LOWER NIOBRARA
NATURAL RESOURCE DISTRICT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lower Niobrara NRD Partners with State Nitrogen Reduction Incentive Act Program

Butte, Neb. — The Lower Niobrara Natural Resources District (LNNRD) has partnered with the State of Nebraska to implement the Nitrogen Reduction Incentive Act (NIRIA) Program. NIRIA was established under LB 1368 (2024) to provide financial incentives to producers who voluntarily reduce nitrogen fertilizer application rates.

The NIRIA program offers payments to producers who reduce their nitrogen application by the lesser of 40 pounds per acre or 15% of their established baseline rate. Incentives are divided into three priority categories:

- **Priority A:** Wellhead protection areas and NRD Phase II or higher areas
- **Priority B:** Certified irrigated acres outside Priority A areas
- **Priority C:** All other acres, including dryland

For the 2025 growing season, eligible producers applied by November 15, 2024. The LNNRD received 81 applications spanning all three priority areas. Applications included 3,485 acres in Priority A, 568 acres in Priority B, and 3,601 acres in Priority C, for a total of 7,654 enrolled acres.

Initial funding from LB 1368 and the Department of Water, Energy, and Environment (DWEE) covered $94,851 distributed across the district for the 2025 NIRIA program.

Applications for the 2026 NIRIA program were due December 15, 2025. The LNNRD has been allocated $115,000 for the upcoming program year. Funding for the 2026 NIRIA program will be provided by the Nebraska Corn Board and DWEE.

NRDs across the state continue to work closely with local producers to ensure the success of NIRIA, serving as the local connection between state resources and agricultural operations. Through this partnership, state funds are directed to producers to support voluntary nitrogen management efforts that protect Nebraska's water resources.