

- ✓ September 13, 2016, Omaha World Herald article, Ted Japp, relative of late Scott Japp, vies for Papio-Missouri River NRD board seat
- ✓ September 13, 2016, Washington Co. Pilot-Tribune & Enterprise article, No tax increase from Papio-Missouri River NRD this year
- ✓ September 14, 2016, Bellevue Leader article, County formally agrees to help fund levee repairs
- ✓ September 15, 2016, Omaha World Herald article, Aerial spraying targets Platte River weeds that endanger animals, people
- ✓ September 28, 2016, The Associated Press article, Cedar Rapids is happy with its flood

- barriers as Cedar River crests
- ✓ October 5, 2016, Sioux City Journal article, Long-awaited Pigeon Creek dredging under way in Dakota County
  - ✓ October 6, 2016, Omaha World Herald article, NRD dredging project begins in northeast Nebraska
  - ✓ October 10, 2016, Omaha World Herald article, New and familiar faces seek to take on water issues on Papio-Missouri River NRD Board
  - ✓ October 13, 2016, Dakota County Star article, Flood control measures headed by NRD begin north of Homer

## **September 2016 Information/Education Report**

### **Information**

- Continued work on updates for Chalco Hills Visitors Center Exhibit
- Continued work on redesign of NRD Web Site
- Distributed news releases
- Began planning for Media Day at Pigeon Creek Dredging Project
- Continued scheduling of Information Campaign video spots
- Updated current web site
- Responded to several requests for information/materials received through web site contacts
- Continued work on Fall 2016 Spectrum Newsletter
- Monitored local media coverage of NRD-related stories
- Attended NARD Annual Conference
- Held News Conference on Phragmites spraying near Platte River

### **Education**

#### **September Programming Schedule:**

**9/1-** Rockwell Elementary- Insects- 63 students (1<sup>st</sup> grade)  
**9/6-** Montclair Elementary- Insects- 43 students (1<sup>st</sup> grade)  
**9/7-** Arbor Park Middle School Green Club—Insects- 36 students  
**9/8-** Papio South High – Macroinvertebrates/Water quality- 20 students  
**9/10-** World O! Water – Animal Booth  
**9/12-** Sagewood Elementary- Snakes/Lizards- 67 students (5<sup>th</sup> grade)  
**9/13-** Spring Ridge Elementary- Insects- 86 students (2<sup>nd</sup> grade)  
**9/14-** Girl Scout Hike and Snake Program- 8 girls  
**9/15-** St. Matthew Middle– GPS/Owls- 112 students  
**9/16-** Skyline Elementary – Insects- 67 students (2<sup>nd</sup> grade)  
**9/20-** Brownell Talbot Family Night- Owls- 67 people  
**9/21-** Wonderful World of Water- Reptiles and Amphibians- 115 students  
**9/22-** Parkview Elementary- Insects- 22 students (pre-K)  
**9/27-** Conservation Day– Animals- 215 students (5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade)  
**9/28-** State Range Judging- Scorer  
**9/29-** Wegner School –Owls- 16 students  
**9/30-** Friedel Academy –Owls- 26 students

#### **Planning:**

Updates/Monitoring of Papio-Missouri River NRD Facebook/Twitter/Google+/Instagram Sites and Web Pages  
General NRD Animal Care  
Outdoor Classroom Grants  
Assist with Press Releases and Press Statements  
World O! Water Set-up/Tear Down  
Pheasants Forever Chapter Donation Requests  
ESO to Vet  
Fall programs in class and on site

#### **Meetings/Trainings:**

Spirit Award Luncheon  
Outdoor Classroom School Meeting  
Let's Move Outside Meeting



October 7, 2016

Omaha Bee Club  
4089 So 84<sup>th</sup> St #211  
Omaha, NE 68127

Mr. John Winkler, General Manager  
Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District  
8901 S. 154th St  
Omaha, NE 68138

Dear Mr. John Winkler:

This letter is in response to your recent donation of \$3,000.00 to the Omaha Bee Club for the Teaching Apiary and Garden. With this support, the OBC is able to provide a place for area beekeepers to get hands on skills training and practice applied beekeeping skills to supplement their own individual learning as well as a part of organized beekeeper certification programs offered by the Omaha Bee Club. In addition to directly providing a place for local beekeepers to develop applied skills, the Omaha Bee Club will be able to maintain a number of hives that will participate in an ongoing study of honey bee hives in Nebraska conducted by the UNL Extension program. By being able to include our "training" hives in this study, we can contribute to the ongoing understanding and improvement of conditions for beekeeping in Nebraska.

