

E. **PAPILLION CREEK WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP REPORT:** The minutes to the August, 24, 2017, Papillion Creek Watershed Partnership Subcommittee meeting are attached. The next Partnership meeting is scheduled for September 28, 2017.

F. **PRINT, BROADCAST AND SOCIAL MEDIA PLACEMENTS:**

- ✓ August 8, 2017, *Sioux City Journal*, “New Missouri River app”
- ✓ Keystone Trail Closure
 - **Print** - August 5, 2017, *Omaha World-Herald*, “Part of Keystone Trail between Maple and Blondo will be closed”
 - **Broadcast** – KPTM (Aug. 4), WOWT (Aug. 5), KPTM (Aug. 6)
- ✓ August 10, 2017, *Omaha World-Herald*, “Tire collection scheduled in Washington County”
- ✓ August 15, 2017, *Pilot Tribune*, “Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee agrees on future role”
- ✓ August 15, 2017, *Pilot Tribune*, “Blair City Council Roundup”
- ✓ August 16, 2017, *Burt Co Plaindealer*, “August means tax time”
- ✓ The Public Pulse
 - **Print** - August 16, 2017, *Omaha World-Herald*, “NRD leaders should respect public”
 - **Social** - August 16, 2017, Twitter @OWHOpinion, “Officials @PapioNRD might not like suggestions from the public, but they should listen, a Public Pulse writer says.”
- ✓ River Access Points Closed
 - **Print** - August 19, 2017, *Omaha World-Herald*, “Some Papio-Missouri River NRD access points will be closed”
 - **Broadcast** – KETV (Aug. 16), KMTV (Aug. 16), KSRZ (Aug. 17)
- ✓ Solar Eclipse Glasses Donation
 - **Print** - August 22, 2017, WOWT.com, “What to do with used eclipse glasses? Donate them.”
 - August 22, 2017, NebraskaRadioNetwork.com, “Nebraskans can recycle their solar eclipse glasses”
 - August 23, 2017, *Omaha World-Herald*, “Save those eclipse glasses – groups collecting them for reuse during 2019 celestial events in South America, Asia”
 - August 29, 2017, *Douglas Co. Post-Gazette*, “Don’t throw away your eclipse glasses”
 - **Social** - August 22, 2017, WOWT Facebook page & Twitter, “What to do with used eclipse glasses? Donate them.”
 - August 22, 2017, KETV Michelle Bandur Facebook page, “You can actually do something good with those eclipse glasses”
 - **Broadcast** – KETV (Aug. 22), KETV-ME (Aug. 22), KETV (Aug. 23)
- ✓ August 23, 2017, *Papillion Times*, “County Unveils 2017-18 budget”
- ✓ August 25, 2017, *Blair Enterprise*, “City of Blair proposes 5% tax increase”
- ✓ August 25, 2017, *Omaha World-Herald* – The Public Pulse, “Savings worthy of discussion.”
- ✓ August 25, 2017, *Blair Pilot-Tribune*, “Fort Calhoun water project nearing completion”
- ✓ August 26, 2017, *Gretna Breeze*, “Lakeview project plans draw some concerns”
- ✓ September 1, 2017, *Midlands Business Journal*, “Environmental projects help to decrease pollution, make lifestyle enhancements”
- ✓ **Broadcast** - September 1, 2017, KETV.ME, Video of stocking of dam site 15A from Instagram
- ✓ September 1, 2017, *Sioux City Journal*, Our Opinion – “Heed risks, practice safety with Missouri”

- ✓ September 3, 2017, *Omaha World-Herald*, “What would Omaha look like if it received as much rain as Houston?”
- ✓ September 6, 2017, *Omaha World-Herald*, “Spraying targets weeds on lower Platte River”
- ✓ September 6, 2017, *Omaha World-Herald*, “World O! Water features all things aquatic”

August 2017 PR/Education Report

Public Relations:

Media relations and story placement
Solar eclipse glasses donation collection outreach
General Manager's report
Setting up one-on-one meetings with project managers to learn about projects and timelines
Meeting with potential new vendors for brand awareness campaigns
Increasing number of social media posts on all platforms and engaging with "fans."
Responding to constituent questions through the website
Assessing website revisions
Working with Joe Riebe on a Papio NRD fishing map app
Created weekly media placement summaries

Education:

August Programming Schedule:

8/1- Brownell Talbot Summer Camp- Backyard Animals- 17 children
8/7- Millard Library Storytime- Turtles- 64 children and parents
8/9- Heron Haven Summer Camp- Backyard Animals- 18 children
8/9- Wildlife Summer Camp-Owls-10 children
8/19-Focus on Forests Teacher workshop – 8 teachers

Planning/Coordination:

General NRD Animal Care
MORE Nature Website Updates and Social Media Posts
Nature Nights '17-18: Fall Presenters/Catering/Confirmation Correspondence
NRD Programs, Programs Spreadsheet, and Calendar
Edit/Re-Write/Update Teacher Newsletter
World O! Water Invoice and Coordination of Presenters/Rentals/Sponsorship/Set-up

Meetings/Trainings:

Bessey Nursery Conference Call
NFS Workshop Meeting
World O! Water Planning Committee Meeting
Meeting with Designer on Teacher Newsletter
Water Works Planning Committee Meeting
Photo Selection Meeting for Teacher Newsletter
Conference Call with OCM about Sponsorship of Tree Exhibit

American Red Cross Blood Drive Email - 8/17/17



Hi Nicole,

Thanks so much for hosting yesterday's blood drive! Especially this summer, the units are extra needed for hospitals so we're truly grateful for your partnership!

16 total units collected, from 18 presenting donors. Your blood drive potentially saved **48** lives.

Please thank the donors for us and of course feel free to share these results via email, social media, via intercom or in person/meeting announcement or

however you see fit.

I also included a cute photo of a local NE recipient story that you can feel free to share as a way to say thank you to participants as well.

Please also let me know any follow up comments/questions you have. Otherwise, we look forward to working with you in the future. We have Feb. 21 open if it works for you again this Winter? Let me know.

Thanks again for all your help coordinating this!

**Blair Bonczynski, Account Manager III, Donor Recruitment
American Red Cross**


West Blood Services Division
3838 Dewey Ave, Omaha, NE 68105
(402) 660-0446 (c) Blair.Bonczynski@redcross.org



Thu 8/24/2017 9:37 AM

Ward, Deborah M. - NRCS-CD, Tekamah, NE <Deborah.Ward2@ne.nacdnet.net>
tire collection

To Stauss, Jennifer

 You replied to this message on 8/24/2017 1:35 PM.

[Bing Maps](#)

Hi Jen!

I just wanted to touch base regarding social media followup for scrap tire collection. We had the following businesses donate:

Casey's General Store – Arlington (pizzas)
Jimmy Johns-Blair (sandwich platters)
Hy-Vee – Fremont (water, sports drinks, ice)
Cargill (volunteers to help with surveys and tire unloading)

Can Papio thank and promote these businesses through our social media (also post on their social media if possible)?

We had 396 loads of tires. Contractor is still removing tires, so we won't know for another few weeks re: volume.

Thank You!!

