



ANNUAL REPORT

2009

www.lpnrd.org

Construction of Lake Wanahoo Speeds Ahead of Schedule in '09

Frequent visitors to the Wahoo area over the past year may have noticed some big changes taking place north of town at the Highway 77-92 junction, as the Lake Wanahoo dam has rapidly taken shape.

Construction on the dam began in October 2008 and a year later had progressed to a point where outlets and diversions could be removed to allow the lake to begin to fill. Water has been pooling in the lakebed since then, and it's anticipated that one large rain event (3" or more in the watershed) could fill the 637-surface-acre lake completely.

The Highway 77-92 junction was also reshaped so that it will eventually be able to link with the planned Highway 77 bypass that will run across the front face of the dam. The junction, closed for much of 2009 to accommodate construction, was reopened in November.

Good weather helped speed construction throughout much of the year, and the dam was approximately 90% complete in December, when crews temporarily shut down due to freezing tem-

peratures. The major remaining item on the dam is concrete work on the emergency spillway, and that should be completed in 4-5 weeks once temperatures warm up again this spring, leaving the project well ahead of schedule.

With the dam nearly complete, project sponsors have been focusing on recreation plans and other components of the project that will be built in 2010-2011, including seven smaller upstream dams along Sand and Duck Creeks. A 2012 grand opening is planned for the Lake Wanahoo Recreation Area.



The dam was closed in October and water began pooling immediately. With snowmelt and spring rains, the lake should be full by summer 2010.



This forest of rebar waiting for concrete is the principal spillway inlet above the dam as it looked in early November 2009.



The Lake Wanahoo dam site, looking east along the former County Road M in November 2009.



IN BRIEF . . .

Soil & Water Conservation

In partnership with the Nebraska Natural Resources Conservation Service, the NRD's Soil & Water Conservation Program provided more than \$127,000 in state cost-share funds and \$33,000 in local funds to land-owners in 2009 to construct terraces, waterways, and other conservation measures.

Tree Planting

The NRD sold approximately 18,700 trees to cooperators across the district in 2009. Of those, approximately 4,934 were planted by district staff at 15 sites. The district also donated tree seedlings to students at the NRD's Spring Conservation Sensation and to area schools and Boy Scout groups for Arbor Day. Since 1972, more than 850,000 NRD trees have been planted in the district.

Rural Water Systems

The NRD's rural water systems - one connecting Bruno and David City and the other connecting Colon and Wahoo - finished their fourth year of operation in 2009, providing Bruno and Colon residents with safe, clean drinking water. The NRD is studying several possibilities for extending the systems to other nearby communities, and new systems for other areas are also under consideration.

500+ Students Participate in NRD Educational Activities

More than 500 students from area schools participated in NRD educational activities in 2009. In May, 320 elementary students attended the Spring Conservation Sensation at Czechland Lake to participate in a variety of hands-on activities relating to water, wildlife, forestry, and more. In October, 168 area high school students competed in the East Central Land Judging Contest sponsored by the NRD and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The NRD also conducted GPS activities and water testing with several area schools in 2009.

