Agenda Item: 11.

### **MEMORANDUM**

TO THE BOARD:

SUBJECT: General's Manager Report

DATE: June 7, 2004

FROM: Steve Oltmans, General Manager

- A. <u>INFORMATION/EDUCATION REPORT</u>: A copy of the I&E Report detailing Information and Education activities of the District for the month of May, 2004, is attached for your review.
- B. MISCELLANEOUS/PERSONNEL ITEMS: None.
- C. <u>REPORT ON PURCHASES CONSTRUCTION SERVICES</u>, <u>PROFESSIONAL SERVICES</u>, <u>PERSONAL PROPERTY</u>: Pursuant to Board direction, attached is a report indicating construction services, professional services and personal property purchases for the month of May, 2004. Please review this report and contact me if you have any questions.
- D. <u>CURRENT AND ON-GOING PROJECTS P-MRNRD LEGAL COUNSEL</u>: Attached is a copy of the current and on-going projects for District Legal Counsel, Paul Peters, as of May 17, 2004. I would ask each Director to review this listing. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.
- E. <u>PAPIO CREEK WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP MEETING:</u> The Papio Creek Watershed Partnership met on May 7, 2004 to discussion Comprehensive Stormwater Management. A copy of the minutes of the meeting and attachments are attached to this report. Please review this material and if you have any questions, please contact me.
- F. RAINSTORM AND FLOODING ON MAY 22 AND 23, 2004 PAPILLION CREEK: As you are aware on May 22 and 23, 2004, areas of the District in Washington, Douglas and Sarpy County received intense rainfall that led to high water in the Papillion Creeks. District staff were called out on flood watch on Saturday night. I have attached a memo from Paul Woodward detailing the flood event.
- G. <u>CHEMIGATION PROGRAM SUMMARY</u>: Attached is a report summarizing chemigation program activities in Nebraska for 2003. The report indicates that there were 40 chemigation permits issued in the Papio-Missouri River NRD. There were no revoked or suspended permits and no reportable incidents for the District.

- H. WESTERN SARPY/CLEAR CREEK FLOOD DAMAGE REDUCTION PROJECT: Attached is a letter to Joshua B. Bolten, Director of the Office of Management and Budget from Senators Ben Nelson and Chuck Hagel and Congressman Doug Bereuter, thanking the OMB for their efforts to complete the approval reviews of the three Nebraska Corps of Engineers project now before the Water and Power Branch. In the letter it is noted that, "Construction on WS/CC can be completed during fiscal year 2006 if the President and Congress provide the funds we have requested in fiscal year 2005 and 2006."
- I. <u>DISCUSSION ON SELECTION OF BONDING FIRM</u>: In FY 2006 (July 1, 2005 June 30, 2006), the District will be issuing revenue bonds for long term financing of the Washington County Rural Water Project #2. Management at this time is contemplating the selection of a firm to issue said bonds. Ameritas has been handling revenue bonds for the District for the past few years. The Board of Directors may wish to establish an Ad Hoc Consultant Selection Subcommittee should they desire.

### J. <u>NEWS CLIPS</u>:

- > Articles regarding LPNNRD and MUD:
  - May 13, 2004, Lincoln Journal Star Article NRD rejects Omaha bid for permits.
    The city's utility district is considering a lawsuit so it can build wells in Saunders
    County.
  - May 14, 2004, Omaha World Herald Editorial Stop the train wreck. Unlawfully blocking MUD water project may be costly for Platte NRD.
  - May 21, 2004, Omaha World Herald Article Both sides dig in heels on well field.
     Foes of MUD's plan file a complaint with the state, and the utility threatens to sue the Lower Platte North NRD.
  - May 25, 2004, Omaha World Herald Editorial Late hits, little substance.
     Opposition to MUD wells digs up nothing of significance to worry about.
  - May 25, 2004, Omaha World Herald Midlands Voices NRD board did duty in slowing MUD wells, written by Lynda Wageman
- May 14, 2004, Omaha World Herald Article Approval likely for test run of tire burning at Ash Grove. The Department of Environmental Quality says its research indicates the alternative fuel plan is safe.
- May 18, 2004, Omaha World Herald Article Lake algae blamed for dog deaths.
- May 19, 2004, Bellevue Leader Article Kids' art wall to be unveiled Saturday at park.
- May 24, 2004, Omaha World Herald Article A down-to-earth celebration. Wildlife shows and exhibits help educate people on how to take care of the planet.
- ➤ May 26, 2004, Omaha World Herald Article City plans to take over county parks. In return, City Hall would give up purchasing duties.
- May 29, 2004, Omaha World Herald Article Plan for Platte River will get more tweaking.
- May 30, 2004, Omaha World Herald Editorial Keep hope flowing. Water issues have enormous impact in nations around the world.

### <u>May 2004</u>

### **Information & Education Report**

### Information

- Completed writing of staff survey
- Updated web site pages
- Continued work on "Overview" and "Metro Trails" A/V programs
- Completed work on ad for Omaha W-H supplement on Omaha 150 Year Anniversary publication date is June 13<sup>th</sup>.
- Staffed booth for Earth day Omaha Celebration at Memorial Park
- Planned NRD participation in National Trails Day/Rotary Trail Marking event.
- Staffed booth at "Fit to Win" event at Heartland Park.
- Gave presentation to Millard Lions Club.

### Education

- Held 2-day Water Works festival
- Judged oral presentations at the Nebraska State Envirothon
- Presented Enviroscape at Earth Day Omaha Celebration
- Started planning for two LEP workshops at Pheasant Fest
- Helped organize and presented at 2-day Watershed Festival at Chalco
- Held Chalco Hills Environmental Field Trips for 7 school groups (~600 students)
- Up-dated "Volunteers Wanted" publication for United Way
- Continued handling wildflower seed orders
- Arranged for new artwork to be displayed at the NRC from our Adopt A School
- Continued planning Summer NRD programs
- Sent out Envirothon certificates
- Completed new NRD Volunteer brochure
- Managed 132 volunteer hours
- Held Conference Call with LEP national office regarding state and national workshops
- Continued NRD Kudos program

