

**Upper Big Blue  
Natural Resources  
District**

**Master Plan  
2012 - 2022**

**January 19, 2012**



UPPER BIG BLUE NRD  
MASTER PLAN - 2012 - 2022

The Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District is a political sub-division of the State of Nebraska. The District was created on July 1, 1972, along with 23 other NRDs across the state. The Districts cover the entire state, including all urban and rural areas. The Districts are governed by elected Boards of Directors that set individual District policies, approve programs and projects, set budgets and approve expenditures. Each District has a General Manager who reports directly to the Board. The General Manager of each District manages a staff that conducts the day to day activities to carry out policies, programs, and projects.

MISSION STATEMENT: The Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District shall be a leader in conserving, protecting, developing, and managing the natural resources of this District for the health and welfare of the people of the District.

RESPONSIBILITIES: The Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District is a multi-purpose, local unit of Nebraska Government for management, development, and protection of the soil and water resources. The basic responsibilities of the District, which are authorized by statute, are listed below, according to this District's priorities:

1. Development, Management, Utilization, and Conservation of Ground Water and Surface Water, and Water Supply for any Beneficial Uses
2. Soil Conservation, Erosion Prevention and Control
3. Flood Prevention and Control (Structural, such as dams, levees, channels, and storm sewers)
4. Pollution Control (Water and Land quality)
5. Prevention of Damages from Flood Water and Sediment (Non-structural such as greenbelts, and zoning)
6. Development and Management of Recreational and Park Facilities
7. Forestry and Range Management
8. Development and Management of Fish and Wildlife Habitat
9. Drainage Improvement
10. Solid Waste Disposal (Landfills or incineration) and Sanitary Drainage

METHODS: The methods to meet these responsibilities are:

1. Leadership
2. Information and Education
3. Technical Advice and Assistance
4. Cost-Sharing
5. Construction and Operation by the District
6. Monitoring, Data Collection, and Research
7. Regulation
8. Formulating and maintaining public and private partnerships

MASTER PLAN  
2012 - 2022

Introduction

This Master Plan for the Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District presents the goals and Objectives relating to the 12 purposes of Districts as stated in the Revised Statutes of Nebraska, Section 2-3229. In accordance with Section 2-3276, the Master Plan is to be updated at least every ten years, or more frequently if major changes in planning and development of objectives occur before the end of the period.

This Master Plan takes Groundwater quantity and quality regulations into account. They have undergone several revisions since the Quantity Regulations were originally adopted in 1979.

This Master Plan was adopted by the Board of Directors on - January 19, 2012.

No attempt is made in the Master Plan to present current plans or budgets, or to present background information on resources and needs. Such information about the natural resources of the District is available from many other sources. Comprehensive data and information is also on file at the District office. Individual project plans and studies are on file for planned, as well as completed projects. Historical data concerning past programs, projects, staffing, and funding are also in the District files.

The details of District programs, activities, and administrative policies are published in the following publications and documents, which are periodically updated.

Long Range Plan	Annual Reports
Annual Budget	Audits
Programs and Cost-Share Practices	Operating Policies
Rules and Regulations	Personnel Policies



GOALS: The priorities and goals are the framework for all District activities, programs, practices, and regulations. The board follows the priorities and goals in establishing policies and budgets. The staff does the same in carrying out the day to day activities.

#### A. Groundwater Conservation and Management

The District's Master Plan states "the primary goal of the Upper Big Blue is successful long-term water management, for both quantity and quality." Therefore, the District strives to provide an adequate supply of acceptable quality groundwater to fulfill the reasonable groundwater demands within the District for domestic, agricultural, manufacturing or industrial, and other uses deemed beneficial by the District Board of Directors.

Groundwater quantity - The Control Area (now known as the Groundwater Management Area #1) was declared on December 9, 1977 and has the following goals:

- To encourage, promote, and regulate the efficient management and conservation of groundwater and to significantly reduce the rate of decline in the groundwater table.
- To hold the District groundwater level above the 1978 level through various District programs and regulations.
- In the small region outside of the Groundwater Management Area #1, the goal is to provide an adequate water supply for existing users, as well as domestic users.

Groundwater quality - The Special Protection Area (now known as the Groundwater Management Area #2) was declared on September 23, 1993, with long range goals are:

- To reduce the potential for nonpoint source contamination of groundwater through education, research, management practices and incentives that would not adversely affect the economy of the area.
- To develop and implement an appropriate system of monitoring and evaluation of nonpoint source groundwater contamination including indicators such as nitrates in groundwater and the unsaturated zone, use of best management practices and other factors that are indicators of the rate of nonpoint source groundwater contamination.
- To encourage the use of best management practices to reduce deep percolation and to support research and adoption of equipment and techniques that have potential for reducing groundwater nitrates.

## Objectives

- Provide information and education and consider cost-sharing to encourage groundwater users to do the following:

- a - Attain the most economical use of groundwater
- b - Use crop rotation
- c - Control runoff
- d - Construct water storage and land treatment where needed
- e - Use irrigation scheduling
- f - Use surface water where available
- g - Check and maintain pumping plant efficiency
- h - Keep records
- i - Install flow meters (irrigation and urban)
- j - Alternative irrigation systems (pivot conversions or sub-surface drip systems)
- k - Sample soil for nitrogen carryover
- l - Set realistic yield goals
- m - Complete full nutrient analysis
- n - Use nitrogen flow regulators
- o - Split nitrogen applications
- p - Use fertigation/Chemigation
- q - Proper lawn and garden watering and fertilization
- r - Proper decommissioning of abandoned wells

- Monitor the groundwater conditions by:

- a - Measuring spring groundwater levels District-wide in the established network of existing wells.
- b - Measuring seasonal changes in groundwater levels using dedicated, continuous recorder wells.
- c - Monitoring groundwater quality annually, District-wide in the established network of existing wells.
- d - Monitoring seasonal changes in groundwater quality using of dedicated water quality monitoring wells.
- f - Work cooperatively with other agencies to collect and evaluate groundwater data.

