

North Platte Natural Resources District Irrigation Newsletter

Issue 8

Surface Water Registration

The North Platte NRD is currently mailing surface water registration paperwork to landowners who irrigate with surface water only. If you receive a packet, please review the materials carefully and follow the instructions to complete your registration and return the signed forms.

This registration process is part of the NRD's effort to improve nitrate management and maintain accurate, up-to-date records. Beginning January 1, 2025, all surface water irrigated acres must be registered and approved by the NRD under updated rules and regulations. This registration will not impact your existing water rights or any agreements with your Surface Water District.

Registering your acres ensures they are associated with annual nitrogen sample data in the NRD's database, supporting better groundwater protection and resource planning.

As of September, Farmers Irrigation District, Gering-Fort Laramie Irrigation District, and Enterprise Irrigation District have had registration paperwork mailed out. The next districts to be mailed out are Pathfinder Irrigation District and Lisco Irrigation District. We hope to have them mailed out in November. If you have not received any paperwork for these irrigation districts, please reach out to the North Platte NRD.



Welcome to Issue #8 of the Irrigation Newsletter! This newsletter is intended to inform **groundwater and surface water irrigators** within the District. The information included in this newsletter is made possible with the help of the University of Nebraska Extension and USDA-NRCS.

Visit or Contact Us

100547 Airport Road

Scottsbluff, NE

308-632-2749

www.npnrd.org



Groundwater and Co-Mingled Acres

The North Platte NRD is currently mailing paperwork for groundwater and co-mingled acres to all applicable irrigators. If you receive a packet, please review the materials carefully and follow the instructions to complete the necessary forms and return them promptly.

This process is part of the NRD's ongoing efforts to maintain accurate records and ensure compliance with updated rules and regulations. If you have not received your paperwork by November 15, please contact the North Platte NRD as soon as possible to make sure you have the documents needed to remain in compliance.



Tree Orders Now Open for 2026 Planting Season

Tree orders for the 2026 planting season are now being accepted. Seedlings are sold in bundles of ten on a first-come, first-served basis, with a variety of species available—including evergreens, broadleaf trees, and shrubs.

Two planting options are offered:

- Bare-root seedlings at \$1.20 per tree
- Plugs at \$2.20 per tree

This is a great opportunity to plan windbreaks, wildlife habitat, or general property enhancements. A full list of available species is posted at www.npnrd.org.



New Water Year & Nutrient Management Reminder

The new water year began on October 1, 2025, and runs through September 30, 2026, for all surface water and groundwater irrigators. As part of the new Rules and Regulations, soil and water samples are required this year. Results must be submitted by December 31, 2026.

If you need assistance finding resources, the District has compiled lists of crop consultants, labs accepting water samples, and labs accepting soil samples locally and in surrounding states to help irrigators comply with the rules. Please note this is not a complete list, and the NRD does not endorse any of the businesses included. These lists are available on our website under the Resources section.

Soil Sample Cost-Share Program

The North Platte NRD is offering cost-share assistance to help defray the cost of soil sampling on eligible lands. To participate, landowners or operators must meet program requirements, including submitting one application per sample, georeferencing each probe site with an attached map, and collecting composite samples representing no more than 80 acres.



Samples must be paired with surface samples up to 12 inches and subsoil samples containing nitrate nitrogen only at a minimum depth of 24 inches. All soil sample results must be shared with the North Platte NRD.

Applications will be approved by the NRD, and funds are limited and distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. The maximum reimbursement is twenty-five dollars per paired sample. Only one party, either the landowner or operator, will receive cost-share funds per tract.

For more information or to apply, please contact the North Platte NRD.

Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Programs

Applications are open for the 2026 Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Program (NSWCP). This cost-share program helps cover a portion of expenses for approved soil, water, and rangeland conservation practices.

Landowners in Banner, Garden, Morrill, Scotts Bluff, and southern Sioux counties are eligible. Applications are being accepted at local NRD or NRCS offices through February 13, 2026.

Save the Date: 3rd Annual Ag Symposium

Join the North Platte NRD for the 3rd Annual Ag Symposium on Tuesday, February 10, 2026. This free, one-day event will bring together producers, ag professionals, and resource experts to discuss key topics affecting agriculture and natural resources in our region.

This year's symposium will highlight the health risks of nitrates in drinking water and the critical role local producers play in protecting water quality. We'll also take a closer look at soil and water sample analysis results, how to interpret them, and how they can directly benefit your operation's efficiency and sustainability.

Attendees will also get updates on local NRD Rules and Regulations, what changes may be coming, and how they impact your day-to-day decision-making.

Enjoy a free lunch, door prizes, and the opportunity to connect with experts and fellow producers.

Below are pictures from last year's Ag Symposium.



