



Insight



Fall 2013

Gigstad and Zink Honored at the Annual Conference of NRDs

During the annual conference of Nebraska's NRDs held in Kearney September 23-24, the Nemaha NRD was pleased to have two award winners honored during Monday's luncheon. Each received an engraved plaque for their efforts to promote and encourage preservation of our natural resources.

Orval Gigstad, Syracuse, received this year's Nebraska Director of the Year Award having served as a Nemaha NRD director since 1993 and as a representative to the Nebraska Association of Resources Districts since 1996. In addition Gigstad continues to serve in leadership roles on various regional and national committees and is an active participant in public relations events that support and promote the NRDs.

For more than 36 years Jan Zink has inspired students to learn about their environment and become more aware of the importance of protecting it. As a science teacher at Norris High School near Firth, Zink has also served as the school's Envirothon sponsor since 1993. Her five-member high school teams have since advanced to State competition almost every year and earned berths to the national contest on three occasions. Zink often comments that she has learned as much as her students in her years of preparing teams to compete in the contest's subject areas that include soils, range, aquatics, forestry, natural resources policy, and wildlife.



2013 Director of the Year-Orval Gigstad; Pictured L-R: Don Siske, NNRD Director; Bob Hilske, NNRD Manager; Jim Johnson, NARD Information & Education Committee Chair; Orval Gigstad; Duane Sugden, NNRD Director; Joe Anderjaska, NARD Board President.



2013 Educator of the Year-Jan Zink; Pictured L-R: Don Siske, NNRD Director; Bob Hilske, NNRD Manager; Jim Johnson, NARD Information & Education Committee Chair; Jan Zink; Orval Gigstad, NNRD Director; Duane Sugden, NNRD Director; Joe Anderjaska, NARD Board President

Nemaha NRD Receives Tree Planting Grant

The tree planting initiative, Free Trees for Fall Planting, sponsored by the Nebraska Community Forestry Council and ReTree Nebraska and funded by the Nebraska Environmental Trust recently awarded the Nemaha NRD a grant to plant 10 landscape trees at Kirkman's Cove Recreation Area near Humboldt. Goals of the program are to celebrate trees and their value, assist with tree planting in public spaces, promote healthy establishment and ongoing care of newly-

planted trees, diversify the community forest by promoting a broader diversity of native and well-adapted tree species, and provide educational opportunities for people to learn more about trees and their proper selection, planting, and care.

A public tree planting event is planned this fall, and more details will be advertised in local news outlets and on the NRD's website and Facebook page later this month.



2013 Recreation Wrap-Up

With summer over, use at our recreation areas is beginning to wind down. This was the first summer that **Iron Horse Trail Lake** was completely full after the major renovation was completed in 2011, and the District saw a major increase in use. Electrical RV pads in the Limestone Cove Use Area were popular nearing or at capacity on many weekends. Many people took advantage of the upgraded beach area which had been underused in the past. Fishing improved dramatically as the population of bluegill and bass increased both in number and size. It is hoped that we will see the first “keeper” sized largemouth bass taken from the lake next summer. One hidden gem at Iron Horse is the new sediment basin on the north end of the lake. It is one of the largest wetlands in southeast Nebraska and abounds with wildlife. A recent visit included sightings of blue herons, egrets, ducks, and even an owl flew by. To get to the area, take the rock trail north from the Timber Point Use Area parking lot for about ½ mile. For next season the NRD plans to install a new shelter in the Oak Grove Day Use Area and will continue to work on a trail that will eventually go around the entire lake.

Kirkman’s Cove continues to be the NRD’s most popular use area. The beach and RV camping areas were busy much of the summer. The area has become a popular location for group events including weddings, reunions, Boy Scout activities, and local business outings. Although we do not reserve areas, the NRD office encourages organizers of these events to contact the office so we can put it on our calendar. Organizations may be eligible for a group entry permit, which eliminates the need for every vehicle attending an event to have a permit. Contact the office for information.

Perhaps the best news for the **Wirth Brothers Lake Recreation Area** was that lake levels remained high all summer. The lake has had a long history of low water levels, and in the spring the NRD did some work to help seal up an area of the lake bottom that may have been contributing to the problem. Additional fish stocking may be considered if the NRD is confident that the

water level in the lake will remain stable. Numerous people took advantage of the beach this summer and were treated to some of the clearest water ever recorded in the lake.

