

Nemaha NRD Board of Directors & Staff

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Brooke Gerdes
Maddie Million
MacKinze Gordon
Chuck Wingert
Charlie Pierce
Correy McClintock
Aaron Stalder
Steve Bartels
Mark McDonald
Tomas Chale
Ken Hatten

NRCS Clerks

Geralynn O'Malley
Kathy Harlow
Deb Nielson
Toni Nidermeyer
Vacant

Subdistrict

2 - Burr
9 - Falls City
At-Large - Unadilla
3 - Syracuse

Subdistrict

1 - Firth
1 - Hickman
2 - Douglas
3 - Dunbar
4 - Nebraska City
4 - Julian
5 - Nebraska City
5 - Nebraska City
6 - Sterling
6 - Sterling
7 - Johnson
7 - Brock
8 - Auburn
8 - Verdon
9 - Rulo
10 - Steinauer
10 - Humboldt

Position

General Manager
Assistant Manager
Administrative Bookkeeper
I&E Coordinator
Administrative Secretary
Water Resources Manager
Water Resources Specialist
Water Technician
Resources Specialist
Watershed Coordinator
Watershed Coordinator
Watershed Coordinator
Field Technician

Position

Tecumseh NRCS
Falls City NRCS
Syracuse NRCS
Auburn NRCS
Pawnee City

Fall 2026

2027 Conservation Tree Program

Plant for the future!

Order Nov. 1, 2026 - Mar. 12, 2027

\$1.50 per Seedling <i>Sold in lots of 25 per species</i>	PLANTING AVAILABLE <i>NNRD machine planting for 200+ trees</i>	ORDER EARLY <i>Popular species can sell out fast!</i>
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NNRD machine planting service available for orders of 200+ trees
(must contact the NNRD to establish a planting plan prior to ordering)

Cost share may be available through Soil & Water Conservation Program

Deadlines

- Ground prep & orders for machine planting: Dec. 31, 2026
- Self-plant orders: March 12, 2027

Order forms available online & in our office.

Scan the QR code to find out more!



Insight is a publication of the Nemaha NRD. Requests to be placed upon the Insight mailing list and/or comments regarding information in this publication should be directed to Maddie Million at 62161 Hwy 136 Tecumseh, NE 68450 or at mmillion@nemahanrd.org. For more information on the Nemaha Natural Resources District please visit our website at www.nemahanrd.org



nemaha

NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
62161 Hwy 136 • Tecumseh, Nebraska 68450



**Fall
2026**



Upcoming Events

- Nov. 1 - Mar. 12: Conservation Tree Program Orders Open
- Nov. 5: Tree Planting Event @ Duck Creek Rec Area
- Nov. 11: Veterans Day Holiday, NNRD Office Closed
- Nov. 12: NNRD Board Meeting
- Nov. 14 - 22: Firearm Deer Season (Trail Closed)
- Nov. 23: NNRD Rec. Areas Close for Season
- Nov. 26: Thanksgiving Holiday, NNRD Office Closed

service to the people of southeast Nebraska, and her outstanding contributions as an employee. The NRD Hall of Fame recognizes individuals whose work has strengthened Nebraska's Natural Resources District system, making the award a fitting recognition of Kuhl's contributions to the district.

During her 44 years with the district, Kuhl has served in several roles, beginning as district secretary and advancing through various positions to her current role as Assistant Manager. Over the years, she has gained a deep understanding of the district's operations and programs. Her experience, insight, and steady guidance have made her a trusted resource for staff and board members and an important part of the district's continued success.



From left: NARD President Ryan Reuter, Nemaha NRD Directors Orval Gigstad, Doug Iske, Dan Hodges and Duane Sugden. Middle row, left to right: Mark McDonald, Kyle Hauschild, Chuck Wingert, Maddie Million, Charlie Pierce, and Correy McClintock. Front row, left to right: Gary Kuhl, Jane Kuhl, and Brooke Gerdes.

nemaha

NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

INSIGHT



Assistant Manager Jane Kuhl Enters the NRD Hall of Fame

NNRD Assistant Manager Jane Kuhl was honored as the recipient of the 2026 Nebraska Association of Resources Districts (NARD) NRD Hall of Fame Employee Award during the NRD Annual Conference in Kearney on September 28.