Deb
Deborah Ward
Program Assistant
Tekamah Field Office
(402)374-1920 ext. 101
P.O. Box 148

Report on Purchases

Construction Services, Professional Services, Personal Property

August, 2017

[illegible]

Updated: August 14, 2017

Current and On-Going Projects P-MRNRD Legal Counsel

★ = **Top Priority**

F = Future Work – No Assignment

N = New Assignment

O = Others Handling

W = Work in Progress

P = Counsel Portion Completed

B = Next Board Meeting

- **Little Papio:** (Cleveland)
- **Big Papio:** (Cleveland)
 - ★ Culverts Rehab Phase 2 Contract w/ FYRA (N)
 - ★ Culverts Rehab Phase 2 Interlocal w/City of Omaha (B)
- **West Branch:** (Cleveland)
 - ★ Land Exchange with Sarpy Co. (96th St.) (P)
- **Western Sarpy Dike:** (Cleveland/Petermann)
 - NRDs/NE-ARNG Interlocal for Camp Ashland Property (F)
- **Floodway Purchase Program:** (Laster/Grint)
 - Arlington Purchase Agreements, Deeds, etc. – Public Hearing (October Board) (W)
- **Trail Projects:** (Williams)
 - ★ Hwy 34 Bridge Trail – Local Funding Interlocal (B)
 - West Papio Trail, Giles to Millard – Potential Tyson Access License Agreement (F)
 - ★ West Papio Trail, Giles to Millard – Omaha/La Vista Interlocal Amendment for Construction (B)

- **Missouri River Corridor Project:** (Becic)
 - Draft Purchase Agreement with Reserved Easement for MUD (Platte River Sites/Missouri River (N))
- **USDA PL 566 Projects, Silver Creek and Pigeon/Jones Watershed:** (Schumacher/Cleveland)
 - Papio PL 566 Site W-2 Issues (F)
 - ★ Tek-Mud 9A Watershed Structure Bank Stabilization Contract (W)
 - ★ P/J 12 Professional Services Contract Amendment with Olsson Assoc. (B)
- **Papio Watershed Dam Sites:** (Grint/Laster/Williams)
 - ★ ROW Acquisition Documents for WP6 & WP7 (F)
 - ★ City of Omaha Interlocal Agreement for ZB-2 (W)
 - ★ WP6 & WP7 Interlocal Agreement with Papillion and Sarpy Co. (P)
 - ★ Purchase Agreements and ROW Documents for Z-B2 (W)
 - ★ City of Omaha Interlocal Agreement Amendment No. 2 for DS-15A (P)
 - ★ WP6 & WP7 Professional Services Contract Amendment with FYRA Eng. (B)
- **Papio Creek Watershed Partnership (Stormwater):** (Grint)
- **Southern Sarpy Watershed Partnership (Stormwater):** (Laster)
 - Interlocal with City of Omaha for Construction Inspections (F)
- **Missouri River R-613 and R-616 Levees:** (Cleveland/Woodward)
 - Offutt AFB Culvert O&M Agreement (W)
 - ROW Acquisition Documents (F)
- **Rural Water Projects:** (Nelson)
- **Other:**

**PAPILLION CREEK
WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP**

MEETING MINUTES



**Partnership Meeting
August 24, 2017 – 10:00 AM – Board Room
Natural Resource Center, 8901 S 154th Street, Omaha, NE**

Attendants:

See attached sign-in sheet.

Purpose

A meeting of the Partnership was held on the above date in order to discuss topics stated in the attached agenda. The meeting began at 10:05 am.

1. Introductions

- An agenda and handouts were distributed. Marlin Petermann facilitated introductions.

2. MS4 Permit Update

- Amanda Grint stated that NDEQ has issued the small MS4 permit for the Papillion Creek Watershed communities on July 1, 2017. A new Notice of Intent must be submitted by each community. The NOI can be submitted at any time, but the new Stormwater Management Plan must be submitted by the end of the year. A copy of Omaha's draft SWMP is included in the packet. We will discuss the draft SWMP at the September and October meetings to finalize.
- Jim Kee stated that Omaha has submitted their SWMP and NOI to NDEQ, but have not yet received any comments. They are on the same timeline for approval of the permit. Reporting periods will be the same for both Omaha and the other communities.
- John Kottmann asked if all the supporting documents should be submitted with the NOI. Should they be digital or hard copies? Amanda will follow up with NDEQ to determine how these should be submitted. Amanda will get an executed copy of the current interlocal agreement.
- Lori Laster and Amanda will work on a draft of the SWMP for the SMS4 communities prior to the next meeting.



3. New Grading Permits

- Jim Kee stated that changes are being proposed to the general terms in the grading permit issued through Permix to be consistent with State requirements. The draft language has been emailed to each community for their review and comment. The major change would be to relax dry weather construction site inspections from weekly to every 14 days. Effluent limitations guidelines have been included in the State permit. There are no numeric limits but there are BMP suggestions to achieve the goals. Please provide any comments to Jim within the next 30 days. A stakeholder meeting will be scheduled with consultants and developers to discuss the changes.

4. Sediment and Erosion Control Enforcement

- Marlin Petermann showed photographs of current sites where sediment has been released in to reservoirs due to inadequate BMPs during construction. Sites including Prairie Queen, Dam Site 15A, and Zorinsky Basin 2. The regulations may not be sufficient to keep sediment from being deposited in streams and reservoirs. Do we need to look at additional requirements for treatment train BMPs to make sure that we are preventing sedimentation?
- Jim Theiler asked if there is a way to define sensitive areas that would require a higher level of BMPs and inspections.
- Jim Kee stated that Cunningham, Standing Bear, and Zorinsky were identified as priority watersheds in the past. Any construction project within a mile of these reservoirs had a priority review, but he is not aware of any additional rules or regulations. It would be possible to add these areas to the Omaha Regional Stormwater Design Manual.
- Any priority sites identified by the City of Omaha are inspected more frequently, but there are no other requirements.
- Andy Szatko stated that it's difficult for people to gain access to other people's property when sediment leaves a construction site.
- Amanda Grint stated that enforcement of cleanup is difficult. It takes a lot of follow up to get contractors to remove sediment and repair damage. And how do we deal with habitual offenders?
- Jim Kee stated that the maximum fine is \$500 per day per violation. When considering a fine, habitual offenders will get a larger fine than those who haven't had previous violations.
- Chris Shewchuk stated that stopping work could also be an option for unresponsiveness.
- Jim Theiler stated that there had been collaboration with Metro Omaha Builders Association (MOBA) when grading permits and regulations were first implemented. We need to start that coordination again.
- Dan Gittinger stated that Gretna stops inspections (footing, electrical, etc.) until issues have been addressed.
- The City of Bellevue collects a cut/fill fee with grading permit fees. We could consider raising permit fees to offset increased costs.
- Omaha will reach out to MOBA and Build Omaha to start a discussion to determine how we can address these issues with contractors and builders.
- Andy Szatko stated that we should set up a meeting with all permit reviewers in each jurisdiction to discuss processes and gather input from everyone. He will also gather feedback from inspectors.

- >> A Doodle poll will be sent out for a subcommittee meeting to include permit reviewers from each community. We will try to schedule the meeting before the next Partnership meeting.

5. Other Items of Interest

- >> World O! Water is on September 9, 2017 from noon to 4 pm at Chaco Hills. Hy Vee is supplying hotdogs and chips. Volunteers are needed to help with canoe rides.
- >> September 21, 2017 (9 am - 3:30 pm) is the Omaha Green Infrastructure Tour. Registration is capped at 94 so registrations should be submitted soon. UNL Extension will send an email and information is posted on the Omaha Stormwater Facebook page.

6. Next Meeting Date

- >> The next meeting will be held September 28, 2017 at 10 am at the NRC building.

7. Adjourn

- >> The meeting adjourned at 11:46. An agenda and the handouts passed out at the meeting are available upon request.

Please contact Lori Laster at 444-6222 regarding any questions or comments concerning these meeting minutes.

Sioux City Journal

Founded in 1864

A MOBILE APP FOR THE MIGHTY MO

New Missouri River app

Users can learn
about water trail via
their smartphones

VERMILLION, S.D. — For a number of years, Missouri River enthusiasts have developed websites full of information touting the scenery, history and notable sites along the river in this area.