- Regulate the use and protection of groundwater through:
  - a - The implementation of Groundwater Management Area Quantity regulations to reduce conflicts between users and to manage the decline of groundwater.
  - b - The implementation of Groundwater Management Area Quality regulations to stabilize and reduce nitrate contamination of groundwater.
  - c - The implementation of Chemigation regulations to reduce the risk of contamination of groundwater through irrigation systems.
  - d - The implementation of irrigation runoff regulations to conserve groundwater and to reduce conflicts between neighbors.
- Provide necessary budget, staff and other assistance to carry out an effective management and regulatory program.
- Conduct studies and research to better understand and manage groundwater in the District.
- Advocate groundwater management by Natural Resources Districts at the local level.
- Assist in the planning and development of domestic water supplies where requested by local units of government or citizen groups.
- Encourage other agencies to conserve groundwater when implementing their programs, such as groundwater remediation plans.
- Cooperate with municipalities on wellhead protection areas.
- Promote and publicize the conservation and wise use of groundwater, through an extensive and comprehensive public relations effort.

## B. Surface Water Conservation

The District goal is to store, conserve, and protect surface water for beneficial uses as determined by the Board of Directors, such as domestic, agricultural, and manufacturing.

### Objectives

- Develop multi-purpose surface water projects consistent with local desires for water conservation, water use, flood control, groundwater recharge, recreation, and fisheries and wildlife habitat.
- Construct, and/or cost-share on dams designed to maximize conservation water storage.
- Encourage soil conservation practices as a method of improving water quality in streams and lakes.
- Determine surface water project priorities consistent with the greatest long term benefits.
- Obtain funding for surface water projects from private, other local, state, and federal sources to supplement the District tax requirement for such projects.
- Develop management agreements for surface water projects with affected units of local government and encourage such governments to assume the management, operation, and maintenance responsibilities connected with these projects.
- Promote, publicize, and offer technical advice and assistance for surface water conservation.

## C. Soil Conservation

The District goal is to maximize soil and water conservation efforts in order to preserve the resources for future use while maintaining production today.

### Objectives

- Prevent accelerated erosion through a voluntary land treatment program, and encourage minimum or reduced tillage.
- Implementing erosion or sediment control regulations where necessary to reduce conflicts between neighbors.
- Discourage channel straightening and dredging, unless steps are taken to prevent detrimental effects.
- Minimize and control erosion of soil through improved conservation practices, conversion of steep slopes with erosive soils to non-cultivated uses, protection of stream banks, and improved land management.
- Maintain soil nutrient levels for productive land use and reduction of water pollution through improved soil management practices.
- Cooperate with local units of government in implementing necessary erosion control practices, as needed, on all residential or commercial development, industrial development, road construction, and other non-agricultural sites.
- Promote, publicize, and offer technical advice and assistance to promote soil conservation.
- Obtain funding for soil conservation from private, other local, state, and federal sources to supplement District funds.

## D. Flood Prevention and Control

The goal of the District is to reduce flooding and flood damages to acceptable levels, while making the best use of flood plain land. Flood plain management is of prime importance, as in many cases, it is the most practical way to reduce flood damages.

### Objectives

- Encourage flood plain management as a necessary step in creating the proper balance between structural and non-structural methods of flood protection.
- Create a greater awareness of flood plain problems and potential solutions through local planning, education and information programs.
- Sponsor, construct, operate, and maintain flood control projects, where feasible, to protect property from flood damages. Design and plan for multi-purpose uses of flood control projects where ever possible. Acquire grants and other funding to supplement District funding.
- Consider assisting communities, on a case by case basis, with flood control projects by offering technical and administrative assistance, offering cost-share, and acquiring grants or other funds. Encourage multi-purpose uses of flood control projects.
- Promote public linear parks, greenbelts, and open space in flood plains as an alternative to allowing real estate development and building construction, if lands have the potential of changing from agricultural to developed areas.
- Consider, on a case by case basis, sharing the consulting services and costs with other local governments in connection with the planning of linear parks, greenbelts, and open space in flood plains.
- Consider, on a case by case basis, acquiring grants for, and sharing the land rights costs of flood plain buyouts with other local governments.
- Encourage local cities and villages to assume sponsorship of all municipal stormwater management projects. Consider requests for assistance on a case by case basis.
- Discourage any creek or river straightening or shortening project within the District's boundaries. Limit channel projects to those necessary for flood control. Discourage drainage improvements designed to develop additional real estate, or cropland, because of potential conflicts between property owners.

## E. Pollution Control

The goal of the District is to minimize the misuse and pollution of our natural resources, to protect and enhance the quality of the land, surface water, and groundwater within the District's boundaries.

### Objectives

- Protect ground and surface water from point and non-point sources of pollutants (see also "Groundwater Conservation and Management".)
- Inform and educate the public to make the citizens aware of potential and existing pollution and the need for prevention.
- Encourage other agencies to take water conservation and beneficial uses into account in cleanup efforts.
- Promote regional efforts toward managing solid waste, both urban and rural. Encourage the sound planning and development of solid waste disposal sites in order to adequately protect land and water quality. Encourage recycling of solid waste.

## F. Parks and Recreation

The goal of the District is to improve and increase the outdoor recreation opportunities in the region, especially in conjunction with multi-purpose water projects.

### Objectives

- Plan recreation use on District funded projects unless the project falls under a land treatment program. The level of recreation provided depends on the scope, size, and cost of the project.
- Manage the five existing developed park and recreation facilities and develop more developed park sites on major multi-purpose projects where the land is held in title by the District.

Developed public use sites may include roads and trails, improved parking areas, picnic areas and shelters, drinking water, boat ramps, playgrounds, camping sites, trash service, and restroom facilities.

- Establish and manage primitive public use areas on undeveloped District projects and properties throughout the District.

Primitive public use areas are to provide access for walking, and may include fishing or hunting where practical. Off-road unimproved parking is to be furnished for traffic safety. Roads, improved trails, picnic areas and shelters, drinking water, boat ramps, playgrounds, improved camping sites, trash service, and restroom facilities are not provided, maintained, or encouraged.

- Consider providing cities and villages, on a case by case basis, with planning and financial assistance for multi-use parks and recreation improvement and development that stresses natural resources such as tree plantings, wildlife habitat, and open spaces. Public use areas that have aspects of soil and water conservation are to have a priority. Ball fields, tennis courts, swimming pools, and similar facilities need to be planned and funded by others.
- In flood plains, promote public linear parks, greenbelts, and open space for public access, by offering planning and financial assistance to counties, cities, and villages.
- Cooperate with counties, and state and federal agencies, in public use area development and management where their activities are consistent with those of the District.
- Provide information and education to promote parks and recreation uses of public lands.