Kuhl was nominated in recognition of her dedication to natural resources, her



NARD President Ryan Reuter presents NNRD Assistant Manager Jane Kuhl with the 2026 NRD Hall of Fame Employee Award at the NARD Annual Conference in Kearney.

service to the people of southeast Nebraska, and her outstanding contributions as an employee. The NRD Hall of Fame recognizes individuals whose work has strengthened Nebraska's Natural Resources District system, making the award a fitting recognition of Kuhl's contributions to the district.

During her 44 years with the district, Kuhl has served in several roles, beginning as district secretary and advancing through various positions to her current role as Assistant Manager. Over the years, she has gained a deep understanding of the district's operations and programs. Her experience, insight, and steady guidance have made her a trusted resource for staff and board members and an important part of the district's continued success.

Kuhl has helped guide the district through changes, support new employees, and pass along her experience to the next generation of staff. Her understanding of the district and its work continues to play an important role in day-to-day operations.

Her connection to conservation and the land extends beyond the office. Kuhl and her husband, Gary, operate a family farm near Elk Creek, where they remain active in the day-to-day work of the farm. Her connection to agriculture and the land complements the conservation work that has been an important part of her career.

The NNRD is proud to see Kuhl's experience and dedication recognized through the NRD Hall of Fame Employee Award. We congratulate Jane on this honor and are grateful for the continued contributions she makes to the district and the communities it serves.

Protecting Lives, Protecting Property, Protecting the Future - Since 1972

Visit us online at www.nemahanrd.org and on Facebook & Instagram @NemahaNRD

Fall 2026

Celebrating Service That Shapes the District

Three members of the NNRD were recognized for significant service milestones during the Nebraska Association of Resources Districts Annual Conference in Kearney on Sept. 29.



From left: NARD President Ryan Reuter, Mark McDonald, NRCS State Conservationist Robert Lawson

Mark McDonald was recognized for 45 years of service to the NNRD. He began as a part-time employee in 1980, primarily planting trees, and joined the staff full-time in 1981. Since then, he has helped lead the district's tree program, designing plans, preparing planting sites, and overseeing crews. During his time with the NNRD, the district has sold more than 1.5 million trees, with at least 1 million planted by district crews under his guidance. In 2023, he was named Tree Planter of the Year for his contributions to conservation in southeast Nebraska.

As a Watershed Coordinator, McDonald helps maintain the district's watershed structures through ongoing monitoring, maintenance, repairs, and improvements that preserve their function and flood

control benefits throughout southeast Nebraska.

Director Duane Sugden was recognized for 35 years of service on the Nemaha NRD Board of Directors. Since joining the board in 1991, Sugden has served in several leadership roles and has represented the district at state and national natural resources events. A longtime farmer, he continues to bring his knowledge of agriculture and conservation to his work as a director and remains actively involved in district programs and activities.



From left: NARD President Ryan Reuter, NNRD Director Duane Sugden, NRCS State Conservationist Robert Lawson

Kathy Harlow was recognized for 20 years of service with the district. Harlow began her work with the Nemaha NRD in 2006 at the Pawnee City NRCS office as a district clerk and transitioned to the Falls City NRCS office in 2026. Through the years, she has been a valued resource and point of support for the NRCS offices, producers and landowners they serve.



Back row, left to right: Chuck Wingert, NNRD Directors Orval Gigstad, Dan Hodges, and Doug Iske. Middle row, left to right: NNRD General Manager Kyle Hauschild, Maddie Million, Jane Kuhl, Correy McClintock, and Charlie Pierce. Front row, left to right: NNRD director Duane Sugden, Mark McDonald, and Brooke Gerdes

The NNRD congratulates Mark, Duane, and Kathy on their achievements and thanks them for their continued contributions to the district and the people it serves.

A Robot's-Eye View of Dam Safety

Sometimes, inspecting a dam means sending in a robot! In August, the Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment (DWE) dam safety team visited Wirth Brothers Lake for a closer look at its principal spillway outlet following a June inspection that raised questions about water flow through the system. As a low-hazard dam, Wirth Brothers Lake is inspected every five years.

Using a camera-equipped robotic crawler, the team traveled through the concrete outlet pipe to capture footage of its interior. This technology allows inspectors to look for cracks, gaps, and other potential concerns in areas that can be difficult to access.



Regular inspections and tools like these help ensure NNRD's watershed structures remain in good condition and continue to serve their intended purposes. NNRD appreciates DWE's assistance with this inspection.

Learn more about dam safety at dwee.nebraska.gov/dam-safety. dwee.nebraska.gov/dam-safety.