We also provide opportunities for groups in the community such as community organizations, home school groups and others to come down and see how bees in a live apiary work. Lots of opportunities to answer curious questions and teach people to be friendly with one of the world's most beneficial (to people) pollinating insects.

Thank you Papio-Missouri NRD for everything you have done and continue to do to help the Omaha Bee Club continue its mission to help "Build Better Beekeepers Bring Better Bees" in the Omaha/Metro area.

Our club is a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization and your gift is a tax deductible gift under IRS guidelines. Pursuant to Internal Revenue Code requirements for substantiation of charitable contributions, no goods or services were provided in return for the tax deductible donation.

Again, thank you for your donation to our club.

Sincerely,

Bob Cook  
Treasurer, Omaha Bee Club



**American  
Red Cross**

Dear Nicole,

The American Red Cross and our partner, Suburban Propane, would like to thank you for being a leader in your community and hosting a successful Red Cross blood drive this summer! It's people like you who make a difference.

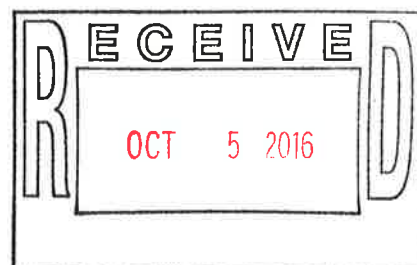
Congratulations on exceeding your blood drive goal. We are pleased to provide you the enclosed certificate acknowledging your achievement. In addition, your organization will be recognized on [redcrossblood.org/sponsor-spotlight](http://redcrossblood.org/sponsor-spotlight).

"We salute you for setting the gold standard for sponsors of the Red Cross to help save lives of patients in need. As a fellow partner of the Red Cross, we are pleased to stand alongside them to recognize the commitment and support you have provided. Congratulations and thank you for all you do to support your community!" – Your friends from Suburban Propane.

Your efforts made a difference in several lives as well as helped boost the blood supply during the critical summer months.

We're grateful you chose to host a blood drive with the Red Cross, and we hope to partner with you again soon!

The American Red Cross and Suburban Propane



**September, 2016**

[illegible]

Updated: September 12, 2016

## **Current and On-Going Projects P-MRNRD Legal Counsel**

★ = Top Priority

F = Future Work – No Assignment

N = New Assignment

O = Others Handling

W = Work in Progress

P = Counsel Portion Completed

B= Next Board Meeting

- **Little Papio:** (Cleveland)
- **Big Papio:** (Cleveland)
  - ★ Master Tune Sign License Enforcement (F)
- **West Branch:** (Cleveland)
  - ★ Land Exchange with Sarpy Co. (96<sup>th</sup> St.) (P)
    - Bellino Sale of NRD ROW (W)
- **Western Sarpy Dike:** (Cleveland/Petermann)
  - NRDs/NE-ARNG Interlocal for Camp Ashland Property (F)
- **Floodway Purchase Program:** (Laster/Grint)
  - Arlington Purchase Agreements, Deeds, etc. (F)
- **Trail Projects:** (Williams)
- **Missouri River Corridor Project:** (Becic)
- **USDA PL 566 Projects, Silver Creek and Pigeon/Jones Watershed:** (Schumacher/Cleveland)
  - ★ Papio W-3 Eminent Domain (Camden) (W)
    - Tek/Mud PL 566 Site 41A access (F)
    - Papio PL 566 Site W-2 Issues (F)

