

2026

Lower Platte North NRD Basin Coalition IMP Report



Annual Report

Lower Platte North Natural Resources District

1/1/2026

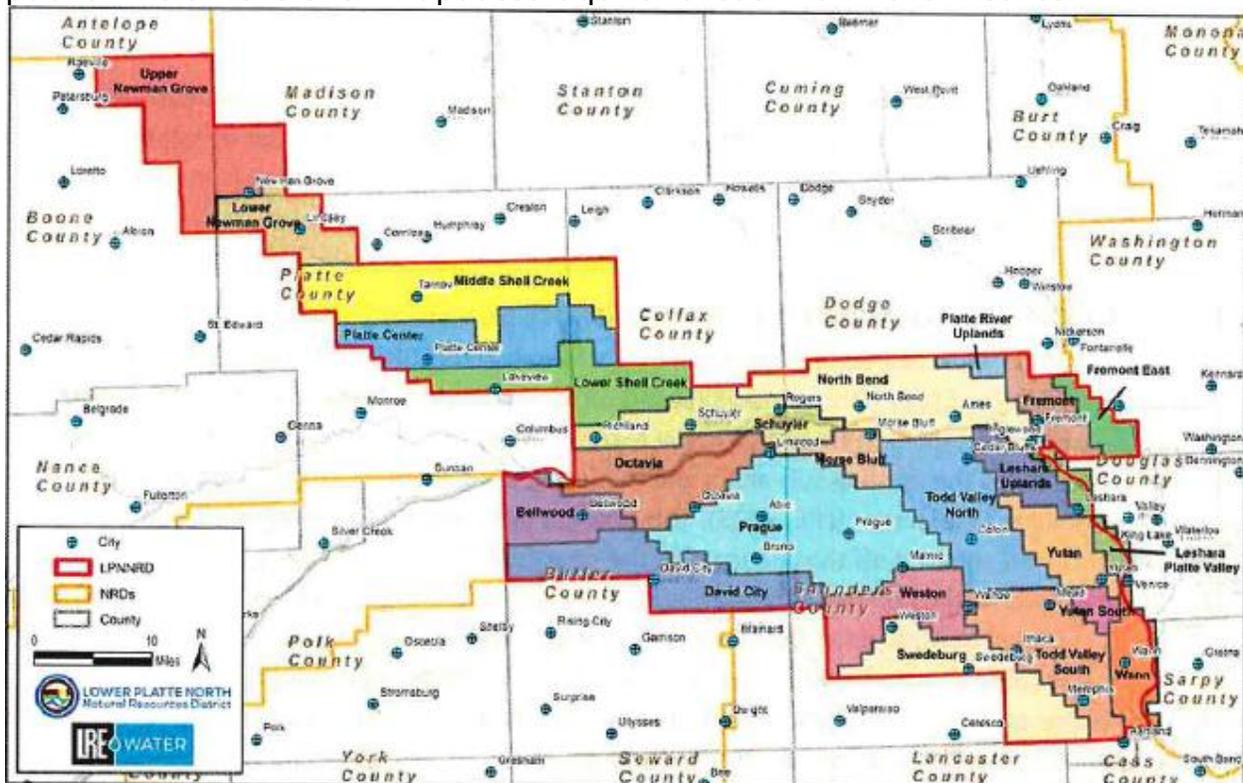
2026 Lower Platte North Natural Resources District Lower Platte Basin River Plan Report

Introduction

The report period is from January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025.

Groundwater Management Plan Update

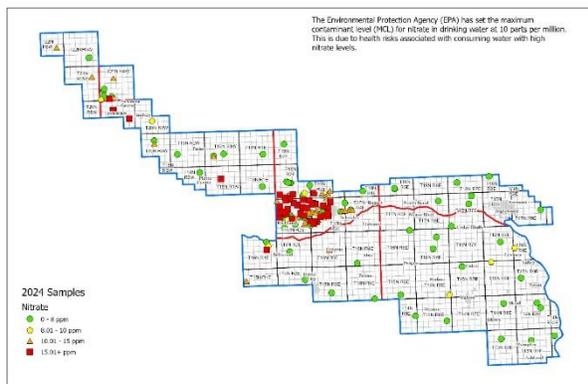
The District completed a draft Groundwater Management Plan with the final hearing slated for March 9. During the stakeholders' and committee meeting discussion a list of recommendations were developed to include in the plan. The recommendations were adoption of aquifer areas, expansion of observation network, alteration of the well scoring sheet, quantity trigger adjustments, re-evaluation of special quantity subareas, reassessment of water quality triggers and more transparency on quantity and quality information for a website. The District has already started the process on these recommendations with most of the recommendations plan on being completed in 2026 except for water quality and interactive website for the public. Below are shown updated aquifer areas within the District.



