

**Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Report To
Papio-Missouri River NRD Board
July 08, 2010
Neil Jensen, District Conservationist**



Photo Courtesy of PMNRD

Emergency Watershed Protection Program

The Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) program helps protect lives and property threatened by natural disasters. It is administered by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), which provides technical and financial assistance to project sponsors with up to 75 percent of the funds

needed to restore the natural function of the watershed. Owners, managers, and users of public, private, or tribal lands are eligible for EWP assistance. Each EWP project, with the exception of floodplain easements, requires a sponsor who applies for assistance.

EWP Sponsors

EWP recovery assistance is made available to sponsoring local organizations (sponsors). The only exception is the acquisition of flood plain easements, in which an individual landowner may request assistance. Some of the more common eligible EWP sponsors are Natural Resources Districts, County and Township boards, Indian tribes and tribal organizations, and state agencies.

Typical Recovery Measures

To be eligible for EWP assistance, a measure must reduce threats to life or property, retard runoff to prevent flooding and/or soil erosion, restore hydraulic capacity, or remove debris deposited by the disaster that might pose a health or safety hazard.

Measures must be defensible--economically, socially, environmentally, and technically. Measures must conform to rules and regulations published by NRCS for complying with Executive Orders 1990 (protection of wetlands) and 11988 (flood plain management).

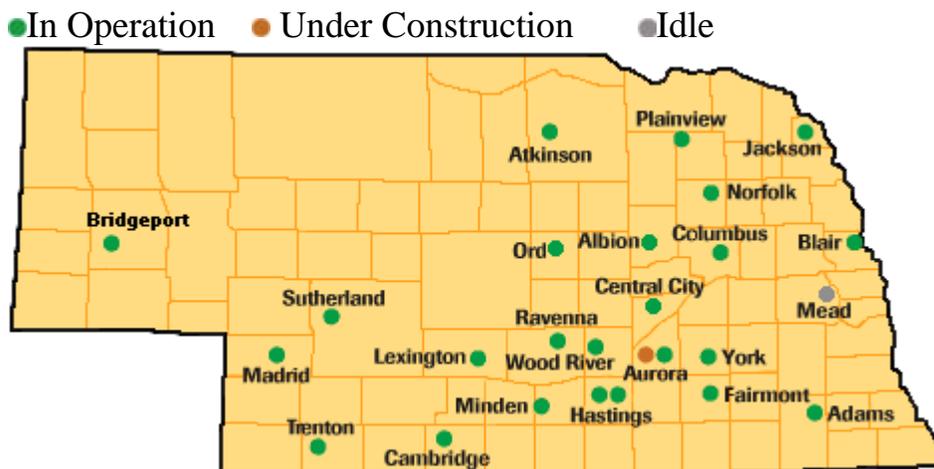
Following are some of the more common measures:

- Conservation practice repair
- Critical area treatment
- Debris and sediment removal
- Dike and levee repair
- Erosion control
- Flood control structure repair
- Flood plain easements
- Land stabilization
- Road and bridge protection
- Streambank stabilization

Ethanol Plants in Nebraska

Exerts from Steve Chick's Friday Message, July 2, 2010

NRCS Water Quality Specialist Renee Hancock researched the status of ethanol plants in Nebraska. There are currently 24 ethanol production plants in Nebraska, with a combined production capacity of over 2 billion gallons of ethanol each year and requiring 769 million bushels of grain in the process. These ethanol plants represent more than \$5 billion in capital investment in the state and provide direct employment for some 1,200 Nebraskans. Nebraska ranks second nationally in ethanol production and is the largest ethanol producer west of the Missouri River. Geographic position, abundant ethanol supply and reliable, competitive rail transportation give Nebraska a strategic advantage in serving ethanol markets in the western U.S.



NOTICE OF A PUBLIC LISTENING SESSION ON THE PRESIDENT'S AMERICA'S GREAT OUTDOORS INITIATIVE

Please join senior representatives from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) and other Federal agencies for a public listening session on conservation, recreation, and reconnecting people to the outdoors. The session will be held Monday, July 12 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. in Grand Island.

This past April, at the White House Conference on America's Great Outdoors, President Obama signed a memorandum establishing the America's Great Outdoors Initiative to develop a conservation agenda worthy of the 21st century and to reconnect Americans with our great outdoors. The President understands that protecting and restoring the lands and waters that we love and reconnecting people to the outdoors must happen at the local level.

Therefore, President Obama directed the principal leaders of the America's Great Outdoors Initiative to travel across the country to listen and learn from people directly involved in finding grassroots solutions to conserving our lands and waters and reconnecting Americans to the outdoors. The President indicated that the sessions should engage the full range of interested groups, including tribal leaders, farmers and ranchers, sportsmen, community park groups, foresters, youth groups, businesspeople, educators, State and local governments, and recreation and conservation groups.

The July 12th public listening session and discussion is an opportunity for leaders of the America's Great Outdoors Initiative to hear from you and other voices in Nebraska about solutions for building a 21st century conservation and recreation agenda and for reconnecting people with the outdoors. Please join us. Here are the details.

Listening Session and Discussion Information:

When: Monday, July 12th, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Where: Quality Inn and Conference Center
7838 HWY 281 (S of the I-80 Grand Island/Hastings exit)
Grand Island, NE

Who: Senior Washington, D.C. and local leadership from U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of the Interior and other

Federal agencies will be present to hear your thoughts and to participate in a conversation with you about America's Great Outdoors.

Please: This event is free and open to the public. For planning purposes it would be helpful if you would pre-register by Thursday July 8 by sending an email to becky.handsaker@ne.usda.gov with your name, the name of the organization with which you are affiliated, if any, and your telephone number. Please let us know if you have any special needs. We will make every effort to accommodate everyone.

In the event you are unable to participate in person, please submit your comments and stories via the America's Great Outdoors website at <http://www.doi.gov/americasgreatoutdoors/>.

If you have questions, please contact Joanna Pope at (402) 437-4123 or Joanna.pope@ne.usda.gov. We hope you will participate and look forward to hearing from you.

Staffing Changes

Steven Cyboron Selected as Soil Conservation Technician in Tekamah. Steven is a recent graduate of Iowa Western Community College in Civil Engineering. He is coming to us from Council Bluffs, IA. Congratulations Steven!!

The Tekamah Field Office, Resource Conservationist position has been advertised. Applicants have until July 21 to apply.

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