- **Papio Watershed Dam Sites:** (Grint/Laster/Williams)
  - ✪ ROW Acquisition Documents for WP6 & WP7 (F)
  - ✪ Transfer Deed to City of Omaha for Zorinsky Basin 1 (P)
  - ✪ Transfer Deed to City of Papillion change elevation of Top of Dam for Prairie Queen (W)
  - ✪ City of Omaha Interlocal Agreement for ZB-2 (B)
  - ✪ WP6 & WP7 Interlocal Agreement with Papillion and Sarpy Co. (B)
- **Papio Creek Watershed Partnership (Stormwater):** (Grint)
- **Missouri River R-613 and R-616 Levees:** (Cleveland/Woodward)
  - Offutt AFB O&M Agreement (P)
  - ✪ Interlocal Funding Agreement with Omaha, Bellevue and Sarpy Co. (P)
  - ✪ ROW Acquisition Hearing Documents (B)
- **Rural Water Projects:** (Nelson)
  - WCRW – Amendment to Washington Count Interlocal Agreement (F)
- **Other:**
  - ✪ Southern Sarpy watershed Partnership Interlocal Agreement (B) (Laster)



# Ted Japp, relative of late Scott Japp, vies for Papio-Missouri River NRD board seat

- By Roseann Moring / World-Herald staff writer  
9-13-16

Voters in the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District's Subdistrict 1 will see a familiar name on the November ballot.

Ted Japp has received enough signatures to appear on the ballot along with Bill Rhea Jr.

Japp is a distant relative of Scott Japp, who served on the board until his death in a farm accident earlier this year.

Subdistrict 1 includes the parts of Washington, Burt, Thurston and Dakota Counties that fall within the NRD. It also includes a small part of northern Douglas County.

# No tax increase from Papio-Missouri River NRD this year

Washington County Pilot-Tribune & Enterprise/Katie Rohman / 9-13-2016

## Papio-Missouri River NRD fiscal year 2017 budget and levy

- Total operating budget: \$70.5M
- Property tax levy: 0.038034
- Total property tax requirement: \$22.83M
- Property valued at \$100,000: \$38.03 in taxes

DAKOTA CITY — The Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District (PMRNRD) will not increase property taxes for fiscal year 2017.

The PMRNRD Board of Directors unanimously approved its budget and property tax levy following public hearings Thursday in Dakota City. No residents commented on either agenda item.

The total operating budget for fiscal year 2017 is \$70.5 million. A property tax levy of 0.038034, the same as the prior year, will generate an estimated \$22.8 million in revenue. The owner of a property valued at \$100,000 would pay a total of \$38.03 in property taxes.

The levy is based on an estimated 3.88 percent increase in valuations across the district. The PMRNRD includes all of Washington, Dakota, Sarpy and Douglas counties and the eastern 60 percent of Burt and Thurston counties.

Subdistrict 1 Director Bill Rhea Jr., an Arlington resident who was sworn in as interim director Aug. 11 following the death of Director Scott Japp, also of Arlington, asked that the board add \$142,322 to the Elk/Pigeon Creek Improvement Project Area in Dakota County to complete major dredging work to assist in relieving flash flooding to landowners. The motion was approved.

The PMRNRD is projected to spend more than \$3.3 million in Subdistrict 1, which includes Washington and Dakota counties and portions of Burt, Thurston and Douglas counties. That is more than \$1 million in additional spending than property tax revenue in Subdistrict 1.

Rhea, who was also appointed to the Personnel, Legislative and Public Affairs Subcommittee Thursday, is on the Nov. 8 general election ballot for Subdistrict 1. He would have challenged Scott Japp before he died in a farm accident in June.

A second candidate for the seat, Ted Japp of Kennard, recently collected enough petition signatures to get on the ballot.



## County formally agrees to help fund levee repairs

**By Eugene Curtin**

*Leader Associate Editor*

The Sarpy County Board Aug. 30 formally signed on to a multijurisdictional effort to shore up the levees surrounding Offutt Air Force Base.

Commissioners voted 6-0 to contribute \$3 million to an almost \$28 million fund that will be used to strengthen 19 miles of levee that protects the base from the Missouri River. The levees also protect thousands

of developable acres south of the base.

John Winkler, general manager of the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District, said his agency will contribute \$5 million to the project, a contribution that might climb to \$7 million, potentially raising the total cost to almost \$30 million.

Other contributors are the State of Nebraska, which will contribute \$13.7 million; the City of Bellevue, which will contribute \$3 million; and the

City of Omaha, which is also contributing \$3 million.

Winkler said he hopes construction will begin next year.

The work should take two years to complete, he said.

The work is being conducted by order of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which has threatened to decertify the levees if the improvements are not made.

That would leave Offutt, and thousands of developable acres, listed as technically sit-

ting in a floodplain.