## G. Forestry and Range Management

The District goal is to maintain and improve the quality of woodlands and grasslands in this region for soil and water conservation, as well as livestock production, timber, and wildlife.

### Objectives

- Provide technical advice on forestry and grassland management. Encourage tree planting for windbreaks and other conservation purposes, and native grass plantings for soil erosion prevention. Encourage proper range and pasture management to provide for better mixes and stands of grass, while increasing productivity.
- Provide a tree planting program to assist landowners in planning for tree plantings, offer seedling trees for sale, and to provide a planting service for windbreak, Christmas tree or wildlife plantings.
- Consider providing cities and villages, on a case by case basis, with planning and financial assistance for community tree, shrub, and native grass plantings.
- Discourage the conversion of existing tree plantings, woodlands, and grasslands to cropland or other uses.
- Promote proper tree trimming and pruning, and vegetation control undertaken by communities and power districts.
- Encourage outdoor classrooms and environmental education in order to show the importance of trees and grasses in conservation.

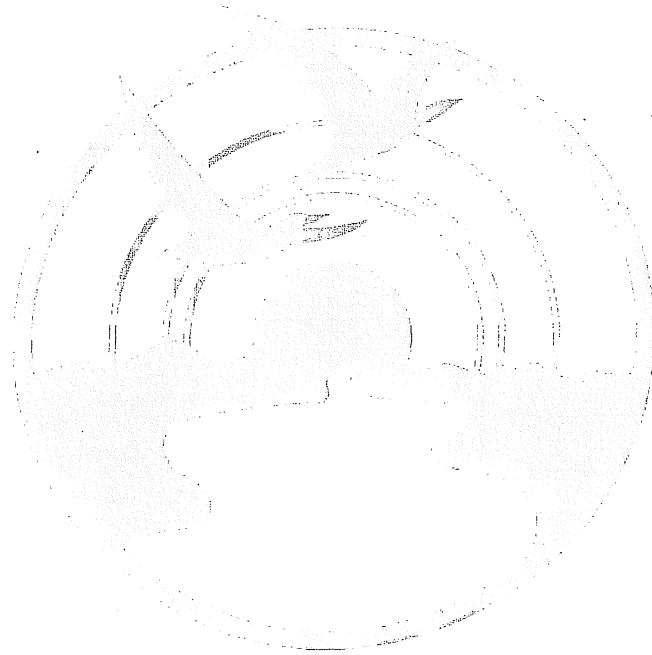
## H. Fish and Wildlife Habitat

The goal of the District is to conserve and improve the fish and wildlife habitat found in the District.

### Objectives

- Provide technical and financial assistance for private landowners to develop and maintain new fish and wildlife habitat.
- Develop fisheries and wildlife habitat, where practical, on District projects.
- Obtain funding for habitat programs from private, other local, state, and federal sources.
- Discourage practices by public entities and individuals that result in the unnecessary destruction of permanent vegetation and trees.
- Encourage private landowners to preserve the remaining wetlands where practical. Discourage dredge and fill activities, and conversion to croplands, unless there are reasonable wetland mitigation sites available.
- Encourage state and federal agencies and private landowners to work together to solve wetland habitat needs and irrigation runoff control, as well as working together to solve lowland flooding problems.
- Promote fish and wildlife habitat on private and public lands

# Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District



## Long Range Plan

**FY 2012 - 2018**

March 15, 2012



# Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District

## Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District Mission Statement

The Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District shall be a leader in conserving, protecting, developing and managing the natural resources of the District for the health and welfare of the people of the District.

## District Responsibilities

The Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District is a multipurpose, local unit of Nebraska government for the management, development and protection of the soil and water resources of the District. The basic responsibilities of the District, authorized by statute, are:

- Development, management, use and conservation of groundwater, surface water and water supply for any beneficial use
- Soil conservation, erosion prevention and control
- Flood prevention and control (dams, levees, channels, storm sewers and other structures)
- Pollution control (water and land quality)
- Prevention of damages from flood water and sediment (greenbelts, zoning and other non-structural measures)
- Development and management of recreation and park facilities
- Forestry and range management
- Development and management of fish and wildlife habitat
- Drainage improvement
- Solid waste disposal (landfills or incineration) and sanitary drainage.

# Long Range Plan 2012 - 2018

## Introduction

More than 54,000 citizens rely on the Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District (NRD) to provide direction and assistance in the wise use, conservation and development of soil, water and related natural resources.

The NRD is dedicated to the conservation and careful development of natural resources to serve everyone's needs. In 1972, over 150 special purpose Districts were consolidated into Nebraska's NRDs. There are 23 NRDs, formed to correspond with the state's major river basins. The NRDs carry the names of these rivers, hence the Upper Big Blue NRD, Lower Platte South NRD, and so on.

NRDs are organized as political subdivisions of the state. Local control is provided by a board of directors, elected by voters within the District. Across the state, NRDs are a major source of assistance to landowners in conservation and natural resources management. The NRDs also, by law, regulate the use of groundwater across the state.

At the Upper Big Blue NRD, a 17-member board of directors establishes policy. These elected Directors represent the citizen's interests in conservation. Not only do directors make decisions about conservation programs at the District level, they also bring a wealth of local judgment and experience to bear when adapting state and national programs to local situations.

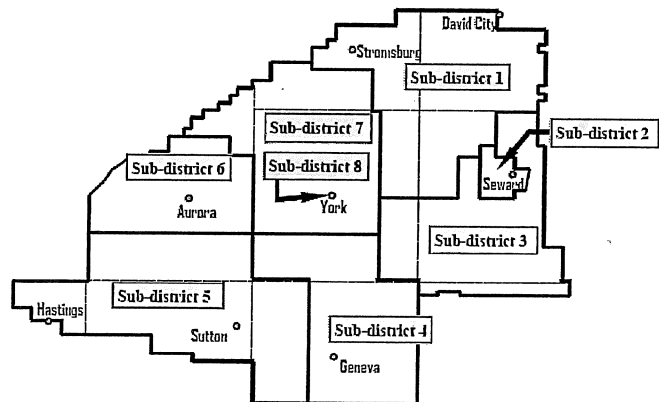
The Directors (two from each of eight sub-districts and one at large) are elected by all of the voters of the NRD. They serve four year terms.

The NRD staff, under the direction of the General Manager at York, is responsible for implementing NRD policy and regulations and serves as the focal point for planning and operations for the District.