# Construction Services, Professional Services, Personal Property Report On Purchases

# May 2004

	Project			
Date	Name	Item / Task	Company	Cost
5/3/04	Big Papio (Q to Harrison)	Rock riprap hauling (\$4.10/ton) - 1,400 tons	Midwest Dumpers	\$5,740
5/3/04	Big Papio (BNRR to Har)	Rock riprap hauling (\$4.20/ton) - 4,200 tons	Midwest Dumpers	\$17,640
5/3/04	Big Papio (Center to 84th)	Rock riprap hauling (\$3.50/ton)-4,400 tons	Midwest Dumpers	\$15,400
5/3/04	Big Papio (Harr to Corn)	Rock riprap hauling (\$4.20/ton)-3,500 tons	Midwest Dumpers	\$14,700
5/3/04	West Branch (66th Street)	Rock riprap hauling (\$4.50/ton)-1,000 tons	Midwest Dumpers	\$4,500
5/3/04	Newport Landing Dam	Rock riprap hauling (\$2.90/ton)- 550 tons	Midwest Dumpers	\$1.595
5/3/04	Big Papio (Q to Harrison)	Rock riprap material (\$11.90/ton) - 1,400 tons	Rinker Materials	\$16,660
5/3/04	Big Papio (BNRR to Har)	Rock riprap material (\$11.90/ton) - 4,200 tons	Rinker Materials	\$49,980
5/3/04	Big Papio (Center - 84th)	Rock riprap material (\$11.90/ton)-4,400 tons	Rinker Materials	\$52,360
5/3/04	Big Papio (Harr to Corn)	Rock riprap material (\$11.90/ton)-3,500 tons	Rinker Materials	\$41,650
5/3/04	West Branch (66th Street)	Rock riprap material (\$11.90/ton)-1,000 tons	Rinker Materials	\$11,900
5/3/04	Newport Landing Dam	Rock riprap material (\$11.90/ton) - 550 tons	Rinker Materials	\$6.545
5/12/04	Chalco Hills Rec Area	Chalco – re-side park residence	Neb. Siding, Window & Door	\$10,695
5/18/04	West Branch (84th to Giles)	Culvert Pipe for temporary creek crossings	Ace/Eaton Metals	\$15,547.20
5/19/04	West Branch Channel Proj.	Tributary Crossing Evaluation Study	HDR Engineering	\$19,914.00
5/28/04	Project Maintenance	Chemicals for spraying weeds	Frontier Coop. Co. & Tractor Supply	\$2,312.00
5/28/04	WCRW #1	Replace fuel pump injector for standby generator	Road Builders, Inc.	\$2,600 (est)
5/28/04	Chalco Hills Rec Area	New picnic shelter	Outdoor Rec Products	\$6,450
5/28/04	Chalco Hills Rec Area	Update and replace 5 solar lights in vault toilets	Solar Light and Power	\$6.945
5/28/04	Chalco Hills Rec Area	Chemicals for weed control	Co-op and Mann Chemical	\$3,200



Updated: May 17, 2004

### Current and On-Going Projects P-MRNRD Legal Counsel

**O** = Top Priority

F = Future Work - No Assignment

N = New Assignment

O = Others Handling

W = Work in Progress

P = PFP's Portion Completed

- Big Papio Channel Project West Center Road to West Dodge Road (Woodward):
- <u>Little Papio</u>: (Cleveland)
- Big Papio: (Cleveland)
- West Branch (Cleveland):
  - o Land Exchange with Sarpy Co. (96<sup>th</sup> St.) (W)
  - Appraisal review (90<sup>th</sup> to Giles) (N)
  - o Purchase Agreements, deeds (90th to Giles) (N)
- Western Sarpy Dike (Sklenar, Cleveland):
  - o Closing with Bundy's (potentially modify ROW/offer) (F)
  - o Complete easements three dikes and one drainage ditch (F)
  - Amended drainage ditch easements on Hickey (First National and Bundy Properties) (W)
  - Levee ROW Documents (RSP, etc.) (W)
  - Cabin ROW Documents, as needed (W)
  - Design Build Phase II Agreement (N)
- **Floodway Purchase Program** (Woodward):
  - o Floodway Property Purchase Agreements for Proskel Property at Elbow Bend (P)
- Trail Projects (Bowen):
  - o Bennington Trail Interlocal Agreement (W)

### • Missouri River Corridor Project (Becic):

- o California Bend Final settlement with tenant (Wright's) (W)
- o Lower Decatur Bend Appraisal Review, ROW documents and habitat easements (W)
- o Missouri River Pedestrian Bridge Professional Services Contract Review (N)

### • USDA P.L. 566 Projects, Silver Creek and Pigeon/Jones Watershed (Puls/Cleveland):

- o Silver Creek Site Easements—as needed (W)
- o Release of Site S-7 Easement (W)
- Papio Site S-27 (Fox Ridge Estates) Trail Easements (W)
- o D-17 Agreement (Waterford) ROW (N)

### • Papio Watershed Dam Sites:

- o Dam Site 19 agreement (Petermann) (F)
- o Dam Site 13 Agreement (Petermann) (F)

### • Papio Creek Watershed Partnership (Stormwater) (Woodward):

- o NRD Bonding Authority Legislation (N)
- Rural Water Projects: (Sklenar)
  - **②** Agreement with SID 296 for WCRW #1 (N)
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment to NRD/MUD Agreement (N)

### • Other:

- o Interlocal Agreement with Bellevue for Missouri Riverfront Development (P) (Becic)
- ② Interlocal Agreement for Dakota County Natural Resources Center (P) (Puls)

/peters/project lists/2004-May 2004

### MEETING MINUTES



### Meeting on Comprehensive Stormwater Management May 7, 2004 - 10 AM to Noon - Board Room Natural Resources Center, 8901 S. 154<sup>th</sup> Street, Omaha, NE

### **Attendants**

The following were in attendance: Duane Wilcox (Washington County Supervisor), Daryl Miller (Washington County Supervisor), Doug Cook (Washington County Planning), Bob Sink (Omaha), Laurie Carrette Zook (HDR), Lyle Christensen (HDR), Kent Holm (Douglas County), Joe Soucie (La Vista), Dave Goedeken (Bellevue), Robert Hayes (Boys Town), Nina Cudahy (Omaha), Marty Grate (Omaha), Gordon Andersen (Omaha), Pat Slaven (Omaha), Karen Klein (Omaha), Marty Leming (Papillion), Ronald Asch (NDEQ), Donna Luckner (NDEQ), Mike Mallory (NDEQ), Mike Kemp (Offutt AFB), Steve Tonn (Douglas/Sarpy County Extension), Don Doty (NRCS), Marlin Petermann (P-MRNRD), and Paul Woodward (P-MRNRD).

### Purpose

A Partnership meeting was held on the above date in order to discuss topics stated in the attached agenda. The meeting began at approximately 10:10 AM.

### 1. Introductions

Marlin Petermann (P-MRNRD) opened the meeting and everyone introduced himself or herself. An agenda and sign-up sheet were distributed.

### 2. Watershed Study Action Items

- Lyle Christensen (HDR) explained that a draft of the Watershed Tools Guidance Manual was available for review and comment. He briefly reviewed the "tools" described in this manual including the Decision Support Database, Stormwater BMP Tracking Database, Hydrologic and Hydraulic (H&H) models, WASP Water Quality model, Sediment Yield Estimation, and Water Quality Sampling. Lyle Christensen (HDR) also summarized his recent discussions with Pat O'Brien (NDEQ) concerning the analysis used for TMDL development versus analysis available for planning such as WASP. It was suggested that those wishing to review the draft guidance manual should provide comments to HDR by May 14, 2004.
- A general location map of the dam sites and reservoirs in the Papillion Creek Watershed currently being studied was handed out. Laurie Carrette Zook (HDR) explained that this map was part of a draft copy of the multi-reservoir analysis report recently completed by HDR. She explained that the purpose of this study was to update past reports prepared by the Corps of Engineers and assess the current constructability of the remaining dams.

Marlin Petermann (P-MRNRD) added that these sites do have potential impacts, but most are still a viable potential for flood control. It was noted that a final report would be available sometime in late June 2004.

### 3. New Interlocal Agreement

▶ Paul Woodward (P-MRNRD) handed out a copy of a Power Point presentation entitled the "Progress and Future of the Papillion Creek Watershed Partnership" and then presented it to the group. The presentation provided background on the Partnership and existing agreement, accomplishments made during the past 3 years, and provisions of the proposed agreement. It was noted that this presentation and/or assistance from the P-MRNRD is available. Paul Woodward (P-MRNRD) reported that Bennington, Boys Town, Omaha, and La Vista had already adopted the new agreement. Representatives from other communities and counties reported when they plan to adopt the agreement.

