

# GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT

## Decommissioned Wells Help to Protect Groundwater

### Lower Platte North NRD Abandoned Well Program

An abandoned well is a well that has been discontinued from any beneficial function. Abandoned wells can create a potential safety hazard to children and animals.



Well Prior to Decommissioning

Abandoned wells create another major threat, as pollutants could be channeled directly into the

groundwater. State law requires these wells are “decommissioned”, or sealed.

Abandoned wells can be decommissioned with up to 75% cost-share assistance from the Lower Platte North NRD. To apply for cost-share assistance, well owners must fill out the information packets available from the LPNNRD Office or website.

To qualify for cost-share, well owners must submit cost estimates from a licensed well driller. NRD staff will then inspect the area and provide

recommendation for approval. If approved, decommissioning work can proceed. After the abandoned well is properly decommissioned, the well owner is required to submit a copy of the paid bill, a W-9 form, and a U.S. Citizenship form to the LPNNRD for reimbursement.

The Lower Platte North NRD strongly encourages landowners to decommission any unused wells for the safety of children and animals, and to protect our groundwater.

## Unique Outdoor Experience at Lake Wanahoo

### Pork Chop Island Now Open

Unplug, relax, and enjoy the sights and sounds at Lake Wanahoo’s latest addition, Pork Chop Island.



Pork Chop Island Campsite

Just beyond the breakwater you will find the small wooded island that is now home to five primitive camping areas. Pack only what you can carry because the island is only accessible by canoe, kayak, or boat!

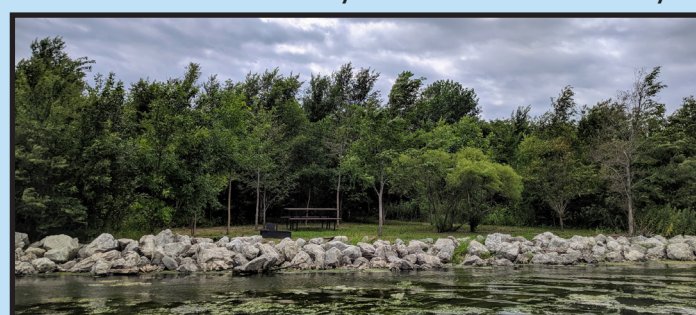
Each site is furnished with a picnic table and fire ring. Firewood will be provided. There are no electricity or facilities on the island other than two compost toilets.

The east side of the island features a dock system that will accommodate up to four boats for easy loading and unloading of camping supplies – and easy access to fishing. Parking is available in the free access area

on the east side of the lake or at the main campground area boat dock. To journey to the island, boats must be launched from the designated campground boat

ramp on the west side of the lake. All Lake Wanahoo Rules and Regulations apply to Pork Chop Island.

For a one-of-a-kind outdoor experience, you can reserve a single spot for \$25 a night or the entire island for \$100. Visit or call the Lower Platte North NRD office to make your reservations today!



Pork Chop Island



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# the VIADUCT

Lower Platte North Natural Resources District  
Summer 2019

## Historic Spring Flooding Leads To Long Recovery

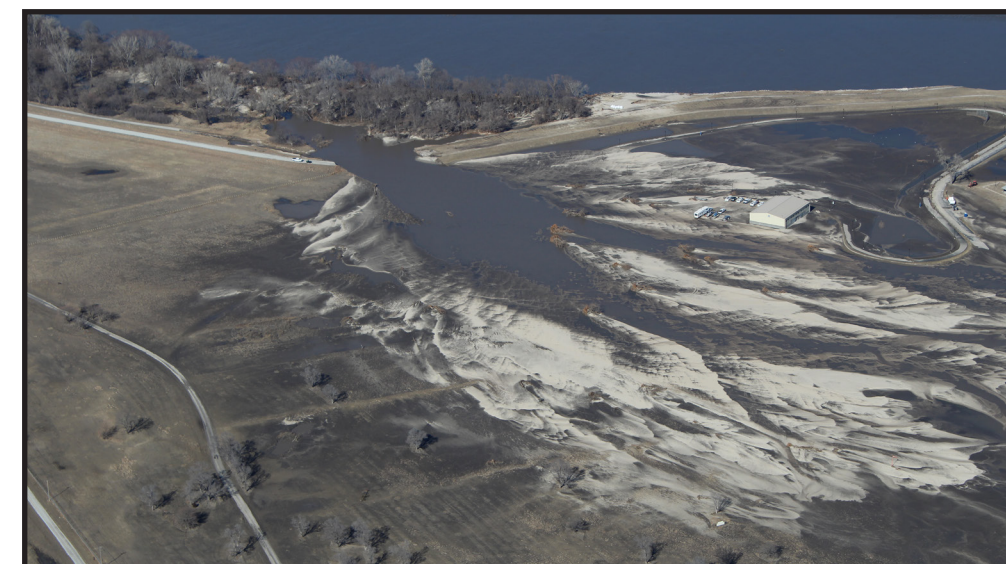
### Cleanup Continues Across The District

