

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE**  
**ACTIVITY REPORT within the P-MRNRD**  
**APRIL 2007**

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**CONSERVATION PLANNING/APPLICATION**

- Blair field office (FO) has 16 conservation applications for spring for \$127,363.13; 7 are completed and paid; 9 are completed and waiting on paperwork.
- Blair FO, Neil Jensen, completed 1 Highly Erodible Land (HEL) determination and 2 wetland determinations.
- Blair FO staff completed 2 conservation plans.
- Blair FO has 53 miscellaneous NRD cost-share applications for FY2007. The applications include CRP seeding, pasture renovation/cropland conversions, tree planting, Pheasants Forever Wildlife Habitat seeding and field buffer/filter strip seeding; 22 are completed and paid \$14,265.78.
- Blair FO held their yearly hand pickup days on April 20-21. Terry Schumacher and Darlene Hensley processed orders for 5,025 trees to 53 landowners. John Zaugg and Terry Schumacher will be machine planting 2,850 trees in Washington County and 1,500 trees in Douglas/Sarpy Counties.
- The District has paid 21 landowners' \$96,775.55 cost share through the 2007 Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Program.
- Dakota County completed 3 HEL determinations and revised conservation plans on 5 tracts.
- Dakota County staff surveyed a grade stabilization structure site and surveyed and designed 2 livestock pipeline systems.
- Walthill FO staff completed 4 grass waterway designs.
- Walthill FO received a FSA (Food Security Act) "whistleblower" complaint in regard to farm plan not being implemented.
- Walthill FO received 1 request for a certified wetland determination.
- Tekamah FO surveyed and designed 1 Conservation Assistance Program (CAP) and 2 EQIP terrace systems and a grass waterway.
- Burt County has 4 tree plantings, totaling 10,574 trees for this spring.

**ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (EQIP)**

- Blair FO completed 2 EQIP payments for \$2,282.30 (water facilities and pasture seeding).
- Dakota County prepared 10 EQIP contracts which include a livestock manure facility, an irrigation conversion project, and 7 pasture management projects; 6 grade stabilization structures are included in the EQIP projects.
- Walthill FO staff provided nutrient management guidance to numerous livestock producers.
- Walthill FO staff completed 2 EQIP (2007) contracts and certified practices for cost share for another contract. They also completed 1 terrace and 1 grass waterway design.
- Tekamah FO completed 2 new EQIP contracts and modified/certified item on an ag waste management contract.
- Omaha FO completed 1 EQIP payment for \$23,700.

**WETLAND RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (WREP)**

**WETLAND RESERVE PROGRAM (WRP)**

- Walthill NRD staff accompanied an appraiser to WREP application sites on the Omaha and Winnebago reservations.

- Tekamah FO reviewed boundaries and easement information and obtained signatures for Wetland Team; they also set up a meeting with surveyor and landowners.
- Tekamah FO flagged the seeding area for 1 WRP contract.

### **CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP)**

#### **CONTINUOUS CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CCRP)**

- Dakota County monitored prescribed burns on 3 CRP tracts.
- Walthill FO revised 5 CRP contracts and completed a grass waterway design.
- Tekamah FO staff surveyed 1 CRP wetland contract for excavation quantities and revised a CRP contract to add prescribed burning; they also completed a contract revision and staked CRP boundary.
- Omaha FO completed field visits for 3 CRP grass filter strip contracts to determine extent of reseeding.

### **SILVER CREEK WATERSHED**

- Tekamah FO completed sediment storage calculation for Silver Creek structure.

### **PIGEON/JONES CREEK WATERSHED**

- Dakota County staff with assistance from P-MRNRD staff surveyed site #18.
- EQIP applications for 3 P/J sites were approved; these include site #1 and 2 landowner sites within the watershed.

### **WILDLIFE HABITAT INCENTIVES PROGRAM (WHIP)**

- Dakota County developed a WHIP contract for 11 acres of brush management, native grass restoration and timber stand improvement.

### **INFORMATION/EDUCATION**

- The Dakota County FO staff provided news items for the NRD share page published in the Dakota County Star for the month of April. Articles included: Enrolling Sensitive Acres in Continuous CRP a Good Option, Invasive Tree Control, Soil and Water Stewardship Week Observed, and Call Before You Dig, It's the Law. Photos with captions were included of Cedar Tree Removal, a Controlled CRP Burn, and a NRD technician surveying Pigeon/Jones Site #18.
- Terry Schumacher, NRD Blair, assisted Washington County Chapter of Pheasants Forever with their annual fund raising dinner and auction held on April 14, 2007. Approximately \$15,000 was raised for use in their programs such as Youth Mentoring, seeding of native grasses for habitat and incentive payments for food plots.
- Sam Thomas, NRCS Dakota City, and Robert Hall, NRCS Omaha, met with North High School's FFA (Future Farmer of America) Chapter to give a presentation of Backyard Conservation.

### **TRAINING/MEETINGS**

- All field office staff attended the NRCS/NRD All-Employees Meeting on April 4, in Tekamah.
- Ralph Arauza, NRCS Blair, attended Prescribed Burning certification at Butler County.
- Kelly Fravel, NRD Dakota County, attended the South Sioux City Tree Board meeting on April 10; she also informed the Dakota County Commissioners of the impact of the potential closing of the Farm Service Agency field office in Dakota County at their meeting held on April 16.
- Neil Stockfleth, NRCS Dakota City, took part in an interview for a WRP "Spotlight on Conservation" article on April 16.

- Sam Thomas, NRCS Dakota City, attended Wetland Restoration and Enhancement training April 23-27.
- Kelly Fravel (NRD) and Blaine Gaer (NRCS) presented tree seedlings to 1,100 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students at 16 schools in Dakota and Thurston counties during the week of April 23; they also took part in Arbor Day activities held at the South Sioux City Community Arboretum on April 27.
- Walthill FO staff attended Thurston County Weed Board meeting.
- Andy Bohnenkamp, NRCS Tekamah, attended a weed meeting with the Farm Service Agency County Committee. He also attended a Prescribed Burn meeting in Mead.
- All field offices in the P-MRNRD participated in a net meeting on Food Security Act 2007 status reviews.

Reported by: Robert Hall, Resource Conservationist, NRCS, Omaha, May 8, 2007