

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
ACTIVITY REPORT within the P-MRNRD
JUNE 2003

CONSERVATION PLANNING/APPLICATION

- FSA compliance reviews for 2003 have been completed by all field offices. None of the field offices reported any non-compliance tracts.
- National Resources Inventory (NRI) data collection for 2003 has begun in all field offices. Across the state, data will be collected for 972 core Primary Sample Units (PSU) and 728 rotation Primary Sample Units. Within the P-MRNRD, information will be collected for 127 PSUs, approximately 25 per office.
- Blair field office received 29 HEL/Wetland Determination/ASCS569 requests for FY 2003.
- Washington County staff completed 13 terrace practices this spring using \$66,028.24 in NRD cost share.
- Blair field office staff worked with landowners this spring to complete 80 tree plantings, 77.2 acres of cropland conversions and 90 acres of pasture renovations. The grass drill was rented by 14 landowners to seed 225.8 acres of CRP, pasture renovations and cropland conversions.
- Burt County has received 5 Certified Wetland Determination requests since April 7, 2003 and 2 HEL determination requests in June 2003.
- Burt County has 30 commitments for terrace jobs with tile outlets and 3 grass waterways, all for fall construction.
- South Sioux City field office received 17 HEL/Wetland determination requests for FY 2003.
- Thurston County worked on 2 ongoing wetland appeals.
- Four summer terrace and waterway projects were approved for cost share in Thurston County.

EQIP

- On June 17, the EQIP Local Work Group met in Tekamah to establish ranking criteria to address resource concerns within the District.
- June 13, was the deadline for producers to submit applications for EQIP. Following is a summary of practices for which applications were received.

	OMAHA	BLAIR	TEKAMAH	WALTHILL
Grazing Systems	1	1	2	4
Pivot Conversions	14	1	5	-
Grade Control Structures	5	3	5	-
Terrace System	1	2	4	-
Livestock Waste System/CNMP	3	-	1	5

WETLAND RESERVE PROGRAM (WRP)

- Wetland restoration/construction has been completed for Mardell Matzen in Washington County; the wetland easement is 30.5 acres.
- In Burt County a land appraisal was completed for a WRP application that was submitted June 2002. The restored wetland would be approximately 8 acres with the total project consisting of 19.8 acres.

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP)

CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (CREP)

- June 13, was the deadline to submit an application to FSA to participate in the General CRP program. The Omaha field office received 37 applications for 950 acres; Tekamah received 35 applications for approximately 1,500 acres; South Sioux City received 1 application for 129 acres. Not all field offices reported offers received.
- Field offices are in the process of conducting CRP status reviews. Burt County has completed 65 status reviews.
- Blair field office completed 1 CRP contract for 9.3 acres of buffers.
- In Burt County, 4 filter strips were seeded and submitted for payment; also, 3 requests for plan revisions were completed.
- The Omaha field office continues to work with FSA to complete approximately 45 CREP applications.
- In Thurston County 50 tracts were bid into the CRP program during general signup. Also, 3 filter strips and 2 waterway contracts were completed.

PIGEON/JONES CREEK WATERSHED

- The site showing for P/J structure 3 was held on June 18. Ten contractors were in attendance. Jensen Construction of Stanton, having the lowest bid, was awarded the contract.
- The EQIP contracts for P/J structures 14 and 4 are being written and will be completed early next month. Three contracts on pasture ground in the watershed are also being completed.
- Tony Lockhart, RC at South Sioux City, continues to conduct one-on-one meetings with the P/J producers to update conservation plans and promote land treatment in the watershed.

WATER QUALITY

- Douglas/Sarpy Counties abandoned 1 well; 3 well applications are pending.
- Washington County abandoned 4 wells; received 1 new application; 10 well applications are pending.
- Dakota County received 2 new applications; 10 well applications pending.
- Burt County received 1 new application; 5 well applications pending.

TRIBAL ASSISTANCE

- Don Atkinson, Walthill, assisted Melissa Robinson Heinsheid of the Omaha Tribal Housing authority regarding prime farmland present on a planned construction site; he also assisted the BIA with a soil sample.

INFORMATION/EDUCATION

- NRCS staff, Don Doty, Chuck Leinen, Lee Appleby and Jennifer Sundberg, accompanied representatives from P-MRNRD and the Burt/Washington Drainage District on a tour of Burt and Washington Counties to evaluate areas for potential cooperative projects that would benefit the drainage district and adjacent landowners.
- Quality Assurance Review was completed in the Tekamah field office to assure that all agronomic practices are being planned and reported correctly.
- The South Sioux City field office staff provided news items and photos with captions for the NRD Share Page published in the South Sioux City Star for the month of June. The news items were on the Pesticide Container Recycling Program schedule of collection times and sites, the start of the Grassland Reserve Program signup, the NE Loess Hills RC&D printer cartridge and cell phone recycling program and an update on the Pigeon/Jones Creek Watershed project. The photos with captions were of the Pesticide Container Recycling Program, the site showing on P/J Structure 3 and the seeding of the extended rural waterline in Dakota County.
- A bus tour of Papio Creek Sites S-27, S-31 and S-32 was conducted on June 8, 2003. NRCS staff, Marvin Brown (NRCS State Office), Don Doty, Chuck Leinen and Ron Lehman, NRD Superintendent of Maintenance and Operations, hosted the tour for the National Watershed Coalition to show the effects of urbanization around sites in the Papio-Missouri River NRD.

MEETINGS

- Terry Schumacher, NRD Blair, attended the Blair City Council meeting with Paul Woodward, NRD Engineer. The main topics of interest were the "proposed by-pass highway" and "trails plan" for the City of Blair.
- Don Atkinson, RC Walthill, attended the American Indian Alaskan Native Employees Association annual meeting in Cloquet, MN.
- NRCS staff, Don Atkinson, Joanna Pope and Tony Lockhart, met to develop the district's volunteer program.

TRAINING

- NRD secretaries, Teresa Murphy and Kelly Fravel, attended Power Point training in Sioux City on June 24.

DISTRICT INFORMATION

- NRD staff, Denny Piper and Rod Kinning, conducted maintenance activities on Tekamah-Mud structures and assisted with pesticide container recycling.

Reported by: Robert Hall, Resource Conservationist, NRCS, Omaha
July 7, 2003

Cc:

Steve Chick, State Conservationist, NRCS, Lincoln

Ken Noonan, ASTC/FO, NRCS, Lincoln

RH:le:Activity Report