Tim Cowman and members of the Missouri National Rec-



NICK
HYTREK

reational River Water Trail committee wanted to make all those interesting facts and photos even more accessible, especially to those paddling down the river in canoes and kayaks.

What better way to make that information available to an audience on the move by creating a mobile app in which those

floating on the river can learn about the interesting features they're seeing by making a few swipes on their smartphones?

"The app is something that was developed as a way to promote and support the Missouri River Water Trail," said Cowman, coordinator of the Missouri National Recreational River Water Trail and a geologist with the U.S. Geological Survey housed at the University of South Dakota.

Stretching some 100 miles

from Fort Randall Dam near Pickstown, South Dakota, to Sioux City, the trail, established in 2013 by the National Park Service, includes many historic, scenic and interesting sites.

Cowman said he wanted to see information about them put into the hands of more people.

Knowing that many people use a smartphone to plan trips, it was logical to develop an app they could use to explore the

Please see APP, Page A5

App

From A1

Missouri River. Plus, Cowman had seen apps for hiking trails in other national parks and thought it would be something that could be adapted for a water trail.

The goal: teach more people about the river and attract more visitors.

"There's a lot of historically and naturally interesting things on the river that they might not be aware of," Cowman said.

Work on the app started in 2014, and it was released last summer. Cowman said he knew from personal experience that it's hard to get

a cellphone signal in many spots on the river, so the app was built so that when installed on a mobile device, all the data — sound, photos, text — is stored onto the device so it can be accessed without a signal.

The app, which can be found at www.i-treks.com/routes/4/, includes information on 26 features, not only those that can be seen from the river, but also points of interest, such as Spirit Mound and scenic overlooks, that are accessed by land.

"You can use it to learn about the Missouri River even if you're not on the Missouri River," Cowman said.

On the river, the app uses GPS on the user's phone to detect the nearest river features. It will pull up videos and other information about that feature that can be viewed while the user is floating past.

"Now you're there actually seeing it, you're not in your house looking at pictures of it," Cowman said. "Most people tell us they find it helpful and educational."

River guides demonstrate the app during interpretive paddles — guided kayak/canoe tours on the river — each summer. During the free events, guides lead 12-15 people onto the river

and take them to two or three points of interest. The guides bring electronic devices along so that during each stop, they can show participants how the app works. Many people will download the app once the tour is finished.

The app shows a lot of potential, Cowman said. More points of interest are planned to be added to the

app so that it will highlight some river feature every couple of miles. Cowman said he doesn't know how many people have downloaded the app, but he's seen a lot more people kayaking and canoeing on the river in the past five years.

There's seemingly more interest in the Missouri River, and Cowman said the app is another way to help people become more familiar with it.

"I think more people are becoming aware of what this river has to offer, not only for recreation but also in terms of how significant it is from an ecological standpoint and how significant it is from a cultural and history standpoint," Cowman said. "We're trying to make people more aware of just what the river

has to offer, how unique it is, how important it is to our area."

If you go

WHAT: Interpretive group canoe/kayak trip on the Missouri National Recreational River Water Trail. Guides will take participants on the river to discuss landmarks such as Goat Island and the wreck of the North Alabama steamboat.

WHEN: 8 a.m.-noon, Aug. 26

WHERE: The trip will begin at the Myron Grove Boat Landing on the Missouri River near Meckling, S.D., and end at Clay County Park near Vermillion, S.D.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: To register, go to www.mnrrwatertrail.org.



JIM LEE, SIOUX CITY JOURNAL FILE

A new mobile app details 26 sites on or near the Missouri River from Fort Randall Dam near Pickstown, South Dakota, to Sioux City, above.

Sioux City Journal

SIOUX CITY, Iowa

Date: Tuesday, August 8, 2017
Frequency: DAILY
Circulation: 48175
Clip Size: 120.57 sq. inches
Ad Rate: \$33.5
Page/Section: A 0001

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JUSTIN WAN, SIOUX CITY JOURNAL

Tim Cowman, coordinator of the Missouri National Recreational River Water Trail, shows off a mobile app that details 26 sites on or near the river from Fort Randall Dam near Pickstown, South Dakota, to Sioux City. The app is capable of pulling up information about the sites while people in kayaks and canoes float past.

WORLD-HERALD (AM)

OMAHA, Nebraska

Date: Saturday, August 5, 2017
Frequency: DAILY
Circulation: 104958
Clip Size: 3.18 sq. inches
Ad Rate: \$162.00
Page/Section: B 0002



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Part of Keystone Trail between Maple and Blondo will be closed

The section of the Keystone Trail between Maple and Blondo Streets will be closed to users starting Monday so the Papio Missouri River Natural Resources District can make repairs to the creek bank.

The work should be completed by Friday. Officials said trail users can use Keystone Drive as a detour around the closed section.

From staff reports

WORLD-HERALD (AM)

OMAHA, Nebraska

Date: Thursday, August 10, 2017
Frequency: DAILY
Circulation: 104958
Clip Size: 6.08 sq. inches
Ad Rate: \$162.00
Page/Section: B 0002



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BRIEFLY

METRO AREA

Tire collection scheduled in Washington County

A free scrap-tire collection is scheduled for Friday at the Washington County Fairgrounds in Arlington.

The collection will run from 8 a.m. to noon at the fairgrounds on the west edge of town.

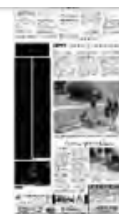
Each load is limited to 100 tires. No rims will be accepted.

The Papio-Missouri River and the Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources Districts and the Nebraska Loess Hills Resource Conservation and Development Council are organizing the collection.

The 10-county collection area is made up of Burt, Colfax, Cuming, Dakota, Dodge, Douglas, Sarpy, Stanton, Thurston and Washington Counties.

Champlin Tire Recycling will process the tires.

— Jay Withrow



Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee agrees on future role

The Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee (MRRIC) held its 38th meeting Aug. 8-10 in Omaha.

Maj. Gen. Scott A. Spellmon, commander, Northwestern Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), and Noreen Walsh, regional director of the Mountain-Prairie Region, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), spoke to the committee about the importance of MRRIC as a collaborative forum.

Members learned about the public comments submitted on the draft Missouri River Recovery Management Plan-Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Adaptive Management (AM) Plan released by the Corps in December. The Corps anticipates completing a biological assessment for the plan in the fall, and the USFWS expects to complete its biological opinion in early 2018.

The AM Plan serves as the framework for implementing potential actions described in the EIS that support the recovery of three threatened and endangered species — the pallid sturgeon, interior least tern and piping plover — while maintaining the Missouri River's eight

authorized purposes — flood control, navigation, irrigation, hydropower, water supply, water quality, recreation and fish and wildlife.

At its May meeting, MRRIC agreed on an approach to active engagement in governance of the AM program in the future and approved a restructuring of its work groups to implement the new approach. A key achievement at the August meeting was to establish bird, fish and human considerations work groups.

"Taking an adaptive management approach is essential for a program at this scale," MRRIC Chairperson Gail Bingham said. "MRRIC has been working closely with the Corps and the Service (USFWS) for many years to understand the science surrounding the lifecycles of the three species and where important questions remain.

"Adaptive management provides a structured opportunity to learn from actions taken so that efforts to achieve the objectives of the Missouri River Recovery Program (MRRP) become more successful over time," Bingham said. "It is exciting that MRRIC can be involved as a strategic

partner in this effort."

MRRIC's Tribal and Communications Work Groups discussed ways to increase the awareness of the MRRP and MRRIC's work among Missouri River Basin Tribes and stakeholder groups. The Corps also presented information about current and future recovery program budget allocations.

MRRIC is a 70-member committee that comprises stakeholders and representatives of tribal, state and federal governments throughout the Missouri River Basin.