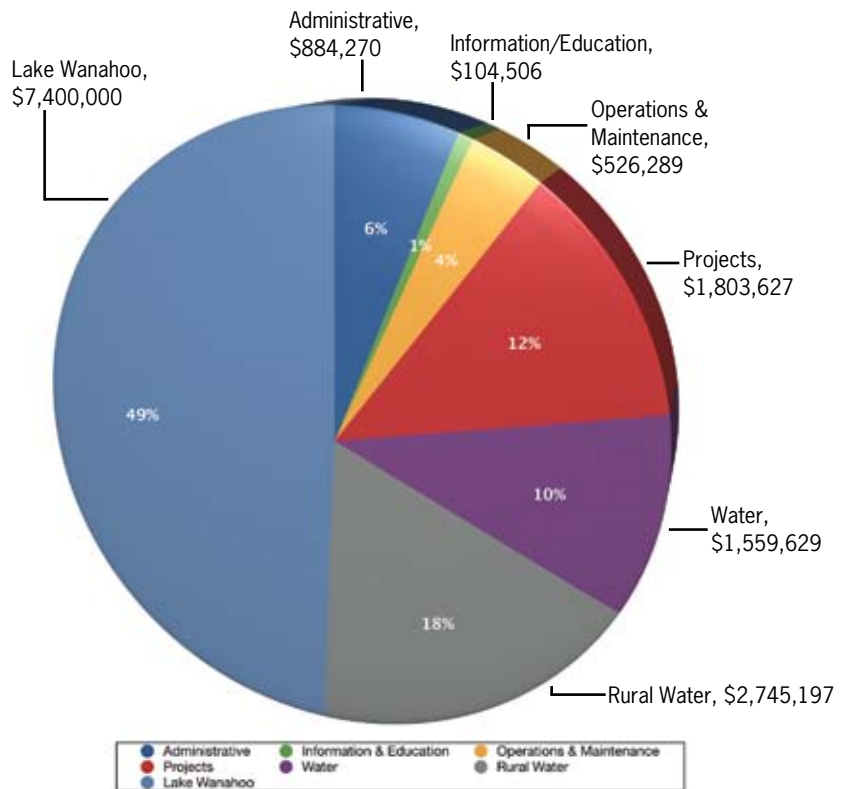
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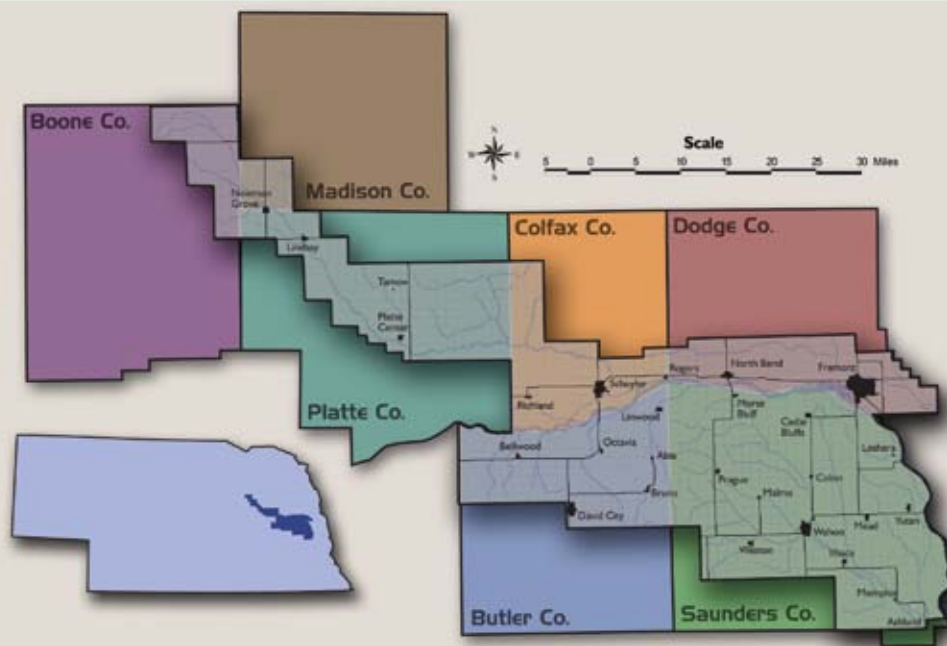
- News & updates on NRD programs
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Lower Platte North NRD Budget, Fiscal Year 2009

Lower Platte North NRD Total Expenses, Fiscal Year 2009 - \$15,023,519



Low
Total



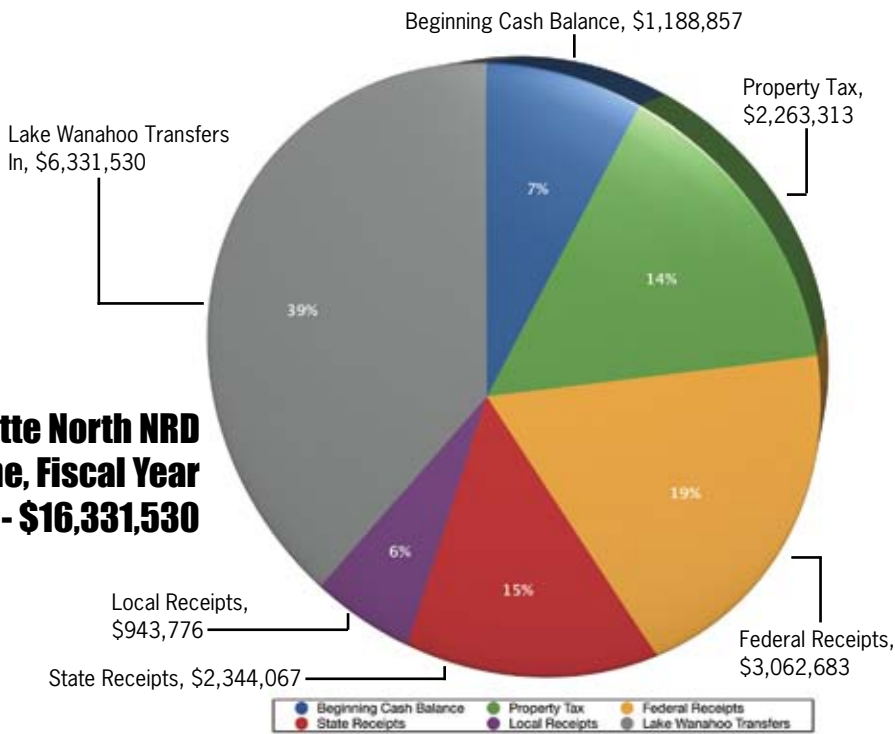
The Lower Platte North NRD is funded by a combination of property taxes and grants from local, State and Federal sources. For fiscal year 2009 (July 1, 2009-June 30, 2010), the district's overall budget is \$15,023,519.

This is significantly higher than normal due to the construction of Lake Wanhoo, which accounted for just under half of the district's total budget. Despite this, the district's property tax rate is actually 2% lower in FY2009 than FY2008.