Land Judging Students Advance to State and National Competitions



The NNRD hosted the 2026 Southeast Area Land Judging competition on September 30 in Richardson County near Humboldt. A total of 270 students and adults from 16 schools participated, with Eldon and Ruth Snoke generously hosting the event on their farm. Despite heavy rain the night before and continuing throughout the day, students worked through the wet conditions to complete the event.

Land judging gives students hands-on experience evaluating soil characteristics, determining land capability, and identifying appropriate conservation practices. Participants apply their knowledge to determine how land can best be managed for agricultural production and long-term conservation.

The top five teams and two individual qualifiers advanced to the State Land Judging competition on October 14 in Beatrice. Johnson County



Recreation Roundup!

NNRD recreation areas offered plenty of opportunities to enjoy the outdoors throughout the summer, along with ongoing improvements.



In August, NNRD field staff partnered with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission for a prescribed burn in the timber at Iron Horse Trail Lake. Prescribed burns help manage invasive vegetation, improve wildlife habitat, and maintain healthy natural areas.

The gazebo overlook at Duck Creek, located at the upper electrical camping loop, is set to receive seating in 2027, giving visitors another place to relax and take in the lake view. The recreation areas continue to balance flood control with outdoor recreation, helping manage floodwaters while providing places to camp, fish, boat, and enjoy nature.



Central placed second overall at state, qualifying the team for the National Land Judging Contest in El Reno, Oklahoma, in May 2027.

Team members are Cooper Jones, Stefani Peters, Tegan Topp, and Tim Johns.

Several students who competed at the SE Area contest also placed among the top individual scorers at state. Kailey Hartman of Pawnee City placed first overall, followed by Gage Hobbs of Syracuse in second. Noah Metschke of Johnson-Brock placed sixth, and Cooper Jones of Johnson County Central placed seventh.

The NNRD thanks the Snoke family, volunteers, partner organizations, and all who helped make this educational event possible. Congratulations to all students who participated in the area and state competitions and for their hard work and dedication to learning about soil and land conservation.



JCC advances to National Land Judging. From left: Connor Bartels, Tim Johns, Cooper Jones, Stefani Peters, Tegan Top, Christy Hodges

Campers can check campsite availability on our website through Set Your Sites. QR code signs at NNRD recreation areas make it easy to pay on-site for camping fees and purchase park permits. The 2026 camping season wraps up the week of November 23, so be sure to enjoy the outdoors while the season lasts!



Wildfire-related tree damage continues to affect the section of the Steamboat Trace Trail from south of Peru to the Honey Creek Bridge. Cleanup efforts have been affected by fall storms and wet conditions, with work progressing as conditions allow. The open sections north of Peru and south of the Honey Creek Bridge have continued to receive maintenance and improvements from NNRD field staff.

The full Trail will be closed Nov. 14–22 during firearm deer season. Follow NNRD on social media or visit our website for updates on trail conditions and reopening.



Fiscal Year 2026 Annual Report (July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026)

Programs

Conservation Assistance

The NNRD’s Soil and Water Conservation Program works with NRCS offices to provide technical assistance, design, and layout of structural conservation practices that reduce erosion and facilitate better grazing management systems. In FY25 the NNRD along with the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources provided cost share assistance to landowners. The following conservation practices were installed throughout the district:

- Miles of terraces: 10.57
- Miles of underground outlets (tile): 3.68
- Acres of grassed waterways: 2.57
- Cubic yards of diversions: 1,530
- 1,700 windbreak trees/shrubs cost-shared (Nemaha, Otoe, & Richardson Counties)

Trees

Through the 2024-2025 Conservation Tree Program, 11,015 trees and shrubs were distributed in 2025. Of those, NNRD staff machine-planted 4,475 at nine different locations across the district, while the remaining seedlings were picked up directly from the NRD office by landowners for their own conservation planting projects.

Nebraska Buffer Strip Program

Over 688 acres in the NNRD were enrolled in the Nebraska Buffer Strip Program aimed at reducing cropland pollutants entering surface waters. The program provides annual payments for grass filter strips or riparian forest buffers along vulnerable surface water resources. Those acres earned a combined \$122,760 in annual payments in FY26.

Urban Special Projects

Two Urban Special Projects were approved in 2026 to improve community parks in Adams and Burr. In Adams, native plantings will complete the final phase of the Adams Park Master Plan, establishing a sustainable forest in the village park. In Burr, plans include adding a one-sixth-mile concrete trail loop and park benches. The NNRD approved \$10,000 for the Adams project and \$14,110 for the Burr project through its cost-share program.