Decertification would put the base at greater risk of closure, and would make the area south of the base essentially undevelopable. On the other hand, Winkler, said, the decision to strengthen the levees is already paying dividends.

He said the Department of the Air Force has agreed to spend \$50 million making repairs to Offutt's aging runway and signs are growing that the base will receive new missions.

# Aerial spraying targets Platte River weeds that endanger animals, people

○ By Jay Withrow / World-Herald staff writer 9-15-2016

Helicopter crews have begun aerial spraying of invasive noxious weeds along the lower Platte River in some eastern and east-central Nebraska counties.

The Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District said the lower Platte is clogged with invasive vegetation — phragmites and purple loosestrife. The noxious weeds are robbing eastern Nebraska of critically needed water and wildlife habitat for the threatened and endangered piping plover and least tern, the district said.

Human safety also is at risk due to ice-jam flooding, which officials blamed partially on the weeds along the Platte River bordering Douglas, Sarpy, Saunders, Dodge, Colfax, Butler, Platte and Cass Counties.

Aerial spraying, which began Tuesday, is being conducted on up to 300 acres of selected sandbars on the lower Platte River from Columbus downstream to the Missouri River, the district said.

The chemical being used is EPA-approved and it is not harmful to humans, officials said. However, two canoe access sites will be closed on the Platte and Elkhorn Rivers for a couple of days as a precaution. The sites are Platte River Landing at Nebraska Highway 64 near Valley and Elkhorn Crossing at 252nd Street and Bennington Road.

The areas are being treated at a cost of about \$200 per acre, officials said. Landowners have been asked to cover 50 percent of the cost.

# Cedar Rapids is happy with its flood barriers as Cedar River crests

- THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

A flood wall stands between Cory Harrison and Cedar Rapids's flooded streets. Crews were busy Tuesday pumping water back into the river.

CEDAR RAPIDS, Iowa (AP) — An elaborate system of temporary flood walls largely protected Cedar Rapids homes and businesses on Tuesday as the river that runs through the city reached its second-highest peak ever.

City officials said the 9.8-mile system of Hesco barriers and earthen berms that contractors erected over the weekend was successfully holding back the rain-swollen Cedar River.

The city, Iowa's second largest, received good news as the river crested Tuesday morning at 22.1 feet, lower than predicted. That was 9 feet below the 2008 flood that destroyed thousands of homes and businesses in the worst natural disaster in Iowa history.

The barriers used to hold back the floodwaters consist of steel mesh panels, lined with a thick polypropylene material that can be quickly filled with sand or dirt, usually using a front-loader. They have also been used extensively by the military.

City crews had worked through the night to patch any weaknesses in the protection system and pump out water that seeped through the barriers or came up through the saturated ground.

"City employees and contractors worked in really heroic ways to make sure the temporary system we put in place was fully functional," said city manager Jeff Pomeranz.

Their work continued Tuesday as the city turned its focus underground to its pressure-packed sewer system, which officials worried could send water shooting onto streets and create dangerous conditions for any bystanders.

"The enemy now is what we don't see," Pomeranz said.

Crews pumped water back into the river Tuesday in downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, which were largely abandoned as residents heeded the city's call to evacuate.

Nick Jelinek, 37, said the flood protection was working "great" as he pumped water out of the basement of a business building he owns in the usually bustling New Bo district. "This is as good as it could go," he said.

While the protection system was largely working, city officials said that many homes and businesses near the river will likely have water in their basements. They warned about the prospect of residential sewer backups and structural damage.

It will be a few more days before residents are allowed to return to their homes and businesses and key roads reopen. Public schools will remain closed today.

Firefighters rescued a woman Monday who had been swept away by the river north of downtown. She was able to cling to a tree until rescuers reached her.

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## Long-awaited Pigeon Creek dredging under way in Dakota County

- NICK HYTREK [nhytrek@siouxcityjournal.com](mailto:nhytrek@siouxcityjournal.com)



HOMER, Neb. | Farmers along Pigeon Creek in Dakota County hope that dredging work begun recently will reduce the risk of future flooding.

A \$199,500 project to dredge silt that has built up in the creek over the past 30-40 years is designed to increase the creek's capacity to carry water in the wake of heavy rainfalls. Large amounts of rain in June 2014 led to levee breaches along the creek and flooding of hundreds of acres of farmland.