Damian Mason, Temple Rhodes, and James Paterson presenting



Some of the door prizes from various donors



Todd Filipi giving updates on windbreak renovation project



Howell Farms receiving Conservation Award

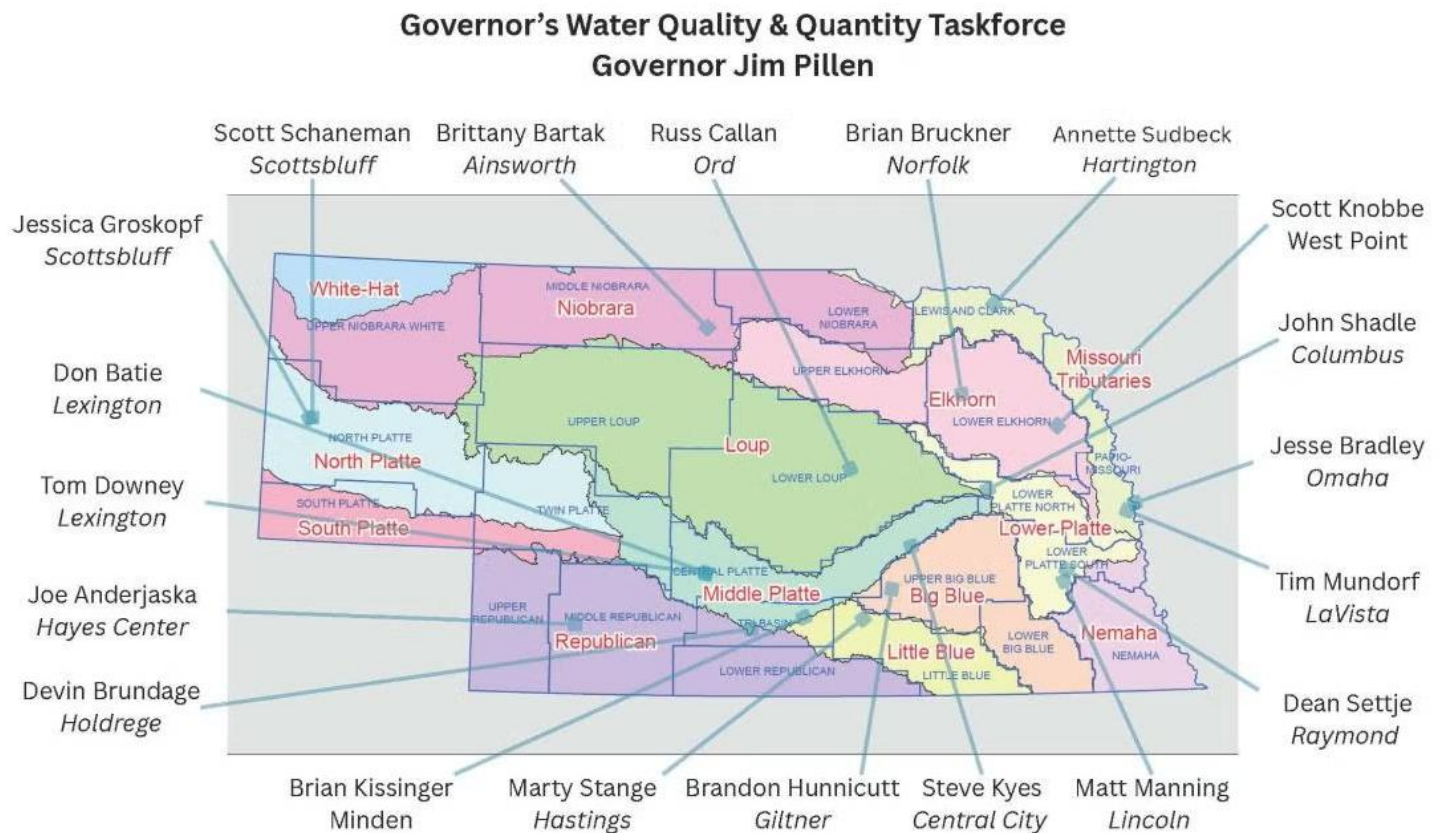
Task Force

Governor Jim Pillen has taken a major step toward protecting Nebraska's most vital resource, water, by launching the Water Quality and Quantity Task Force. Speaking to executive-level members during the group's inaugural meeting, Gov. Pillen emphasized a shift from reactive to proactive water policy.

"We now have the knowledge and technology to be proactive in how we approach issues that impact our farmers, industries, and communities," said Gov. Pillen.

The task force brings together leaders from across agriculture, environmental services, and local government. The group will set short, mid, and long-term goals, with members breaking into smaller subgroups to tackle specific issues. Key focus areas include water conservation, quality, and increased use of technology, especially in agriculture.

Below is a picture of the task force representatives across the state. North Platte Natural Resources District General Manager Scott Schaneman has been appointed to the task force, representing western Nebraska's interests in managing groundwater quality and quantity. If you have input or concerns related to groundwater in the region, you're encouraged to contact him at 308-632-2749.





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Water Use Reports

The North Platte NRD is currently processing the 2025 ground water use reports. These reports show previous year water usage and outline water availability for the new Allocation, which started October 1, 2024, and ends September 30, 2029. There will be a small percentage of reports that will have to be calculated using power records and flow tests and will be delayed. The reports will be mailed out as soon as they are ready.

Board Meetings

The public is welcome to attend all Board meetings and the Committee meetings. The North Platte Natural Resources District conducts its Board Meetings on the second Thursday of each month at 3 pm. Committee meetings are held as needed. The meetings are held at the office located at 100547 Airport Road, Scottsbluff. We welcome your thoughts and opinions on upcoming projects.

This is part eight of an ongoing series designed to provide education and information to the Landowners and Operators irrigating within the North Platte Natural Resources District boundaries.

Information found in this Newsletter has been reproduced from "Irrigation and Nitrogen Management, User Education/Certification Program" a Nebraska Extension Circular EC2008. If you would like more information, please contact the North Platte Natural Resources District.