

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
ACTIVITY REPORT within the P-MRNRD
MAY 2004

CONSERVATION PLANNING/APPLICATION

- Burt County received 1 new request for a HEL determination and 3 new requests for certified wetland determinations during the month of May. Five HEL determinations were completed and 2 certified wetland determinations were completed.
- An anonymous complaint was received in Burt County regarding possible HEL non-compliance on 24 tracts, multiple owners/operators. A request was submitted to the Burt County FSA for ASCS-569s, as needed, on these tracts. Letters were sent to all owners and operators associated with the tracts. Every tract will be added to the Status Review list for 2004. All fields in these tracts will be reviewed in the field and compliance determined. Burt County has a total of 33 Status Reviews for 2004.
- Blair field office has received 81 HEL/Wetland Determination/ASCS-569 requests for FY2004; 10 are completed.
- Thurston County completed 4 terrace projects.
- Dakota County revised 7 conservation compliance plans and 13 status reviews on HEL cropland are underway.
- Twelve tree planting projects were submitted for cost share in Dakota County.
- Blair field office staff sent 7 notification letters to landowners scheduling compliance reviews.
- Blair field office had 24 applications for NRD cost sharing to plant trees (16 are completed); 29 applications for CRP/Cropland Conversion/Pasture Renovation (14 completed) and 22 requests to use the grass drills for conservation seeding and CRP (18 completed).

EQIP

- Ranking has been completed on all applications in Burt County including: livestock waste facility, livestock pipelines/watering facilities, range and pasture seeding, grade control structures and irrigation practices.
- Livestock pipelines and tanks were installed on one 1999 EQIP contract in Burt County. Payment applications have been received but not yet processed.
- Thurston County ranked 5 applications and submitted to NRCS State Office.
- Three Pigeon/Jones Watershed structures, 3 rotational grazing systems and 1 irrigation conversion project were planned and ranked for EQIP in Dakota County.
- Blair field office completed cost estimates and ranking for 9 EQIP applications for: ag waste systems, grade stabilization structures, pasture management, cross fencing and waterlines.

WETLAND RESERVE PROGRAM (WRP)

- Five WRP applications were ranked, estimated for cost and submitted to the State Office for approval in Burt County. The applications encompass an approximate total of 180 acres.
- Eligible sites in Dakota County have been inventoried for WRP participation.

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP)

- Four CRP payment applications were reviewed for mid-contract management practice completion in Burt County. One payment application was reviewed and submitted for a new General CRP seeding.
- Twelve CRP (including general and continuous) contracts were certified for new seeding and reseeding completion in Burt County.
- Thurston County completed 15 CRP seedings and 4 waterway contracts.
- In Dakota County, 2 farmable wetlands with buffers were enrolled and seeded, 1 for 12 acres and the other 11 acres. Also, 9 Pheasants Forever food plot cost-share applications have been submitted.
- Washington County received 1 Continuous CRP application for a filter strip; contract has been approved and completed.

PIGEON/JONES CREEK WATERSHED

- Seeding on Site 3, the high-hazard structure above the town of Hubbard, was completed; pond is beginning to fill.

SILVER CREEK WATERSHED

- Construction was completed on Structure 13 in the Silver Creek Watershed in Burt County; construction on Structure 19 began on June 1.
- NRCS staff, Ralph Arauza, Blaine Gaer and Andy Bohnenkamp worked on the preliminary survey of Site 31.

WATER QUALITY

- Douglas/Sarpy Counties approved 2 new applications; completed 1 well abandonment; 13 applications pending.
- Washington County completed 15 well abandonments; 13 applications pending.
- Dakota County abandoned 2 wells; 1 application pending.
- Burt County approved 1 new application; 2 applications pending.

INFORMATION/EDUCATION

- The South Sioux City staff provided new items and photos with captions for the NRD Share Page published in the *Dakota County Star* for the month of May. The news items were: Pesticide Container Recycling for Dakota and Thurston County, Backyard Conservation, and Importance of Checking Cross Connections in Rural Water Systems. Photos with captions were included of the newly completed Pigeon/Jones dam near Hubbard, NRD tree planting crew, and 5th and 6th grade students at Winnebago receiving Blue Spruce seedlings from the P-MRNRD in observance of Arbor Day.
- Neil Jensen, Ralph Arauza and Terry Schumacher (Blair) and Mindy Humphrey (Omaha) participated in the Fourth Grade Conservation Days at Arbor Park Elementary School; 200 trees were donated by the P-MRNRD and given to students.

WASHINGTON COUNTY RURAL WATER PROJECT

- NRD staff, John Zaugg and Terry Schumacher, continue to contact landowners, answer questions and collect easements for the Washington County Rural Water Project.

DAKOTA COUNTY SERVICE CENTER

- The architect is finalizing the floor plan for the Natural Resource Center in Dakota City.

DISTRICT INFORMATION

- Rod Kinning and Denny Piper (NRD Walthill) have been mowing the dike on Pigeon Creek and seeding Elk Creek weir structure.
- Terry Schumacher and John Zaugg (NRD) completed the replanting of two 6' Blue Spruce trees at Bennington Prairie View Rec Area.
- Terry Schumacher, (NRD Blair) and Omaha NRD Park Staff, Marty Thieman and Jana Durbin, planted 5,775 trees in two days in the wetland area south of Hwy. 370 in the Chalco Hills Rec Area.

TRAINING/MEETINGS

- NRCS/NRD staff, Andy Bohnenkamp, Jenny Sundberg, Neil Stockfleth, Blaine Gaer, Don Atkinson, John Zaugg, Terry Schumacher and Jason McCauley and Justin McCauley (BIA) attended terrace design training in Tekamah; the presenters for this training were Chuck Leinen, Jim Kennedy (NRCS staff) and Andy Baker (BIA).
- Andy Bohnenkamp and Jenny Sundberg (NRCS Tekamah) attended Protracts training presented by State Office personnel for managing federal cost-share applications and approvals.

Reported by: Robert Hall, Resource Conservationist, NRCS, Omaha, June 7, 2004