

Stream Gages Provide Valuable Information

Extreme flood events in 2015 and 2016 prompted the Little Blue NRD and other resources agencies to evaluate the emergency flood alert network in the Little Blue River Basin. With only a single gage on the Little Blue River upstream of Fairbury, it was quickly determined that emergency warning network is grossly inadequate to provide timely flood flow information to protect lives and property. (DNR operates a gage on the Big Sandy Creek at Alexandria but it only records those creek flows, not the river.)

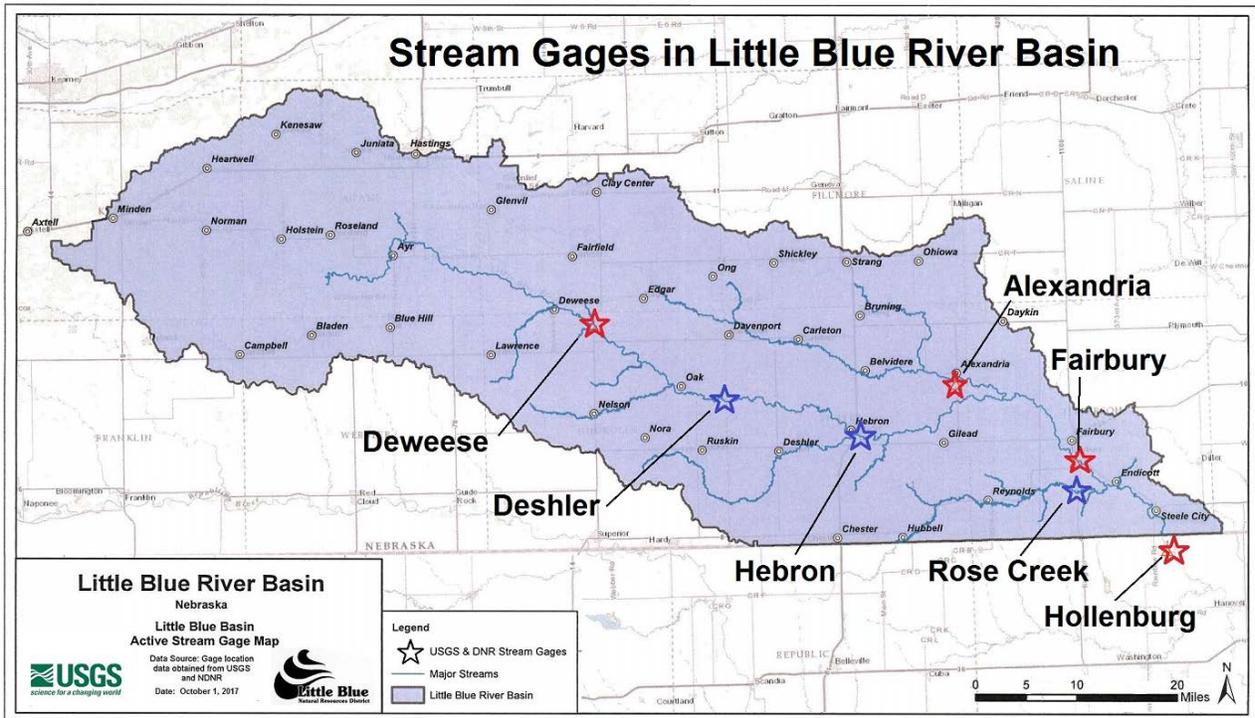
The Little Blue NRD began discussions with the National Weather Service, US Geologic Survey and Department of Natural Resources about the area's needs. Sites were identified which would provide optimum stream flow observation points to give adequate warning to downstream communities. The City of Hebron, and Jefferson and Thayer County were also approached because of the value of flood flow information to those entities for preparedness and protective measures. The Little Blue NRD applied for a \$15,000 grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust to support the installation of two gages; the third was a cooperative venture between USGS and the local entities.

Gages have now been installed on the Little Blue River on the Nuckolls/Thayer county line, at Hebron and another on Rose Creek south of Fairbury.

