



Winter 2023

Volume 37, Issue 1

Tri-Basin Topics

A quarterly publication of Tri-Basin Natural Resources District



South-Central Water Conference January 31st

Agenda Topics

- Central's Investment to the Future
- Drones in Ag
- Rusty Pivots and Nitrates
- NE DNR Projects
- Water Resources Updates

The 2023 South-Central Water Conference will be held Tuesday, January 31st at the Phelps County Ag Center. Join us at 9:30 a.m. for coffee and donuts. Sessions begin at 10:00 a.m. The conference is free of charge and a lunch by Score One Smokin' will be provided for those attending. The program will conclude around 2:30 p.m. A full agenda for the event will be posted at www.tribasinprd.org as soon as it is available.

The conference is sponsored by Tri-Basin Natural Resources District, Lower Republican Natural Resources District, Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District, and UNL Extension. It is a joint effort to increase the public's understanding of water-related issues in Nebraska.

Area agri-businesses will display their products and services at the water conference and will have representatives on hand to visit with conference participants.



Tri-Basin NRD's Phase II or Phase III Groundwater Quality Management Area producers who attend the conference are eligible to receive nitrogen management recertification credit if they sign-in when they enter.

Order Conservation Trees and Shrubs Today!

(See enclosed information)

Contact Tri-Basin NRD or your local NRCS office for information about planting a windbreak or shelterbelt.



Nitrogen Reports

Nitrogen Management Reports for the 2022 crop year were due December 31, 2022. If you have fields in the Phase II or Phase III areas of the Groundwater Quality Management Area and have not turned in your reports, please do so as soon as possible. If you need forms or help filling them out, contact the TBNRD office.

Chemigation Renewals

Renewal forms will go out to producers who had active chemigation permits last year. Producers whose chemigation certification has expired will need to attend one of the chemigation training sessions held in February and March or complete the online course. For dates and locations for classes go to www.tribasinprd.org.

Chemigation renewal permits are due in the Tri-Basin NRD office before **June 1, 2023**.

"Dedicated to Conservation of our Natural Resources"

<http://www.tribasinprd.org>



Manager's Message

by John Thorburn

One key aspect of any successful, sustained program is planning. Natural resources districts (NRDs) rely on plans to help us prioritize the use of our limited funds and staff resources most effectively to achieve our conservation goals. We

have project plans, program goals, performance metrics and objectives. We have special plans, like our groundwater management plan and our integrated water resources management plans (IMPs), that focus on certain aspects of groundwater conservation and protection. We are currently working with a group of local stakeholders and DNR staff to revise our Republican Basin IMP. We don't anticipate making substantial changes, just updates to the plan, which was developed in 2012.

In addition to specific project and program plans, we have one document that looks at the entire spectrum of NRD responsibilities and helps us prioritize our conservation work so that Tri-Basin NRD can protect our soil and water resources most effectively. It is called our "Master Plan."

State law delegates the following areas of responsibility for NRDs: (1) erosion prevention and control, (2) prevention of damages from flood water and sediment, (3) flood prevention and control, (4) soil conservation, (5) water supply for any beneficial uses, (6) development, management, utilization and conservation of groundwater and surface water, (7) pollution control, (8) solid waste disposal and sanitary drainage, (9) drainage improvement and channel rectification, (10) development and management of fish and wildlife habitat, (11) development and management of recreational and park facilities, and (12) forestry and range management.



Above: Phelps County Tree Planting
Below: Republican River Augmentation Well



Below:
Chemigation
Inspection



Above: PRD Pasture Controlled Burn
Below: Odessa IPA drainage ditch and culvert



These 12 areas of responsibility overlap, so they have been combined in the following manner for the Master Plan (numbers in parentheses refer to the numbering of the various responsibilities listed above):

- Erosion prevention and control (1) and soil conservation (4).
- Prevention of damages from flood water and sediment (2) and flood prevention and control (3).
- Water supply for any beneficial uses (5) and development, management, utilization and conservation of groundwater and surface water (6).
- Pollution control (7) and solid waste disposal and sanitary drainage (8).
- Drainage improvement and channel rectification (9).
- Development and management of fish and wildlife habitat (10) and development and management of recreational and park facilities (11).

Our management priority at Tri-Basin NRD has been and will remain protecting our priceless groundwater resources from contamination and diminishment. Utilizing chemigation equipment to apply fertilizer in a timely manner is a key water quality protection measure, even though it technically falls into the category of "pollution control." Soil conservation and drainage improvement are next on our list of conservation priorities.

State law requires that NRDs review our Master Plans at least once every ten years. We are concluding our review and revision this year (2023). We will then submit our proposed plan to the state Department of Natural Resources for review and approval. If you are interested in the details, Tri-Basin's Master plan and many of our other plans can be found on our website, [tribasinnrd.org](http://www.tribasinnrd.org).