### 4. Preparation for NPDES Phase II Permits

- Donna Luckner (NDEQ) reported that the draft general permit was currently undergoing internal review as well as review by EPA. She anticipated receiving comments from EPA within the next week or so, and then making any necessary changes prior to putting the General NPDES Phase II Permit on or before June 1, 2004. Following a 30-day public notice period, it is anticipated that the final permit would be issued to communities and counties on July 1, 2004. Donna noted an EPA conference on July 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>.
- ▶ Paul Woodward (P-MRNRD) briefly reviewed issues discussed at a meeting with Nina Cudahy (Omaha) on May 4, 2004 concerning preparation for implementing NPDES Permit activities. Issues discussed included improvements to the PCWP website, upcoming educational events including Earth Day, brochures, draft ordinance review, and reporting. It was noted that a subcommittee of the Partnership should review several documents at a future meeting including an annual report template, draft ordinance language, reporting forms, and proposed appendices to the Stormwater Management Design Manual.

### 5. Stormwater Design Manual Subcommittee Report

Paul Woodward (P-MRNRD) handed out minutes from a Partnership Subcommittee meeting held on April 15, 2004. He explained that potential updates to the Stormwater Management Design Manual were reviewed and discussed, but it was decided that a future meeting was needed and would be organized by Kirk Pfeffer (Omaha). Marty Grate noted that the May 13, 2004 meeting has been canceled and will be rescheduled.

### 6. Funding

Paul Woodward (P-MRNRD) handed out a summary of the Watershed Fund as of May 6, 2004. He reported that most contributions currently due by August 1, 2004 had been received. He also reviewed past and future expenses as well as the anticipated balance at the end of the existing agreement.

### 7. Other Items of Interest

- Pat Slaven (Omaha) reported some of the results from the latest Cunningham Lake Watershed Community-Based Planning public meeting held on April 11, 2004, at Northwest High School. She explained that a new watershed council for Cunningham Lake representing all interest groups had been formed and planned to meet on May 24, 2004. It was noted that the next public meeting would likely be toward the end of the summer after suggested solutions had been thoroughly investigated. Pat Slaven (Omaha) also informed everyone that a fact sheet responding to concerns raised by several participants at the public meeting has been drafted and would soon be distributed. Steve Tonn (Douglas/Sarpy County Extension) also reviewed the makeup of the Watershed Council and commented on the progress of the Corps' Section 1135 project on the lake itself. Don Doty (NRCS) explained that Cunningham was one of three e watersheds targeted by the NRCS EQUIP program to enhance conservation practices.
- ➤ Paul Woodward (P-MRNRD) provided an update on the status of the West Papio Watershed Floodplain Remapping project. He noted that a few of the communities had responded to his request to inform their public officials about the project, but others including Sarpy County, Gretna, Omaha, La Vista, and Bellevue still needed to do so.
- Marty Grate (Omaha) gave an update on the Household Hazardous Waste Facility under construction. This regional facility is substantially complete and plans for a grand opening are slated for late August.

### 8. Next Meeting Dates

> The next Partnership meeting will be held on Thursday, June 17, 2004 at 10:00 AM in the Board Room of the Natural Resources Center. A Subcommittee Meeting involving representatives from all entities who wish to attend is scheduled for Thursday, June 10, 2004, from 10 AM to Noon in the Small Conference Room of the Natural Resources Center.

### 9. Adjourn

- > The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:25 AM. An agenda, attendance list, and the handouts passed out at the meeting are available to those members who were not present at the meeting upon request.
- 10. A picnic luncheon followed the meeting.

Please contact Paul Woodward at 444-6222 regarding any questions or comments concerning these meeting minutes.

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### **MEETING AGENDA**



### Meeting on Comprehensive Storm Water Management May 7, 2004 – 10 to Noon – Board Room Natural Resources Center, 8901 S. 154<sup>th</sup> Street, Omaha, NE

- 1. Introductions
- 2. Watershed Study Action Items
  - Watershed 'Tools' Guidance Manual (HDR)
  - Multi-Reservoir Analysis (HDR)
- 3. New Inter-local Agreement
  - Presentation (P-MRNRD)
- 4. Preparation for NPDES Phase II Permits
  - NPDES Phase II Permit Status (NDEQ)
  - Omaha and NRD Compliance Activities (P-MRNRD and Omaha)
- 5. Stormwater Design Manual Subcommittee Report (P-MRNRD)
- 6. Funding
  - Watershed Fund Summary (P-MRNRD)
- 7. Other items of interest
  - Cunningham Lake Watershed Community Based Planning Project (Omaha)
- 8. Next Meeting Date
- 9. Adjourn
- 10. Picnic Luncheon

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Sign-In Sheet



Meeting on Comprehensive Stormwater Management May 7, 2004 – 10 AM to Noon – Board Room Natural Resources Center, 8901 S. 154<sup>th</sup> Street, Omaha, NE

(Please Print)

NAME &	MAILING ADDRESS	TELEPHONE &
EMPLOYER O	STERET - CITY/ZIP	EMAIL ADDRESS
Paul Woodward	8901 S 154th St	402-444-6222
P-MRNRD	Omaha, NE 68117	purocodword epapio ned.org
Lyle Christensen	8404 Indian Hills Dr.	(402) 399-1329
HOR	8484 Indian Hills Drive	Tychrist @ Harine com
Laune Carrette Zook	8404 Indian Hills Drive	1402) 399-1078
ZOOK	Omaha No 68114	laune carrettee haring com
Robert Hayes	355 McBean Cr	498-1135
Boys Town	Boys Town Ne 68010	house & hout out ora
Pat Slaven	1819 Farnam Stc701	hayes & Bostown org
anala Parks + Rec	. Omala NG 68183	pslaven@ a omaha.ne. us
Karen Klein	1819 Farman St	444-4906
On the City Planning	Omeh NE 68183	their @ ci. omahe. ne.us
WARTY LEWING	122 EAST 300ST	597-2044
city of parition	PARILLIAN No 68046	MECHING @ PAPILLOW.
Steve Tonn	1308 Gold Coast Rd Sk200	444-4237
Douglas/Sarpy Extension	Papillion NE 68046-3019	Stonne unInotes 02 und. of
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DON DOTY-NRCS	BMAHA NE 68138	dow. doty one us da . go
	8901 5.154 D shout	595-1768
Mike HALLING - NDGO	Dugua, NE 68138	
	3015 Menke Circle	Mike. Mallony Dideg State A 402-444-6362-
KENT Houn	Omaha, NE 6834	
MIKE KENT	55 CGS/CEV 6884	Kholma co. douglas.ne.us
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Sign-In Sheet