"It doesn't take a very large rainfall to fill that ditch up. If they dig it out, it should handle a lot more water without breaching. It's been needed for a long time," said Bryce Andersen, a Dakota City farmer who lost about 1,500 acres of crops to flooding two years ago.

Work began last week to dredge about seven miles of Pigeon Creek from U.S. Highway 77 near Homer upstream to the bridge at South Bluff Road east of Hubbard.

"It was a project that really needed to be done, but there were never the resources available for it," said John Winkler, general manager of the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District, which is overseeing and funding the project.

Winkler said funding was transferred from an Omaha-area project to do the Pigeon Creek work.

Damage caused by the 2014 breaches cost more than \$1 million to repair, he said. Silt removed from the creek will be added to the levee to reinforce it.

Andersen, who also sits on an advisory board that provides input to the NRD, said the dredging has been on the wish list for a long time.

"We have been talking about this for several years," he said. "This will help. There's no doubt about it."

Winkler said dredging will continue until it gets too cold to work. Dredging could continue into 2017.

"We're going to keep going until the weather dictates otherwise," Winkler said.

# NRD dredging project begins in northeast Nebraska

- By Jay Withrow / World-Herald staff writer

10-6-16

Updated 17 hrs ago

The Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District has begun a nearly \$200,000 dredging project to reduce sediment buildup and flooding along Pigeon Creek in northeast Nebraska's Dakota County.

The dredging is aimed at easing flooding of farmland near the creek.

About seven miles of Pigeon Creek will be dredged by NRD crews into 2017.

The area sustained considerable flooding damage from heavy rains in June 2014, officials said, with the Pigeon Creek levee damaged twice that month.

Dredging will be done from about U.S. Highway 77 north of Homer upstream to the bridge at South Bluff Road east of Hubbard.

The dredging is part of the Elk/Pigeon Creek Improvement Project Area. It will be paid for by NRD funding approved at the district's Sept. 9 meeting in Dakota City. The total amount budgeted for the project was \$199,500.

# New and familiar faces seek to take on water issues on Papio-Missouri River NRD Board

- By Roseann Moring / World-Herald staff writer 10-10-16



The Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District has a lot going on.

In November, voters in six of the 11 subdistricts will choose their representative for the next four years.

The new officials will help oversee a \$70 million budget. They'll also help shape several dam projects in the area.

The district is tasked with flood prevention and other water issues in Douglas, Sarpy, Washington, Burt, Thurston and Dakota Counties.

## Subdistrict 1

Subdistrict 1 includes the parts of Washington, Burt, Thurston and Dakota Counties that fall within the NRD. It also includes a small part of northern Douglas County.

The district lost its incumbent this year when board member Scott Japp died in a farm accident.

Japp's adversarial style brought him many supporters in his native Washington County, though he often frustrated other board members with what they saw as his obstructionism.

A cousin of Japp's, Ted Japp, petitioned to appear on the ballot and will run against Bill Rhea Jr.

Both candidates said they want to represent the interests of their rural constituents, who can sometimes be at odds with those from the Omaha area, while working more closely with other board members.

The board appointed Rhea to fill the vacant seat until the elected director takes office in January.

Ted Japp said in an interview that he's long been interested in the NRD. He said he agrees with much of what his cousin tried to accomplish, particularly opposing tax increases.

But Ted Japp said he would have a different style from the former director. He compared himself to Husker coach Mike Riley, as opposed to Scott Japp's Bo Pelini.

At the September meeting, Rhea pushed the board to add about \$142,000 for a channel improvement project at Elk/Pigeon Creek in Dakota County. He said that shows that a collaborative style can be effective.

"I'm going to be very conservative on spending tax dollars, although I think we need to work on water quality and water conservation," he said. "I'm really in this for the next generation."



**TED JAPP**



Ted Japp

**Age:** 59

**Party:** Republican

**Occupation:** retired chiropractor

**Home:** rural Blair

**Public offices held:** none

**Education:** doctor of Chiropractic, Northwestern University of Health Sciences

**Family:** married, three children

**Faith:** Evangelical Christian

**Website:** none

**BILL RHEA JR.**



Bill Rhea Jr.