Water Quality Activities

The Lower Platte North (LPN) District is in its first full year of implementing a Phase 4 water quality management area within the Richland-Schuyler Phase 3 management area. This Phase 4 area shows nitrate levels over 15 ppm or uranium contamination over 30 ppb in 50 percent of the sampled wells. The first phase will be educating the producers on the rules and meeting with as many of them that we can. The NRD is in the last stages of producers installing water flow meter on their irrigation wells. Staff have informed all producers that meters will need to be installed before irrigation starts in 2026. The 80 lbs. prior to May 1st have readily been accepted with the rain received last summer assisted in reducing the leaching, but time will tell after water sampling is conducted in the future. The LPNNRD still have some interest in gravity to pivot/SDI conversions with EQIP funding and NRD tacking on extra funding with federal approval.

Still waiting on USGS report on the age-dating project with Lower Loup and Lower Platte North NRD. Some preliminary information from this study has shown some nitrate leaching within the last few years. This information will be shown to the producers when the report is provided explaining that leaching is not a 25 – 50 years ago issue.



Water Sampling was very limited in 2025 with the amount of rainfall received. Staff are planning on doing extensive sampling in a few Wellhead Protection areas and Todd Valley. The NRD is trying to identify areas of higher concentrations of salts with more complaints each year received from well drillers and producers.

The map shows the nitrate results from 2024 with emphasis in the management areas and Shell Creek which was in last year's report.

Water Quantity Activities

With the recommendations provided from the Groundwater Management Plan the SQS #2 north of Columbus was re-evaluated with staff meeting with the producers showing adjusted boundaries and allocations. The plan presented is to divide into different areas and go to a 4-year 40 inch rolling allocation.

The three Lower Platte Basin NRDs along with DWEE continue working on a basin wide groundwater modeling project. This project is planned to be completed in 2026.

Well Permits Issued Approved, Cancelled or Denied

The Lower Platte North issued 24 wells permits in 2025. There were 19 irrigation wells, of which 3 were replacements and 2 supplemental wells. The NRD issued 5 other permits for research, extraction, fire protection, livestock and public water supply for a camp.

Water Use Information for Irrigation Wells

Total Number of Flow Meters – 1434 which 1350 are on irrigation systems.

Water Use from the Special Quantity Subareas (Allocated areas). The SQS areas are majority pivots except for a few pivot corners.

Overall Average: (Inches per acre)

SQS#1 – 0.69” in/ac

SQS#2 – 1.04” in/ac.

Rest of the District: 1.2 (includes more gravity field than SQS)

Public Outreach

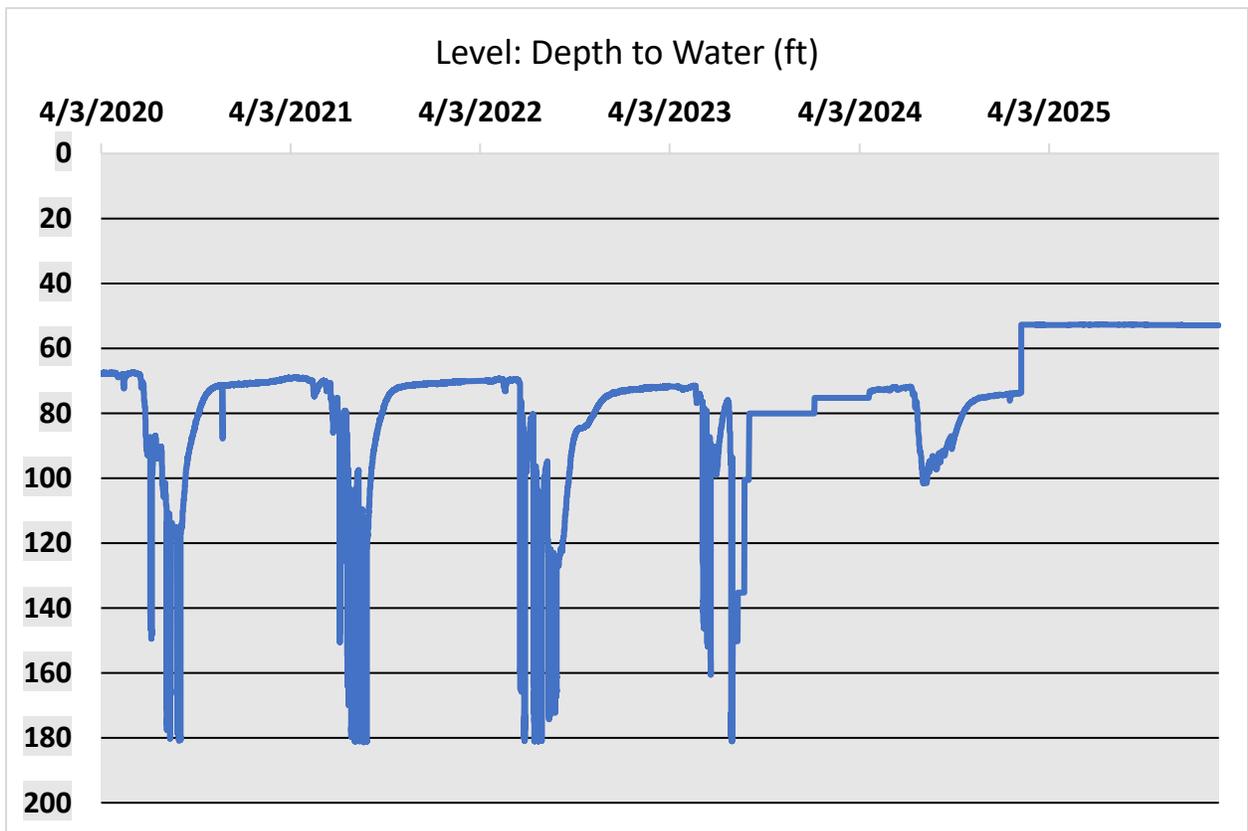
The District continue conducting nitrogen/irrigation certification meetings for producers with 200-300 in attendance. This year the NRD is utilizing Vtap as part of the certification. The District conducted open houses discussing the Groundwater Management Plan updates and has been involved with numerous school events with one event with DWEE involvement. The District publishes a newsletter that goes into the local newspapers with emphasis on the sandy soils and groundwater management plan. Along with the newsletter, the district has also begun using email blasts to provide producers with information on various programs, deadlines, and meetings. This additional public outreach has been met with a lot of positivity and appreciation from the producers of the district. The last email blast was delivered to 1,187 users with a 45% open rate. 90 of those users clicked on one of the links to view additional information.