The aftermath of March’s “Bomb Cyclone” still lingers throughout the state. Months after the significant flood event, areas in the Lower Platte North Natural Resources District (LPNNRD) are still working to clean up and repair damages.

LPNNRD staff received multiple reports of tremendous damage to farmland in the district, substantial damages to lakes in the area, multiple levee breaches, and disorder to area creek stabilization projects.

Multiple breaches in the Clear Creek levee project, between Yutan and Ashland, resulted in substantial damage to the National Guard Camp and the surrounding area. The Fuse Plug Levee within the National Guard Camp, an ongoing LPNNRD responsibility shared with Lower Platte South NRD, washed out as it was designed.

“The Fuse Plug Levee prevents



Flood Damage at Camp Ashland

the Platte River water from backing up landward during the winter months,” explains Bob Heimann, LPNNRD Operations & Maintenance Manager. “During the summer months it allows landward flooding from Salt Creek and Wahoo Creek to flow to the river via a notch in the levee.” During the March flooding, the Fuse Plug Levee was inundated from both sides. The levee gave way during the event, allowing water from the Platte River, Salt

Creek, and Wahoo Creek to pass through at that location.

The fuse plug levee will need to be enclosed before winter arrives. Temporary repairs have been made to breaches, including a repair within the National Guard Camp. The Army Corps of Engineers continues to work on the design criteria so repairs can start this fall.

Some of the damage at Lake



Lower Platte North NRD  
Board & Staff

Board Member.....	Subdistrict
Lon Olson, Fremont .....	1
Kelly Thompson, Fremont.....	1
Frank Pollard, Fremont (Vice-Chairperson).....	2
Bill Saeger, Fremont.....	2
Dave Saalfeld, North Bend.....	3
Larry Feala, North Bend (Secretary) .....	3
Chris Yosten, Schuyler.....	4
Matt Bailey, Schuyler .....	4
Mark Seier, Newman Grove .....	5
John Hannah, Columbus .....	5
Joe Birkel, David City .....	6
Robert Hilger, David City (Treasurer).....	6
Nancy Meyer, Cedar Bluffs.....	7
Ryan Sabatka, Weston .....	7
Jerry Johnson, Wahoo .....	8
Alex Kavan, Wahoo .....	8
Don Veskerna, Ashland.....	9
Robert Meduna, Wahoo .....	9
Gene Ruzicka, North Bend (Chairperson)....	at large
Staff Member.....	Position
Daryl Andersen.....	Water Resources Manager
Tyler Benal .....	Water Resources Specialist
Jill Breunig .....	Bookkeeping Dept. Head/Adm. Asst.
Will Brueggemann .....	Water Resources Specialist
Duke Dokulil .....	O & M Technician
Sean Elliott.....	Projects/Rural Water Manager
Eric Gottschalk.....	General Manager
Bob Heimann .....	O & M Manager
Tom Mountford .....	Assistant Manager
Dave Moore.....	O & M Technician
Russell Oaklund .....	Lead Water Resources Specialist
Dave Odvody .....	Recreation Facilitator
Chris Poole .....	Grants/GIS Dept. Head
Karen Rezac.....	Dept./Admin Assistant
Skye Rezac.....	NRD/NRCS Technician
Lacey Sabatka.....	I & E Asst./Receptionist
Bret Schomer .....	Wanahoo Recreation Supervisor/
	Water Resources Specialist
Desirae TePoel .....	I & E Dept. Head

NRD/NRCS Field Office Assistant.....	County
Kimberly Piitz .....	Butler County
Kristin Miller .....	Colfax County
Luz Schaferman .....	Dodge County
Marla Milliken.....	Saunders County

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From the Desk of  
the General Manager  
Finding a “Peaceful Place” of Your Own



Eric Gottschalk

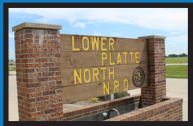
With today’s urban sprawl, concrete expansion, smart phones and overall technology bombardment, finding a quiet place in nature seems to be getting harder and harder to find. Science Daily reports; “It’s official, spending time outside is good for you and has wide-ranging health benefits...Exposure to greenspace and nature reduces the risk of type II diabetes, cardiovascular disease, premature death and high blood pressure.” I believe finding a personal, “Peaceful Place” is essential to everyone’s overall wellbeing.