The NRD works closely with state and federal agencies to coordinate conservation efforts. A key agency is the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) who provides planning, technical aid and inspections for private landowners. NRCS field offices are located in Aurora, Clay Center, David City, Geneva, Hastings, Osceola, Seward, Wilber and York.

A major source of funding for projects, programs and administration comes from a tax levy on all taxable property within the District. Other sources include federal, state, and private grants.

The NRD has the authority to coordinate land and water management projects and programs with local, state and federal conservation organizations and other governmental units. These projects may be funded through the sharing of project costs by the sponsoring local, state, private, and/or federal entities or agencies.



# Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District

This Long Range Plan for the Upper Big Blue Natural Resources District follows the goals and objectives of the 2012 Master Plan recently approved by the NRD Board of Directors. This Long Range Plan was adopted by the board of directors on March 15, 2012.

The Long Range Plan summarizes the planned District activities and includes projections of financial, staffing and land rights needs of the District.

## Major Programs and Activities

The District offers several major natural resources programs and public education, as well as administers rules and regulations for groundwater use and protection. A detailed description of the offered Programs and Practices can be found in the Upper Big Blue NRD Programs publication which is continually updated. Current regulations are in the Upper Big Blue NRD Rules and Regulations publication. The important programs, regulations and activities are listed below:

	<u>Programs</u>
Water Conservation Dams	Groundwater Quantity
	Observation Wells
Flood Control	Crop Water Use Information
Dams	Irrigation Scheduling Equipment
Levees	Flow Meter Cost Share
Flood Plain Buyouts	Demonstration Fields (CROP-TIP)
Storm Water Drainage - Urban	Groundwater Quality
Master Drainage Plans	Monitoring Wells
Storm Water Drainage Systems	Well abandonment Cost Share
	Wellhead Protection Area Assistance
Hazard Mitigation Planning	Domestic Well Quality Testing
Land Treatment Cost Share	Wildlife Habitat
Terraces	Habitat Improvement
Dams	Corners for Wildlife
Diversions	
Windbreaks	Tree Plantings
Irrigation Efficiency Improvements	Seedling Sales
	Conservation Plantings
Public Relations	Community Tree Cost Share
Newsletter	
Public Speaking	Parks and Recreation
Public Events	Parks Cost Share
Scholarships	NRD Recreation Areas
Outdoor Classrooms	
	Research

## Regulations

Groundwater Quantity – Most of the NRD  
Well Permits  
Large Water User Studies  
Well Spacing  
Transfers  
Irrigated Acres Certification  
Groundwater Use Reports  
Flow Meters

Fully Appropriated Upper Platte Basin  
Integrated Management Plan

Restricted Growth Lower Platte Basin

Chemigation

Erosion and Sediment Control

Groundwater Quality – All of the NRD  
Fertilizer timing restrictions  
Operator training  
Soil Sampling  
Irrigation Scheduling  
Irrigation Water test for Nitrates  
Annual Reports

Park Regulations

General

Anderson Recreation Area

Overland Trails

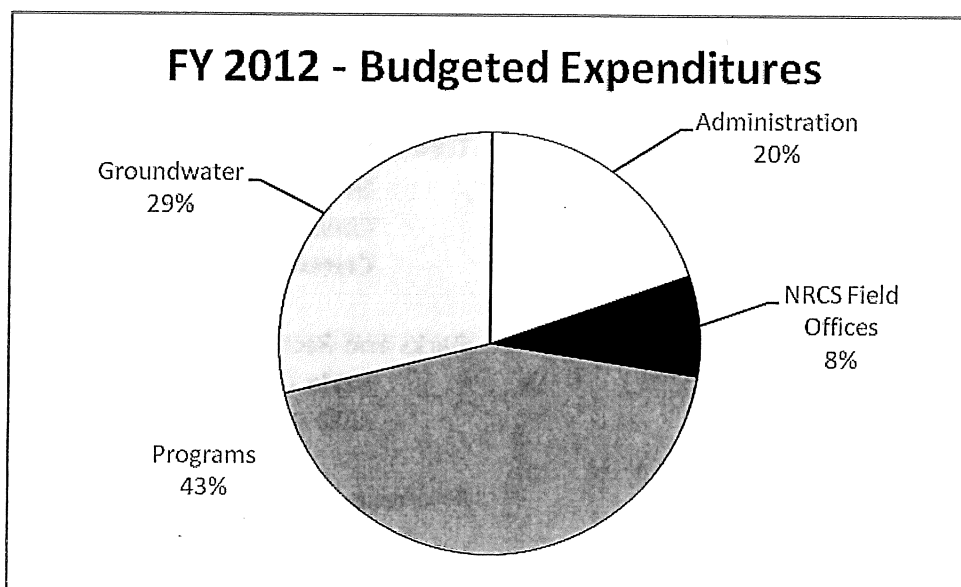
Oxbow Trails

Pioneer Trails

Smith Creek

## Groundwater Management

The Master Plan states “**the primary goal of the Upper Big Blue is successful long-term water management, for both quantity and quality.**” Therefore long term management and regulation of groundwater quantity and quality has a high priority in this District. That commitment requires a staff of 8 and a large part of the annual budget, 1/3 of the total staff and about 1/3 of the budget.





## Major Projects

The Upper Big Blue is planning on constructing, or assisting with funding, several major projects in order to meet other goals of the Master Plan. These projects will progress as time and funds allow. The projects listed in this Long Range Plan are:

Struebing Dam Improvements – The dam and reservoir were built in 1982. The land rights are all easements which granted the District the right to operate the dam and store water. However, there is no public access. Should the current owners decide to sell the property associated with the dam and lake, as well as adjacent land, the District could purchase the land and open the reservoir for public use. A major recreation project at the site, including RV Camping, day use areas, boat ramps and fishing habitat improvements, is accounted for in this plan.

Fairmont Storm Drainage – This is an urban storm water drainage project being built by the Village of Fairmont. The project was designed by the village's consultant to improve storm water drainage within the village. Fairmont is paying the majority of the cost, with some inter-government cost share assistance from the District

Smith Creek Rehabilitation – The project purpose is to improve lake water quality at Smith Creek near Beaver Crossing. The Smith Creek dam and recreation area was built in 1983 and is owned and operated by the District. A small older dam is located just upstream on one of the drainages into the lake. That dam is in need of major maintenance because of spillway erosion. The rehabilitation project is planned to repair that dam so as to allow it to continue to catch silt from the watershed.