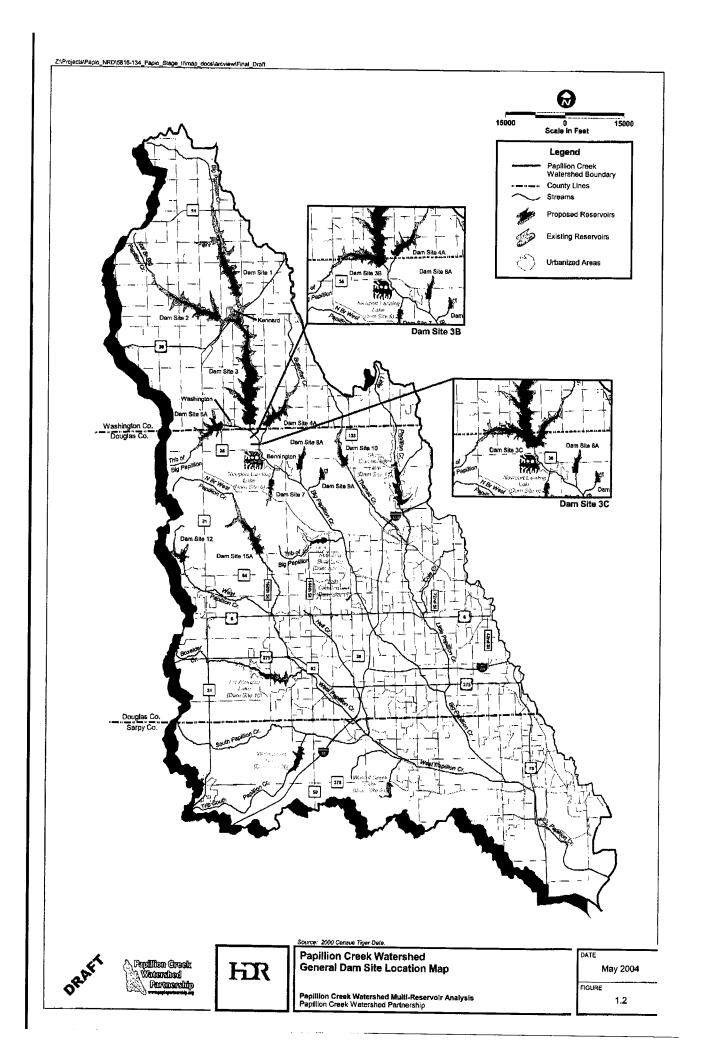
Meeting on Comprehensive Stormwater Management

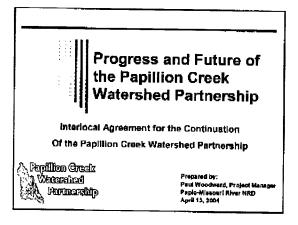
May 7, 2004 – 10 AM to Noon – Board Room

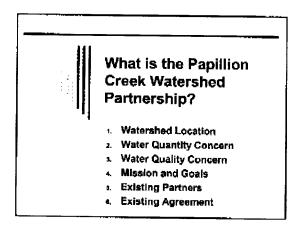
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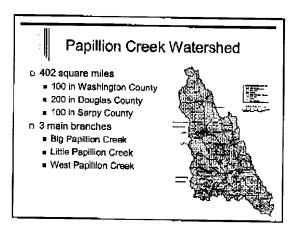
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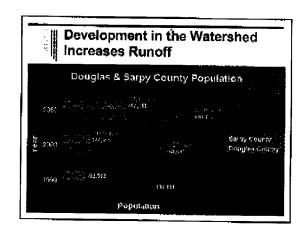
name &	MAILING ADDRESS	TELEPHONE &
EMPLOYER	STERET - CITY/ZAP	EMAIL ADDRESS
Marlin Petermann	8901 5 154th St	102-444-6222
P. MRNRD	Omaka, NE 68138	impetermann @ proposed org
DOWNA LUCKNESS	1200 10 STREET SLITE 400	402-471-1369
Ronald L. Asch	1200 N Street, SUKE 400	denne lockner (NOED STATE NE
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NDEQ	Lincoln, NE 68509	Hom. asch@Mdeg. State. No. 11
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OMATINA /PWD	DMA+14 NE 68107	gandersen @ci, aman, ne .
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Bob Sink  Omaha PW  Wash Co Brack  Clary CK Meller  Doug Cook  Washington Co. Planning  DAVOCTOEDENEN	Omaria, NE 68183  2162 Shart St  Place No 65008  CONTROUSE 1555 Colfax ST BAIR, NE 62008  CITYOFBELLEVUE	402-426-6872
BODSINK  Omaha PW  Wash Co Brack  Clay CK Meller  Doug Cook  Washington Co. Planning  DAVODGOEDEKEN	CONTROUSE 1555 CONFAX ST BAIR, NE 18008  CITTOFBELLEVIE 210 W. 1710510N	65 nix & Ci. Omaha.nl. U.S 402-426-2077 402-426-6872 cook @huntel. Net
Bob Sink  Omaha PW  Wash Co Brack  Clary CK Meller  Doug Cook  Washington Co. Planning  DAVOCTOEDENEN	Omaria, NE 68183  2162 Shart St  Place No 65008  CONTROUSE 1555 Colfax ST BAIR, NE 62008  CITYOFBELLEVUE	65 mix. 6. C. Onaha. M. C. U.S.  402-426-207-7  402-426-6872  cook. @huntel. Net  402-293-3028
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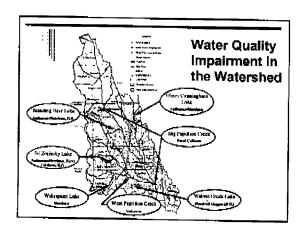


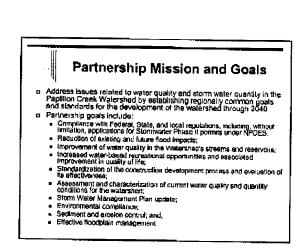


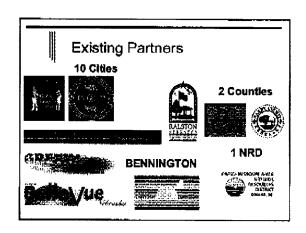


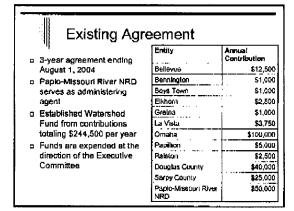




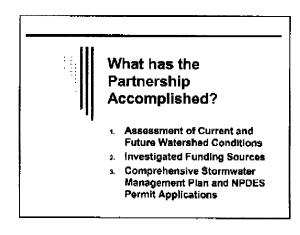


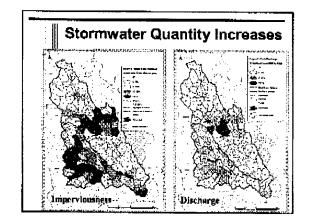


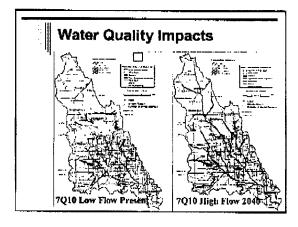




### **Papillion Creek Watershed** Partnership Members AMMINTION Représentative Phone Bellevue David Goodeke 293-3030 Bernington David Clark 571-8801 Boys Town Robert Hayes 498-1135 Elkharn Don Elkmeier 289-2678 Gretra Donna Stigge 332-3336 LaVieta Joe Soucie 331-8927 Omaha Marty Grate 444-3908 Papillion Marty Leming 597-2044 Relation Dan Freshman 331-6677 Couglas County Kent Holm 444-6362 Sarpy County . Mark Wayne 593-2347 Papio-Missouri River NRD Paul Woodward 444-8222







### Results of Assessment

- Imperviousness projected to increase from 13.8% in 2002 to 25.1% in
- Flooding potential will continue to increase without new controls.
  - Fort Crook gage peak discharge increase @ 5% and volume increase @
  - Areas of more pronounced impacts
    - a Big Papid between Bennington Road and Military Road
    - Big Papid between North Bridge Road (Old Mill) and Happy Hollow Country Club.
    - n Big Papio Near Capehart Rd.
  - n South Branch of West Papio below Greins.
- Comprehensive BMPs will be required to control sediment transport, bacteria, and nutrients
  - Compliance with Regulatory Standards will be difficult.



