

**NORTH PLATTE NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

November 17, 2022
3:00 P.M.

1. Call Meeting to Order

This meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Kent Andreas. Notice of the meeting was given to the public by publishing a legal notice on November 12, 2022, in the Scottsbluff Star Herald.

2. Inform Public of Open Meetings Act

Andreas informed the meeting attendees that this meeting would be conducted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, which is posted by the door for public inspection.

Attendance

Board Members Present: Kent Andreas, Ryan Reuter, Gary Darnall, Pete Lapaseotes, Chuck Henkel
Board Members Absent: Roger Eirich, Dave Deines, Mark Westphal, Dan Weinreis

Others Present:

North Platte NRD Staff: Craig Uhrig, Todd Filipi, Ken Ridgeway, Lydia Hendrickson, Keelie Williamson, Danielle Madden, Dave Christian, Lynn Okicki, Kirstee Moore, Amanda Shepperd
Adaptive Resources, Inc. (ARI): Thad Kuntz
Simmons Olsen Law Firm: Steve Smith, Megan Dockery

Documentation Provided

The following documents were made available at the meeting for the Board of Directors and public review:

1. Meeting Notice
2. Agenda
3. Minutes of the October 13, 2022, Board of Directors meeting
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Manager's Report
6. Report on Upper Platte Basin Conjunctive Management Plan
7. North Platte NRD Nutrient Management Paper
8. Final outline of Nutrient Management Plan considerations
9. Board of Directors February Minutes Excerpt
10. Article-Nebraska's Dirty Water

3. Consideration of Absences

Andreas called for a motion to excuse absences.

A motion was made by Lapaseotes, seconded by Henkel, to excuse absences. Motion Passed

Aye: Andreas, Darnall, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Reuter

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Deines, Eirich, Weinreis, Westphal

4. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Board reviewed the minutes of the October 13, 2022, regular monthly meeting.

A motion was made by Henkel, seconded by Reuter, to approve the minutes of the October 13, 2022, regular monthly meeting. Motion passed.

Aye: Andreas, Darnall, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Reuter

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Deines, Eirich, Weinreis, Westphal

5. Treasurer's Report and Accounts Payable

Reuter reviewed the monthly expenses from the Treasurer's Report with the Board.

A motion was made by Darnall, seconded by Henkel, to accept the Treasurer's Report and pay the bills as listed. Motion passed.

Aye: Andreas, Darnall, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Reuter

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Deines, Eirich, Weinreis, Westphal

6. Comments from the Public

There were no comments from the public

7. Manager's Report

The NSWCP State NRD Manager's Committee met by Zoom on October 13, 2022. Committee members consisting of NARD staff and NRD managers discussed continued decline of NSWCP funds. Over the course of several years the funds have significantly decreased while the conservation requirements continue to increase. The committee has surveyed all the NRD districts on how they are operating their NWSCP program and how many dollars they are contributing. Currently, out of the survey responses, NRDs are contributing \$3 of local funds to \$1 of state funds. The committee members feel this should be reversed. The committee will continue to review survey responses as they come in.

On October 19, 2022, the NPNRD hosted the State Land Judging Contest at the Schleicher Ranch south of Gering. Twenty-nine FFA chapters brought students to participate in the contest. The winning team was Norfolk High School. The next contest in the NPNRD will be the Western Area Land Judging Contest in 2023.

As you all may remember we started working on the Master Plan two years ago. We had several staff sessions discussing the plan as well as a board session. The plan is now complete and will be brought to the District Operations Committee for approval at the end of the month. Upon the recommendation of the committee the board will approve the plan at the December board meeting.

The plan needs to be submitted no later than Dec. 31, 2022. This plan is valid for the next 10 years.

There are three dams in Morrill County that require a structure assessment that are owned by the City of Bayard. Those dams are up for review and NARD is working with an engineering firm to cooperatively share with other dam owners across the State, any assessment and engineering costs. If the NPNRD acts as a sponsor, the City of Bayard will save money by cooperatively working with NARD and engineering firms. The North Platte NRD would not be accepting any responsibilities or costs associated with those dams, it would only allow NARD the opportunity to work with those dam owners in our District.

On November 17th there will be a meeting of the Gering Valley Flood Control Permanent Maintenance Committee. At this meeting we will be discussing the need for additional repair work to areas of the drain as well as discussing the work that was completed throughout the year.

The Flat-Water Free Press just published an article named “Nebraska’s water is laced with nitrate its likely harming our kids.” This article has raised a lot of eyebrows across the State with several large newspapers covering this story. This is the first article in a four-part series examining the effects of nitrates in our drinking water and the potential harm to our health that can come from that. I have attached the links to those articles below.