Education & Outreach

Plant-A-Tree

The NNRD’s Plant-A-Tree Program gives third-grade students across the district a hands-on introduction to tree planting and conservation. Each spring, students receive a tree or shrub seedling and learn how to plant and care for it. In 2026, the program reached 16 area schools, distributing 688 trees and shrubs to help grow an appreciation for natural resources.

Land Judging

The NNRD hosted the Southeast Area Land Judging competition on September 30, 2026, near Humboldt, with 270 students and adults from 16 schools participating. The top five teams and two qualifying individuals advanced to the State Land Judging competition on October 14 in Beatrice. Johnson County Central placed second overall at state, qualifying the team to compete at the National Land Judging Contest in Oklahoma in May 2027.

Radio Advertising

The NNRD shares news and updates throughout the year through radio advertising and weekly live call-ins. Tune in to B103 (103.1 FM) every Wednesday at 8:10 a.m. for updates on district programs, projects, and events.

Years of Service

- Kyle Hauschild - General Manager - 5 Years
- Kathy Harlow - NRCS Clerk - 20 Years
- Duane Sugden - Director - 35 Years
- Mark McDonald - Watershed Coordinator - 45 Years

FALL IS HERE. ALGAE CAN BE, TOO!

Harmful algal blooms (HABs) can occur into the fall, even after beach monitoring ends for the season.

Know the signs. Stay safe.

Learn more at dwee.nebraska.gov

Fiscal Year 2027 (July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027)

The Nemaha NRD Board of Directors approved the Fiscal Year 2027 budget in September, keeping the property tax levy at \$0.029987 per \$100 of valuation. The district’s budget is funded primarily through local property taxes, supplemented by grants and other funding from state, federal, and local sources.

Maintaining and rehabilitating watershed structures remains a priority as aging infrastructure requires continued attention. The FY27 budget allocates \$1 million toward Ultraviolet Cured-in-Place Pipe (UV-CIPP) projects, which renew aging pipes within watershed structures, helping preserve their integrity and extend their service life.

The budget also includes an additional \$10,000 for the flowmeter cost-share program to help producers monitor irrigation water use, along with funding for a full-time field technician to assist with watershed structure and recreation area maintenance, tree planting, and other district projects.

In October, the Board approved an amendment to the FY27 budget to account for anticipated funds from the Nebraska Department of Water, Energy, and Environment (DWEE). These funds will be passed through the district to pay for AqualQ, a data collection application staff will use to securely manage information on chemigation inspections, flowmeter readings, dam inspections, and other district data. The application will help streamline record keeping, improve reporting accuracy, and provide access to information in the field. The amendment will not affect the property tax levy.

FY27 Budget Expense Category	Budgeted Amount	% of Budget
Watershed & Flood	\$1,280,000	28%
Recreation	\$162,083	3%
Personnel & Director	\$1,806,855	40%
General Operation	\$270,672	6%
Conservation Assistance	\$369,500	8%
Water Quality/Quantity	\$166,596	4%
Capital/Expenditures	\$75,500	2%
Cash Reserve, Sinking	\$349,795	8%
Information & Education	\$23,225	<1%
Total FY27 Budget	\$4,504,227	



Nebraska Buffer Strip Program

Protect Water. Put Marginal Acres to Work.

Have cropland near a stream, wetland, or other waterbody?
Earn annual rental payments by enrolling eligible acres in the program

 5-10 year contracts

 Annual payments

 Year-round sign-up



Contact your county USDA Service Center to learn more!

Manager's Update

From the desk of Kyle Hauschild, General Manager

The Nemaha NRD finalized its FY27 budget in September, including some new initiatives as well as items that have been in progress over the last several years. Watershed maintenance continues to be a major priority for the district, with nearly \$1 million allocated to Cast in Place Pipe (CIPP) projects. CIPP is a process used to repair old, corrugated pipes found in many of the district’s more than 400 dams. As these structures age, the pipes begin to deteriorate, and we are working to stay ahead of maintenance needs to help extend their lifespan by another 50 years or more.

We are also working to add new amenities to our recreation areas, including new seating in the overlook gazebo at Duck Creek, expanded parking at Kirkman’s Cove, and tree removal along the Steamboat Trace Trail. Our water staff continue to monitor groundwater quantity and quality, and we have made updates to our groundwater rules over the past year.

I look forward to the exciting projects and improvements ahead for the district this year.