New Water Technician

My name is Dana Christensen, and I am the new Water Resources Technician at the Tri-Basin NRD. My primary responsibility will be Chemigation.

I was born and raised in rural Northeastern Pennsylvania where my love for natural resources began. In a family of avid outdoorsmen, I quickly gained an appreciation for the important role we play in the balance of nature.

I graduated in December of 2021 from Delaware Valley University with a Bachelor's degree in Conservation and Wildlife Management. Having done my Senior Seminar presentation on Water Conservation in the Ogallala Aquifer, I am fortunate to have found a position at the Tri-Basin NRD.

Upon marrying my husband, Tim, we decided to move back to his home state of Nebraska in June of 2022.

During my free time I enjoy quilting, crocheting, cooking, hunting, taking care of our chickens, and spending time with our dog, Hondo.



TBNRD Trees Honor District Newborns

Tri-Basin NRD offers parents of newborns in the district the gift of a seedling tree. These trees are available to the family of any child born in Gosper, Phelps or Kearney Counties since the previous tree season (March 2022).

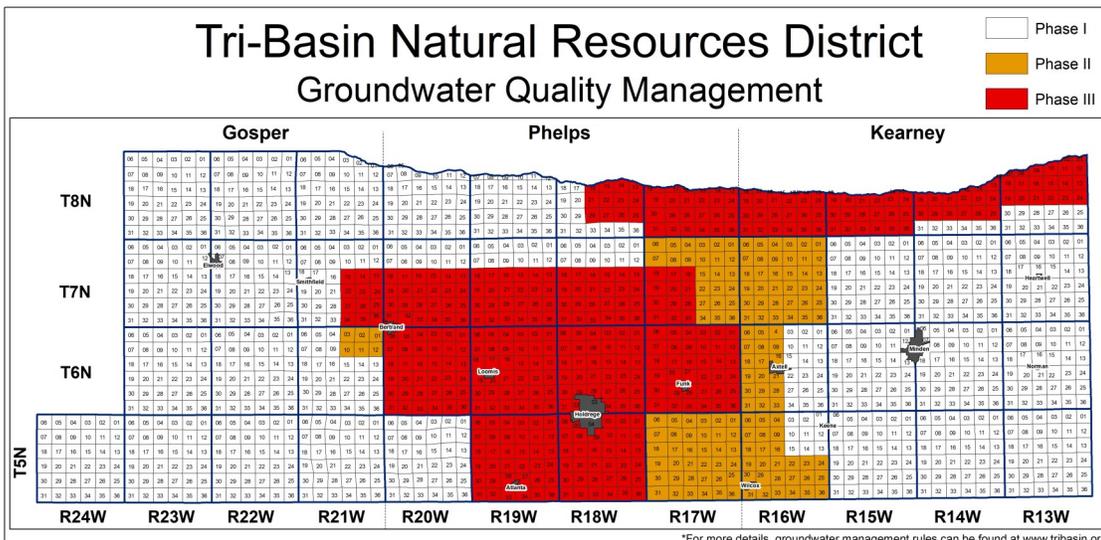
Reserve a baby tree by calling the Tri-Basin NRD at 308-995-6688 or email nmunter@tribasinprd.org your request with the baby's name and birthdate and the parents' names, address, and phone number. We will contact you in April to let you know when and where to pick up your tree. If you have any questions, please call the Tri-Basin and ask for Nate.

Nitrogen Management Certification Reminders

The Groundwater Quality Management Areas established by Tri-Basin NRD have allowed district staff to work cooperatively with farmers and agronomists for more than 25 years. These management areas help improve the timeliness, efficiency, and effectiveness of fertilizer application. These efforts have resulted in stable or declining nitrate/nitrogen levels in groundwater supplies in much of the district, safeguarding the quality of our groundwater.

Producers in Phase II and Phase III areas of the Groundwater Quality Management Area must take soil samples this winter and water samples in Summer 2023. Current Nitrogen Management Certification is required.

Producers whose certification has expired will receive notification in January by mail. Training dates have been set and can be found on Tri-Basin's website at www.tribasinprd.org. Attendance at the South-Central Water Conference on January 31st also qualifies for Nitrogen Management Certification. (You must sign-in to receive credit.)





**Non-Profit Permit
U. S. Postage
PAID
Holdrege, NE 68949
Permit No. 220**

Tri-Basin Natural Resources District
1723 Burlington St. Holdrege, NE 68949
(308) 995-6688
email: tribasin@tribasinprd.org
www.tribasinprd.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Nebraska's NRDs: Protecting Lives, Protecting Property, Protecting the Future

Calendar

- January 10 NRD Board Meeting, 1:30 p.m.*
 - January 16 NRD Closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
 - January 31 South Central Water Conference, Holdrege
 - February 14 NRD Board Meeting, 1:30 p.m.*
 - February 20 NRD Closed for Presidents' Day
 - March 14 NRD Board Meeting, 1:30 p.m.*
 - April 11 NRD Board Meeting, 7:30 p.m.*
 - April 25-26 Water Jamboree, Republican City
 - April 28 Arbor Day Tree Give Aways, District-wide
- * Times are tentative. All meetings are at TBNRD office in Holdrege unless otherwise noted.