- Applied for several federal grants including:
  - EPA Watershed Initiative Proposal to help fund Zorinsky Sadiment Basin and Household Hazardous Waste Facility
  - NDEQ Section 604 Funding Proposal to produce educational materials
  - Multiple proposals to EPA Region VII to stencil storm drains
- Helped promote the need for enabling State legislation to allow local governments the opportunity to obtain additional stormwater funding
- Requested additional appropriations of VA-HUD dollars through the EPA



### Development of a Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan

Best Management Practices selected by the Partnership as activities to meet NPDES Permit Requirements



### Comprehensive Storm Water Management Plan

- A collection of Best Management Practices (BMP) which cover the six "minimum control measures" identified by EPA
  - Public Education and Outreach
  - Public Participation and Involvement
  - Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination
  - Construction Site Runoff
  - Post-construction Runoff Control
- Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations
- A designation of the timeframe in which these BMPs will be
- ullidentified goals for each BMP from which annual activities can be measured and reported



### Public Education and Outreach



 Household Hazardous Waste Information Brochures



- p Partnership Website
  - www.papiopartnership.org



- c Earth Day Participation
  - www.earthsite.org



### Public Participation & Involvement



Stream Cleanup Day

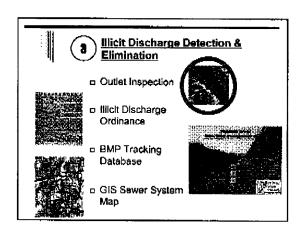


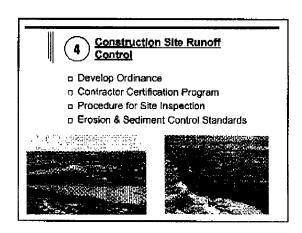
- Community Hotline
- Household Hazardous Waste Drop Off Program

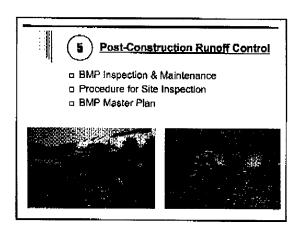


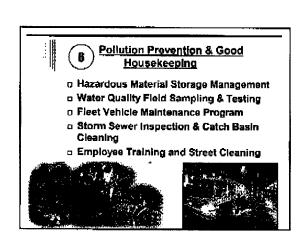
- Stakeholders Meetings
- Storm Drain Stenciling Website – Community Feedback

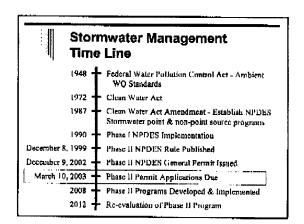


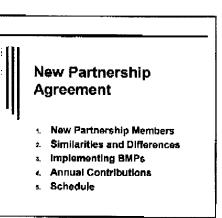




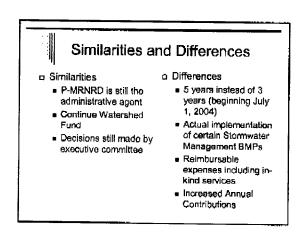


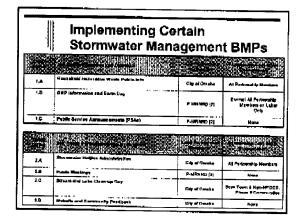


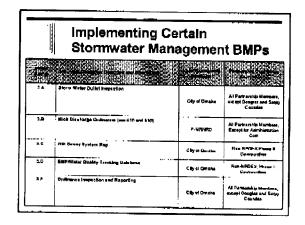












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Annual Contributions							
Asserv	Previous Contribution	Province Percentage	Frepound Septemberion	Proposed Esceninge			
Sellevue	\$12,500.00	6.1%	\$20,000.00	4.4%			
Sennington	\$1,000.00	0 4%	\$500.00	O. 1%			
Saya lawn	\$1,000.00	0.4%	\$1,000.00	0.2%			
Ekkarn	\$2,500.00	1.0%	\$3,500.00	0.6%			
Ore ine	\$1,000 00	0.4%	\$1,000.00	0.2%			
Le Virte	\$3,750.06	1 5%	\$5,000.00	1.1%			
Kennerd	\$0.00	0.0%	\$500,00	0.1%			
Omaha	£120,000 UU	40.9%	5184,000 00	41 0%			
Papillion .	\$5,000.00	2.0%	17,000.00	16%			
Retrion	\$2,500 00	1.0%	\$2,600.00	0 8%			
Daugles County	\$40,000.00	15.4%	\$85,000.00	14 4%			
Surpy County	\$25,000.00	10.2%	665,000.00	12.2%			
Washington County	\$0.00	0.0%	\$16,000.00	9.3%			
Paris NAC	\$50,000.00	20.5%	\$80,000 UO	20.0%			
TOTALS	\$244,250.00	100 00%	\$450,000.00	100.00%			



### Conclusion

- The new Partnership Agreement will:
  - Provide funding to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) required by NPDES Permits
  - Continue to provide cost-savings by working together as well as local cost-share for federal or state grants
  - Allow local government to continue to address impacts to water quality and stormwater quantity on a watershed sormerh
  - Continue to promote consistent and comprehensive stormwater management across jurisdictional boundaries



### **THANK YOU**

**ANY QUESTIONS?** 



### MEETING MINUTES



### NPDES Permit Subcommittee Meeting April 15, 2004 - 10 AM to Noon - Small Conference Room Natural Resources Center, 8901 S. 154<sup>th</sup> Street, Omaha, NE

### **Attendants**

The following were in attendance: Laurie Carrette Zook (HDR), Lyle Christensen (HDR), Joe Soucie (La Vista), Robert Hayes (Boys Town), Nina Cudahy (Omaha), Marty Grate (Omaha), Kirk Pfeffer (Omaha), Geoff Goodwin (Omaha), Marlin Petermann (P-MRNRD), and Paul Woodward (P-MRNRD).

### Purpose

A Partnership Subcommittee meeting was held on the above date in order to discuss topics stated in the attached agenda. The meeting began at approximately 10:08 AM.

- 1. Introductions
  - > Paul Woodward (P-MRNRD) opened the meeting and an agenda and sign-up sheet were distributed.
- 2. Preparation for NPDES Permits
  - The latest Critical Path Schedule for NPDES Phase II Stormwater Permit Implementation was handed out. Each activity was reviewed and discussed by the committee. The need and timing of a future public meeting was discussed, and it was decided that a meeting sometime in the fall would work best. Nina Cudahy (Omaha) noted that she had drafted a new comprehensive ordinance and that she could provide it to the Partnership for review. It was decided that Paul Woodward (P-MRNRD) and Nina Cudahy (Omaha) would meet at a later date to address certain action items including updates to the website, upcoming educational events such as Earth Day, and reporting.
- 3. Stormwater Design Manual Update
  - Paul Woodward (P-MRNRD) handed out a table of existing and draft Drainage Criteria Manual Table of Contents prepared in March of 2002. Laurie Carrette Zook (HDR) briefly reviewed the revisions to certain sections that were previously proposed. Nina Cudahy (Omaha) explained that she had drafted an appendix to the manual that addresses BMPs required by the NPDES Permit. She noted that the subcommittee and ACEC would be welcome to review this draft appendix. The combination of the Stormwater Management and Erosion Control Manual was discussed. Geoff Goodwin (Omaha)

reviewed some joint problems of both manuals and noted that both would need to be modified in order to stay consistent. Kirk Pfeffer (Omaha) agreed to organize another meeting to further discuss revising the manual.