Seward West Trail – The trail project will add about 2 miles of hiking and biking trail to the existing Plum Creek Trail in the City of Seward. It is part of the City's plan to have a trail system extend around the perimeter of Seward. This turnkey project will be designed and constructed by the District for the City of Seward. Once completed the City will own and operate the trail. Federal funding will come from the Nebraska Department of Roads provided an agreement can be worked out with the State. The balance of the funds will come from the City and the District.

David City Storm Drainage - The project is the last phase of a major storm water drainage and flood control project started in the David City area in 1976. The phases completed prior to 1982 are the Airport Drainage, Northwest Drainage, and the Struebing Dam. The original sponsors were the City of David City, Butler County, Lower Platte North and the Upper Big Blue NRDs. After several failed attempts the storm drainage from North Highway 15 and west past the Butler County Fairgrounds, is now under construction. The new works will drain into the Struebing Dam. The City is paying the construction cost of \$2,000,000, while the two NRDs and the City are paying for the engineering. The Upper Big Blue engineering staff is doing the design, and construction inspection. When completed, the City will own and operate the drainage project.

Pioneer Trails Recreation Area – The District built the Pioneer Trails dam and recreation area in 1986. The District owns and operates the site. The existing recreation site has a well established forested area that is principally used for day use. The lake has high groundwater recharge rates, as intended. However, the lake does not remain at levels conducive to recreation. The project concept is to seal part of the reservoir bottom and to pump water into the lake to maintain better lake levels. The concept also includes a recreational vehicle and tent campground similar to the one just built at Recharge Lake near York.

City of York Trail Project – The possible trail project to be constructed by the District would be owned and operated jointly by the District and the City of York. The joint arrangement is best because the trail right of way would be located both inside and outside the City limits. The trail would be an extension of the existing City trail system that ends on the southwest side of York. The route would extend to the west under the Highway 81 bypass at Beaver Creek and then onto the northwest to Recharge Lake.

Urban Storm Water Master Planning – The District has completed storm water master drainage planning for Aurora, Milford and parts of Seward. This effort needs to continue, especially for the smaller cities and villages in the District. The proper sizing and location of drainage works throughout a village needs to be considered, not just a local fix for a neighborhood problem. The District is also in a position to consider the impacts and solutions for drainage from or to the rural areas.

Urban Storm Water Drainage Projects – After the master planning is complete for a community, some construction cost share assistance from the District may be necessary to encourage construction of the highest priority components. It is expected that requests will be made over the next several years.

Joint Public Water Supply Systems – The District is anticipating a growing need for joint water supply projects because nitrates in groundwater is a problem for cities and villages. Other contaminants also affect drinking water quality. The cities and villages must, because of federal regulations, supply clean water for their citizens. Water treatment plants for drinking water quality are expensive. The City of Seward spent several million dollars on a treatment plant to remove nitrates. The City of Hastings is looking at \$100,000,000 expenditure over the next 20 years to remove nitrates from the water furnished to their 25,000 citizens. By looking at these costs, and other information, it is apparent that it will not be cost effective for Villages and small cities to build their own individual treatment plants.

Several years ago, an unsuccessful effort was undertaken by Osceola, Polk, Shelby and Stromsburg to build a joint public water supply system. The attempt failed because the smaller villages did not want the system planning, construction and operation to be influenced by a larger community.

The District is in a position to take the lead in developing joint water supply systems because it serves all the citizens of the area, not just those in a particular town. The District can be the lead agency for planning, design and construction. District funds may be best used for general concept planning and to pay part of the consulting engineers' costs. Seed money may be necessary to encourage construction. The long term operation and maintenance costs should be paid for with charges to the final customers.

Several options exist for the ownership and operation of joint water supply systems. The cooperating cities and villages could set up an entity through an Inter-Local Agreement to own and operate the system. Or the District could, with political and financial support from the cooperating communities, establish a rural water district to supply treated drinking water. If a rural water district was created, it would have to be part of the District, not a stand alone entity. A rural water district could also deliver domestic water to rural customers. Other options are possible but probably not as workable.

As the communities search for solutions, requests for joint water supply systems are anticipated.

LONG RANGE PLAN

UPPER BIG BLUE NRD FY 2012 - 2018 MAJOR PROJECTS

PROJECT	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	Totals
Fairmont Storm Drainage	35,000							35,000
Struebing Dam Improvements		1,200,000			800,000			2,000,000
Smith Creek Lake Rehabilitation				300,000				300,000
DEQ 319 Grant - 50%				(150,000)				(150,000)
Upper Big Blue	-	-	-	150,000	-	-	-	150,000
Seward West Trail	35,000	515,000	300,000	-	-	-	-	850,000
Federal Grant - 70%	(24,500)	(360,500)	(210,000)	-	-	-	-	(595,000)
City of Seward - 75% of Local	-	(90,000)	(90,000)	-	-	-	-	(180,000)
Upper Big Blue	10,500	64,500	-	-	-	-	-	75,000
David City Storm Drainage	40,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	40,000
David City and LPNIRD - 75%	(30,000)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(30,000)
Upper Big Blue	10,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,000
Pioneer Trails Recreation Area		50,000	650,000					700,000
City of Aurora -			(100,000)					(100,000)
Upper Big Blue	-	50,000	550,000	-	-	-	-	600,000
City of York Trail Project			10,000	25,000	300,000	300,000	365,000	1,000,000
City of York - 75%			(7,500)	(18,750)	(225,000)	(225,000)	(273,750)	(750,000)
Upper Big Blue	-	-	2,500	6,250	75,000	75,000	91,250	250,000
Urban Storm Water Master Planning		15,000		15,000		20,000		50,000
Cities Share - 75%		(11,250)		(11,250)		(15,000)		(37,500)
Upper Big Blue	-	3,750	-	3,750	-	5,000	-	12,500
Urban Storm Drainage Projects	-	-	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	100,000
Joint Public Water Supply Systems	-	-	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	250,000
Cities Share - 50%	-	-	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)	(25,000)	(125,000)
Upper Big Blue	-	-	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000	125,000
<b>TOTAL PROJECTS COSTS</b>	<b>110,000</b>	<b>1,780,000</b>	<b>1,030,000</b>	<b>410,000</b>	<b>1,170,000</b>	<b>390,000</b>	<b>435,000</b>	<b>5,325,000</b>
<b>TOTAL UPPER BIG BLUE COSTS</b>	<b>55,500</b>	<b>1,318,250</b>	<b>597,500</b>	<b>205,000</b>	<b>920,000</b>	<b>125,000</b>	<b>136,250</b>	<b>3,357,500</b>