NRD & Conservation Related News

****NRDs**** The Flatwater Free Press article about nitrates in groundwater has been picked up by several media outlets:

- Omaha World-Herald: https://omaha.com/news/state-and-regional/nebraska-s-nitrate-problem- is-growing-worse-and-its-likely-harming-our-kids/article_35882b14-5640-11ed-a486-632c18479870.html
- Lincoln Journal Star: https://journalstar.com/agriculture/our-dirty-water-nebraska-s-nitrate- problem-is-growing-worse-it-s-likely-harming-our/article_042cff6-713d-5938-8cb2-81048e24e5f5.html
- News Channel Nebraska: <https://www.newschannelnebraska.com/story/47585068/our-dirty- water>
- The Reader: <https://thereader.com/2022/10/28/nebraskas-dirty-water/>
- KPVI TV: https://www.kpvi.com/news/national_news/our-dirty-water-nebraska-s-nitrate- problem-is-growing-worse-it-s-likely-harming-our/article_d8a5ed82-a48e-5498-a61a-088096f03a73.html

□ Investigate Midwest: <https://investigatemidwest.org/2022/10/31/our-dirty-water-nebraskas- nitrate-problem-is-growing-worse-its-likely-harming-our-kids/>

- KSNB TV: <https://www.ksnblcal4.com/2022/10/31/our-dirty-water-nebraskas-nitrate-problem- is-growing-worse-its-likely-harming-our-kids/>
- KLKN TV: <https://www.klknv.com/nitrate-levels-in-nebraskas-groundwater-are-on-the-rise/>

****NRDs**** The Flatwater Free Press released a variation of their original nitrate article that is

shorter, “Quick Hit: Nebraska’s Water is laced with nitrate. It’s likely harming our kids.” **Read more:** [https://flatwaterfreepress.org/quick-hit-nebraskas-water-is-laced-with-nitrate-its-likely-](https://flatwaterfreepress.org/quick-hit-nebraskas-water-is-laced-with-nitrate-its-likely-harming-our-kids/)

[harming-our-kids/](#)

Staff is continuing to work with DNR on the updating of a few of our retirement contracts. The term of those contracts has expired, and new contracts need to be written for the district to continue receiving funds from the Platte Basin Coalition (PBC). Those contracts listed below are:

Contract 1157 Surface Water Temporary Retirement Contracts
Contract 925 Ground water Permanent Retirement Contracts
Contract 935 Ground Water Permanent Retirement Contracts
New Contract for the Robust Review
New Contract for EPIC

All those contracts listed will be eligible for a 60% reimbursement from the PBC.

- *Upcoming Events:*
- *November 17, 2022, 10:00 A.M. Gering Valley Flood Control Permanent Maintenance Committee*
- *November 21-22, 2022, Nebraska State Irrigators Association Convention (Kearney)*
- *November 29, 2022, 1:00 P.M. Water Resources Committee meeting with DNR*
- *TBD District Operations Committee Meeting*
- *December 8, 2022, 3:00 P.M. NPNRD Board of Directors Meeting*

8. Staff Report on Fall Field Work

Craig Uhrig reported that approximately 1,320 static water levels were taken in March and October. 2,150 flowmeters were read by nine people in October. The Minatare project diverted for 86 days and the Schaneman project diverted for 73 days. 117 telemetry units were maintained, three wells were decommissioned in August, and Harrisburg water system continues to be part of the responsibility of the NPNRD.

Todd Filipi explained the tree season for fall was slow due to lack of moisture. Met with Gering student council and helped plant trees in burn impacted area. Halsey wildfire did not take out the nursery, but inventory looks down a bit. A few species will not be available in the coming spring. Local people and organizations have interest in different projects to get trees planted back into burn areas. 4,000 ponderosa pine are lined up for spring to get planted in burn area. Forest service may be giving 30,000 trees to put into the burn area. Several thousand trees have already been sold for spring. The Resources Conservation Department conducted a couple of outreach opportunities for the community. Two NET grants have been submitted and made into the final forty. Todd will be meeting with The Forest Service concerning a grant for 25% cost-share.

9. Staff Report on Upper Platte Basin Plan

There will be better opportunities for NRDs who have reached their depletion goals. DNR demanded Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District (CNPPID) put-on paper, their thoughts of what a fully appropriated basin is. The NPNRD believes conjunctive management concerning the NPNRD should be considered complete.

10. Adjourn

There being no further business, Andreas called for a motion to adjourn.

A motion was made by Reuter, seconded by Henkel, to adjourn at 3:57p.m. Motion passed.

Aye: Andreas, Darnall, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Reuter

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Deines, Eirich, Weinreis, Westphal