

# Memorandum

**To:** PLPA Subcommittee

**Re:** Amendments to District Policy – 17.5 District Programs – Information and Education Program

**Date:** May 11, 2010

**From:** Christine Jacobsen

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The District's Policy 17.5 regarding Information and Education Programs was last updated in December of 1998. Since that time there have been several expansions in the programming the District provides.

The 2010 draft revisions are attached for your review.

**It is recommended that the Subcommittee recommend to the Board that the revisions to the District Policy 17.5 be adopted.**

**17.5 District Programs - Information and Education Program.** The Information and Education Program is an authorized program of the District. The District conducts a number of support activities as part of its Information and Education Program. This is done to provide the public with accurate information on projects and programs previously outlined and to develop an awareness and concern for natural resource conservation and management. Major support activities include:

A. Program Brochures: Informative brochures on conservation education, Back to the River Project, Conservation Cost Sharing Programs, Chalco Hills, Flood Prevention and Flood Plain Management, Papio Trails, ~~Chalco Hills Nature Trail Guide~~, and ~~Walnut Creek Lake and Recreation Area~~ have been published and will be updated and distributed as necessary.

B. Newsletters:

1. Publication of the SPECTRUM newsletter continues to be one of the District's main lines of communication. Over 8,000 copies are distributed through mailings.

2. The District also publishes the Conservnews ~~one or two times each year~~ as needed in cooperation with the NRCS for all landowners in the District. Approximately 7,000 households receive the newsletter which highlights programs available for farmers.

3.

~~2-4.~~ Cultivation Newsletter is published and sent to teachers within the District in the Fall. This newsletter highlights the Education programs of the District.

C. Education Programs:

The District is currently working with ~~local~~ teachers, school administrators, environmental education specialists, and community leaders ~~volunteer naturalists~~ on outdoor education curricula; (including but not limited to in school programming, outdoor learning areas, and field trips), ~~for school age children at the Chalco Hills Recreation Area~~. Development of these educational programs has greatly enhanced the NRD's ability to reach children and their parents ~~people~~ with the conservation message. Approximately 50,000 people ~~8,000 youth visit Chalco Hills each year or~~ participate in one of numerous NRD-sponsored education activities annually.

The District is involved with ~~other youth~~ several education programs and Community Events, including Water Works for fifth grade students in Douglas and Sarpy Counties, Conservation Field Days at Summit Lake, Aquafest for students in Dakota and Thurston Counties, and the Nebraska Envirothon, an environmental competition for high school students. Community Events include Earth Day Omaha, and the World O! Water Festival. The District runs summer day camps for youth ages four to fourteen.

The Metro Omaha Resources for Exploring Nature (M.O.R.E Nature) was founded by the District and the District uses this outreach program to educate families in the Omaha metro area on the importance of outdoor recreation.

D. Teacher Scholarships: ~~Three~~ \$200.00 scholarships are awarded annually to area teachers who wish to continue their education in conservation related subjects.

E. Speakers Bureau: In response to requests from teachers and various civic groups, presentations are made concerning natural resource management. Twenty-five to thirty presentations are made annually.

F. News Releases: Information is provided to the public, through the local media, by the District's media relations program and Public Service Announcements. During the past year, articles appeared in the Omaha World-Herald and in local weekly papers. Also, contacts to radio and television stations resulted in coverage through those media.

G. Internet Web Site: The District launched its Internet Web Site ([www.papionrd.org](http://www.papionrd.org)) in 1998. The site is designed to give visitors an overview of the NRD and an opportunity to electronically contact the NRD with questions and comments.

G-H. Outdoor Classroom Grants: \$1000.00 grants are awarded annually to District schools to develop, implement, and improve outdoor learning environments.

~~H. Volunteer Program: The District recruits volunteers to assist with nature hikes, Visitor Center Guides, park improvements and maintenance, and a variety of in-office assistance.~~

[February 5, 1987; March 3, 1988; December 8, 1994; December 10, 1998]