Planning Costs are in italics

# LONG RANGE PLAN

## UPPER BIG BLUE PROJECTS SUMMARY TABLE

PROJECT	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	Totals
Land Rights	-	1,200,000	-	-	-	-	-	1,200,000
Project Construction	35,000	515,000	950,000	300,000	1,100,000	300,000	365,000	3,565,000
Inter Govt Cost Share	35,000		20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	135,000
<i>Planning Costs</i>								-
<i>NRD Staff</i>	30,000	50,000	10,000	15,000	-	35,000	25,000	165,000
<i>Professional Services</i>	10,000	15,000	50,000	75,000	50,000	35,000	25,000	260,000
<i>Planning Costs Total</i>	40,000	65,000	60,000	90,000	50,000	70,000	50,000	425,000
Total Projects Costs	110,000	1,780,000	1,030,000	410,000	1,170,000	390,000	435,000	5,325,000
State Grants	-	-	-	150,000	-	-	-	150,000
Federal Grants	24,500	360,500	210,000	-	-	-	-	595,000
Income from Cities	30,000	101,250	222,500	55,000	250,000	265,000	298,750	1,222,500
TOTAL FUNDS FROM GRANTS + CITIES	54,500	461,750	432,500	205,000	250,000	265,000	298,750	1,967,500
TOTAL UPPER BIG BLUE COSTS	55,500	1,318,250	597,500	205,000	920,000	125,000	136,250	3,357,500

## District Staff

The District Board of Directors sets the direction, policies and budget for the Natural Resources District. The management staff oversee the day to day functions of the District, including regulation enforcement. These functions are carried out by the rest of the employees. The management staff are also instrumental in budget and policy development, which are ultimately approved by the Board. The management staff are the project managers who conduct and oversee planning, design, contracts and construction of District projects. Consultants are sometimes hired for specific tasks, such as geo-technical investigations or research. Occasionally consultants are hired for project design, but only under close supervision by management.

Several Position changes occurred at the beginning of FY 2012. A second maintenance worker was hired as an occasional employee to maintain the Anderson Recreation Area Wednesday through Thursday weekly during the camping season. Four NRCS field office clerk positions were changed from part time to full time, bringing all field office clerk positions to full time. The York position had been full time prior to the change.

CURRENT STAFF - The District has 25 employee positions, 22 full time, 1 part time and 2 occasional workers. Full time and part time employees are permanent employees with paid benefits. Full time employees work 40 hour weeks all year whereas part time employees work a regular schedule of at least 20 hours per week. Occasional workers are temporary employees who do not earn benefits. Their hours vary depending on available work.

STAFF CHANGES - One change is planned in the near term. That is to make the second maintenance worker position part time with benefits. The district will then be adequately staffed for the rest of the planning period.

<b>Administration</b>	<b>NRCS Field Office Clerks</b>	<b>Programs</b>	<b>Groundwater Management</b>
3 Full Time Employees	5 Full Time Employees	6 Full Time Employees 1 Part Time Employee 2 Occasional Employees	8 Full Time Employees
General Manager Office Manager Receptionist	Aurora – Clerk Geneva – Clerk Osceola – Clerk Seward – Clerk York - Clerk	Projects Dept Manager/Engineer Lead Engineering Technician Engineering Technician Secretary (Part Time)  Forestry Dept Manager Maintenance Worker Maintenance Worker (Occasional) Tree Planter (Occasional)  Public Relations Manager	Water Dept Manager Water Conservationist Water Data Specialist Lead Water Technician Water Technician Water Technician Secretary Secretary