State statute allows NRDs a maximum property tax rate of 5.5 cents per \$100 of valuation. At the FY2009 rate of 4.4775 cents, the NRD is at 81% of the allowable rate. This equates to \$44.76 in property tax for a \$100,000 home or farm.

For the FY2009 budget, each dollar of property tax collected is matched by 6 dollars in outside funding. Property tax receipts accounted for only 14% of the NRD's total budget in '09.

**Lower Platte North NRD
Total Income, Fiscal Year
2009 - \$16,331,530**



The Annual Report is distributed once a year in newspapers in the Lower Platte North NRD. Writing/design by Troy Thompson, Information/Education Specialist.

Board Member Subdistrict

Roland Renter.....	1
Gene Acklie.....	1
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Art Bailey.....	4
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John Hannah.....	5
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Ronald Sabatka.....	7
Daryl Reitmajer.....	8
Robert Meduna.....	8
Don Veskerna.....	9
Ray Casey.....	9
Dave Vrana.....	at large

Staff Member..... Position

Larry Angle.....	Water Resources Manager
Sam Barlean.....	O & M/Rural Water Specialist
Curt Becker.....	Water Resources Specialist
Jill Breunig.....	Administrative Manager
Sean Elliot.....	NRD/NRCS Technician
Eric Gottschalk.....	Projects Coordinator
Bob Heimann.....	O & M Manager
Marla Milliken.....	NRD/NRCS Technician
John Miyoshi.....	General Manager
Tom Mountford.....	Assistant Manager
Mike Murren.....	Lake Wanhoo Coordinator
Russell Oaklund.....	Water Resources Specialist
Dave Odvody.....	Recreation Facilitator
Chris Poole.....	GIS Specialist
Karen Rezac.....	Secretary/Bookkeeper
Joe Sabata.....	O & M Specialist
Mike Sousek.....	Rural Water Manager
Krystal Sund.....	Accountant
Troy Thompson.....	Info-Ed/Computer Specialist

NRD/NRCS Clerks..... County

Susie Leu.....	Butler County
Brenda Wardman.....	Colfax County
Jenny Campbell.....	Dodge County
Kelly Bartek.....	Saunders County

To receive the NRD's quarterly newsletter, The Viaduct, contact:

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About the NRD

The Lower Platte North Natural Resources District, based in Wahoo, covers parts of seven counties in eastcentral Nebraska. There are 23 NRDs in Nebraska, charged with developing and protecting the state's natural resources. In pursuing this mission, the districts often work in partnership with landowners and other government agencies, such as the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The Lower Platte North NRD is governed by 19 locally-elected directors from nine subdistricts, and employs 22 full-time staff members (see current listing of NRD directors and staff at right). Get more info on the NRD and our projects and programs at www.lpnnrd.org.

**Protecting Lives
Protecting Property
Protecting the Future**



“Fully-Appropriated” Status for Lower Platte Basin Reversed

In December 2008, the Lower Platte River basin (including much of the Lower Platte North NRD) was preliminarily declared as “fully-appropriated” (at the maximum level of sustainable irrigation development) by the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources. A moratorium was placed on new irrigation development within the fully-appropriated area and the NRD stopped accepting new well permits from that area.

However, problems with some of the science used to determine the basin’s appropriation status were discovered, and the state reversed the fully-appropriated declaration in March 2009. The moratorium ended in August 2009 and the former fully-appropriated area was opened back up to limited irrigation development (up to 2,500 acres per year). The NRD held two rounds of request periods (in August-September 2009 and December 2009) for producers to apply for variances for new wells and/or expansion of irrigated acres in the former fully-appropriated area for 2009-2010. Due to a lower than expected number of applications, the NRD is currently accepting variance requests on a continuous basis.

NRD Designates “Irrigation Development Areas”

When the NRD began working on a plan to allow limited irrigation development to resume in the former fully-appropriated area, it was decided to designate three “Irrigation Development Areas” in the district. In **Restricted** Development Areas (where the NRD declared a moratorium in 2008), no new irrigated acres are allowed. In **Limited** Development Areas (the former fully-appropriated area), up to 2,500 new irrigated acres per year are allowed. In **Normal** Development Areas, there is no restriction on new irrigated acres, but well permits are required for all new acres.

About the GWMA

In 1997, the NRD designated a Ground Water Management Area (GWMA) covering the entire district. The GWMA monitors and regulates both groundwater quality and groundwater quantity.

Under GWMA rules, well operators must be certified in nitrogen and water management every four years. Operators become certified by attending free NRD training classes (held each spring). The classes focus on ways to manage water and nitrogen use to protect our shared water supply.

Well operators who are not certified in nitrogen and water management are ineligible for cost-share funds from the NRD and will not be able to get their irrigated acres certified.

The GWMA also includes restrictions on commercial nitrogen fertilizer applications in the spring and fall on certain soil types, among other regulations. There are also two “Phase II” areas in the district (in the Schuyler and Bellwood areas) where additional regulations apply. For a complete list of GWMA requirements, please visit our website at www.lpnrd.org or contact us at (402) 443-4675.