**Age:** 47

**Party:** Republican

**Occupation:** in charge of risk management and farming operation at Rhea Cattle Co.

**Home:** Arlington

**Public offices held:** none

**Education:** bachelor's degree, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

**Family:** divorced, three children

**Faith:** Christian

**Website:** none

# Subdistrict 3

Far northeastern Douglas County voters will see two familiar names on the ballot: incumbent Curt Frost and former board member Larry Bradley.

Frost, owner and operator of C&J Frost Farms, said his main focus will be on taxes.

He often voted with Scott Japp to try to block tax increases or what they saw as unnecessary spending.

"I'm not afraid to get outvoted," he said. "Somebody's got to stand up for the Omaha people."

Bradley, an adjunct professor at the University of Nebraska at

Omaha, served one term on the board from 2008 to 2012 and left to make an unsuccessful bid for a spot on the University of Nebraska Board of Regents.

He said he would make common-sense decisions.

And, he said, "one of the big goals for me is to ensure inner-city citizens get to enjoy the recreational aspect of the Papio-Missouri NRD," he said.

## LARRY BRADLEY



Larry Bradley

**Age:** 52

**Party:** Democratic

**Occupation:** adjunct professor of geography and geology, UNO

**Home:** Omaha

**Public offices held:** Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District board, 2008 to 2012

**Education:** bachelor's degree, University of Nebraska at Omaha; master's, UNO; doctorate, UNL

**Family:** married, two children

**Faith:** Roman Catholic

**Website:** [bradleynrd2016.com](http://bradleynrd2016.com)

## CURT FROST

**Age:** 52

**Party:** Republican

**Occupation:** owner and operator of C&J Frost Farms

**Home:** Douglas County

**Public offices held:** Papio-Missouri NRD board, 2012 to present

**Education:** Northwest High School

**Family:** married, three children

**Faith:** Lutheran

**Website:** none

## Subdistrict 5

In western Douglas County, longtime board member Rich Tesar is being challenged by Bill Pospichal, who owns an outdoor recreation company.

Tesar said he has several passions that drive his service on the NRD board, including flood control, encouraging the use of natural resources and water quality.

Tesar serves in several leadership positions with the NRD, and his colleagues often turn to him for institutional knowledge.

He said his home on the Platte River has flooded, which gives him special insight to the importance of flood control.

"It is my passion to try to prevent flooding, be it on the rivers and the creeks in the district," he said.

Pospichal said he's gotten to know NRD-related issues in part because his company sold park products to the entity.

Even after Pospichal sold the company, he said, he's been involved in local water issues, and he's served on a handful of NRD-related boards.

"I've always had the interest in conservation work," he said.

### **BILL POSPICHAL**



Bill Pospichal

**Age:** 63

**Party:** Democratic

**Occupation:** co-owner of Outdoor Recreation Products

**Home:** unincorporated Douglas County

**Public offices held:** none

**Education:** bachelor's degree, UNO

**Family:** married

**Faith:** Catholic

**Website:** none

## **RICH TESAR**



Rich Tesar

**Age:** 66

**Party:** Republican

**Occupation:** retired owner of Rich Tesar Outdoors

**Home:** unincorporated Douglas County

**Public offices held:** Papio-Missouri NRD board, 1984-92 and 2001 to present

**Education:** some college, UNO

**Family:** married; two children

**Faith:** Lutheran

**Website:** none

## **Subdistrict 7**

First-term board member Patrick Leahy is being challenged in his north-central district by Patricia Hannan.

Hannan did not return several phone messages from The World-Herald. She sent a statement that said the NRD has "a culture problem."

The statement read in part: "I would like to restore some sanity by bringing fiscal accountability and transparency back to the NRD board. There is no legitimate reason to waste precious taxpayer resources on unnecessary dams that serve no viable flood control purpose."

Leahy said his second term would be "a little bit of more of the same as the first term."

He said he would not support a property tax increase in his second term.

And he said he wants to do more work toward making sure that development doesn't expand the flood plain downstream. That could mean, for example, incentives for infill development in developed areas.

Leahy is the grandson of former Omaha Mayor Gene Leahy, a campaign manager for the Steier Group and a captain assigned to U.S. Strategic Command in the Army Reserves.

