

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

April 9, 2026
3:00 P.M.

1. Call Meeting to Order

This meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Roger Eirich. Notice of the meeting was given to the public by publishing a legal notice on April 2, 2026, in the Scottsbluff Star Herald.

2. Inform Public of Open Meetings Act

Eirich 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: Roger Eirich, Kent Andreas, Chuck Henkel, Pete Lapaseotes, Ryan Reuter, Dan Weinreis

Board Members Absent: Lane Darnall, Dave Deines, Mark Westphal

Others Present:

Members of the Public: PJ Hoehn, Bill Ruder

North Platte NRD Staff: Travis Preston, Lydia Hendrickson, Ken Ridgeway, Craig Uhrig, Kyle Ann Hopkins, Macy Elliot

NRCS: Georgette Jordening

Adaptive Resources, Inc. (ARI): Thad Kuntz

Simmons Olsen Law Firm: Megan Dockery

Documentation Provided

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

1. Agenda
2. Minutes of the March 12, 2026, Board of Directors meeting
3. Treasurer's Report & Accounts Payable
4. Manager's Report
5. Cease and Desist letter to Mike Hoehn Farm and Ranch, Inc.
6. Voluntary Compliance Plan for Mike Hoehn Farm & Ranch, Inc. and ACR Land, LLC.
7. Invoice from Gering Fort Laramie Irrigation District
8. Letter From Mitchell Irrigation District Concerning Brown Canyon Drain
9. NPNRD Drought Plan

4. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Board reviewed the minutes of March 12, 2026, regular Board meeting.

A motion was made by Henkel, seconded by Reuter, to approve the minutes of March 12, 2026, regular monthly meeting. Motion passed.

Aye: Andreas, Eirich, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Reuter, Weinreis

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Darnall, Deines, Westphal

5. Treasurer's Report and Accounts Payable

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

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

Aye: Andreas, Eirich, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Reuter, Weinreis

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Darnall, Deines, Westphal

6. Comments from the Public

Georgette Jordening informed the board that continuous CRP offers are in. There was a lot of interest in CREP this year. Morrill fire has taken majority of NRCS time. There is a producer meeting in Oshkosh Friday April 10th.

7. Manager's Report

Scott Schaneman reviewed the managers' report

The final meeting of the Governor's Task Force on Water Quality and Quantity was held on March 25th in Lincoln. Governor Pillen was provided with a brief overview of the report that was created by the Task Force and while all members of the Task Force were present, the report was signed and presented to the Governor for his review. As a request, the Governor asked the Task Force Members to meet at a minimum of once a year to review the progress of the goals outlined in the report. As a side note, the One Red Committee, which happens to be an extension of the Task force, will continue to meet monthly to plan the rollout of the One Red Program this Fall.

On March 19th I had the opportunity to speak to the local Nebraska Corn Growers group in Bridgeport at the Community Center. There were around 20 people in attendance. Some of the questions or concerns were soil and water sampling, ground water transfers, well moratorium, and the Morrill County Fire.

Travis and I attended the Platte Over Appropriated Committee (POAC) and Platte Basin Coalition (PBC) meetings in North Platte last Thursday April 2nd. Some of the items discussed were the Upper Platte Principal meetings held between DWEE, CNPPID and NPPD, annual reporting for the

Basin meeting in August. We also discussed the scope of work for the 2027 Robust Review, as well as ongoing drought conditions and the activation of the Basin Drought Plan.

This year's Yont's Water Conference will be held on Wednesday April 8th and the Panhandle Research and Extension Center. Ken Ridgeway will be providing a presentation regarding the results of the NET soil sample cost share pilot program we offered a couple years ago, and Anni Poetzel from UNL will be providing a presentation on nitrates in the North Platte NRD. Anni has worked with District staff over the last few months building the presentation she will be giving at the conference. Representatives from the Bureau of Reclamation will be there to provide an updated forecast on snowpack and Spring runoff, and Goshen and Gering Ft. Laramie will be providing a tunnel repair update. Later that afternoon Travis and I will be attending the North Platte Decree meeting representing the North Platte NRD. I will provide a report regarding this meeting in my next manager's report.

The North Platte Valley Irrigators, and the North Platte NRD will be meeting with DWEE on Tuesday April 7th at 3:00 here at the NPNRD office. With a much lower forecast out for April, DWEE felt it would be necessary to gather this group together once more to discuss the forecast as well as river operations for the 2026 irrigation season.

On Friday April 10th at 3:30 UNL Extension, and USDA have arranged a meeting at the Oshkosh City Auditorium to discuss relief efforts for those producers affected by the Morrill County Fire. Cost share opportunities, feed and forage needs, mental health, as well as other topics are on the agenda to be discussed. I will be providing an update to those producers who are looking for assistance through our NSWCP program.

8. Legislative Update

LB525 Ag data and privacy act was a concern for NRDs and data collected. NRDs have been exempted from LB525. NRDs would be exempt from freedom of information act requirements when it comes to handing over individual data requests.