TRI-BASIN NRD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Bradley Lundeen, Chairman Wilcox
- Todd Garrelts, Vice Chairman Holdrege
- Robin Hinrichs, Treasurer Axtell
- Joe Bilka, Secretary Holdrege
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TRI-BASIN NRD STAFF

- Dana Christensen Water Resources Technician
- Amy Dutton Minden Office Secretary
- Tammy Fahrenbruch Water Programs Coordinator
- Lori Hagan Office Clerk
- Sasha Hahn Information & Education Coordinator
- Nolan Little Water Resources Manager
- Carie Lynch Administrative Secretary
- Nate Munter Land Resources Coordinator
- Patrick Nott Water Resources Technician
- Nancy Pemberton Elwood Office Secretary
- Tami Reese Holdrege Office Secretary
- Dalton Refior Land Resources Technician
- Esther Smith Office Assistant
- John Thorburn General Manager
- Jeff VanEperen Water Resources Technician

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A mailing list is maintained and requests to be placed on the list should be sent to the above address. Comments and suggestions may be addressed to the General Manager.

Get Tri-Basin Topics in your inbox instead of your mailbox!

To request an electronic version of this newsletter, send an email to shahn@tribasinprd.org.

TRI-BASIN NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT 2023 HAND PLANT ORDER FORM

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

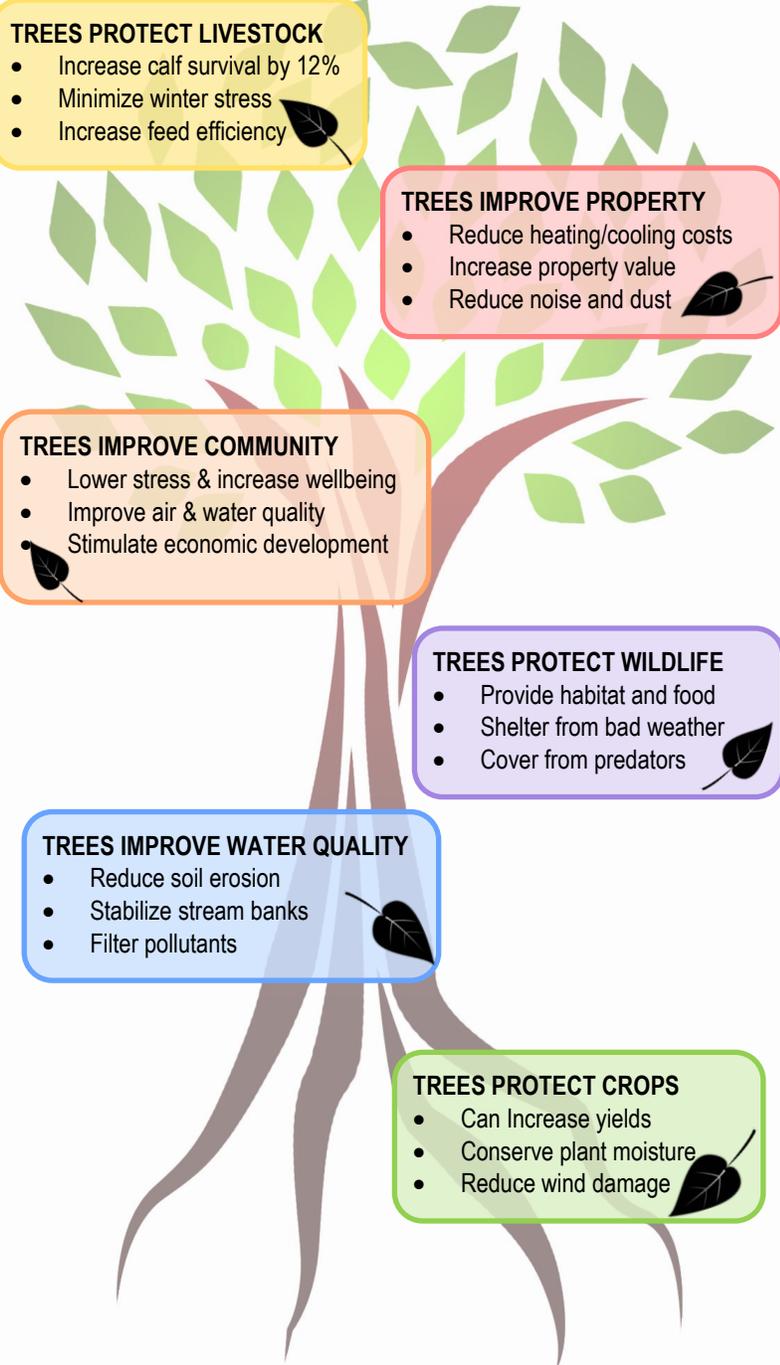
ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____ PHONE: _____

ORDERS MUST BE IN MULTIPLES OF 25.

