



Upper Big Blue
Natural Resources District

FORESTRY DEPARTMENT



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THE UPPER BIG BLUE NRD FORESTRY DEPARTMENT: FORESTRY ESTABLISHMENT AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION PROGRAMS AND ASSISTANCE...

District Forestry

Under the NRD's seedling sales program, tree and shrub stock is provided to District patrons at the lowest possible cost. In order to assure quality stock, seedlings are kept in a refrigerated state prior to delivery to the customer. The Forestry Department staff can design custom planting plans, and custom planting can also be arranged through the department.



The Upper Big Blue NRD Forestry Department is one of five departments at the NRD. The Forestry Department staff consists of the Department Manager, Maintenance Technician, and Seasonal Tree Planting Assistant. The Forestry Department is responsible for implementing and managing forestry establishment and wildlife conservation programs. The goal is to protect Nebraska's natural resources both flora and fauna.

The following pages describe the many programs that the Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District Forestry Department administers.

CORNERS FOR WILDLIFE PROGRAM

Corners For Wildlife gives landowners the option of enrolling in a conservation program to help establish wildlife habitat on center pivot corners not capable of sustaining high yields when planted to row crops. Pivot corners containing native grasses and/or trees are not eligible for the program as the goal of the program is to create wildlife habitats where there are none.



Corners For Wildlife becomes a win/win situation in which landowners benefit by converting crop-less pivot corners into a wildlife sanctuary and receive payment for doing so. At the same time, wildlife wins because a substantial habitat has been created. Sponsoring organizations of Corners For Wildlife are Pheasants Forever, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, the Nebraska Environmental Trust, and the Upper Big Blue NRD.

WILDLIFE HABITAT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (WHIP)

Through the private lands portion of the Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program (WHIP), landowners receive cost-share assistance to create wildlife habitat and enhance or protect existing habitat. Many of Nebraska's Natural Resources Districts have cooperated with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission from the very beginning to make this an excellent program and partnership. WHIP participants receive varying annual payments depending on the type of habitat created.

WILD NEBRASKA PROGRAM

The Upper Big Blue NRD and Nebraska Game & Parks Commission cooperate on the WILD Nebraska Program to develop, manage, and enhance wildlife habitat in response to declining wildlife populations. Participating landowners are offered financial assistance to establish new wildlife habitat areas and improve existing habitat locales.

KEY PROJECTS:

The following are just a few of the many successful community assistance activities undertaken by the NRD's Forestry Department in recent years.

Fairmont:

- Community Native Grass program

Henderson:

- Lakeview Park restoration project

Sutton:

- School Creek Hiking and Biking Trail
- Community Tree Resources program—Sutton swimming pool
- Clarks Pond restoration project

York:

- Trees at York swimming pool
- Community Tree Resources program at the York Senior Center

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COMMUNITY TREE RESOURCES PROGRAM FOR CITIES, VILLAGES AND PARKS

This program offers financial assistance to communities for the development or improvement of city, village, and park tree resources. Two levels of participation are offered: the first level **(CTR-I)** encourages cities and villages to develop a new tree improvement program which qualifies them for the “Tree City USA” designation. A higher level of District assistance is available to communities, which make such a commitment.

A second level of assistance **(CTR-II)** is available to cities, villages and other public entities, which have developed a specific plan for tree replacement or new plantings. A five-year plan and an annual budget for tree resources improvement are required.



TREE AND SHRUB SALES AND PLANTING

The Upper Big Blue NRD sells tree and shrub seedlings each winter through early spring. The trees and shrubs are typically planted for farmstead and field windbreaks, and wildlife habitat areas.

Trees and shrubs are also planted to develop riparian buffer strips under the Conservation Reserve Program. The NRD staff will plant trees for customers at a nominal cost and can custom design tree and shrub planting plans. The tree planting season generally begins in April and is completed in June of each year.



KEY PROGRAMS:

The following are just a few of the many successful programs that we have assisted District communities with in recent years and we can assist your community as well.

COMMUNITY NATIVE GRASS RESOURCES PROGRAM

Native Nebraska grasses such as the Little Bluestem are being planted through the Community Native Grass Program. The program is designed to establish native grasses in lands surrounding wastewater treatment lagoons, Wellhead Protection Areas, and lands suitable for wildlife habitat improvement.

A city, village, or public entity must submit a viable plan for planting. This plan must include the number of acres to be planted, seeding mixture to be applied, planting map, planting completion timetable, and a cost estimate of the total project. The entity must sign an agreement that it will maintain the planting for a five-year minimum.