The Nemaha NRD’s parks are open all year; however, some use areas may be closed to reduce maintenance and vandalism. Full services are provided through the rifle deer season in November; water service is shut off and electrical service may be limited after that time. Keep in mind that hunting is not allowed in any of the parks except for a designated area below the dam at Iron Horse Trail Lake from October 1 - March 1, where hunting is limited to archery or shotgun only (no waterfowl hunting is allowed).

Fall is always a wonderful time of year to use the **Steamboat Trace** trail. The 22 - mile hiking/ biking trail that stretches from just south of Nebraska City to Brownville is dotted with trees that turn all shades of color in the fall. An extravaganza of color usually starts in late September and runs through late October. Fall foliage and leaf drop always seems to be a little earlier along the trail than in neighboring towns, so don’t be fooled by that tree in your back yard. Remember: the trail is closed to everyone during rifle deer season, this year scheduled from November 16 to November



Hunting is never allowed on or from the Steamboat Trace.

Remember: Steamboat Trace is CLOSED November 16 - 24 during rifle deer season!

Water Resources Update

Groundwater Management Rules & Regulations Update

On May 9, 2013, the District’s new well permit ranking system became effective for any well designed to pump greater than 50 gallons per minute. The ranking system takes into account thickness of the principle aquifer, the aquifer’s ability to transmit water, and the density of existing registered wells that are within a 6,000 foot radius of the well permit’s proposed location. Based upon a series of equations, these criteria are then scored; and a minimum score of 201 points must be achieved in order to be approved. If the well permit is for irrigation, the method of water application is also considered. The goal of the well permit ranking system is to continue to allow for high capacity well development without creating impacts, conflicts, or interference with neighboring groundwater users.

Additional changes to the District’s groundwater management rules and regulations include requiring a flowmeter on all new or replacement permitted wells, allowing no more than two irrigation wells to be approved to apply water on a single tract of

land, and well permit applications must be received by 4:30 p.m. the first Thursday of each month in order to be considered for that month’s meeting. A testhole geologic log must accompany any new well permit application along with a \$50 filing fee. No permit is required to have a testhole completed.

Cost-Share Assistance

Cost-share assistance is still available for flowmeters, soil moisture monitoring equipment, and the decommissioning of abandoned wells. Check our website or call for further information.

Water Well Analysis

Any District resident who would like to have a domestic or livestock well sampled and analyzed for nitrate-nitrogen and/or coliform bacteria is encouraged to contact the office and schedule an appointment. The sample is collected and analyzed by staff, and there is NO charge for this service. Additional analyses can be conducted for a fee from a certified, outside laboratory.



Taken in early September, this photo shows work progressing on the rehab of Wilson Creek 8-H.

Rehab Project to Protect Lives, Property

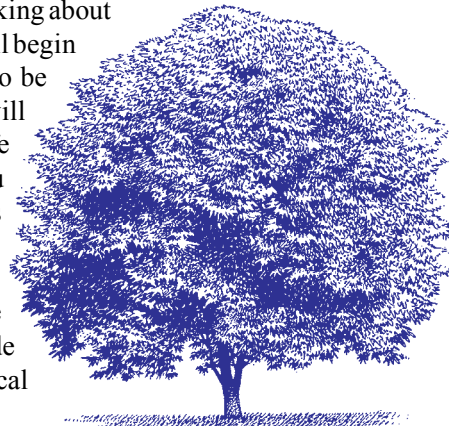
Rehabilitation of the Wilson Creek 8-H structure located near Dunbar is nearing completion. This structure provides crucial flood control for both Highway 2 located directly downstream of the dam and for the Village of Dunbar. Work included installing a concrete riser and outlet pipe, raising and widening the emergency spillway, and increasing the overall height of the structure. According to Prange Construction and engineers with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the project should be wrapped up by the end of October, nearly two months ahead of schedule. Federal funding of over \$325,000 coupled with local dollars made this \$500,000 project feasible and should prolong the life of the dam for another 100 years.

Start Thinking About Spring Tree Planting

Fall is the perfect time of year to start thinking about your spring tree planting plans. The NRD will begin accepting orders on November 1 for trees to be planted next spring. As always the NRD will plant your windbreak, shelterbelt, or wildlife plot if you have a minimum of 200 trees. You will need to have your ground prepared this fall, particularly if it is currently in sod.

At this time no changes are expected to the price of trees, planting fees, or available species. However, final details will be made available later this month; so watch your local news media or check our website

(www.nemahanrd.org/tree.htm) for additional information.



