

BLAIR FIELD OFFICE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

SIXTH EDITION - JUNE 2021

1060 WILBUR STREET BLAIR NE 68008

PAPIO-MISSOURI RIVER NRD WELL ABANDONMENT PROGRAM

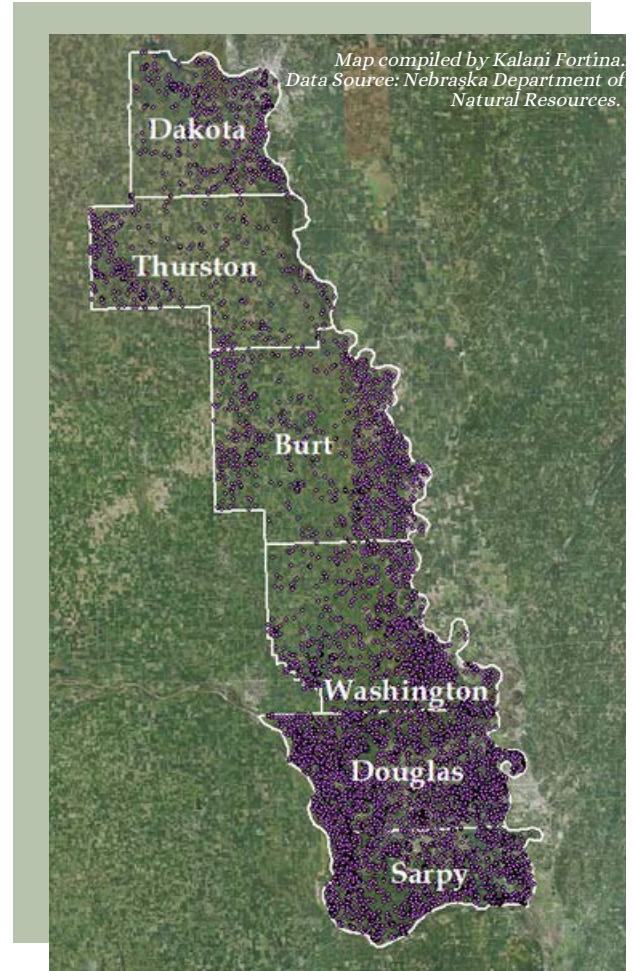
The Papio-Missouri River NRD Board of Directors initiated the Well Abandonment Program in August 1993. The purpose of the program is to provide incentives to landowners for proper abandonment of out-of-service wells. Since the beginning of the program, the NRD has provided cost-share for the safe abandonment of 497 wells in Washington county alone – totaling almost \$250,000!

Wells left unsecured are a hazard to people, livestock, and pets. Furthermore, wells that are not properly abandoned provide a pipeline to groundwater and can be easily polluted with chemicals, fertilizers, and other common contaminants.

If there is a well on your property that is not in use, the NRD has a cost-share program available to assist you with the expense of abandoning. The NRD will provide cost-share at a rate of 75% of the total eligible cost- with a maximum of \$750 for domestic drilled wells, \$1,000 for dug wells, and \$1,500 for city, irrigation, commercial or municipal wells. Eligible costs include: pulling the rods and pump, filling a cistern (if the cistern is attached to the well), and sealing of the well (chlorination, sand, bentonite, plug and concrete).

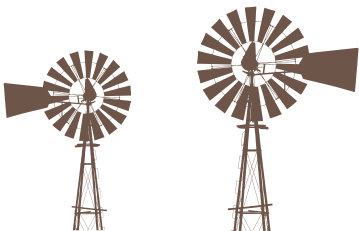


Two licensed water well contractors complete a well abandonment in Washington County.



A map of decommissioned and currently in-use, registered wells within the six counties of the Papio-Missouri River NRD. Each purple dot represents one water well. Portions of Thurston and Burt counties fall under the jurisdiction of the Lower Elkhorn NRD (LENRD). LENRD also provides cost-sharing for well abandonments. It's important to note that wells did not have to be registered prior to 1993. There are many additional out-of-service wells that are not represented in the map above.

The NRD program follows the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) rules and regulations. If you are not going to use a well on your farm or acreage, it must be abandoned in accordance with the DNR regulations (Title 178 Article 12). A State of Nebraska licensed water well contractor, driller, or pump installer can complete and certify the abandonment to proper regulations. Together we can protect our groundwater for future generations! Contact Darlene Hensley at (402) 426-4782 ext 101 for more information or to sign-up for the program.



To provide feedback or update your subscription to the newsletter,
contact Kalani Fortina:

Kalani.Fortina@usda.gov or (402) 426-4782 ext. 110



2021 SCRAP COMPUTER AND ELECTRONIC WASTE RECYCLING COLLECTIONS



In May, the annual PMRNRD E-Waste recycling collections were held in all four PMRNRD field offices (Blair, Tekamah, Walthill & Dakota City).

Many NRD and NRCS employees volunteered to help with the collections, as well as outside volunteers from companies including Cargill.

In Blair, a semi was fully loaded with electronics. Televisions, electronic cords/cables, phones, computers and printers were among items collected for proper recycling.

Funding for the collections was provided by a grant from the Nebraska Department of Environment & Energy.

Tribute - Terry's

A word from Terry Schumacher,
Land & Water Programs Coordinator

Happy days are here again! Corn topped \$7.00 and beans topped \$16.00 in May. Most of the planting for 2021 is done. Now is the time to scout the fields for stands, those pesky insects, and weeds. It is also a good time to assess any erosion or conservation issues that need to be addressed.

There are USDA and NRD cost-share programs available to address any resource concerns on your farms. Now is a good time to work with NRCS on a plan and application for EQIP dollars. The EQIP deadline is in November.

Additionally, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) has paused the CRP program. We expect to see an update in rental rates and a revamp of some of the CRP practices to make it easier to enroll. This is a great opportunity for those marginal or difficult to farm areas - and I know corn topped \$7.00!

FIELD NOTES:

Photo by Tom English



Cover crops (cereal rye) on a Washington County farm. There are many ways in which cover crops benefit soil health. By seeding a cover crop after harvest, you can easily improve water infiltration, soil structure/compaction, and increase biologic activity/organic matter in the soil.

Meet Tom English, NRCS Soil Conservationist!



Tom has been the Soil Conservationist in the Blair Field Office for over a year now. He earned his B.S. in Environmental Science from the University of Nebraska Omaha and has previously worked in Environmental Consulting & Conservation Planning in the state of Washington, and held a brief stint with the PMRNRD before becoming a permanent employee with the NRCS in Blair.

Tom was born and raised in Omaha, not too far removed from the farmland surrounding the river city. He understands that healthy land makes healthy crops with make healthy people. Tom is always looking for a holistic approach to conservation and is here to help anyone who may come through the door or call into the office!