Goal Current District Loans

In the past, board action has allowed for repayment of loans before maturity. Paying the loans quickly could free up money for other needs.

Objectives

- A. Consider interest rates
- B. Analyze needs for future expansion
- C. Budgeting to pay down loans

Goal Increase the District's Building and Vehicle Fund Accounts and establish a Recreation improvement fund

The District's vision and mission involves a necessity for adequate building and equipment needs. The recreation areas that the District manages have needs both now and in the future. It is important to include funding for those needs in this ten-year period and for the future.

Objectives

- A. Budget funds to meet the needs for maintaining the facilities, vehicles and equipment

Operations Management

Operations management oversees, designs, and controls the District's business operations, ensuring that physical property and/or technical functions are efficient in terms of using as few resources as needed, and effective in terms of meeting the District's mission. Processes and procedures are also involved in operations management. As in Personnel and Structure, the District Operations require staff skills, creativity, rational analysis, and knowledge of technology.

Goal Make Strategic Decisions

Strategic management analyzes the District's major initiatives and provides long term direction. It entails specifying the District's mission, vision and objectives, developing policies, programs and plans, often in terms of projects and programs, which are designed to achieve these objectives, and then allocating resources to implement the policies and plans, projects and programs.

Objectives

- A. Plan for long term decisions
- B. Explore resources needs that are currently unmet (and/or expectations)

Goal Plan for Efficient and Effective Operations

OTHER

Multijurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP)

The Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) is charged by state statute to reduce the vulnerabilities of the people and communities of Nebraska from the damage, injury and loss of life and property resulting from natural, technological, or man-made disasters and emergencies.

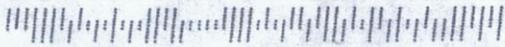
Seeing a need in our District for emergency management, a grant through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and NEMA was obtained, a consultant hired and the SPNRD worked with jurisdictions across the District to prepare the HMP. In 2013, the HMP was approved by FEMA/NEMA.

The plan will need to be kept current (updated every five years) and jurisdictions will be encouraged to seek grants for their mitigation projects. The SPNRD will need to provide staff assistance to keep the plan current. This will be ongoing and be included in each Master Plan.

All-Hazards Incident Management

The SPNRD General Manager received FEMA training for the Incident Command System so that he can assist with coordinated response among jurisdictions and agencies. This will be beneficial not only for incidents relating to Oliver Reservoir, but for any incidents throughout the District. Updating the training as necessary will be critical.

South Platte Nat
District
551 Parkland Drive
Sidney NE 69162-0294



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DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

Kent Zimmerman
301 Centennial Mall South
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4676