

LOWER PLATTE SOUTH NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT



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NRD Spring Storm Repairs Progressing

LINCOLN (NE) January 20, 2016 – Re-opening Olive Creek Road near Princeton and re-opening the Homestead Recreational Trail through southern Lancaster County remain among top priorities as the Lower Platte South Natural Resources District (NRD) continues to repair damage from severe storms last spring. The NRD is in various stages of securing federal funding of several of its repair projects from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and according to NRD General Manager Glenn Johnson, “Negotiations between the NRD and FEMA to determine FEMA’s level of funding for each repair project have been very cooperative.” Johnson said FEMA seeks to help return facilities and property to the condition they were in prior to the storm.

In all, the NRD has reported \$1.5 million in storm damage to its facilities, including damage to trails, dams, the cost of cleaning up debris from the storms at many locations and the cost of flood fighting, primarily along the Salt Creek Levee during the storms last May. Generally, FEMA provides about 75 percent of the cost of repairs that meet its guidelines, but, according to NRD Assistant Manager Paul Zillig, the approval process takes some time. “After the NRD does its preliminary assessment of damage and submits it to FEMA, there are confirmations, planning and design work, repair estimates, contractor bidding and much correspondence involved before actual repair work begins,” said Zillig. Even after following those procedures, the NRD nearly completed two repair projects before cold weather slowed the work. Zillig said, “We tried hard to get repairs completed to Upper Salt Dam 18-9,

so Olive Creek Road could be re-opened near East 33rd Street.” The dam is a grade control structure northeast of Princeton. Residents and businesses in that area have been inconvenienced by the road closing since last May, and cold weather has now pushed the likely completion of the project into spring. The USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service is engineering the project and Lipsey Construction, of Lincoln, is the contractor. The NRD manages 170 dams district-wide. “Overall,” said Zillig, “NRD dams functioned extremely well during and after the storms, delaying a large amount of storm runoff from flowing down Salt Creek through Lincoln and Ashland.”

Cold weather has also delayed work on the NRD’s Homestead Trail. Most of the NRD-owned portion of the trail from south of Saltillo Road to Cortland has also been closed since May. Despite cold weather slowing the work to repair bridges, a culvert and long stretches of the trail surface, work is still progressing and the NRD will re-open the trail by spring. Olsson Associates is the project engineer and Gana Trucking and Excavation, of Martell, is the contractor. The Homestead Trail is just south of the City of Lincoln’s Jamaica North Trail, which is likely to be repaired this summer.

Construction is expected to begin in the spring on the NRD’s final two repair projects. The most expensive storm repair project will be along Lincoln’s Antelope Creek, just west of 40th Street, where an estimated \$1.14 million in bank stabilization work is needed. The NRD and FEMA are still working out design details for that project and another trail repair. The NRD’s MoPac East Recreational Trail has about \$208,000 in damage to a bridge northeast of Elmwood, near Fletcher Avenue, and “The MoPac” remains closed in that area.