### 4. Watershed 'Tools' Guidance Manual Development

- ➤ Lyle Christensen (HDR) handed out a draft of the introduction and table of contents for a Watershed Tools Guidance Manual. He reviewed that the development of two databases, one by HDR and one by Omaha, would work well together, but serve separate purposes. He explained that further coordination with Nina Cudahy (Omaha) would probably complete this portion of the manual.
- ➤ Lyle Christensen (HDR) gave a brief comparison between the statistical approach used by NDEQ to prepare TMDLs and the application WASP currently offered. He explained that NDEQs approach could not be used for planning because it relied on field sampling, but that WASP could have future planning applications. A pilot study on a particular BMP will probably be the first step.
- > It was noted that a future teleconference will be held between HDR and the NRD to determine the methods used for the Sediment Yield analysis.
- 5. Other Items of Interest
  - > None
- 6. Next Meeting Dates
  - > The next Partnership meeting will be held on Friday, May 7, 2004 at 10:00 AM in the Board Room of the Natural Resources Center. A future meeting concerning the Stormwater Design Manual update to be coordinated by the City of Omaha was preliminarily scheduled for May 13, 2004.

### 7. Adjourn

> The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:10 PM. An agenda, attendance list, and the handouts passed out at the meeting are available to those members who were not present at the meeting upon request.

Please contact Paul Woodward at 444-6222 regarding any questions or comments concerning these meeting minutes.

535\PCWP\Meetings\040401-PCWP meeting minutes.doc

File: 535 "PCWP"



### **Watershed Fund Summary**

Updated May 6, 2004

### **CONTRIBUTIONS**

	Annual Contribution		Contribution-	Remaining Amount Due
Entity	Amount	Percent (%)	1	Aug. 1, 2004
Bellevue	\$12,500.00	5.1%	\$37,500,00	\$0.00
Bennington	\$1,000.00	0.4%	\$3,000.00	\$0.00
Girls and Boys Town	\$1,000.00	0.4%	\$2,000.00	\$1,000.00
Elkhorn	\$2,500.00	1.0%	\$7,500.00	\$0.00
Gretna	\$1,000.00	0.4%	. \$2,000.00	\$1,000.00
La Vista	\$3,750.00	1.5%	\$11,250.00	\$0.00
Omaha	\$100,000.00	40.9%	\$300,000.00	\$0.00
Papillion	\$5,000.00	2.0%	\$15,000.00	\$0.00
Ralston	\$2,500.00	1.0%	\$7,500.00	\$0.00
Douglas County	\$40,000.00	16.4%	\$80,000.00	\$40,000.00
Sarpy County	\$25,000.00	10.2%	\$50,000.00	\$25,000.00
Papio NRD	\$50,000.00	20.5%	\$150,000.00	\$0.00
TOTAL	\$244,250.00	100.0%	\$665,750.00	\$67,000.00

### **EXPENSES**

Item	Expense-To- Date	Future Expenses
Omaha Reimbursement (HDR & CDM)	\$357,150.04	\$0.00
Misc (Partnership Letterhead, etc)	\$1,000.73	\$0.00
CDM	\$19,890.58	\$0.00
HDR Engineering, Inc. (Stage II)	\$47,407.69	\$87,592.31
HDR Engineering, Inc. (Needs Assessment)	\$16,484.31	\$18,515.69
TOTAL	\$441,933.35	\$106,108.00

### **BALANCE**

	!	Future Balance
Contributions	\$665,750.00	\$732,750.00
Expenses	\$441,933.35	\$548,041.35
Interest	<b>\$6,08</b> 5.50	\$7,500.00
TOTAL	\$229,902.15	\$192,208.65

### Memorandum

**To**: File 536

**From**: Paul Woodward, Water Resources Engineer

**Date**: May 26, 2004

Re: Rainstorm and Flooding on May 22 and 23, 2004 – Papillion Creek

On May 22 (PM) and 23 (AM), 2004, areas of the District in Washington, Douglas, and Sarpy County received intense rainfall that lead to high water in the Papillion Creeks. District staff on flood watch (both in the field and in the office) Saturday night, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, made the following observations:

- Staff gauge reading of 14.0 ft @ 10:55 PM on the Big Papio at Hwy 36 west of Bennington.
- Lathe set near riprap at SE corner of Hwy 30 Bridge near Kennard @ 11:30 PM. The stage at this location had receded a foot @ 11:43 PM.
- There was evidence two (2) miles upstream of Kennard that the Big Papio had flooded outside of its banks. However, water had receded within the channel by 12:20 AM.
- A high water mark was noted on the silt fence near the SE corner of the Hwy 30 Bridge over the NW Branch of the Big Papio just SE of Kennard. Stage was receding at this location @ 12:15 AM.
- Staff gauge reading of 16.5 ft @ 12:35 AM on the Big Papio at Hwy 36 west of Bennington. Peak about half to 2/3<sup>rd</sup> bank full stage.
- The Little Papio at Maple Street had receded about a foot at 10:55 PM and nearly 16" at 11:45 PM. Peaked near half of bank full stage
- Cole Creek was only half full at 10:35 PM.
- Thomas Creek was only up 2 feet at 11:20 PM.
- The confluence of the Big and Little Papio at "Q" Street appeared to crest at 17.6 ft on 5/23/2004 at 12:15 AM according to the staff gauge.
- The West Papio in Papillion was at 6.4 ft on 5/23/2004 at 12:35 AM.

Rainfall data from the flood warning system was incomplete, especially for gauges in Washington County due to a data retrieval error at the National Weather Service until approximately 8:30 PM. However, District staff contacted landowners participating in the Rain Gauge Program and obtained rainfalls as shown on the attached map. The average rainfall reported in Washington County fell in less than a 2 hour period and was approximately 1.75 inches and ranged from 1.68 to 1.98. Rainfall amounts in Douglas and Sarpy County ranged from 1 to 2 inches in a similar time period.

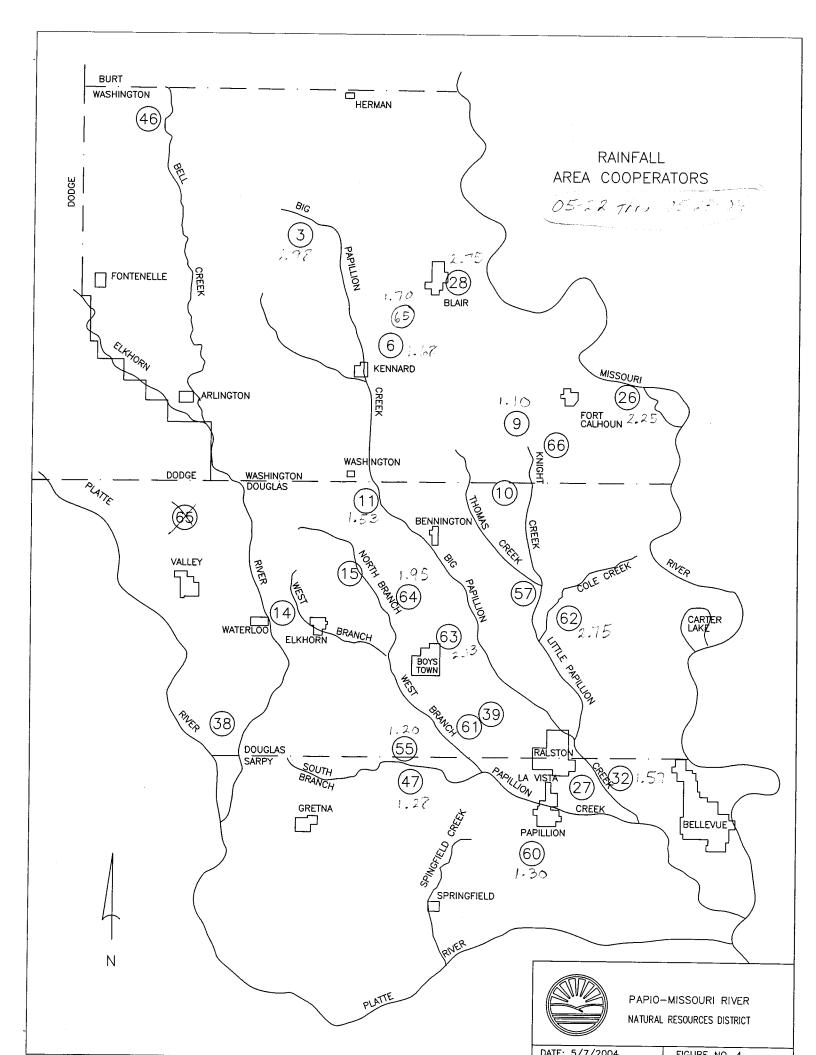
Beginning at 8:30 PM, the flood warning gauges were able to record peak stages for reaches in the Big Papio, Little Papio, and West Papio. Hydrographs for May 22<sup>nd</sup> through May 25<sup>th</sup> are attached. Peak stages on the Big Papio during Saturday night/ Sunday morning were 21.82 feet at 11:17 PM near Kennard, 16.5 ft at 12:15 AM near Bennington on Hwy 36, and 22.51 ft at 2:09 AM near 125<sup>th</sup> and Fort St. Peak stages on the Little Papio ranged from 7.84 ft at Irvington to 12.10 ft near Aksarben and were actually higher after an intense rainfall on Monday afternoon, May 24, 2004. The West Papio at Millard reported the highest peak stages at Millard Ave. of 10.92 ft and 11.68 ft on May 22<sup>nd</sup> at 11:30 PM and on May 24<sup>th</sup> at 4:50 PM respectively.