Levy limit bill for budget caps is still in the legislature. Dean Edson explained to the legislative committee why the caps on the budget would be negative for NRDs especially in Overappropriated areas. So far Scott has not been able to find an exclusion for NRDs.

9. Morrill County Fire

Scott Schaneman told the board about conversations the staff have been having concerning the fire. Scott tasked Todd Filipi and Ken Ridgeway with trying to figure out how many miles of tree rows have been lost to the fire.

Senator Ricketts has asked what the federal government can do. Scott told Senator Ricketts that supporting those impacted not only in the short term but also as time passes will be important.

Governor Pillen told Scott not to worry about fence or anything USDA can do. The governor expressed a need for our district to get water back on those lands. Through either livestock wells or agricultural wells. His opinion was that the obligation of NRDs was to streamline getting water back out on those pastures. There has been discussion concerning ideas of how to help those in the burn

area. The IMP makes it difficult. Jesse Bradley expressed DWEEs willingness to figure it out in those burn areas. The state is willing to look at excusing permits if necessary. Emergency circumstances will likely allow for emergency water use despite the IMP.

10. District Operations Committee Report

Scott Schaneman informed the board about topics discussed at the meeting. The Morrill County fire and operation of a well without a flowmeter. The committee recommended the board recognize there was a violation of a well being pumped without a flowmeter. The other thing discussed was accepting the voluntary compliance plan and the potential penalties that can be assessed. The opinion of the attorneys was that unless a violation of the cease-and-desist order happened then no penalties can be assessed.

11. Discussion and Consideration to Determine a Violation of the Districts Rules and Regulations Chapter 6, Section 1, Operating a Ground Water Well Without a Permanently Installed Flowmeter by Mike Hoehn Farm and Ranch, Inc. and ACR Land, LLC.

A motion was made by Lapaseotes, seconded by Henkel, to recognize there was a violation to District Rules and Regulations. Motion passed.

Aye: Andreas, Eirich, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Reuter, Weinreis

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Darnall, Deines, Westphal

12. Discussion and Consideration to Accept a Voluntary Compliance Plan with Mike Hoehn Farm and Ranch, Inc. and ACR Land, LLC.

A motion was made by Andreas, seconded by Reuter, to accept the voluntary compliance plan with Mike Hoehn Farm and Ranch, Inc. and ACR Land, LLC. and account for the 22.2 acre-inches pumped in 2025 in the 2026-2029 allocation of 56 acre-inches. Leaving 33.8 acre-inches for the remainder of the allocation period. Motion passed.

Aye: Andreas, Eirich, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Reuter, Weinreis

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Darnall, Deines, Westphal

13. Discussion and Consideration of Cooperatively Assisting Gering Ft. Laramie Irrigation District and Scotts Bluff County in Repairing a Concrete Drainage Ditch in Mitchell Valley.

Gering Fort Laramie Irrigation District and Scotts Bluff County reached out and informed Scott that there was a drain that had washed out and the concrete was broken out of it. Scott Schaneman went out and inspected the damage with them. They are asking if the NPNRD would be willing to help pay for the repair. There is a line item in the budget for these kinds of repairs. The NPNRD has provided dollars back to irrigation districts or interested parties to repair damaged drainages.

A motion was made by Weinreis, seconded by Andreas, to pay \$1,877.42 toward repairs made by Gering Fort Laramie Irrigation District with the Understanding that any future decisions regarding assistance with drainage repairs will be made on a case-by-case basis. Motion passed.

Aye: Andreas, Eirich, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Reuter, Weinreis

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Darnall, Deines, Westphal

14. Discussion Regarding the Permanent Repair of the Browns Canyon Drain.

Scott Schaneman provided some historical context of previous Browns Canyon repairs. There was a temporary fix. The NPNRD agreed to pay approximately \$15,000 at the time of the temporary fix. SWIIF money through the state was recently awarded to fix Browns Canyon permanently. The cost is approximately \$1,000,000. Mitchell Irrigation District is asking the same entities who helped with the temporary repair to help with the 10% match of \$100,000. There is still discussion about what percentages should be for the shared cost.

15. NPNRD and Upper Platte Basin Drought Plans

Scott Schaneman showed the Nebraska Drought map from U.S. Drought Monitor. The entire state is now covered in some form of drought. The triggers for drought planning have been met. The NPNRD drought plan is a comprehensive and time intensive plan. After talking with staff, it was recognized there are things we can do with current staffing but with all the things that need to happen according to the plan it will likely take outside help. Scott had a conversation with Jennifer Schellpepper to discuss using a marketing firm to help with the communication and marketing. Jennifer believes PBC can be used to pay for the employment of a marketing firm. The firm could work with all the NRDs within the basin and PBC could pay for 60% of the cost.

There was continued discussion concerning how previous efforts to mitigate drought have been handled by irrigation districts and on commingled lands. There was a recommendation to get a Water Resources Committee Meeting together.

16. Adjourn

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

A motion was made by Andreas, seconded by Weinreis, to adjourn the meeting at 4:23pm. Motion Passed.

Aye: Andreas, Eirich, Henkel, Lapaseotes, Reuter, Weinreis

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Darnall, Deines, Westphal