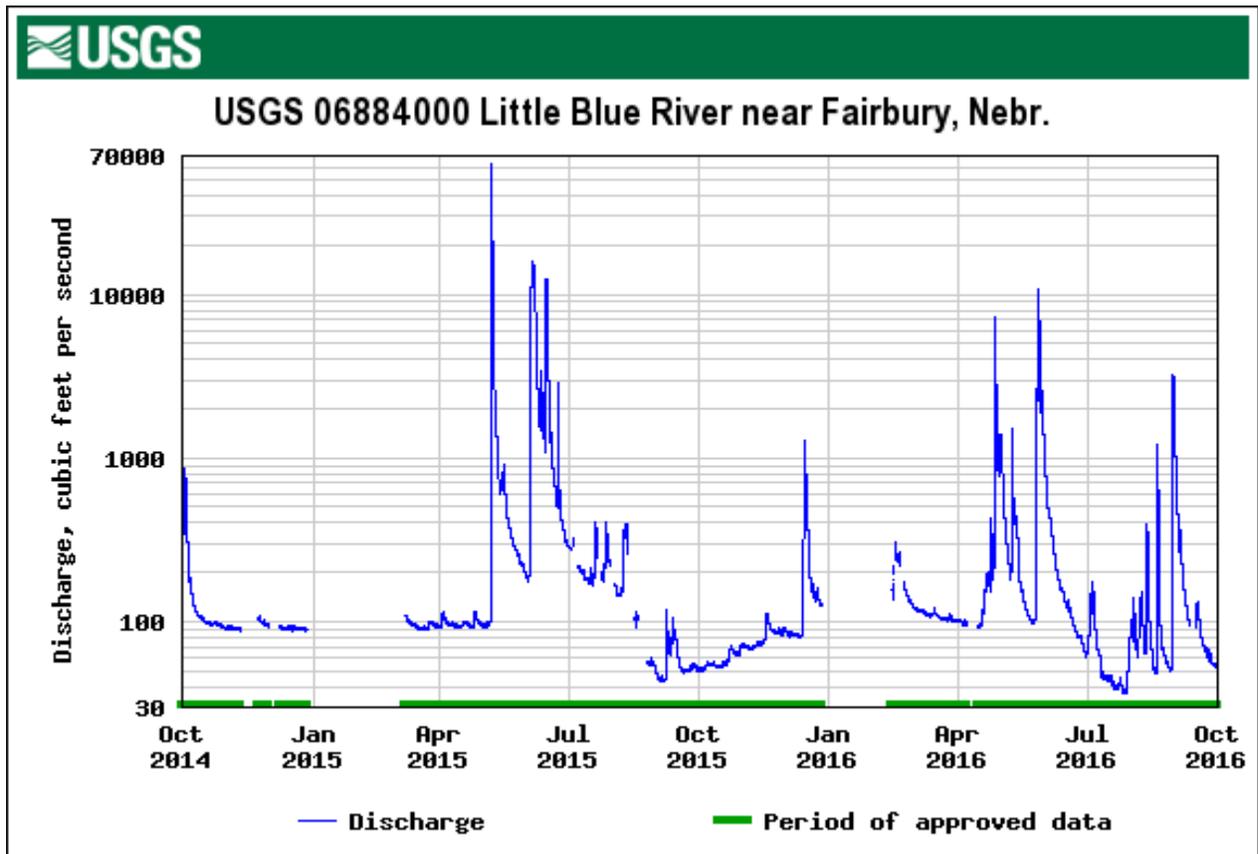
The purpose of the gages is the long-term tracking of stream flow, but more importantly, they provide instantaneous readings of storm surges and floods, and provide warning through "WaterAlert" which can give officials and landowners time to respond appropriately with whatever measures are necessary to protect lives and property. Other key uses of stream gages are for data collection for engineering designs for drainage, bridges, culverts and flood control structures, the tracking groundwater pumping influence on stream flow, and monitoring of flow for state compact administration.

Our thanks to the agencies that recognize the value of stream flow monitoring to protect lives, property and the future.





Map shows existing stream gages in red and newly installed gages in blue.



Fairbury stream gage for October 1, 2014 through September 30 2016 showing peak flood flow events for which public notice was warranted. (10,000 cfs is approx. 75,000 gallons per second.)