WILDLIFE HABITAT ESTABLISHMENT AND IMPROVEMENT

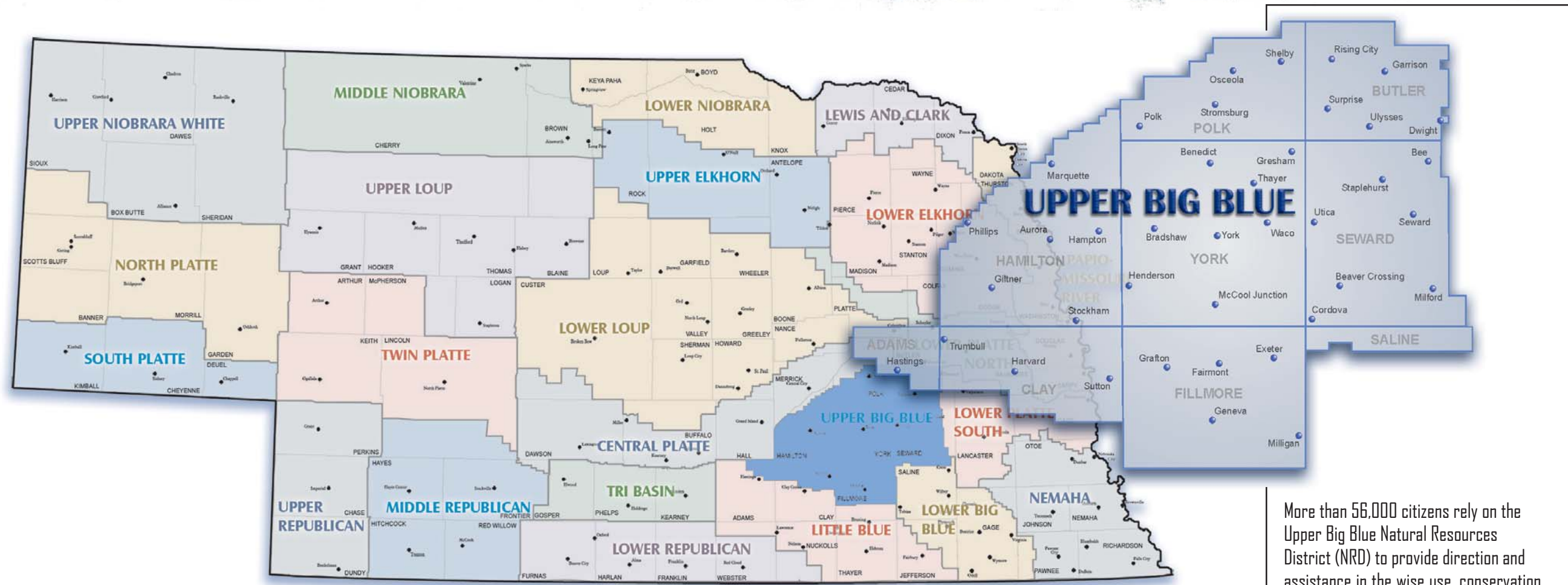
The District cooperates with the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission and Pheasants Forever on programs to create and enhance wildlife habitat. Federal agencies administer habitat development programs including the “Conservation Reserve Program”, the “Wetland Reserve Program”, “Partners for Wildlife”, and “Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program”.

State agency programs that the Upper Big Blue NRD works with include: “WILD Nebraska”, “Wetland Initiative Program”, “Conservation Reserve Program-Management Access Program”, “Seasonal Habitat Improvement Program”, “Cooperative Roadside Seeding Program”, “Upland Habitat Initiative”, “Wildlife Shelterbelt Program” and the “Living Snow Fence Program”.

All of these programs work for the improvement of wildlife habitat, by providing nesting, roosting, shelter, and food storage. They also work to control soil erosion and generally enhance the aesthetics of the areas that qualify for program inclusion.



NRD PROFILE



Once dismissed as "The Great American Desert," Nebraska now is known both nationally and abroad for its agricultural bounty and natural wonders. We sometimes take these wonders for granted, but they surround us from one corner of the state to another; from Niobrara to Red Cloud, from Scottsbluff to Omaha.

The Nebraska Legislature enacted laws in 1972 to combine 154 special purpose entities into 23 Natural Resources Districts (NRDs). These Districts are unique to Nebraska and to the rest of the country. NRDs are local government units with broad responsibilities to protect our natural resources. Major Nebraska river basins form the boundaries enabling Districts to respond best to local needs.

An elected Board of Directors governs each District. Much of their funding comes from local property taxes. In most cases, your local NRD typically uses 1-2 percent of all property taxes collected in the District.

NRDs help Nebraskans respond to natural resources challenges with local control and local solutions. Partnerships have been built with various agencies and organizations, including the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, other state and federal agencies, municipalities, counties, and private organizations.

Many NRD projects leave long-lasting conservation results: dams, terraces, drainage ditches, windbreaks, reservoirs, and recreational trails.

The Nebraska Association of Resources Districts, a statewide association created by NRDs, provides administrative services, legislative representation, statewide communication, and coordination for the 23 independent Districts.

Since being created in 1972, NRDs have experienced tremendous growth in the responsibilities given to them by state statute, especially in protecting groundwater.

The NRDs inform Nebraska's young people by supplying information, education, and other outreach efforts. It is vital that future generations understand the importance of securing Nebraska's natural resources.

More than 56,000 citizens rely on the Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District (NRD) to provide direction and assistance in the wise use, conservation and development of our soil, water and related natural resources. The NRD is dedicated to the conservation and careful development of natural resources to serve everyone's needs.

NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICTS...
 ... the greatest sources of the state's wealth and its assurance for future prosperity