MRRIC was authorized by Congress in the 2007 Water Resources Development Act and was established in 2008 by the Assistant

Secretary of the Army (Civil Works). It provides recommendations to the Secretary of the Army and other Federal agencies on efforts to recover the three listed species, mitigate habitat loss, and restore the ecosystem to protect other native species. The committee makes decisions by consensus.

The next MRRIC meeting will be Oct. 31 through Nov. 2, in Kansas City, Mo. For more information on MRRIC, contact the committee chairperson at mrric@usace.army.mil. More information on Missouri River recovery efforts is available at mrric.org and moriverrecovery.org.



Pallid sturgeon

COURTESY USFWS MOUNTAIN PRAIRIE

BLAIR CITY COUNCIL ROUNDUP: AUG. 8

Officer residency tabled again

The council voted 5-2 to table the third and final reading of an amendment to its police officer residency ordinance for a second time. Council members Frank Wolff, Ward 2, and Chris Jensen, Ward 1, voting nay. Council member Marty Shepard, Ward 4, was absent.

There were "timing issues" with the third and final reading July 25, President Brad Andersen, Ward 2, said Aug. 8. Council member Kevin Hall, Ward 1, said he wanted more time for review.

The current ordinance requires all officers to live within 30 minutes of Blair. The council initially introduced an amendment June 27 to require new officers to live within 15 miles of Blair. It would have also required residency for any officer to be eligible for promotion.

The Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 83 offered an alternative amendment that expanded the requirement for newly hired officers to Washington County residency. A promotion eligibility requirement wouldn't be included.

Floodplain study making progress

The city is ready to submit a study of an unnamed tributary commonly called "South Creek" to FEMA for review.

Dozens of properties were moved into the floodplain in 2012 after FEMA released new floodplain maps, resulting in property owners needing to buy flood insurance. The city hired an engineering firm to conduct another study because it suspected FEMA's survey wasn't accurate.

There were originally 11 struc-

tures in the floodplain, including an abandoned railroad grade, that caused water to rise. There are now three.

The city started with about 150 properties. About 27 remain in the floodplain after the new study, but those owners can obtain a certificate to submit to FEMA so their flood insurance requirement is removed.

"Bottom line is, of about 150 properties, we'll have three that will need to remain in the floodplain for sure," Al Schoemaker, director of public works, said.

The city hopes to have the study adopted by FEMA and the remapping completed by Jan. 1. If adopted, the city will notify affected property owners of the results.

Keno license changed

The council voted 7-0 to approve a request from Big Red Keno for a keno license change of ownership for Russow's Corner Pub, 1600 State St.

Jayne and Mike Russow of Blair recently purchased the bar, formerly the Corner Retreat, from Jeff and Joshua Christiansen, and are renovating the building. The Russows have a temporary agreement with Jeff Christiansen for the keno license until the ownership change is official.

The city's keno fund balance was \$189,332 as of July 31. The funds have been used to purchase equipment and vehicles, and for projects like a new handicapped-accessible sidewalk at Optimist Park.

Few details left on U.S. 75 project

The U.S. Highway 75 repaving project throughout the city was in the "punch list" phase Aug. 8, Al Schoemaker, director of pub-

lic works, said. A contractor was scheduled to remove and replace "somewhat rough" manholes on the highway going south out of Blair last week.

Schoemaker said he expected the project to be completed within two weeks.

Water main repair went smoothly

Schoemaker gave an account of the 30-inch Cargill transmission water main break July 28.

The break started at the city's wastewater treatment plant at 2:58 a.m. By 3:03 a.m., it was a "river running out of the ground down there," he said.

The city supplied water for Cargill from its other mains and the south water tower, which resulted in a strain on the city's ability to pump water up the hill to feed the tower. The Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District started a back-feed from the Metropolitan Utilities District through the NRD's Washington County Rural Water 1 and 2 systems. The city spent about \$600,000 to install an oversized 12-inch water main for that purpose in 2009.

The Blair Volunteer Fire Department also helped with extra pumping capacity to keep the water tower full. The City of Fremont provided parts to repair the main.

The main was back in service the morning of July 30.

"No one was in danger of being out of water in the city," Schoemaker said. "In the future, if we truly are in a desperate situation ... it's nice we have a backup operation that can run about a million gallons a day."

— Katie Rohman

BURT CO. PLAINDEALER

TEKAMAH, Nebraska

Date: Wednesday, August 16, 2017
Frequency: WEEKLY
Circulation: 1493
Clip Size: 33.68 sq. inches
Ad Rate: \$10.4
Page/Section: 0007



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August means tax time

The end of August has a lot going on.

Some of it involves taxation. In the matter of a few weeks people will be heading to the courthouse to pay the second half of their property taxes. Also, government bodies with the authority to levy a tax will be determining their budgets for the 2017-18 fiscal year. Part of that process involves determining their property tax requirements and the tax levy they'll need to raise the set amount of money.

Property taxes are figured by dividing a property's assessed value by 100 and multiplying that figure by the tax rate. A Tekamah property owner, for example is subject to a total levy of \$2.011737 from all the agencies that can ask for tax money. For the owner of \$100,000 worth of property, that means a tax bill of \$2,011.74.

That total is payable Dec.

31 of the particular tax year. Or it can be paid at the county treasurer's office in two installments. The first half is due the next May 1 while the second half is due Sept. 1.

For the 2106 tax year, the taxes that are being paid now, the treasurer's office is expected to collect \$24,968,082.76 in personal and real estate property tax. About a third of that remains to be collected with most of the remainder arriving in the next two weeks.

But just because the county takes in that kind of money doesn't mean they get to keep it.

Of the nearly \$25 million they'll collect only \$4.38 million actually stays at the courthouse to fund county operations. The rest of it goes back to the entities that asked for it.

Deputy Treasurer Robin Olson said payments generally go out the same month they come in.

Most of tax money collected goes to school districts. The treasurer collects taxes for Tekamah-Herman, Oakland-Craig, Lyons-Decatur, Bancroft-Rosalie and Logan View schools.

Tekamah-Herman's last budget required \$8.38 million in property taxes, nearly twice what the county sought.

Burt County asked 24.3283 cents on every \$100 of property in the entire county, whether its in town or in the country. In contrast, schools can only tax the property owners within their districts.

The cities also levy a tax. The City of Tekamah wanted 65.5205 cents per \$100 of valuation last year to fund its operations and service its debt.

The county also collects money for the cemetery and fire districts in the county, the Papio-Missouri River and Lower Elkhorn Natural Resources Districts, Educational Service

Unit No. 2 based in Fremont, Northeast Technical Community College in Norfolk and the Pender hospital, among others.

The exact breakdown for every tax authority on every piece of property is printed on the respective property tax statement, Olson said.

Each taxing entity determines its own rate. While the county board certifies each levy every fall, it has no authority to make the others change their rates. Certification, Olson said, means only that the county will collect a certain amount at a certain rate and pay it to the entity that asks for it.

The budget process requires taxing bodies to hold a public hearing before their tax asking and tax rates can be set. By law, those meetings must be announced to the public 10 days in advance.

WORLD-HERALD (AM)

OMAHA, Nebraska

Date: Wednesday, August 16, 2017
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THE PUBLIC PULSE

NRD leaders should respect public

Along with many homeowners, I am very concerned about rising property taxes. Since it appeared to me that the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District draft budget represented a tax hike, I decided to attend my first board meeting on Aug. 10.

Three taxpayers spoke at the meeting, sharing their concerns and offering suggestions on reducing the budget. I was surprised at the reaction by some board members during these presentations.

Some listened politely, others seemed very interested and reviewed material provided to them, but one of the board members was very unprofessional. He twirled his mustache, grinned sarcastically, picked at his arms and did not review any of the materials provided.