Water Demand Inventory

The District is in year nine obtaining required water use reports for municipalities. Industrial and other high-capacity wells report voluntarily, unless they are drilled after 2012.

Water Supply Inventory and Groundwater Elevation Data

Lower Platte North static water measurements showed a rise of .74 feet from spring of 2024 to 2025. The water levels have only declined 0.39 feet from fall to spring of 2025. The NRD has 62 sites with dedicated data loggers. Shown is one of the sites north of Columbus showing water levels higher than the previous years.



Water Transfer Permits 2025 Granted:

None in 2025

Depletions and Groundwater Consumptive Uses Voided in 2025:

No sites were voided in 2025.

Stream gage measurements on District Maintained Gages: Lower Platte North gages are joint projects with USGS or NeDNR. LPN has 5 installed cameras on the lower part of Platte River with assistance from the USGS.

Water Banking Activities: None for 2025.

Streamflow Accretion Activities (new projects, conjunctive management projects, etc.): The NRD has started the construction of 3 dams on 2 sites on Wahoo Creek with 6 more planned.

Drought Management Plan

The Lower Platte North NRD has completed the district-wide Drought Management Plan. The Drought Management Plan helps to reduce district-wide impacts during drought events and aid the NRD in water resource management. This plan helps to identify potential best management practices, create educational and awareness materials, identify key municipality concerns, and identify future actions to implement mitigation strategies. Implementation of these components can be adopted to attain a more sustainable and stable water supply for all uses across the district.

A significant part of the planning process consisted of meeting with local communities and their public water systems to evaluate their drought vulnerabilities and understand available drought ordinances. The plan includes recommendations for drought mitigation strategies based on the outcomes from meetings with communities and the construction of a drought resilience matrix. Also included in the plan are community engagement and awareness material along with sample drought ordinances for communities to utilize and update to fit their needs. There are also recommendations for the Lower Platte North NRD that can be implemented to better aid in drought mitigation strategies. The outcome of this plan is a more sustainable and stable water supply for all uses across the district.

Municipal Water Uses

Name	Total Gallons (2024)	Total Gallons (2025)
MUD Platte West Water Production Facility	10,334,804,000	9,460,475,000
City of Fremont	9,458,948,000	5,032,054,000
City of Lincoln	5,841,820,110	6,210,268,410
City of Newman Grove	32,205,200	18,535,500
City of North Bend	64,440,000	58,082,511
City of Schuyler	376,856,000	
City of Wahoo(Colon Included 2025)	269,693,307	
Village of Abie	2,576,600	2,570,400
Village of Bellwood	-	
Village of Cedar Bluffs	25,147,232	19,819,060
Village of Ithaca	4,033,000	
Village of Lindsay	65,992,600	75,316,200
Village of Malmo	1,980,000	
Village of Mead	20,280,316	28,825,650
Village of Memphis	Not available	7,722,240
Village of Morse Bluff	3,600,000	
Village of Platte Center	19,348,203	
Village of Prague	9,639,000	12,322,000
Village of Rogers		
Village of Weston	13,948,027	13,756,100
Village of Yutan	49,132,000	27,391,000

David City (2025 includes Bruno)	163,436,066	248,275,000
----------------------------------	-------------	-------------

Lower Platte North Rural Water Systems supplies water to Bruno and Colon with David City and Wahoo supplying the water.