Planning Helps Ease Disaster Impacts

In a cooperative effort with Johnson, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, and Richardson Counties, the NNRD is working to update the 2012 Hazard Mitigation Plan. The purpose of the plan is to evaluate potential risks from disasters and identify practices that could be put into place to alleviate damage from disasters ranging from tornadoes to ice storms. A single, five-county plan reduces the potential cost incurred if each county put together its own plan. JEO Consulting was hired to update the plan, which must be completed by July, 2015. Total cost of the plan is \$78,000, with FEMA providing 75% of that amount and the balance split among the counties and NRD.

NEMAHA NRD STAFF

Bob Hilske, Manager
Scott Nelson, Assistant Manager
Jane Kuhl, Administrative Assistant
Allison Caspers, Administrative Assistant
Lisa Bartels, Secretary
Chuck Wingert, Water Resources Manager
Charlie Pierce, Water Resources Technician
Steve Bartels, Field Representative
Mark McDonald, Field Representative
Vernon Speers, Jr., Field Representative
Aaron Stalder, Resources Specialist
Tomas Chalé Aké, Projects Crew Leader
Shawn Kreienhop, Resources Specialist
Phil Vance & Doug Schmidt,
Seasonal Maintenance Crew

NRD STAFF IN NRCS OFFICES

Alice Alexander, Auburn
Glenda Bates, Tecumseh
Kim Zech, Syracuse
Amanda Hartman, Falls City
Kathy Harlow, Pawnee City

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

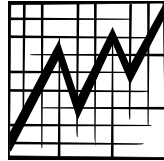
John Albrecht, Nebraska City
Charles Bausch, Adams
Lisa Beethe, Elk Creek
Rob Bohling, Johnson (**Chair**)
Charles Duryea, Humboldt
Orval Gigstad, Syracuse
Michael Gilson, Nebraska City
Ted Godemann, Falls City
Dave Guhde, Nebraska City
Dan Hodges, Julian
Doug Iske, Dunbar
Jon Keithley, Falls City
Scott Kudrna, Auburn
Michael McDonald, Palmyra
William Niedfeldt, Shubert
Don Siske, Table Rock (**Sec.-Treas.**)
Mike Speece, Auburn
J. Duane Sugden, Sterling
Steve Sugden, Adams (**Vice-Chair**)
Bruce Walker, Falls City
Paul Weber, Firth

NEMAHA NRD OFFICE:

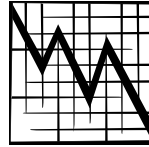


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NRD Budget Is Up,



But The Levy Is Down

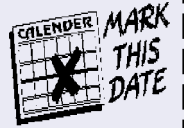


With a couple of large projects on the schedule, the Nemaha NRD board made the difficult decision to increase the tax request for its FY2014 budget by \$200,000. However, with a 12 percent increase in property valuations across the eight-county District, the resulting tax levy actually dropped from about 4.5 cents to 4.3 cents per \$100.

Of the total \$5 million in expenditures included in the budget, more than 35% can be attributed to land rights, utilities, road improvements, and conservation measures involved with the Buck Creek and Duck Creek projects in Nemaha County near Peru. Grant funds will help with about 23 percent of these expenditures right now; more funds have been requested from state sources but may not be available for a few years. One of the biggest expenses that will await these state funds is for land purchases required for the Duck Creek project, a flood control dam that will also provide public recreation. Construction of the dam is hoped to begin in about a year, so land purchases will be required in this fiscal year.

The other major project expenditure this year is for the completion of the rehab of Wilson Creek 8-H near Dunbar. Over \$450,000 was included in the expenditure for this work, but 65% of the cost will be picked up by federal PL566 monies.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



October

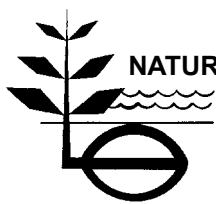
- 10 NNRD Board Meeting, Tecumseh
- 14 Columbus Day Holiday,
NNRD Office Closed
- 23 State Land Judging Contest

November

- 11 Veterans Day Holiday,
NNRD Office Closed
- 14 NNRD Board Meeting, Tecumseh
- 16-24 Steamboat Trace Closed
During Firearm Deer Season
- 28 Thanksgiving Holiday,
NNRD Office Closed

December

- 12 NNRD Board Meeting, Tecumseh
- 24-25 Christmas Holiday, NNRD Office
Closes @ Noon on 24th



nemaha

NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

62161 Hwy 136
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The Nemaha NRD's **Insight** is a publication of the Nemaha Natural Resources District. Requests to be placed on the **Insight** mailing list and/or comments regarding information in this publication should be directed to Jane Kuhl, Administrative Assistant, 62161 Hwy 136, Tecumseh, NE 68450. Phone (402) 335-3325