



Protecting Lives • Protecting Property • Protecting the Future

**For Immediate Release**

Feb. 19, 2021

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**Nebraska Tree Canopy in Decline, Planting More Important Than Ever**

*Time is running out to order conservation trees from your Natural Resources District*

**LINCOLN, Nebraska** – Trees help soften the harsh climate of the Great Plains, but recent weather events are leaving Nebraska communities at-risk of being devoid of trees and their innumerable benefits.

According to the Nebraska Forest Service, Nebraska communities lost an average of 18 percent of their tree canopy in the last two decades due to extreme weather events, diseases and invasive insects.

As a result of the 2012 wildfires, northwest Nebraska lost large sections of forests unique to the Pine Ridge District. Upper Niobrara White Natural Resources District (UNWRD) is helping replant the ponderosa pine forests in the area. UNWRD Director Scott Berndt has seen firsthand the benefits of tree planting.

“Nebraska has a proud history of planting trees, but we’ve fallen behind in maintaining our once-coveted designation,” Berndt said. “Trees are an investment in the future, and Nebraskans should revitalize their tree-planting spirit.”

Each year, Nebraska’s Natural Resources Districts (NRDs) help communities and landowners plant more than 700,000 trees throughout the state. For approximately \$1 each, conservation trees benefit both people and animals. They shade and shelter homes, reduce soil erosion, protect crops and livestock, provide food and cover for wildlife, buffer noise, provide valuable products and add beauty to the landscape.

Each NRD program varies, but possible tree program services include: planting, weed barrier installation or weed control, and drip irrigation. Order your trees soon as NRDs will soon close tree orders for spring plantings. For more information or to place an order, contact your local NRD or visit [www.nrdnet.org](http://www.nrdnet.org) and select "Find Your NRD."

Learn more about the NRD Tree Conservation Program at [www.nrdtrees.org](http://www.nrdtrees.org).

*The Nebraska Association of Resources Districts (NARD), the trade association for Nebraska's 23 Natural Resources Districts (NRD), works with individual districts to protect lives, property and the future of Nebraska's natural resources. NRDs are unique to Nebraska, and act as local government entities with broad responsibilities to protect Nebraska's natural resources. Major Nebraska river basins form the boundaries of the 23 NRDs, enabling districts to respond to local conservation and resource management needs. Learn more about Nebraska's NRDs at [www.nrdnet.org](http://www.nrdnet.org).*

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