## PATRICK LEAHY



Patrick Leahy

**Age:** 33

**Party:** Independent

**Occupation:** campaign manager with the Steier Group, a development consulting firm

**Home:** Omaha

**Public offices held:** Papio-Missouri NRD board, 2012 to present

**Education:** bachelor's degree, UNO; working on master's degree, Creighton University

**Family:** single, no kids

**Faith:** Catholic

**Website:** patrickleahyomaha.com

## PATRICIA HANNAN

**Party:** Republican

**Home:** Omaha

**Education:** bachelor's degree, Creighton University; master's degree, UNL

**Faith:** Catholic

\*Patricia Hannan has not returned phone calls

## Subdistrict 9

In the central-western district, including the Millard area, another first-term board member, Patrick Bonnett, is being challenged by Mark Gruenewald.

Gruenewald did not return several phone messages.

Bonnett said he ran for office to make sure that Dam Site 15A, which affects Millard and Papillion, would get built.

Now that the project at 168th and Fort Streets is underway, he said, he wants the district to focus its spending on acquiring land for new dam projects.

"Because of the development pressure, acquiring that land is critical for flood control protection," he said.

Bonnett has been active in the Millard area and the Republican Party. In 2012, he led an unsuccessful effort to overturn Omaha's legal protections for gay and transgender residents.

He spent 12 years in the U.S. Army.

## PATRICK BONNETT



Patrick Bonnett

**Age:** 44

**Party:** Republican

**Occupation:** financial consultant focusing on mortgage loan services

**Home:** Omaha

**Public offices held:** Papio-Missouri NRD board, 2012 to present

**Education:** bachelor's degree, UNO

**Family:** single, no kids

**Faith:** Catholic

**Website:** none

## MARK GRUENEWALD

**Party:** Republican

**Home:** Omaha

\*Mark Gruenewald has not returned phone calls

\*\*\*\*\*

## Subdistrict 11

Board member Ron Woodle of Bellevue, a former Sarpy County Board member, is facing off against business owner John Wiese.

Woodle noted that the eastern Sarpy County district is the "bottom of the drain" for water in the district, meaning that decisions upstream could cause flooding problems there.

He said his goal on the board is "just to try to be a good steward of the taxpayers' money."

"In most instances the NRD is pretty frugal," he said. "They have some big projects, but we haven't had the problems that we've got in other places."

Wiese said he's running for the board to push the NRD to focus more on its core mission and less on recreation.

"People get a little off track and need someone to point them in the right direction," said Wiese, a political newcomer who grew up in Washington County.

He described himself as a "straight shooter" and "a tell it like it is type of guy."

## **RON WOODLE**



Ron Woodle

**Age:** 83

**Party:** Republican

**Occupation:** retired business owner

**Home:** Bellevue

**Public offices held:** Papio-Missouri NRD board, 2012 to present; Sarpy County Commissioner, 1988-95

**Education:** attended Omaha University for three years until drafted to the U.S. Army

**Family:** married, three children

**Faith:** Presbyterian

**Website:** none

## **JOHN B. WIESE**

**Age:** 58

**Party:** Republican

**Occupation:** Business owner, WS Industrial Services

**Home:** Sarpy County south of Papillion

**Public offices held:** none

**Education:** attended Kearney State and UNO

**Family:** divorced, two children

**Faith:** Christian

**Website:** none



# Flood control measures headed by NRD begin north of Homer

BY MICHELLE KUESTER

dakotacountystar@gmail.com

The Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District recently began a \$200k project to reduce the sediment buildup in Pigeon Creek in Dakota County. The dredging will help lessen flooding of adjacent agricultural land.



**Bill  
Rhea**

Approximately seven miles of the creek will be dredged, starting from near Highway 77 north of Homer upstream to the bridge at South Bluff Road, east of

Hubbard. The project's estimated completion date is spring 2017.

The project will be paid for with Natural Resources District funding approved at the district's Sept. 9 Board of Directors meeting in Dakota City.

"Having gone to board meetings for the last two or three years, I've heard numerous complaints about the current drainage system," said Bill Rhea, subdistrict one director. Rhea pushed for project funds at the Sept. 9 meeting.

"We felt the project needed to be done," he added.



Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District begins dredging Pigeon Creek just north of Homer. The \$200k project which will help with flooding is estimated to be completed in the spring.

MICHELLE KUESTER | DAKOTA COUNTY STAR