

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
ACTIVITY REPORT within the P-MRNRD
MAY 2006

CONSERVATION PLANNING/APPLICATION

- Blair field office (FO) has 4 conservation applications for summer construction: 1 grade stabilization structure, 1 toe wall structure and 2 terrace systems.
- Blair FO has 22 Conservation Assistance Program (CAP) applications for cost-share assistance for tree planting in Washington County.
- Blair FO grassland drill was used by 11 landowners to seed 142.6 acres of natives and CRP.
- Two CAP applications were submitted for payment for waterways built in Sarpy County.
- One CAP terrace project was completed in Burt County.
- Dakota County completed survey and preliminary design work on 3 grade stabilization structures.
- Dakota County completed 18 conservation compliance status reviews.
- Sam Thomas and Mitch Keebler (NRCS) are conducting Quality Assurance Reviews of conservation practices in Burt and Washington Counties.
- Dakota County approved 5 seeding projects, 4 tree planting projects, 3 grade stabilization structures and 1 terrace project.
- Walthill FO drill was used on 15 sites to seed 300 acres.
- Walthill NRD staff sprayed and mowed structures in Pigeon/Jones and Silver Creek watersheds.
- Walthill FO completed 1 CAP payment for a terrace project and mailed out 1 wetland violation letter.
- Walthill FO conducted 4 “whistleblower” conservation compliance status reviews.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (EQIP)

- Blair FO staff reports the completion of the Sibbersen EQIP grade stabilization structure. Seeding will be completed next week.
- Blair FO approved 16 EQIP applications for funding; cost share totaled \$443,751.
- Omaha FO approved 16 EQIP applications for funding; cost share totaled \$331,975.
- A full-flow riprap chute was completed on the John Startzer property. The chute provides 100-year storm capacity and provides 18 feet of grade control on a lateral of Buffalo Creek in Sarpy County.
- Two EQIP/NRD payments were made for terrace projects finished this spring in Burt County.
- Two new EQIP contracts were approved by Burt County; 1 is a terrace job and the other is a pasture management project.
- One EQIP livestock pipeline was surveyed in Burt County with the help of Blaine Gaer from Thurston County. The design was also completed and the construction of this project will begin the first part of June.
- Dakota County approved 2 new pasture project contracts and certified a completed pasture project.

WETLAND RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (WREP)

WETLAND RESERVE PROGRAM (WRP)

- Blair FO, Neil Jensen, assisted the wetland team with the field review on 2 WRP applications in Washington County.
- Burt County received 2 new WRP applications for a total of 160 acres offered.

- Twelve WRP Intent to Continue letters were received from producers in Burt County; this step in the WRP application process precedes the agreement to accept the Appraised Value which has not been completed.
- The Wetland Team reviewed 4 new applications in Dakota County.
- Walthill FO staff assisted with surveying wetland sites in Burt County.

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP)

CONTINUOUS CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CCRP)

- Blair FO staff wrote 2 CCRP contracts for a farmstead windbreak and field border.
- Blair FO made payments on a field border and a filter strip.
- Omaha FO made a payment on a grass filter strip.
- Two CRP Food Plot revisions were completed in Burt County.
- Walthill NRD staff assisted in planting trees on 2 CRP sites in Saryp County.
- Walthill FO staff assisted Dakota City with waterway layout.
- Walthill FO completed 12 filter strip seedings; 7 general CRP seedings were completed and processed for payment.

PIGEON/JONES CREEK WATERSHED

- Neil Stockfleth presented a program and tour of the Pigeon/Jones Watershed Special Project to 16 members of the Leadership Dakota County class on May 18.
- Neil Stockfleth hosted a tour with the Dakota County Commissioners and the Dakota County Road Department on May 22, to review several proposed road structures and the recreational site.
- Walthill NRD staff assisted in the installation of silt barriers on Pigeon/Jones site 5.

TRIBAL ASSISTANCE

- Walthill FO staff attended a Tribal Employment Rights Office meeting with Omaha tribal employees.
- Walthill FO assisted Omaha Tribe by disking around new home sites and broadcasting seed.

INFORMATION/EDUCATION

- Blair FO, NRCS Neil Jensen and Ralph Arauza, assisted the Washington County Extension and Cargill Inc. with conservation presentations and games at the Conservation School Days for about 185 Arbor Park Middle School 4th grade students and teachers. Students received seedling trees donated by the P-MRNRD.
- Andy Bohnenkamp and Justin Linder (NRCS Tekamah), and Burt County UNL Extension agent John Wilson completed the Burt County Crop Residue Management Survey. A 30% increase in no-till was recorded for both soybeans and corn.
- Dakota County completed their County Crop Residue Management Survey which shows that 77% of the crops were no-till planted.
- The Dakota County FO staff provided news items for the NRD share page published in the Dakota County Star for the month of May. Article topics included: Marketing Carbon Credits, Pesticide Container Recycling, Scrap Tire Collection and Water System Cross Connection Safety. Photos with captions were included of a landowner and a wildlife biologist discussing a WHIP contract in the field, a P-MRNRD tree planting project near Homer, and fifth grade students in South Sioux City receiving tree seedlings courtesy of the P-MRNRD.
- Justin Linder, Tekamah's new NRCS Resource Conservationist arrived on Tuesday, May 30. We look forward to working with Justin and welcome him to Burt County.
- Dakota County staff held a coffee to recognize the efforts of Dick Leitschuck during National Volunteer Recognition Week.

- South Sioux City received a P-MRNRD “Celebrate Trees” grant for planting 18 trees in Scenic Park.

TRAINING/MEETINGS

- Blair FO staff, Neil Jensen, completed the on-line Security Awareness Training required by the NRCS.
- Neil Stockfleth, Dakota City, attended the At-Risk Wildlife and Plant Workshop in Ponca on May 4.

Reported by: Robert Hall, Resource Conservationist, NRCS, Omaha, June 7, 2006