



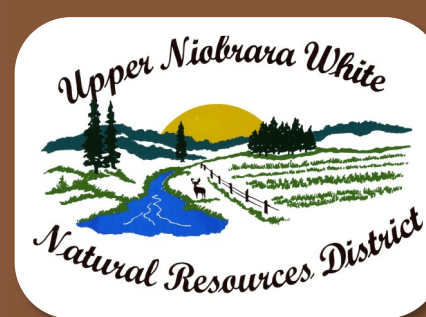
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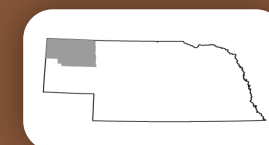
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# Reflections

Upper Niobrara White Natural Resources District  
Serving Box Butte, Dawes, Sheridan and Sioux Counties



December 2024

Save the Date!  
**RANGE DAY**  
January 14th,  
2025  
CSC Student  
Center

**Reminder:**  
All irrigation  
wells are  
required to  
have  
flowmeters.

**NRD Tree  
Sales are  
OPEN!**  
See Page 3 for  
Ordering  
Information &  
Species List

Subarea  
4 & 6 Water  
Transfer  
Deadline:  
**December  
31st, 2024**

## Nitrogen Reduction Incentive Program

Nitrogen is an essential nutrient for crop production. When organic nitrogen (i.e. manure) or inorganic nitrogen (i.e. commercial fertilizer) is added to the soil, microorganisms convert the various nitrogen forms to nitrate. When not utilized

by the growing crops, high soluble nitrates move through the soil and eventually to the groundwater. Unfortunately, there are areas of the state where groundwater nitrate concentrations exceed safe drinking water protection levels.

In an effort to combat nitrate contamination, the Nebraska Legislature passed LB 1368 in 2024 and established the Nitrogen Reduction Incentive Act (NiRIA) in order to provide incentives for producers who reduce commercial fertilizer applications. Payments will range from \$10-\$15 per acre to corn, sugar beet and/or potato producers who can demonstrate a 40 pound per acre or 15% reduction of historic nitrogen application. Fields in municipal wellhead protection areas will be the highest priority and thus eligible for the \$15 per acre payment with irrigate crop ground being eligible for a \$12 per acre payment and finally dryland crop fields will be eligible for \$10 acre.

In order to participate, a producer must complete the program application form and provide information on historic fertilizer use, irrigation water nitrate levels and a current soil test. Following the crop season, documentation on actual nitrogen use must be provided.

*The deadline to apply for these limited funds is January 15, 2025.* More information can be found at [www.unwnrd.org](http://www.unwnrd.org) or by calling 308-432-6190.



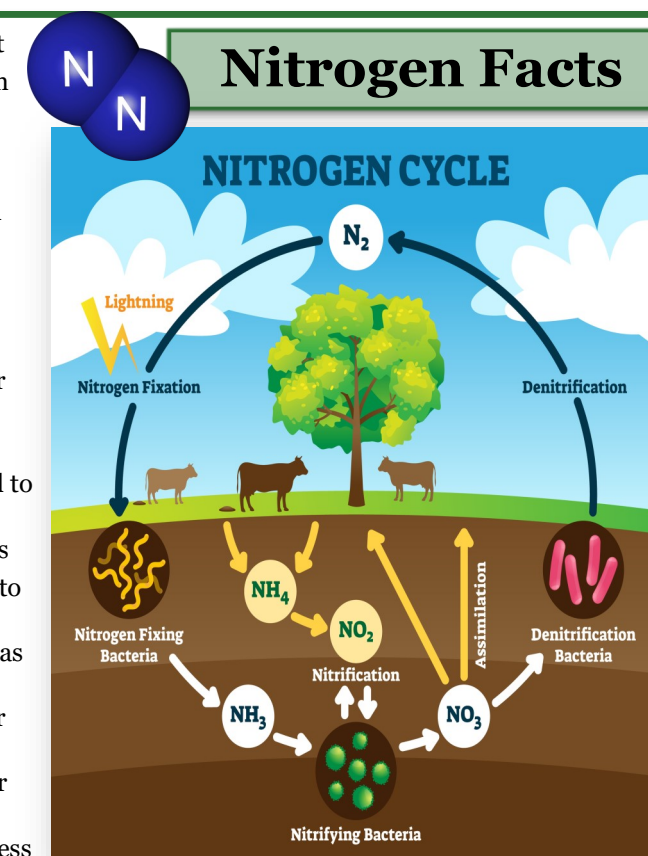
## ATTENTION IRRIGATORS

2024 marks the end of the current groundwater allocation period for producers irrigating in subareas 4 and 6, recently there have been several dry years and with that comes more irrigating to maintain crop needs. Water use reports were mailed on November 22<sup>nd</sup>. Please review these reports for accuracy and contact the UNWNRD office with any questions. Allocation penalties may be imposed if more water was pumped than was remaining on the allocation; there is an opportunity for those producers who need to or want to transfer a portion of the allocation. Water transfers are only allowed in the same subarea, to or from a tract of land once in an allocation period and only allowed within the same section or three government survey sections that are contiguous and are located within a three-square mile area. *The deadline for water transfer applications is December 31, 2024.*

