



LEWIS & CLARK NRD NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

Protecting Lives Protecting Property Protecting the Future

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News Release:



2009 Review of NRD Programs and Activities

The Lewis and Clark NRD continues to protect the lives, property and future of northeast Nebraska by actively providing services for the residents of the district. The district collected around \$360,000 in local property tax dollars in 2009 with a total budget of over \$2.5 million. Put another way, only 14% of the total budget is funded by property tax dollars.

These benefits include:

1. To protect the land almost \$110,000 was approved for conservation practices in 2009. Approved were 11 dam installations along with 37 grass seedings, planned grazing systems, and tree planting contracts.

2. To insure the future of the Missouri River the NRD Directors monitor river activities including; the National Park Service Recreation River Plan, Corps of Engineers Recovery Implementation Committee, changes in flow from Gavins Point Dam, and Lewis and Clark Lake sedimentation issues. The Missouri River "Futures" group includes NRD representation for locally coordinated management activities.

3. The district continues to protect water quality by monitoring a total of 200 irrigation wells across the district which are sampled on an annual or bi-annual rotation. Of these 179 irrigation wells plus 23 monitoring wells are located in the Bazile Triangle Groundwater Management Area, which was designated in 2004. This area includes all of Creighton Township; Cleveland Township except for sections 25, 26, 27, 34, 35, and 36; plus sections 6, 7, 18, and 19 of Columbia Township in Knox County. The NRD continues developing and improving programs to better utilize nitrogen in the area. Siphoning Nitrates with Irrigated Pasture or Irrigated Hay (SNIP)(SNIH) and chemigation cost-share are just some of the programs developed to reduce the nitrates leaching to the groundwater. Note: SNIP and SNIH are limited to the six sections of the Creighton Municipal Well recharge area. Also to protect groundwater quality the district issued 299 chemigation permits with 121 having routine inspections to insure the required equipment for chemigation was present and working properly.



4. To protect the quantity, static water levels are measured bi-annually in thirty key wells across the district. Groundwater levels remained steady on an average, in 2009. These wells have shown a slight increase in static water level over the past 30 years.



5. The district continues to protect the lives and property of the residents of the Aowa Creek watershed in Dixon County with continued operation and maintenance of 50 structures in the watershed. Work continues at Powder Creek, the largest structure in Dixon County, to improve the recreation features of this project with the addition of picnic tables, fire rings and open restrooms. Also more mowing is being done around the camper pads and picnic shelters. The construction of Powder Creek Flood Control and Recreation Project (31-20A) was completed in October 2003. The dam provides 21% of the Aowa Creek watershed flood reduction, which significantly reduces flooding in Ponca and the downstream farmland. This project provides 317 acres of grassland, 40 acres of trees for hunting and a 110-acre lake for fishing. The Natural Resources Conservation Service provided the majority of the funds for the project. Other participating agencies are the Dept. of Natural Resources, NE Game and Parks, Department of Environmental Quality, and Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund (lottery).



6. The Cedar-Knox Rural Water Project, provides clean, safe drinking water to an ever increasing number of customers. By providing a dependable source of high quality drinking water the project insures the future and helps promote development along Lewis and Clark Lake and the Missouri River. Now over 773 homes and 4 communities are served with approximately 101,000,000 gallons of high quality water annually. The staff continues to improve the treatment process to protect the quality of the water along with plans for construction of a new waterline to improve the efficiency of the water delivery system.



The District also is working with the communities of Coleridge and Wausa to develop a regional drinking water system. Preliminary engineering plans will provide service to Magnet, McLean and Belden. The funding for the project was approved in 2008 by the United State Department of Agriculture.

7. The district acted as the grant sponsor for the Corps of Discovery Welcome Center constructed along Highway 81 south of Yankton. This tourism facility provides economic promotion to Northeast Nebraska. People from all 50 states and 56 foreign countries have visited the Center. The facility also hosts educational programs and exhibits.

8. Three Wildlife Habitats areas were added in 2009 to bring the enrolled total acres to 1095 at a yearly cost of nearly \$29,000.

9. To protect the fields, livestock and farmsteads the district continues its Tree Program which saw 30,500 trees sold in 2009. The tree crew planted 13,907 trees and an additional



12,818 were hand planted. The remaining trees were donated to schools and communities for educational and promotional purposes. The NRD also sold 118,900 feet of conservation mulch (almost 23 miles).



10. Eleven applications were received and approved to seal abandoned wells protecting the groundwater from contaminants entering through these open holes to the aquifer. These wells were located on private property in the three-county area with a cost of around \$4,000 to complete the work.

11. The NRD administers state contracts for the Buffer Strip Program to protect the surface water of the area. There are 27 contracts with a yearly cost of \$12,000. The Nebraska Dept. of Agriculture provides the funds for this program.



12. For the future leader the Lewis & Clark NRD co-sponsored the 20th annual high school level water festival, “Wonderful World of Water” held at Gillman Park in Pierce on September 16th. Several agencies work together to develop an annual program aimed at educating high school sophomores and juniors on major issues concerning groundwater. The Lewis & Clark NRD also co-sponsors “Aquafest”, a water education program for 5th grade students in Northeast Nebraska. The event attracted around 300 students from area schools who spent March 10th and 11th learning about principles of science and Nebraska's greatest natural resource *water*. Students learn a variety of things including; effects of water pollution, insects that walk on water, Laws of Physics by creating enormous bubbles and Newton’s Law using



water rockets. During **Soil and Water Stewardship Week**, April 26th thru May 3rd, the NRD provides bulletins, litanies, and program inserts to area churches for distribution to their congregations. The NRD also provides educational booklets to the youth of these churches. The National Association of Conservation Districts theme in 2009 was “***Dig It! The Secrets of Soil***”.



The NRD staff includes: Tom Moser, General Manager; Marilyn Schumacher, Administrative Secretary; Terry Julesgard, Resource Technician; Diane Wieseler, NRCS Clerk Hartington; Jeanne Koenig, NRCS Clerk Bloomfield; Bobbi Jones, NRCS Clerk Ponca. The Rural Water staff includes: Gene Schroeder, Project Manager; Galen Jueden, Field Technician; Gary Eckmann, Plant Operator; and Marla Wortmann, Bookkeeper. Lewis & Clark Board of Directors: Sub-District 1; Danny Schaefer, Fordyce, Mary Ann Wortmann, Crofton, Sub-District 2; Mark Fehringer, Bloomfield, Jack Fuchtmann, Creighton, Sub-District 3; Bill Christensen, Hartington, Marcel Kramer, Crofton, Sub-District 4; Ron Wortmann, Hartington, Dan Kollars, Hartington, Sub-District 5; Curtis Armstrong, Ponca, Leroy Hoelsing, Newcastle, At-Large; Gary Howey, Hartington. Thanks to the dedication of these people for another year well done.