During discussions on the proposed budget, a few of the board members had concerns about the budget and agreed with information that one of the taxpayers had provided. I was shocked when NRD General Manager John Winkler referred to this report as "twisted" and then disagreed with the budget objections.

The NRD website indicates: "The Board welcomes public input." However, it appears that Winkler and some board members don't.

Property owners should lobby their board members to reduce the proposed budget and improve the relationship with taxpayers. The board meetings should welcome suggestions from the taxpayers. They work for us.

Aldona Tanner, Omaha

Twitter - @OWHOpinion - 8/16/17

The Public Pulse



World-Herald Opinion

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Following



Officials [@PapioNRD](#) might not like suggestions from the public, but they should listen, a Public Pulse writer says.



The Public Pulse: NRD leaders should respect the public

Along with many homeowners, I am very concerned about rising property taxes. Since it appeared to me that the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District ...

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OMAHA, Nebraska

Date: Saturday, August 19, 2017
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Some Papio-Missouri River NRD access points will be closed

Because of high water levels, debris and surface runoff and the potential for water levels to rise because of water upstream, the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District will keep the following access points closed through the weekend:

- » Platte River Landing (access point to the Platte River)
- » All Elkhorn River access points and recreation areas in Douglas County. The campground will be open. — **From staff reports**

Solar Eclipse Glasses Donation Coverage

WOWT.com – 8/22/17



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What to do with used eclipse glasses? Donate them.



By Papio-Missouri River NRD | Posted: Tue 12:43 PM, Aug 22, 2017



OMAHA, Neb. Now that the eclipse is over, there's a problem. What to do with those used eclipse glasses?

The Papio-Missouri River NRD is asking for us to donate them for reuse in other parts of the world.


The NRD is collecting solar eclipse glasses for Astronomers Without Borders, who wants to redistribute the glasses to schools in Asia and South America, where there will be solar eclipses in 2019.

The NRD is asking the public to bring or mail their glasses to the Papio-Missouri River NRD at 8901 South 154th Street, Omaha, NE 68138.

They will then send them off to Astronomers without Borders. The organization has not yet identified addresses for people to send the glasses directly, so the NRD is collecting them and will then send what they collect once an address is released.

People can also drop them off at the NRD. There is a receptacle at the front desk for the glasses.

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Papio NRD says donate those used eclipse glasses to a good cause.
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Don't throw away your solar eclipse glasses! Donate them. Here's how.

**Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District**
Published by Hootsuite [?] · August 22 at 9:05am · 🌐

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You Can Actually Do Something Good With Those Eclipse Glasses

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Nebraskans can recycle their solar eclipse glasses

AUGUST 22, 2017 BY [KARLA JAMES](#)

The Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District wants your used solar eclipse glasses for a great cause. The Astronomers Without Borders group wants to redistribute the glasses to schools in Asia and South America, where there will be a solar eclipse in 2019.

The NRD is asking for the public to bring in or mail them your glasses so they can send them off to that organization. Their mailing address is 8901 S. 154th Street, Omaha, Nebraska, 68138.

Omaha World-Herald – 8/23/17

Save those eclipse glasses — groups collecting them for reuse during 2019 celestial events in South America, Asia

By Chris Peters / World-Herald staff writer Aug 23, 2017 Updated 12 hrs ago (0)



Buffett Magnet Middle School seventh-graders — from left, Monica Moran, Isabella Mitchell and AJ Meeske — show off their eclipse glasses

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Omaha World-Herald – 8/23/17



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If you haven't already, don't chuck your eclipse glasses.

Organizations around the Omaha area — and around the country — are gathering up spare and undamaged glasses for the next astronomical spectacles in 2019. Your donated glasses could travel around the world.

Astronomers Without Borders has put out a call to organizations from Oregon to South Carolina to gather donated glasses. The organization plans to redistribute them to people in South America for the July 2, 2019, total solar eclipse and in Asia for the Dec. 26, 2019, annular eclipse.

According to NASA, eclipse glasses that are up to the current standard last indefinitely “if the filters aren't scratched, punctured or torn.” If you plan on traveling for the next American eclipse in 2024 and have a safe place to store the glasses, hang onto them. Otherwise, there are several places in town that have started up a collection.

Omaha World-Herald – 8/23/17

Astronomers Without Borders has put out a call to organizations from Oregon to South Carolina to gather donated glasses. The organization plans to redistribute them to people in South America for the July 2, 2019, total solar eclipse and in Asia for the Dec. 26, 2019, annular eclipse.

According to NASA, eclipse glasses that are up to the current standard last indefinitely “if the filters aren’t scratched, punctured or torn.” If you plan on traveling for the next American eclipse in 2024 and have a safe place to store the glasses, hang onto them. Otherwise, there are several places in town that have started up a collection.

Bellevue’s Fontenelle Forest is accepting donated glasses in person or via mail at 1111 Bellevue Blvd. North. The Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District is accepting them, too. Drop off or send glasses to 8901 S. 154th St. in Omaha.

Optometrist Kristin Reed at ModernEyes Eyecare & Eyewear has also started a collection in person at 19060 Q St., Suite 107.

DOUGLAS CO. POST-GAZETTE

ELKHORN, Nebraska

Date: Tuesday, August 29, 2017
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Ad Rate: \$21.25
Page/Section: 0003



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Don't throw away your eclipse glasses

The Papio-Missouri River NRD is collecting solar eclipse glasses for a very good cause. They saw in an article that Astronomers Without Borders want to redistribute the glasses to schools in Asia and South America, where there will be solar eclipses in 2019.

Papio NRD is asking the public to bring or mail their glasses to Papio-Missouri River NRD, 8901 S. 154th Street, Omaha, NE 68138, and they will send them off to Astronomers without Borders.

Keene Memorial Library in Fremont is also collecting eclipse glasses to recycle through Astronomers Without Borders. Glasses may be dropped off at the front desk during library hours: Sunday, 12:30-4:30 p.m.; Monday-Thursday, 9:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.; and Friday and Saturday, 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The library is located at 1030 N. Broad Street in Fremont. For more information, call the library at 402-727-2694.



County unveils 2017-18 budget

By Eugene Curtin

Times Associate Editor

The 2017-18 budget that will be unveiled by the Sarpy County Board Tuesday keeps the county's property tax rate at 29.69 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation, a rate that maintains a 15-year streak during which the county has not increased its property tax rate.

The last increase came in 2002 when the rate increased from 29 cents to 29.9 cents. That rate dropped to 29.69 cents in 2015 and has remained there through three budget cycles. The stable tax rate does not mean that Sarpy County residents will avoid higher property tax payments, howev-

er, since increasing property valuations increase the dollar value on which property tax is levied.

For example, a house that was valued at \$150,000 a year ago but whose value has increased an average 3.3 percent to \$154,995 this year, will pay on that higher value. The owners' annual tax payment, therefore, will climb from \$445.35 to \$460.18, an increase of \$14.83 even though the tax rate itself has not changed.

The county's share of overall county tax dollars lands at about 13 percent, while the public schools take 55 percent, sanitary and improvement districts take 12 percent, the cities 10 percent and the rest is distributed between Metropolitan Communi-

ty College, fire districts, the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District and the Sarpy County Agricultural Society.

The county expects to spend \$153.4 million during the approaching fiscal year, up 3.26 percent from the \$148.6 million it budgeted last year. That revenue will be drawn from a countywide property valuation of \$14.4 billion, up 6.2 percent from last year's valuation of \$13.6 billion.

Although property taxes are the major source of county revenue, accounting for 27.8 percent, they are not the only significant source. Fees charged for services account for 23.6 percent of revenues, with state and federal contributions accounting for an-

other 12 percent.