## District FY 2012 Budget

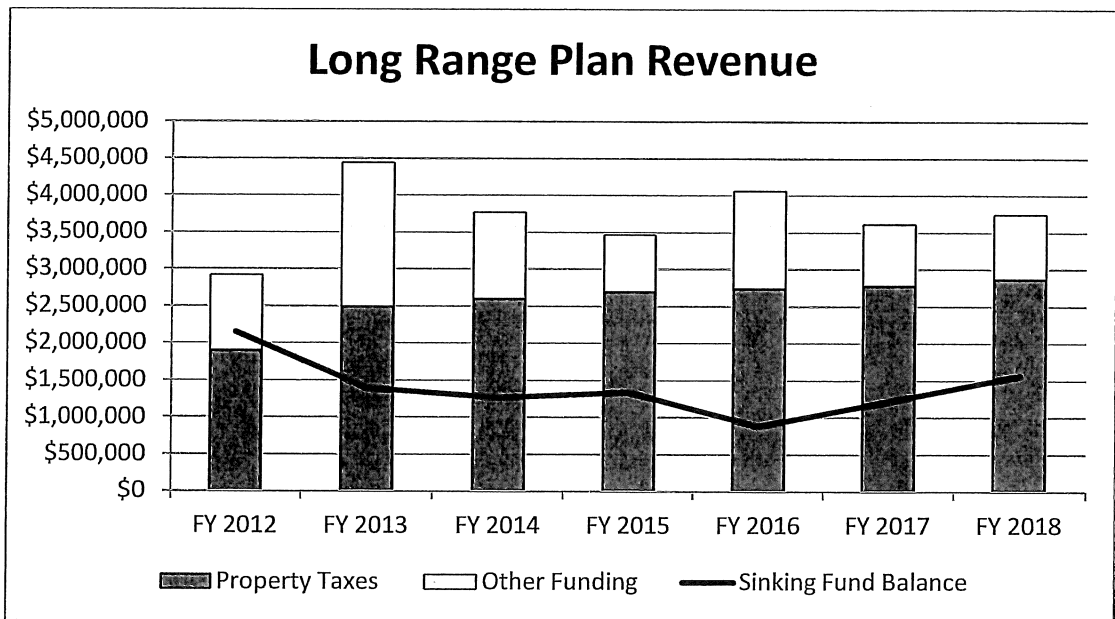
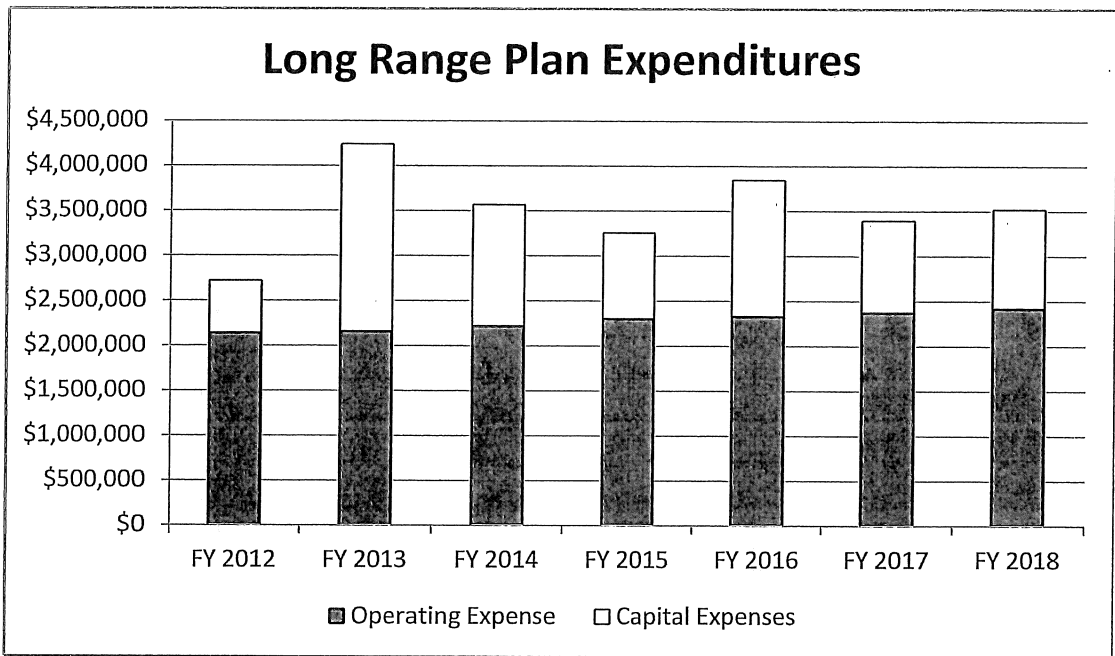
<b>UPPER BIG BLUE NRD FY 2012 GENERAL FUND BUDGET</b>					
EXPENSES	Administration	NRCS Field Offices	Programs	Groundwater	Total
Special Projects	-	-	69,349	4,000	73,349
Professional Services	36,200	-	45,000	35,000	116,200
Materials for Resale	-	-	25,000	65,000	90,000
Other Operating Expenses	163,290	-	170,254	81,000	414,544
Total Wages and Benefits	241,213	209,946	467,968	458,567	1,377,694
Directors	68,754	-	-	-	68,754
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>509,457</b>	<b>209,946</b>	<b>777,571</b>	<b>643,567</b>	<b>2,140,541</b>
Transfers to Sinking Fund	-	-	55,000	-	55,000
Capital Improvements	20,000	-	391,630	105,000	516,630
Capital Expenses - Autos & Equip.	6,500	-	19,300	36,000	61,800
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>26,500</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>410,930</b>	<b>141,000</b>	<b>578,430</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>535,957</b>	<b>209,946</b>	<b>1,188,501</b>	<b>784,567</b>	<b>2,718,971</b>
Cash Reserve	39,424	15,443	87,423	57,711	200,000
<b>GRAND TOTAL WITH CASH RESERVE</b>	<b>575,381</b>	<b>225,389</b>	<b>1,275,924</b>	<b>842,278</b>	<b>2,918,971</b>

REVENUE	Administration	NRCS	Programs	Groundwater	Total
Net Assets	126,036	49,371	279,489	184,499	639,395
State Grants	-	-	84,910	64,300	149,210
Federal Grants	-	-	-	-	-
Private Grants	-	-	29,900	-	29,900
Income from Cities & Counties	-	-	54,409	-	54,409
Sales	-	-	-	38,000	38,000
Other Income	15,000	32,305	60,450	-	107,755
<b>TOTAL INCOME AND NET ASSESTS</b>	<b>141,036</b>	<b>81,676</b>	<b>509,158</b>	<b>286,799</b>	<b>1,018,669</b>
PROPERTY TAXES	434,344	143,713	766,766	555,478	1,900,302
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>575,381</b>	<b>225,389</b>	<b>1,275,924</b>	<b>842,278</b>	<b>2,918,971</b>
Balance Forward (Cash Reserve)					200,000

<b>UPPER BIG BLUE NRD    FY 2012    SINKING FUND BUDGET</b>	
EXPENSES	FY 2012
Current Expenses	-
Transfers to General Fund	-
<b>TOTAL SINKING FUND EXPENSES</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>INVESTMENTS FOR FUTURE PROJECTS</b>	
Project - O & M	276,927
Project - Water Quality Education	54,398
Project - Water Resources	657,774
Project - Seward West Trail	75,547
Project - Building	188,631
Project - Struebing	705,550
Project - Urban Storm Water	69,208
Project - Recreation Project	95,136
Project - Flood Control	30,444
Total Investments for Future Projects	2,153,615
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES AND INVESTMENTS</b>	<b>2,153,615</b>

REVENUE	FY 2012
Investments beginning of Fiscal Year	2,067,219
Interest on Investments	31,396
Transfers from General Fund	55,000
<b>TOTAL SINKING FUND REVENUE</b>	<b>2,153,615</b>
Less Expenses	-
Balance Forward	2,153,615

