

NRD's Launch New Management Application

We are excited to introduce **Producer Connect**, a new platform that makes balancing agricultural productivity with environmental stewardship easier than ever.

What is Producer Connect?

Producer Connect is a groundbreaking web and mobile application suite designed to empower agricultural producers with the tools they need to optimize inputs, enhance agricultural profitability, improve water quality, and increase irrigation efficiency.

Why Sign Up?

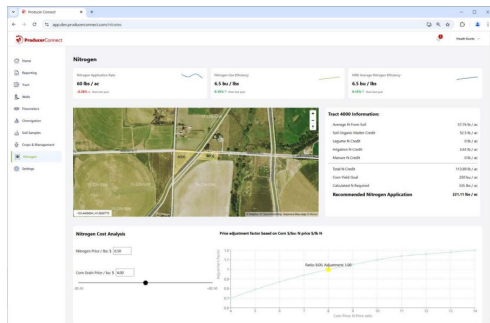
Participation in *Producer Connect* is required for producers in Groundwater Quality Phase II & III areas across the district. This platform will serve as the primary tool for submitting your flowmeter and crop reports to your NRD.

How to Get Started

- **Activate Your Account:** Click <https://app.producerconnect.com/> to sign-up, or scan the QR code using your mobile device.
- **Set Up Your Login:** Follow the simple steps to create your username and password.
- **Account Verification:** Once your account is set up, your local NRD will verify it.
- **Start Exploring:** Use the platform to submit your flowmeter readings and crop report forms directly to the NRD.

The Bottom Line:

Producer Connect empowers you to farm smarter. By aligning water and fertilizer use, you can enhance crop production while contributing to the protection of Nebraska's groundwater resources. Join today to be part of a solution that ensures your farm's success and supports the long-term sustainability of Nebraska agriculture.



Water Resources Protection Coordinator

Zack Zimmerman joined the NRD in May as the new Water Resources Protection Coordinator. Zack will be working to encourage conservation practices to reduce identified impairments to surface water and groundwater resources in addition to providing technical and program assistance primarily within Source Water Protection (SWP) Areas, Phase II-III Groundwater Quality and Quantity Management Areas (GWMAs and GWQMAs) and National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) Areas in the Lower Big Blue NRD. In his free time, Zack enjoys hunting, fishing and spending time with his 8-month old chocolate lab, Turk. Zack is passionate about all things outdoors and is excited to start meeting producers in the district.



Lower Big Blue NRD Newsletter

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Questions or comments regarding the newsletter may be directed to the office of the Lower Big Blue NRD by phone at (402) 228.3402; by fax at (402) 223.4441; by email at kimmerling@lbbnrd.net; or by mail at:

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Lower Big Blue
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Watershed Capital of Nebraska

"Protecting Lives, Protecting Property,
Protecting The Future"

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June 2026

THE BLUE BUZZ

LOWER BIG BLUE NRD

Groundwater Management Update: Sub Areas 2 & 8 Designated Phase 2

Following the annual review of spring groundwater levels at the regular monthly Board meeting on May 14, 2026, the Board did not see enough positive improvements in the water levels to lift the district-wide moratorium. Additionally, Sub Areas 2 and 8 have reached Phase 2 status. This means irrigation wells in these areas will be required to install flowmeters by December 31, 2027 and allocation will begin in 2028. Sub Areas 3, 7 and 9 reached Phase 2 triggers in 2025 and will require flowmeters by December 31, 2026. Allocation in these areas will begin in 2027. Flowmeter cost share is available on a first come first served basis. More information about cost share is provided below. In January 2026, the Board lifted the moratorium on expansion of irrigated acres and the drilling of new wells in Sub Areas 1, 4 and 5. Expansion is permitted **only** in these Sub Areas subject to the Groundwater Quantity Rules and Regulations approved December 22, 2025. If you have questions about what is allowable on your acres, please call or visit the NRD **BEFORE** you begin your project. Information on what is allowable by Sub Area is available inside this publication.

Static Water Levels

The Lower Big Blue NRD measures the static water level of over 170 irrigation and dedicated monitoring wells around the district every Spring (usually the first week in April) and Fall (usually the first week in November). Spring 2026 readings by Sub Area are shown here.

Area	No of Wells	Change Spring '25 to Spring '26	Change from Baseline	From Phase II Trigger
Sub Area 1- Friend	41	+0.50'	-1.80'	+3.20'
Sub Area 2- Brush Creek	5	+0.68'	-3.02'	-1.07'
Sub Area 3- Clatonia	8	+0.40'	-7.80'	-5.0'
Sub Area 4- Plymouth	29	+0.20'	-3.80'	+0.25'
Sub Area 5- DeWitt	9	-0.10'	-3.30'	+0.34'
Sub Area 6- Pickrell	14	+0.30'	-5.50'	-0.50'
Sub Area 7- Harbine	7	+1.70'	-4.50'	-2.42'
Sub Area 8- PWF	22	+0.80'	-4.90'	-1.67'
Sub Area 9- Diller	7	+0.60'	-16.0'	-13.1'
District Wide	142	-0.56'	-5.62'	-2.22'

Flowmeter Cost Share

LBBNRD provides cost share for flowmeters at a rate of **\$112.60/inch** up to 50% of the actual cost. For example, an 8" meter would be cost shared at \$900.80. There is no limit to the number of applications per landowner in Sub Areas where flowmeters are required (Sub Areas 2, 3, 7, 8 and 9). Producers in other areas who wish to install flowmeters voluntarily will be limited to two applications per calendar year. Funding is provided on a first come, first served basis. While flowmeters are not required everywhere, they are essential to proper irrigation management, and voluntary installation is strongly encouraged.



Important Dates

December 31, 2026- Flowmeters must be installed on all wells pumping greater than 50 gpm in Sub Areas 3, 7 & 9.

January 1, 2027- Three year allocation period begins in Sub Areas 3, 7 & 9

December 31, 2027-Flowmeters must be installed on all wells pumping greater than 50 gpm in Sub Areas 2 & 8.

January 1, 2028- Three year allocation period begins in Sub Areas 2 & 8.