The vast majority of county spending concerns general government operations, public safety, road construction and other public works. Among the budget items likely to grow in prominence is a proposal to spend \$250,000 on a study that would recommend whether Sarpy County needs a new jail or whether it should add to the existing jail.

The current jail, which opened in 1989, is beyond maximum occupancy and the county has started farming prisoners out to other jurisdictions. The board will vote on the budget at its Aug. 29 session.



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City of Blair proposes 5% property tax increase

Budget hearing set for Sept. 12

BY KATIE ROHMAN

editor@enterprisepub.com

The City of Blair has proposed a 5 percent property tax increase for fiscal year 2017-18.

If approved as presented, the city would increase its 2018 property tax levy to 37.1989 cents per \$100 of valuation. The tax request would generate \$1.97 million.

The owner of a house valued at \$150,000 would owe \$557.98 — an increase of \$20.74 annually.

The property tax levy for 2017 was 35.8163 cents per \$100 of valuation.

Blair's 2017 valuation increased 1.1 percent to \$528.44 million.

The city council voted 7-1 to adopt the preliminary budget Tuesday. Council member Marty Shepard, Ward 4, voted nay.

A budget hearing for the public is scheduled for 7 p.m. Sept. 12.

The preliminary budget calls for a total appropriation of \$34.78 million for fiscal year 2018, compared to \$46.34 million the prior year.

As proposed, civilian employees would receive a 2 percent pay increase. The city is also budgeting for a 10 percent hike in health insurance. However, the 10 percent

increase would only be in effect for nine months because it's calculated on a calendar year, so the city would see an effective rate increase of about 13 percent for the fiscal year.

Park priorities debated

The preliminary cemetery, park and recreation department budget, totaling \$978,520, contains some items of debate among council members.

Plans for a new all-weather restroom at Lions Park, budgeted for \$180,000 last year, have moved into the preliminary budget this year because the project never got off the ground. The Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District would contribute a \$50,000 grant to the project, while sales tax would pay for \$100,000 and the rest would come from keno funds.

In 2016, the city completed its \$150,000 new playground at Lions Park, North 16th and Park streets. New restrooms were scheduled to be built around that time, but the park board has been debating how to fund construction of the building within

SEE INCREASE, 10A

INCREASE: Budget hearing set for Sept. 12

FROM PAGE 1A

the budget the city has provided.

Installation of new playground equipment at Steyer Park, South 16th and Butler streets, is nearing completion. The project totaled about \$40,000.

The preliminary budget includes another playground

Since then, the council has been working with the parks board to determine project priorities, which have included updating playground equipment.

Council President Brad Andersen, Ward 2, suggested during the meeting Tuesday that the city push the Stemmermann Park project to the next fiscal year in an effort to hold down taxes.

The preliminary budget includes another playground project for 2018: Stemmermann Park, North 10th and Jackson streets, budgeted for \$145,000. The general fund, sales tax and keno funds would pay for the new equipment.

The city council accepted a final master plan for its parks in February 2015. Planning firm Big Muddy Workshop facilitated nine months of public meetings to develop the Blair Parks Master Plan and Trail Update.

Stemmermann Park project to the next fiscal year in an effort to hold down taxes.

"I looked at the list, and there's not that much to cut," Andersen said. "We're down to people, pretty much."

He noted that the new Matthew Daubenspeck Memorial Playground was recently installed near Stemmermann Park in the Blair Youth Sports Complex. It was funded by

ENTERPRISE

BLAIR, Nebraska

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private donations and keno funds.

Council member Chris Jensen, Ward 1, voiced his disapproval of the budgeted cost for the Lions Park restrooms.

"We could probably spend three hut homes in Blair for what we're spending on a bathroom," he said.

Council member Jon Stewart, Ward 4, and other members confirmed they received letters of support for the new restrooms from constituents. Stewart co-led the effort to renovate and relocate the train depot to Lions Park several years ago.

"It serves more than just the depot," he said of the restrooms. Park and trail users would also benefit, he said.

"I don't think anybody here is saying that they're not needed," council member Kevin Hall, Ward 1, said.

City Administrator Rod Storm explained that if the council chooses to remove funding for the Lions Park restrooms, it doesn't affect the levy.

Council may consider new aquatic center

During its budget workshop Aug. 14, the city council debated a possible half-cent sales tax increase next year to fund a new aquatic center and splash pad to replace the municipal swimming pool. The tax increase could also help provide funds for the expansion of the fire department, the highway truck bypass and City Hall remodel-

ing.

The city is budgeting \$70,000 for the swimming pool. Of that total, \$30,000 would pay for engineering costs for a possible new facility, and \$20,000 would pay the Blair Family YMCA's management fee.

Police budget for new equipment

The police department is budgeted for a nearly 20 percent increase to \$2.3 million due to several big-ticket purchases, including a new squad car, copier and Taser to be bought using keno funds.

Public safety bonds totaling \$240,000 would be used to buy new radios and field-based reporting software and computers. The department's current radios are 12 years old, Chief Joe Lager said.

Police salaries will increase 2.5 percent as required by its contract with Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 83.

Library proposes more staff

The library has requested four additional part-time positions for a total of 3,120 hours. The budget allows for one regular part-time employee at 28 hours per week and a second position allowing up to 1,000 hours as needed. The total library budget is \$725,512.

WORLD-HERALD (AM)

OMAHA, Nebraska

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THE PUBLIC PULSE

Savings worthy of discussion

I attended the Aug. 10 meeting of the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District board after learning the 2018 budget would be reviewed. Speakers suggested numerous way to reduce, delay or eliminate expenditures.

I was surprised to see that some board members seemed to have little interest in hearing or discussing the proposed changes to the budget. I had the feeling that the public hearing was just a formality before approval of the budget without change.

This apparent attitude is disappointing at a time when Nebraska is struggling to avoid increasing taxes.

Allen H. Sohl, Gretna



Fort Calhoun water project nearing completion

BY HILLARY ROSECRANTS

features@enterprisepub.com

The Fort Calhoun City Council approved a \$15,572 change order to the 2016 Water System Improvements project, \$3,382 of which will be reimbursed by the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District (PMRNRD).

The project primarily includes the installation of a new water main along County Road P32. The main is now completely installed, and the majority of delays and increases in cost were due to new water service connections due to the new pain.

"We sent out letters to various residents that live along the county road there, and we had five people who wanted new

water services," Zach Schulz, a project engineer for JEO Consulting Group, said at the Aug. 21 city council meeting. "They'll be connecting into the new water main there, they're new customers and they'll be paying the connecting fees."

In addition, the change order covers the cost of additional valve boxes, which will make it possible to turn valves on and off. Schulz estimated that the new water main's valve would be turned on and in service sometime in the following week.

"Everything's on track and going fairly well," said Schulz.

The PMRNRD will reimburse the city because a portion of the new water main will become rural water, which the district will

maintain itself.

"I've worked out the costs with them and they're accepting of that," Schulz said.

Schulz said the project will probably include another month and a half of miscellaneous items to complete, such as ditch clean-up, seeding and grading. The city also approved a fourth pay application to Nelson Construction, the contractor completing the work, for \$39,658.

"This includes all work up to date that the contractor has completed," Schulz explained of the sum.

The city will retain 5 percent of the total cost of the project until the work is completed and approved through the appropriate channels.



Lakeview project plans draw some concerns

By Susan Skinner

Gretna Breeze Editor

Preliminary plans for the Lakeview residential development will move ahead to the Gretna City Council after the Planning Commission recommended approval at an Aug. 22 meeting.

The project proposed by McCune Development LLC would include 179 lots and 12 outlots on about 76 acres south of an extension of Schram Road between 204th and 210th streets. Developer Paul McCune told the board the project would include both a gated villa retirement community and homes largely in the \$400,000 price range.