# District Long Range Plan FY 2012 - 2018





## LONG RANGE PLAN

<b>UPPER BIG BLUE NRD FY 2012 - 2018 GENERAL FUND BUDGET EXPENDITURES</b>							
2.5% base operating expense increase per year							
EXPENSES	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018
Special Projects	73,349	40,000	41,000	42,000	43,000	44,000	45,000
Professional Services	116,200	120,000	130,000	157,000	134,000	121,000	113,000
Materials for Resale	90,000	92,000	94,000	96,000	98,000	100,000	103,000
Other Operating Expenses	414,544	425,000	436,000	447,000	458,000	469,000	481,000
Total Wages and Benefits	1,377,694	1,412,000	1,447,000	1,483,000	1,520,000	1,558,000	1,597,000
Directors	68,754	70,000	72,000	74,000	76,000	78,000	80,000
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>2,140,541</b>	<b>2,159,000</b>	<b>2,220,000</b>	<b>2,299,000</b>	<b>2,329,000</b>	<b>2,370,000</b>	<b>2,419,000</b>
Transfers to Sinking Fund	55,000			50,000		300,000	300,000
Land Rights	-	1,200,000	-	-	-	-	-
Project Construction	72,000	515,000	950,000	300,000	1,100,000	300,000	365,000
Inter Govt Cost Share - Projects	61,875	-	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Buildings and Building Improvements	20,000	-	-	200,000	-	-	-
Land Treatment and Buffer Strips	174,135	178,000	182,000	187,000	192,000	197,000	202,000
Water Meter Cost Share and Repair	60,000	62,000	64,000	66,000	68,000	70,000	72,000
Abandoned Well Cost Share	45,000	46,000	47,000	48,000	49,000	50,000	51,000
Wildlife Habitat	28,620	29,000	30,000	31,000	32,000	33,000	34,000
Total Capital Improvements	516,630	2,030,000	1,293,000	902,000	1,461,000	970,000	1,044,000
Capital Expenses - Autos & Equipment	61,800	50,000	51,000	52,000	53,000	54,000	55,000
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>578,430</b>	<b>2,080,000</b>	<b>1,344,000</b>	<b>954,000</b>	<b>1,514,000</b>	<b>1,024,000</b>	<b>1,099,000</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>2,718,971</b>	<b>4,239,000</b>	<b>3,564,000</b>	<b>3,253,000</b>	<b>3,843,000</b>	<b>3,394,000</b>	<b>3,518,000</b>
Cash Reserve	200,000	200,000	205,000	210,000	215,000	220,000	226,000
<b>GRAND TOTAL WITH CASH RESERVE</b>	<b>2,918,971</b>	<b>4,439,000</b>	<b>3,769,000</b>	<b>3,463,000</b>	<b>4,058,000</b>	<b>3,614,000</b>	<b>3,744,000</b>

## LONG RANGE PLAN

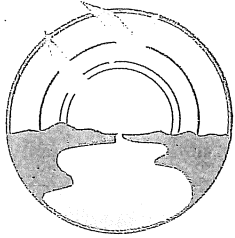
<b>UPPER BIG BLUE NRD FY 2012 - 2018 GENERAL FUND BUDGET REVENUES</b>							
REVENUE	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018
Net Assets	639,395	525,000	425,000	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000
State Grants	149,210	-	-	150,000	-	-	-
Federal Grants	-	360,500	210,000	-	-	-	-
Private Grants	29,900	30,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Income from Cities & Counties	54,409	101,250	222,500	55,000	250,000	265,000	298,750
Sales	38,000	40,000	41,000	42,000	43,000	44,000	45,000
Other Income	107,755	110,000	113,000	116,000	119,000	122,000	125,000
Transfers from Sinking Fund		781,000	150,000		500,000		
<b>TOTAL INCOME AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>1,018,669</b>	<b>1,947,750</b>	<b>1,166,500</b>	<b>768,000</b>	<b>1,317,000</b>	<b>836,000</b>	<b>873,750</b>
PROPERTY TAXES	1,900,302	2,491,250	2,602,500	2,695,000	2,741,000	2,778,000	2,870,250
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>2,918,971</b>	<b>4,439,000</b>	<b>3,769,000</b>	<b>3,463,000</b>	<b>4,058,000</b>	<b>3,614,000</b>	<b>3,744,000</b>
Balance Forward (Cash Reserve)	200,000	200,000	205,000	210,000	215,000	220,000	226,000
Valuations at 5% per year increase (Historical NRD 25 year average is 5.6%)	\$ 8,374,640,330	8,793,372,347	9,233,040,964	9,694,693,012	10,179,427,663	10,688,399,046	11,222,818,998
Tax Levy - Projected	\$ 0.0241	\$ 0.0283	\$ 0.0282	\$ 0.0278	\$ 0.0269	\$ 0.0260	\$ 0.0256

## LONG RANGE PLAN

<b>UPPER BIG BLUE NRD FY 2012 - 2018 SINKING FUND BUDGET</b>							
<b>EXPENSES</b>	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018
CURRENT EXPENSES	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TRANSFERS TO GENERAL FUND	-	781,000	150,000	-	500,000	-	-
<b>TOTAL SINKING FUND EXPENSES</b>	-	781,000	150,000	-	500,000	-	-
INVESTMENTS FOR FUTURE PROJECTS	2,153,615	1,372,615	1,248,458	1,266,638	841,971	882,230	1,217,519
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES AND INVESTMENTS</b>	<b>2,153,615</b>	<b>2,153,615</b>	<b>1,398,458</b>	<b>1,266,638</b>	<b>1,341,971</b>	<b>882,230</b>	<b>1,217,519</b>

<b>REVENUE</b>	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018
Investments beginning of Fiscal Year	2,067,219	2,153,615	1,398,458	1,266,638	1,341,971	882,230	1,217,519
Interest on Investments	31,396	25,843	18,180	25,333	40,259	35,289	48,701
Transfers from General Fund	55,000	-	-	50,000	-	300,000	300,000
<b>TOTAL SINKING FUND REVENUE</b>	<b>2,153,615</b>	<b>2,179,458</b>	<b>1,416,638</b>	<b>1,341,971</b>	<b>1,382,230</b>	<b>1,217,519</b>	<b>1,566,220</b>
Less Expenses	-	781,000	150,000	-	500,000	-	-
Balance Forward	2,153,615	1,398,458	1,266,638	1,341,971	882,230	1,217,519	1,566,220
Estimated Interest Rates	1.5%	1.2%	1.3%	2.0%	3.0%	4.0%	4.0%





UPPER BIG BLUE  
Natural Resources District

105 N. Lincoln Ave.  
York, Nebraska 68467

402-362-6601  
Fax: 402-362-1849  
[www.upperbigblue.org](http://www.upperbigblue.org)

20 January 2012

Kent Zimmerman  
Nebraska Department of Natural Resources  
301 Centennial Mall South  
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4676

Dear Kent,

The Upper Big Blue NRD Board of Directors adopted the 2012 – 2022 Master Plan for the NRD at yesterday's Board Meeting. A copy for DNR is enclosed.

Sincerely,

John C. Turnbull  
General Manager