Other Water Uses

This list includes industrial, livestock and other.

Owner	2025 Water Usage Gallons
AGP	62,010
Barcel Mill & Lumber	855,088
Bruce Williams	581,563
Charles Folken Feed Yards	405,267
Crucible Farms Inc	155,192
Daniel L Lutjens	2,786,350
Dicke Feedyards LLC	36,669
Fremont Family YMCA	59,420,876
John J Kobza	47,127,000
Eisenmenger Bros. LLC	400,895,000
Malena Farms Inc	455,676,834
Mead Cattle Company LLC	255,272,009
PST Double D	29,802,999
Loseke Veterinary Services PC	62,048
Scott Cassel	2,831,405
Timothy J Mueller	3,785
Timothy Rickert	74,292,499

Certified Acres

All Irrigation	All Irrigation Ground	All Irrigation Surface	All Irrigation Comingled
Boone	28616.9	0	0
Butler	57950.29	674.85	373.27
Colfax	54694.54	238.65	1003.34
Dodge	51963.35	84.53	599.1
Madison	5848.86	0	0
Platte	94143.37	793.79	1090.89
Saunders	109345.99	2617.14	2050.97
Total	402563.3	4408.96	5117.57
HCA Irrigation	HCA Irrigation Ground	HCA Irrigation Surface	HCA Irrigation Comingled
Boone	28616.9	0	0
Butler	45781.82	605.15	84.45
Colfax	47794.65	202.35	1003.34
Dodge	51963.35	84.53	599.1
Madison	5848.86	0	0
Platte	80508.05	793.79	1090.89
Saunders	84568.87	2545.25	1819.39
Total	345082.5	4231.07	4597.17
Non-HCA Irrigation	Non-HCA Irrigation Ground	Non-HCA Irrigation Surface	Non-HCA Irrigation Comingled
Boone	0	0	0
Butler	12168.47	69.7	288.82
Colfax	6899.89	36.3	0
Dodge	0	0	0
Madison	0	0	0
Platte	13635.32	0	0
Saunders	24777.12	71.89	231.58
Total	57480.8	177.89	520.4

New Depletions and Groundwater Consumptive Uses 2024 Granted:

NRD Transaction ID	County	Township	Range	Range Dir	Section	Application Type	Change Date	Area (Acres)	Use of Irrigated Acres	SDF	Acre Feet Depletion
LPN-V-025-0672	Boone	21	5	W	22	expansion	10/15/2025	29.7	Crop Production	0.0906	0.61
LPN-V-025-0668	Saunders	17	7	E	33	expansion	10/15/2025	11.9	Crop Production	0.6316	1.69
LPN-V-025-0670	Saunders	16	7	E	28	new	10/15/2025	63.5	Crop Production	0.764	10.92
LPN-V-025-0666	Saunders	14	9	E	30	new	10/15/2025	92.1	Crop Production	0.594	12.31
LPN-V-025-0674	Colfax	18	3	E	33	expansion	10/15/2025	9.0	Crop Production	0.8931	1.81
LPN-V-025-0675	Colfax	18	3	E	33	expansion	10/15/2025	10.0	Crop Production	0.8931	2.01
LPN-V-025-0662	Platte	20	4	W	3	new	10/15/2025	123.4	Crop Production	0.049	1.37
LPN-V-025-0671	Saunders	14	8	E	22	new	10/15/2025	69.2	Crop Production	0.7898	12.30
LPN-V-025-0661	Platte	20	3	W	4	expansion	10/15/2025	67.5	Crop Production	0.0293	0.44
LPN-V-025-0669	Saunders	14	7	E	23	new	10/15/2025	70.6	Crop Production	0.7794	12.38
LPN-V-025-0673	Saunders	16	9	E	20	new	10/15/2025	25.0	Crop Production	0.8575	4.82
LPN-V-022-0585	Saunders	13	8	E	13	new	10/15/2025	123.0	Crop Production	0.8963	24.80
LPN-V-025-0660	Boone	21	5	W	11	new	10/15/2025	136.7	Crop Production	0.0648	1.99
LPN-V-025-0663	Platte	19	1	E	19	expansion	10/15/2025	74.6	Crop Production	0.0803	1.34
								Total Acres	906.20	Total Acre/Feet Depletions	88.79

Depletion Credits

No credits requested for 2025, but staff is in the process of reviewing applications from 2023 – 24.