Residents who live near the proposed development filled the room for a public hearing on the request to approve the preliminary plat and rezoning for the project. They expressed concern about traffic access and safety with Lakeview's connections to the Highland Ridge neighborhood to the west and 204th Street to the east. Many stated that improvements needed to be made to 204th Street before further development in the area was allowed. Others voiced concerns about an increase in stormwater runoff and silt issues that already plague some area residents.

The development hinges

on the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District's plans for the proposed West Papio 4 reservoir project. The project has been termed a proposed priority reservoir project site by the NRD, and it is estimated it will cost about \$10 million to obtain the land and build the dam near 204th Street and Schram Road.

The NRD currently is in the process of creating a 60 percent design plan that is expected to be done in the spring. The plan will identify any land acquisition needed to complete the reservoir project, and would be enough direction to allow the Lakeview project to move forward.

"We've been talking back and forth with the NRD," McCune said, "and it's finally all coming together."

In addressing the concerns of those at the public hearing, a McCune representative noted it would be a minimum of one year before the first foundation was built, and possibly longer, after approval of the preliminary plat and that could potentially relieve some of the timing concerns about 204th Street improvements and the reservoir project.

Also at the Aug. 22 meeting, the Planning Commission took the following actions:

- Recommended approval

of a preliminary and final plat for Weeks Subdivision, generally located between Highway 6 and Standing Stone Drive north of Schram Road. The request by Weeks, Woodruff Investments LLC is a replat of the existing two lots that adjusted the lot line about 10 feet between the lots. The city staff recommended approval; no one spoke at the public hearing.

- Recommended approval of a final plat and rezoning for the Aspen Creek North subdivision. The request by BHI Development Inc. includes the final plat for lots 1 through 147 plus 14 outlots as well as a rezoning from TA and AG to R-2. The development generally is located southwest of 186th Street and Cornhusker Road. City staff recommended approval; no one spoke at the public hearing. The recommendation takes into consideration comments from the city engineer.

- Recommended approval of a preliminary and final plat for a Replat 1 of the subdivision to be known as Aspen Creek Replat 1. The request by BHI Development Inc. includes commercial lots 1 through 5 and outlots A and B, generally located in the northeast corner of 186th Street to 183rd Street and Highway 370.

The purchase of some adjoining land allowed the lot sizes to increase slightly and necessitated the replat. City staff recommended approval; no one spoke at the public hearing. The recommendation takes into consideration comments from the city engineer.

- Recommended approval of a preliminary plat and rezoning for a subdivision to be known as Burlington Park at Gretna Station. The request by Gretna Industrial Park LLC includes a rezoning request for some lots to go from I-2 and GC to I-1 while others will remain I-2. The project is located north of Highway 370 near 200th Street on property that currently is owned by the City of Gretna and includes 14 lots. City staff recommended approval of the request; no one spoke at the public hearing.

Each of these requests will next go before the Gretna City Council for final consideration. These items are expected to be on the agenda for the Sept. 19 city council meeting, which will begin at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall, 204 N. McKenna Ave.

The Gretna Planning Commission meets at 6:30 p.m. the fourth Tuesday of each month at City Hall. For more information, go to the city's website: gretnane.org.



Environmental projects help to decrease pollution, make lifestyle enhancements

by David Kubicek

From engineering water flow to enhance the cityscape to building sustainable houses, environmental projects reduce pollution and save money in the long run.

CSO once stood for Omaha's Combined Sewer Overflow program, which was re-branded as Clean Solutions for Omaha, said Jim Theiler, assistant director for environmental projects with the city of Omaha.

"The CSO program is designed to improve the water quality in our local rivers and streams," he said. "These projects decrease

pollution in the river and make improvements in the city."

Last year the city completed its Spring Lake Park project. The park didn't have any lakes, which had disappeared by the 1920s. The CSO program restored the lakes by separating the sewers and bringing water into the park.

Completed last year, Spring Lake Park now has a two-acre lake that supports a permanent fishery.

CSO is doing a similar project in Fontenelle Park.

"In North Omaha, there used to be a golf course, and on the golf course was a lagoon," Theiler said. "The golf course went away. We brought in stormwater from the neighboring area to expand it for other uses. By keeping water in the area for other uses, there's less water that gets into the Missouri River."

Public Works and the Parks Department have done similar projects in Elmwood Park and Adams Park, using stormwater from the neighborhood to create amenities in the

Continued on next page.

Environmental projects

Continued from preceding page.

parks and slow down water drainage into the Missouri River.

On the drawing board is a project between the city and a developer to repurpose the old Creighton medical facility downtown into an apartment complex.

"We'll convert the former parking lot into a two-acre lake, which will help the developer sell his apartments," Theiler said. "We'll bring sewer water from up north. The water will stay in the lake and come out more slowly rather than rushing directly to the river. The developer hopes to get started by next year."

Steven Ginn Architects is working on a small home in northern Nebraska that is completely off the grid, according to Architectural Associate Greg Gettman. Because the site is remote, the cost to connect to utilities

is prohibitively high.

"It's significantly less expensive to design the house to take advantage of solar power, with a backup gas generator," Gettman said. "But to pull that off, the house had to be as efficient as possible."

In this case, that meant orienting the roof toward the south, which allowed it to support photovoltaic panels angled for maximum exposure to the sun. It also utilized many passive methods of making the building efficient, including long roof overhangs, high performance insulation and windows, and an orientation that allowed for a cooling breeze in the summer.

"These elements, paired with a small footprint, minimized the energy that would be required, and thus allowed us to squeeze all the power the house would need out of just those few panels mounted on the roof," Gettman said.

One challenge was that winter snow could block the photovoltaic panels, rendering them useless. The firm solved this problem by adding a clearstory with a small catwalk terminating at the top of the roof, so one of the occupants could reach a broom through the clerestory windows to sweep snow off the panels.

Gettman said several of the firm's clients have expressed interest in the Tesla Solar Roof, which is not yet available in this area because it's still undergoing tests, but it has the potential to make solar power significantly more approachable.

"This system is exciting because it's both potentially less expensive and better looking than traditional solar panels," Gettman said. "Tesla did this successfully in the auto market; it wasn't that electric vehicles weren't available. Tesla made them desirable."

Stocking of Dam Site15A from Instagram



1.  **KETV-ME** Market: Omaha, NE (74)

NewsWatch 7 @ 9

Sep 1 2017 09:00PM CT

[9:15:13 PM] [0:22] Omaha's new recreation area is now stocked with 22,000 large mouth bass. Take a look. The papio, **MISSOURI RIVER NRD** posted this photo today. Nebraska game and parks is stocking the new lake at 168th and fort. It will be open next year, and the recommendation is to name it after boys town's father Edward Flanagan.

[View](#) 

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OUR OPINION

Heed risks, practice safety with Missouri

Respect the river.

As we approach the traditional end to summer, Labor Day weekend, we repeat that piece of advice, which we have heard offered by so many others through the years about the Missouri River.

In an Aug. 20 story, Journal staff writer Alex Boisjolie reported on local discussion this summer about the safety of "Burbank Beach," a popular area along the Missouri River roughly eight miles west of Elk Point, South Dakota. "Burbank Beach" is a "game production area" maintained by the state for wildlife and isn't a designated beach, but swimming is legal at the site. Posted signs at the location warn of the swimming dangers.

Because three young men have drowned within the last three years while swimming in the river off this sandy piece of state-owned land, some of the "Burbank Beach" discussion is focused on whether Union County should provide more surveillance of the site.

"There have been comments on Facebook that say we need to have a boat down there all the time and have somebody on duty all the time," Sheriff Dan Limoges said for the Aug. 20 story. "How can we do that? We can't. We would have to hire five or six people."