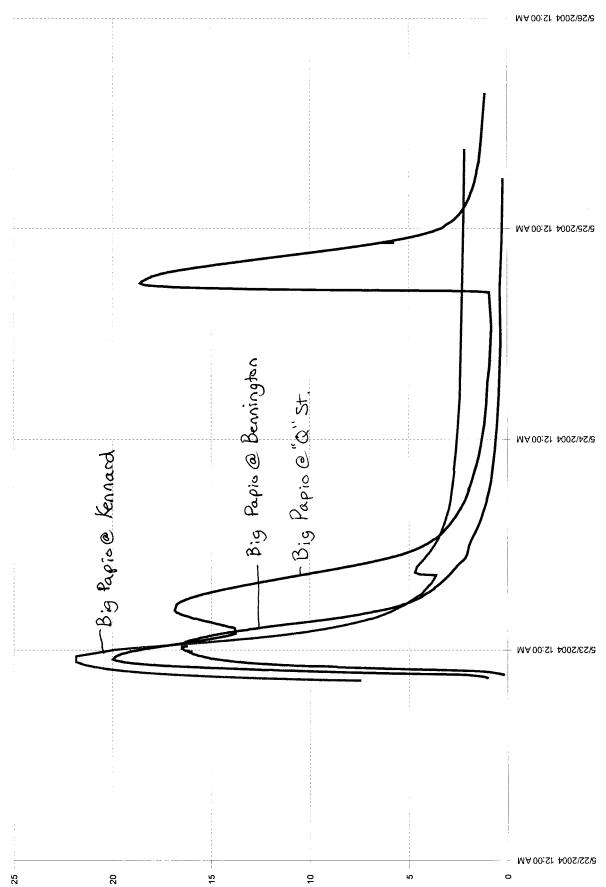
Additionally, high water marks were set on May 24, 2004 at several locations and subsequent elevations were surveyed by District staff as noted on the attached table. Additionally, crest stage gauge measurements were taken for both Saturday night and Monday morning rain storms, and they are available from USGS.

High water was also recorded in the Elkhorn River and Logan Creek on May 23, 2004 after several days of rain in their respective drainage basins. The Elkhorn River crested near 12.0 ft at Waterloo, NE late in the day on May 23<sup>rd</sup> while Logan Creek peaked over 15 ft near Uehling, NE early on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, according to the attached graphs from USGS gages. Increase flows and stages were also observed in the Platte River at Ashland and Louisville and are documented in the attached graphs.

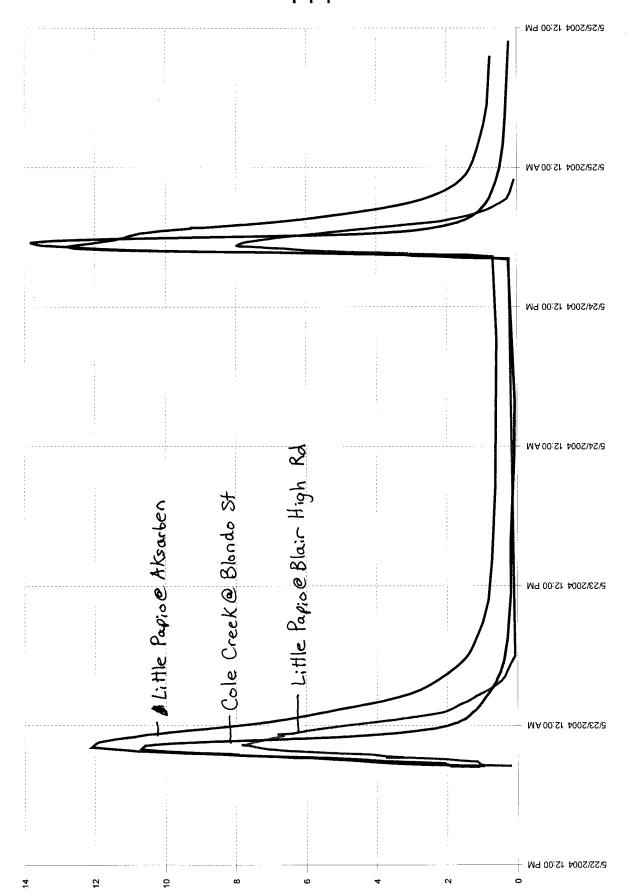
### High Water Marks set 05/24/03

Creek (Location)	Elevation (ft, NVGD 1929)	Bank Full Elevation (ft, msl)
Bell Creek @ 1st Street (N of		1155.0
Arlington)		
NW Branch Big Papio (W of	1137.78	1140.0
Kennard)		
Big Papio (E of Kennard)	1140.26	1138.0
Big Papio (CR 26)		NA
Big Papio (CR 34)		NA
Big Papio (Hwy 36 W of		1100.0
Bennington)		
Big Papio ("Q" Street)	1000.74	1004.0
Big Papio (Capehart Rd)	971.91	982.0
Little Papio (Maple St.)	1044.72	1055.0
Little Papio (Pine St.)	1014.05	1028.7
West Papio (84 <sup>th</sup> St.)	996.93	1010.0