Medicine Bow Peak, just west of Centennial, Wyoming was our Dad’s peaceful place. He spent countless hours planning, driving and hiking to get to the peak he called his own. An hour or two sitting and taking in the beauty of his special place would rejuvenate his spirit, clear his mind and fill his soul.

My place (although, I too need to take time more often) is an adirondack chair on the front porch of our shed in Walnut Woods...2.5 acres of NRD black walnut trees planted in the Spring of ‘91 and ‘92. There I can listen to birds, watch squirrels and rabbits, (maybe take a nap), unwind and just enjoy the sites and sounds of the amazing outdoors.

Today I challenge everyone to find your very own peaceful place in nature, whether it’s the top of a mountain, a backyard swing or the shed porch in a grove of walnuts...find YOUR place, spend time there, and take it all in...your soul will thank you for it.

Learn More!



Learn more about the Lower Platte North NRD by visiting [www.lpnrd.org](http://www.lpnrd.org).

Like us on Facebook and Follow us on Twitter and YouTube to keep up with upcoming events and programs.

New Faces  
New Staff Joins the LPNNRD

Lacey Sabatka

The Lower Platte North NRD recently welcomed Lacey Sabatka as the new Information and Education Assistant/Receptionist. She previously worked for the Upper Loup

NRD in Thedford, and has almost ten years of experience in graphic design and marketing. Lacey and her husband, T.J., reside near Ithaca along with their three horses, two dogs, and small herd of cattle.



Lacey Sabatka

Flooding Continued from page 1

Wanahoo was not identified until the water level dropped. The massive amounts of water caused flooding over the top of the trail across the breakwater. Once the water receded, debris was cleaned up and more rock was added to the breakwater trail.

Intense waterflow coming through the principle spillway of the Lake Wanahoo Dam caused damage to the spilling basin/plunge pool. The riprap, made up of large boulder-sized rock, was displaced, causing severe erosion in the plunge pool and along the creek bank. The Federal Emergency Management Agency will be assisting the LPNNRD with this project.

Hormel Boat Ramp, near Fremont, which provided access to the Platte River was washed away during the spring 2019 flooding. The ramp was opened in 1999 through a grant with Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, specifically for emergency purposes, but allowed public access free of charge. The next steps for this project are currently being handled by Fremont officials.

Hazards—such as the most recent flooding events—pose a risk to people, property, the environment and the economy. The LPNNRD is currently in the process of updating the Hazard Mitigation Plan to make the region stronger against natural and human-caused

disasters. The planning process is community-driven, and guided by a planning team consisting of representatives from across the communities and counties residing within the LPNNRD boundaries. The public can check the status of the planning process at [jeo.com/lpnrd-hmp](http://jeo.com/lpnrd-hmp).

Since the spring flooding, LPNNRD staff have completed multiple inspections of damaged areas and met with dozens of federal and state agency representatives, emergency managers, city and county officials, and others to address issues as a result of the floods and continued repairs across the district.

Encouraging Conservation through Education

LPNNRD Education Efforts

The Lower Platte North NRD offers a variety of hands-on activities and programs to encourage outdoor exploration and to help youth learn more about our natural resources.

Programs are developed from environmental education curriculum and are tailored to suit various age levels and grades. LPNNRD staff modify activities and programs to

the needs of classrooms and out of school time (OST) programs. Youth, ages 3-18, are provided the opportunity to learn more about wildlife, soil, water, pollinators, trees, and more.

LPNNRD education efforts include classroom/organization presentations, field trip opportunities, hands-on activities, career exploration, and special programs. The Lower Platte North NRD provides youth education opportunities to public and private schools, 4-H clubs, FFA chapters, Boy Scout troops, Girl Scouts troops, and other OST programs



I&E Dept. Staff, Desirae TePoel, Presents a Wildlife Program



Water Dept. Staff, Daryl Andersen and Russell Oaklund, Present a Lake Ecosystems Activity

throughout the district. All programs are free of charge to the youth organization or classroom.

To learn more about the LPNNRD Information & Education Department and the environmental education opportunities available, please visit [www.lpnrd.org](http://www.lpnrd.org).