

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
ACTIVITY REPORT
JUNE 2007

CONSERVATION PLANNING/APPLICATION

- Blair field office (FO) completed 2 conservation plans and 3 wetland determinations.
- Blair FO had 71 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. 65 applications were completed and paid \$31,080.65. This included cost sharing on 5,700 trees, 256.3 acres Cropland Conversions/Wildlife Habitat and 489 acres of CRP plantings.
- The District has paid 35 landowners' \$117,849.32 cost share through the 2007 Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Program.
- Dakota County revised conservation plans on 7 tracts, completed 4 conservation compliance status reviews and a number of follow-up residue checks. They also mailed reminder letters on conservation plan residue requirements to 6 producers.
- Dakota County staff surveyed 2 grade stabilization structure sites; design work is underway on a large pasture pipeline project.
- Dakota County has 2 pasture pipeline installation projects underway.
- Dakota County received 2 new CAP applications for grass seeding projects.
- Patrick Cowsert, NRCS Resource Soil Scientist, assisted Don Atkinson at Walthill with certified wetland determinations on 2 tracts, one owned by Winnebago Tribe and the other by allottees.
- Walthill FO sent out 1 response letter following a status review field visit; they also completed field work for 3 status reviews.
- Tekamah FO submitted 2 CAP payments for terrace systems.
- Tekamah FO revised 2 conservation plans and completed 5 cost estimates for terrace systems.
- Tekamah FO, Justin Linder, put together a fact sheet to address ephemeral and gully erosion in concentrated flow areas.
- Tekamah FO completed 13 wetland determinations and completed field visits and determinations for 20 compliance status reviews.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (EQIP)

- Blair FO completed 1 EQIP payment for \$1,309.00 on a no-till system.
- Neil Jensen, Blair FO, attended a teleconference on EQIP payments.
- Walthill FO completed 2 grade stabilization structures.
- Omaha FO completed 1 EQIP payment.
- Tekamah FO surveyed and worked on the hydrology for 2 EQIP grade control structures.
- Justin Linder, Resource Conservationist at Tekamah, designed an irrigation system in Dakota County.

WETLAND RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (WREP)

WETLAND RESERVE PROGRAM (WRP)

- Walthill FO staff and Robert Warner (Omaha tribal employee) visited 18 WREP application sites; surveyors were taken to 5 of these sites.
- Tekamah FO organized a meeting with 3 producers and surveyors.
- Tekamah FO processed the bills for 2 tree and grass plantings on WRP sites.

- Evelyn Maslonka, NRD Programs Assistant at Tekamah, has filed WRP correspondence letters for easements and survey documents.

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP)

CONTINUOUS CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CCRP)

- Walthill FO completed CAP payments for 4 CRP contracts.
- Omaha FO completed 1 CRP payment.
- Tekamah FO revised 5 CRP contracts and completed the eligibility requirements for a series of filter strips.

WILDLIFE HABITAT INCENTIVES PROGRAM

- Dakota County has a prairie restoration project underway; tree and shrub clearing is nearly complete on 8 acres.

SILVER CREEK WATERSHED

- NRD and NRCS staff looked at a potential site for a structure and met with another landowner to finalize grass seeding for his structure.

PAPILLION CREEK WATERSHED MULTI-RESERVIOR PROGRAM

- Terry Schumacher, NRD Blair, attended the last three public information hearings on the proposed watershed program that includes several large dams in Washington County. Staff from HDR and P-MRNRD were present with maps and handouts to explain the study and answer questions by concerned landowners.

PIGEON/JONES CREEK WATERSHED

- Neil Stockfleth presented information on the P/J project to 17 members of the South Sioux City Rotary Club.

DISTRICT PROGRAMS

- NRD staff at Walthill collected 2,000 – 3,000 herbicide containers.

TRIBAL ASSISTANCE

- Chuck Leinen, Engineer at Omaha FO, assisted Bureau of Indian Affairs personnel with an erosion problem.

CIVIL RIGHTS

- Walthill FO provided NRCS State Office with information regarding WREP work with Omaha tribe.

INFORMATION/EDUCATION

- **No-till Whirlwind Expo at Pender:** The Walthill FO staff have been busy assisting with the No-till on the Plains Expo. No-till on the Plains is a regional organization that reaches over 3,000 farmers yearly. The farmer-run group promotes practical and scientific application of continuous no-till farming. The day-long event is set for July 18, and begins at 9 a.m. at the Randy Rink farm which is 3 miles east of Pender on Hwy 94 to 20th Road, then 1 mile south.
- The Dakota County FO staff provided news items for the NRD share page published in the Dakota County Star for the month of June. Articles included: No-till Whirlwind Expo at Pender; Conservation Practices Help Reduce Flooding and Erosion; USDA Submits Plans to Restructure Offices; and Pesticide Container Recycling Continues through July. Photos with captions were included of a livestock watering pipeline being installed on a farm near Jackson; a tree planting at the Lewis and Clark Historical

Marker site near Homer; and of NRCS staff member Neil Stockfleth determining residue levels in a no-tilled field of soybeans near Dakota City.

- Dakota county staff have been promoting the No-till Expo planned near Pender by direct mailings to farmers, posting announcements in public locations, and publicizing the event in the local paper and FSA newsletter. Four agricultural business sponsorships were sought for the Expo.

TRAINING/MEETINGS

- All NRCS field offices participated in the field office closure teleconference.
- All NRCS field offices participated in the Haying/Grazing and Mid-Contract Management net conference.
- Justin Linder, NRCS Tekamah, attended the Missouri River Ecosystem Coordination Group meeting and gave a presentation of WRP projects.

Reported by: Robert Hall, Resource Conservationist, NRCS, Omaha, July 10, 2007