Tree Order Deadline is April 1, 2023.

QUANTITY	SPECIES
	CONIFERS
	AUSTRIAN PINE
	COLORADO BLUE SPRUCE
	PONDEROSA PINE
	RED CEDAR (Eastern)
	NORWAY SPRUCE
	BROADLEAFS
	BLACK WALNUT
	BUR OAK
	HACKBERRY
	RED OAK
	SWAMP WHITE OAK
	SHRUBS
	AMERICAN PLUM
	COTONEASTER
	CHOKECHERRY
	ELDERBERRY
	RED OSIER DOGWOOD
	LILAC
	SAND CHERRY
	SKUNKBUSH SUMAC
	Total # of Trees
	Multiply total # of trees x 1.00
	Mulch x .38/foot
	Staples x .15
	Subtotal
	Tax (Holdrege 7%, Minden 7.5%, Elwood 6.5%)
	TOTAL AMOUNT DUE/PAID



Tree Pickup will be at: _____ Tri-Basin NRD _____ Minden NRCS _____ Elwood NRCS

WHY PLANT A WINDBREAK?

Windbreaks and shelterbelts provide many benefits. Windbreaks planted along field boundaries reduce soil erosion by reducing wind velocity. Shelterbelts planted around farmsteads reduce heating costs in homes and shop buildings. Shelterbelts can protect livestock from blizzards and serve as "living snow fences." Trees and shrubs also provide food, shelter and nesting habitat for many species of birds and mammals.

NRD TREE & SHRUB PLANTINGS

Contact the NRD Office or your county NRCS for help with determining the type and number of trees and shrubs you need. The technician will make arrangements for the tree order and planting service. The NRD will plant the trees according to the plan.

Trees are planted in the spring as soon as conditions are suitable. The NRD tree planting crew will notify landowners of the approximate date and time of planting.

SITE PREPARATION

Good site preparation is a key to rapid tree growth and survival. The best site preparation begins the year before the trees are planted. On heavier soils, working the ground to kill competing vegetation is an excellent method of preparing the site. The technician assisting in planning a windbreak or habitat plot can advise you about the type of site preparation needed. The technician can also help you determine if herbicide carryover will be a problem.

WEED CONTROL

Weed control in the form of plastic mulch is available through the district. This woven material is installed over the trees after planting. Slots are then cut for the trees. Plastic mulch not only eliminates weeds but also helps to preserve soil moisture.

PRICES	
Trees & Shrubs	\$1.00 each/multiples of 25
PLANTING SERVICE	
Tree planting (no mulch)	\$0.50/ft
Trees, tree planting, mulch and mulch installation	\$2.00/ft
Drip tape	\$0.30/ft
Drip tape set-up	Minimum \$35.00
Pull-in Charge	\$50.00
Renovations*	\$250.00
Shrub thickets*	\$300.00
Minimum 750 foot per planting	
Plastic Mulch (Material Only)	\$0.38 per ft
Stakes	\$0.15 each
Seedling Tubes	\$1.10 each
Prices are subject to change.	
*Contact Tri-Basin NRD for site review.	

PLANTING YOUR OWN TREES

You can order trees and shrubs at the NRD or your local NRCS Office. Orders must be in multiples of 25 per species. We will send you a postcard when your trees arrive. We also have tree spades available to rent.

DRIP TAPE

Tri-Basin has subsurface "drip tape" available for watering trees planted by the District. The water source could be a portable tank or a hydrant. Check with the TBNRD Land Resource Coordinator for more information.

COST-SHARE

Tri-Basin NRD offers cost-share funds for tree plantings and plastic mulch installation. You should apply at your county NRCS office before March 1.

All sites must be properly prepared before planting to qualify for cost-share. Reimbursement is made only after full payment is received. The minimum total cost of plantings eligible for cost-share is \$500.

Cost-share may also be available from your county USDA office. Pheasants Forever and Nebraska Game & Parks Commission also offer programs for wildlife habitat improvement. NRCS staff can help you determine which programs have funds available and best suit your needs.

BILLING ON NRD PLANTINGS

Tri-Basin NRD bills for trees/tree planting service after completion. Full payment is due upon receipt of the billing. Cost-share payments will not be made until payment is received at the Tri-Basin or NRCS office.