Planning for the future, the upcoming allocation for subareas 4 and 6, for the five-year period of 2025-2029, will remain the same at 65 inches plus the maximum carry forward of 32.5 inches and will begin January 1, 2025 and run through December 31, 2029.

## If you are drilling a new well...

...or replacing an old well make sure you are contracting with a Nebraska licensed contractor. It is **state law** that all contractor's be licensed through the Water Well Standards and Contractor's Licensing Program to ensure that constructions standards are met to protect groundwater quality and public health.



- ◆ Nitrogen is a naturally occurring element
- ◆ Nitrogen is the most abundant element in the atmosphere
- ◆ Nitrogen is converted by microbes to ammonia, nitrates and nitrites
- ◆ Colder soil temperatures reduce nitrogen conversion
- ◆ Background nitrate concentration in groundwater is 1-2 mg/l
- ◆ Nitrates are essential for plant growth
- ◆ Supplemental fertilizers are necessary for maximum yields
- ◆ Nitrates can move through the soil easily
- ◆ Nitrates not taken up by plants can travel to groundwater
- ◆ Nitrates move more quickly in sandy soils
- ◆ Nitrates above 10 mg/l have been linked to health issues
- ◆ 88% of Nebraskans rely on groundwater as the source of drinking water
- ◆ 22% of Nebraskans access drinking water from a private domestic well
- ◆ Well construction impacts drinking water quality
- ◆ Nitrates are invisible, tasteless and odorless



Wildlife: April Casey



## 2025 Photo Contest Open January 1 – July 1, 2025

Submit photos to [armstrong@unwnrd.org](mailto:armstrong@unwnrd.org)

### Requirements:

- District resident's contact information
- Photo location (within District)
- Title of photo
- Category (Agriculture, Nature, Wildlife, Recreation, Other)

Agriculture: Jeri Anderson



## 2024 Photo Contest Winners

Nature: Vicky Yant



Other: Kirk Budd



Recreation: Mike Wellnitz



# TREES

- NRD tree sales are open for the Spring of 2025!
- Get your orders in as soon as possible to take advantage of the discount on our first 42,500 trees sold!
- *Sale Price: \$1.10/tree*
- *Regular Price: \$1.25/tree*

## Available Species

### Shrubs

American Plum  
Buffaloberry  
Caragana  
Chokecherry  
Cotoneaster  
Elderberry  
Golden Currant  
Hazelnut  
Lilac  
Redosier Dogwood  
Sandcherry  
Serviceberry  
Sumac  
Hansen Hedge Rose

### Conifers

Austrian Pine  
Colorado Blue Spruce  
Ponderosa Pine  
Red Cedar  
Scotch Pine  
Jack Pine  
Black Hills Spruce  
Rocky Mountain  
Juniper

### Deciduous

American Elm  
Black Walnut  
Bur Oak  
Catalpa  
Cottonwood, Hybrid  
Cottonwood, Native  
Hackberry  
Honeylocust

### Potted Conifers (\$2.00)

Black Hills Spruce  
Colorado Blue Spruce  
Ponderosa Pine  
Red Cedar  
Rocky Mountain  
Juniper



## HOW TO ORDER

Orders can be placed:

- in person at our office  
(430 E. 2nd Street Chadron)
- over the phone (308-432-6190)
- emailed ([goff@unwnrd.org](mailto:goff@unwnrd.org))
- mailed in (430 E. 2nd Street,  
Chadron, NE 69337)



Scan for  
Tree Order  
Form

The order form can be found on our website: [www.unwnrd.org](http://www.unwnrd.org)

Trees must be ordered in increments of 5.

Orders are open while supplies last.

Trees can be picked up from mid April to late May.

Payment is required before trees can be picked up or planted.

Cost-Share may be available for larger plantings;  
contact Eli Goff, UNWNRD Tree Program Coordinator.

Tree survival, unfortunately, cannot be guaranteed.

## *Trees are great for....*

- Shade
- Wind Protection
- Snow Protection
- Livestock Protection
- Crop Protection
- Erosion Control
- Wildlife Habitat
- Noise Reduction
- Air & Water Quality Improvement
- Property Value