We commend county and state officials for discussion of additional ways to make "Burbank Beach" safer, including improved accessibility for emergency vehicles, but we sympathize with the sheriff's position. Because the sheriff's department doesn't have the manpower or budget, a significant increase in law enforcement presence isn't realistic.

So, in our minds, this is the bottom line: Personal responsibility will remain the most crucial ingredient for preventing future "Burbank Beach" tragedies no one wishes to see.

We urge—no, we implore—anyone who spends time at "Burbank Beach": Heed the risks, exercise caution, practice safety. Respect the river.



JUSTIN WAN, SIOUX CITY JOURNAL

A warning sign cautions visitors to "Burbank Beach."

What would Omaha look like if it received as much rain as Houston?

By Michael O'Connor / World-Herald staff writer Sep 3, 2017 Updated Sep 3, 2017 (0)



In August 1999, 10 inches of rain fell in the metro area, causing flooding in northeast Omaha. Water filled Robert Leonard's basement. He surveys the street near his house during the flood to see what other damage the flooding caused.

JAMES R. BURNETT/THE WORLD-HERALD

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Stormwater swelled 8 feet deep, crashing through Omaha's transit headquarters. Basements filled with chest-deep water. Flooding damaged more than 1,000 homes.

That all happened when 10.5 inches of rain drenched Omaha in less than 24 hours in August 1999, a record amount for that span.

But it's just one-fourth of the deluge that ravaged the Houston area during Hurricane Harvey and its aftermath.

There's no doubt that Houston, which is relatively flat and barely above sea level, was at greater flooding risk than Omaha. The record-shattering rain that hit the Texas city — more than 4 feet in some areas — would cause widespread and catastrophic flooding here and in many parts of the country, said John Winkler, general manager of the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District.

"It would be unfathomable, devastating," said Winkler, whose Omaha-based agency is responsible for flood control in a six-county area. "It would look like a lake."

Chances are infinitesimal that Omaha would ever get hit by rains even close in scale to Houston's deluge, one of the largest downpours in U.S. history. Eastern Nebraska faces a different threat — an increase in heavy rains that cause flooding. And the amounts don't need to be double-digit to create trouble.

But what would Omaha — a city that averages 31 inches of rainfall a year — look like after the 48-plus inches that hit the Houston area in less than a week?

Winkler said Bellevue and Papillion would face some of the worst flooding, because they're near where the area's watershed funnels into the Missouri River.

Flooding would also hit hard, he said, in areas along or near the Papio Creek system and its tributaries, such as 84th Street by Interstate 80, 72nd and Pacific Streets and 144th and F Streets. Downtown Omaha would get swamped because it has so much concrete and so little open soil to soak up rain.

Just as they do under heavy rains, places at higher elevations would fare better, including the Ponca Hills, areas near 72nd Street and the Sorensen Parkway, and neighborhoods northwest of 90th Street and West Dodge Road.

Where your house sits in hilly Omaha would make a big difference. Homes at the top of the hill near St. Cecilia Cathedral by 40th and California Streets, for example, would have far less of a problem than those near low-lying Saddle Creek Road just a few blocks away.

Bob Stubbe, City of Omaha public works director, said the city's storm sewer system is not designed to handle the epic amounts of rain Houston received.

He said that would be the case even after the multiyear, \$2 billion effort underway to reduce the amount of raw sewage Omaha dumps into the Missouri River and the Papio Creek. But he said the overhauled sewer system will lessen street flooding and basement sewage backups when more typical heavy rains hit Omaha.

Dave Pearson, a hydrologist with the National Weather Service office in Valley, said Omaha isn't the only place that would get swamped if hit with levels of rain like Houston's.

"There isn't a (stormwater) system in the world that can move that much water," he said. "You can't engineer that."

But he said the chances of Omaha ever facing 4-plus feet of rain over several days is minuscule. Even the chances of Omaha getting 10.5 inches again in a day is less than 0.5 percent, he said.

Al Dutcher, Nebraska's associate state climatologist, said Omaha gets its share of moist air — even corn sends moisture into the air as the crop grows, he said. But the heavy-duty moisture that causes torrential rainfall has to travel farther to get here from elsewhere, like from the Gulf of Mexico.

And the Midwest, unlike Houston, benefits more from the jet stream, which helps prevent storms from stalling out in one spot.

But Dutcher said Omaha and other parts of the country still face a serious weather reality. During the past three decades in eastern Nebraska and western Iowa there has been a 10 to 20 percent increase in heavy rains — defined as more than 1 inch. And even inches of rain can turn into several feet or more of flooding when it accumulates in low-lying areas or causes creeks and rivers to overflow.

The 2 to 5 inches of rain that hit the Omaha area three years ago created havoc on roads.

The storm led to high water that trapped vehicles in parts of the metro area, including a street under a bridge near Westroads Mall, which filled with nearly 3 feet of water. As usual, Saddle Creek Road flooded in midtown. Towing companies were swamped with calls for help.

Dutcher said climate change is one reason for the trend: Warmer temperatures cause more ocean evaporation, leading to increased moisture in the air. He said development in urban areas creates greater flooding risks, as concrete covers more soil.

Winkler, the manager with the NRD, said area reservoirs play an essential role in flood control, and more are planned.

He said the district plans to build six more dam sites in the next 20 to 30 years at a cost of \$93 million.

The district opened four new reservoirs in the past eight years and has two more opening in the next few years.

“We do have protections in place,” he said. “But we have more we need to do.”

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Spraying targets weeds on lower Platte River

By JAY WITHROW
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Officials have begun aerial spraying of invasive, noxious vegetation on the lower Platte River in eastern Nebraska.

The spraying of 500 acres for phragmites and purple loosestrife began Friday near Columbus and was to continue downstream today or Thursday where the Platte meets the Missouri River, officials said.

Precise applications of an aquatic herbicide approved by the Environmental Pro-

tection Agency is being done by helicopter.

The area is treated at a cost of about \$180 per acre. Landowners are being asked to cover 50 percent of the cost, officials said.

The lower Platte River is becoming clogged with the weeds, which are robbing eastern Nebraska of critically needed water and wildlife habitat for the threatened and endangered piping plover and least tern, officials said.

The Papio-Missouri River, Lower Platte South and

Lower Platte North Natural Resource Districts are working with riverside landowners and weed-control authorities on the assault on the noxious plants, officials said.

Taking root on sandbars and shoreline, the plants reproduce rapidly, overtaking much of the natural habitat.

Today and Thursday, the Platte River Landing access site and recreation area near Omaha is scheduled to be closed for the aerial spraying, officials said.

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World O! Water features all things aquatic

By BLAKE URSCH

WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

When it's just a tap turn away, it's easy to take water for granted.

But now's your chance to show H₂O the appreciation it deserves.

The annual World O! Water event will be from noon to 4 p.m. Saturday at the Chalco Hills Recreation Area, 8901 S. 154th St. It is free to attend.

Participants will be able to take canoe rides, climb a rock wall and examine live animals, including dragonfly larvae, water snails and mayfly nymphs. Educational demonstrations will teach visitors about water safety techniques and aquatic ecosystems.

A free lunch will be available on a first-come first-serve basis. Dogs are welcome.

The all-ages event, which aims to spread awareness of water quality, conservation and recreation, includes activities by more than 30 organizations, including the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium.

Last year, the event drew a record crowd of about 2,400, said Chris Stratman, executive director of Keep Omaha Beautiful, one of the partners on the event.

Stratman said he expects to break the record this year.

"It's outdoors. It's educational. It's very kid-friendly," Stratman said. "That's enticing to people."

The event is produced through a partnership of the City of Omaha Public Works Department, Keep Omaha Beautiful, the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the Papillion Creek Watershed Partnership.

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