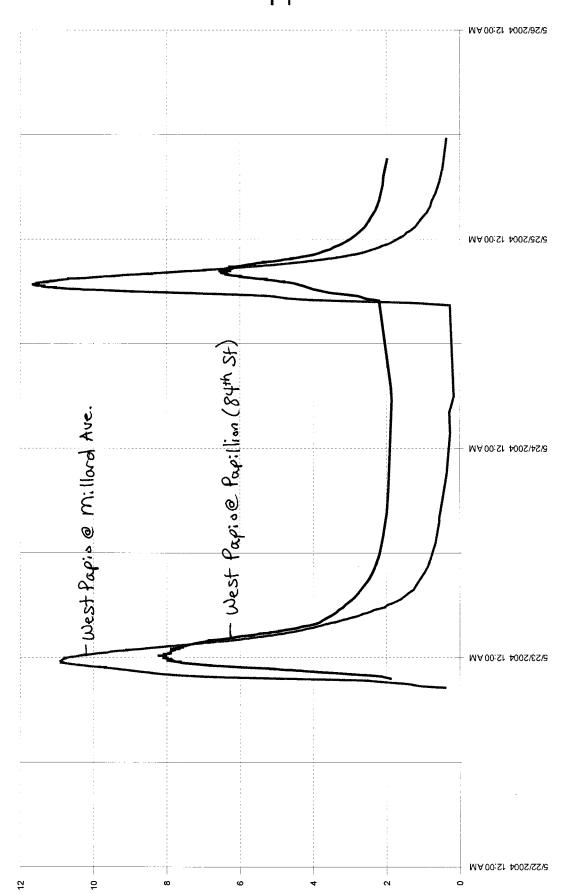




feet for the most recent 3 days



feet for the most recent 3 days



feet for the most recent 3 days



**Water Resources** 

Data Category:	Geographic Area:	
Real-time ▼	Nebraska →	go

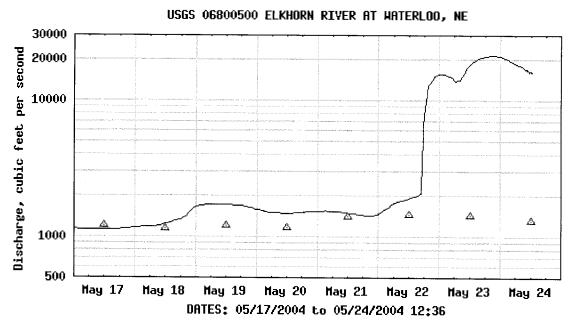
# USGS 06800500 ELKHORN RIVER AT WATERLOO, NE PROVISIONAL DATA SUBJECT TO REVISION

Available data for this site Real-time GO

Available Parameters	Output format	Days	
All 8 parameters available at this site	Graph	7	get data
00060 Discharge (DD 01)		(1 31)	
00065 Gage height (DD 02)		(1-31)	
00045 Precipitation (DD 03)			

### Discharge, cubic feet per second

Most recent value: 16,200 05-24-2004 12:30



EXPLANATION

— DISCHARGE

△ MEDIAN DAILY STREAMFLOW BASED ON 74 YEARS OF RECORD

Download a presentation-quality graph

Parameter Code 00060; DD 01

Daily mean flow statistics for 5/24 based on 74 years of record in ft<sup>3</sup>/sec

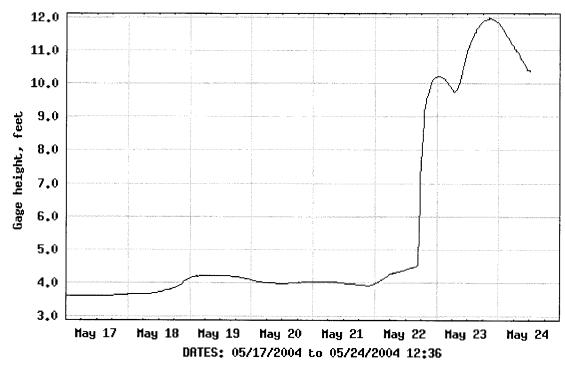
Current Flow	Minimum	Mean	Maximum	80 percent exceedance	50 percent exceedance	20 percent exceedance
16,200	271	2,068	10,800	650	1,320	2,940
Percent exceedance means that 80, 50, or 20 percent of all daily mean flows for 5/24						

have been greater than the value shown.

### Gage height, feet

Most recent value: 10.38 05-24-2004 12:30

### USGS 06800500 ELKHORN RIVER AT MATERLOO, NE



Download a presentation-quality graph

Parameter Code 00065; DD 02

Questions about data <u>gs-w-ne\_NWISWeb\_Data\_Inquiries@usgs.gov</u>
Feedback on this websitegs-w-ne\_NWISWeb\_Maintainer@usgs.gov
Real-time Data for Nebraska
http://waterdata.usgs.gov/ne/nwis/uv?

Top Explanation of terms

Retrieved on 2004-05-24 16:10:19 EDT

Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey
USGS Water Resources of Nebraska

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Water Resources

Data Category:	Geographic Area:	
Real-time <u>▼</u>	Nebraska 🔻	go

# USGS 06799500 LOGAN CREEK NEAR UEHLING, NEBR. PROVISIONAL DATA SUBJECT TO REVISION

Available data for this site Real-time GO

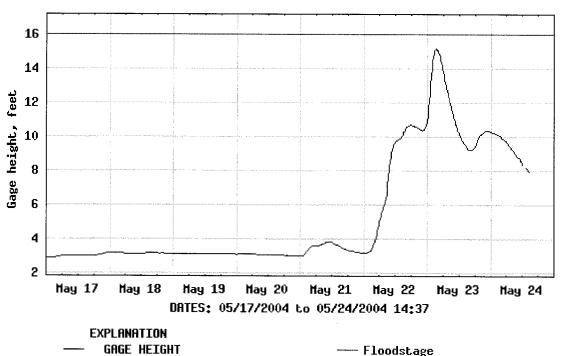
Station funded by cooperative programs between the U.S. Geological Survey and the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources and the Lower Platte North Natural Resources District.

Available Parameters	Output format	Days	
All 4 parameters available at this site	Graph	(1-31)	get data

### Gage height, feet

Most recent value: 7.96 05-24-2004 14:30





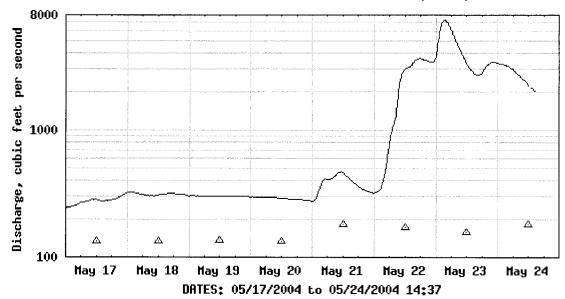
Download a presentation-quality graph

Parameter Code 00065; DD 03

### Discharge, cubic feet per second

Most recent value: 2,020 05-24-2004 14:30





**EXPLANATION** DISCHARGE

MEDIAN DAILY STREAMFLOW BASED ON 62 YEARS OF RECORD

Download a presentation-quality graph

Parameter Code 00060; DD 04

Daily mean flow statistics for 5/24 based on 62 years of record in ft<sup>3</sup>/sec

Current Flow	Minimum	Mean	Maximum	80 percent exceedance	50 percent exceedance	20 percent exceedance
2,020	35	301	2,060	77.2	183	419

Percent exceedance means that 80, 50, or 20 percent of all daily mean flows for 5/24 have been greater than the value shown.

Questions about data

gs-w-ne NWISWeb Data Inquiries@usgs.gov Feedback on this websitegs-w-ne NWISWeb Maintainer@usgs.gov

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Real-time Data for Nebraska

http://waterdata.usgs.gov/ne/nwis/uv?

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Water Resources

Data Category:		Geographic Area:	0000 446
Real-time	$\mathbf{Z}$	Nebraska 💌	go

# USGS 06799350 ELKHORN RIVER AT WEST POINT, NEBR. PROVISIONAL DATA SUBJECT TO REVISION

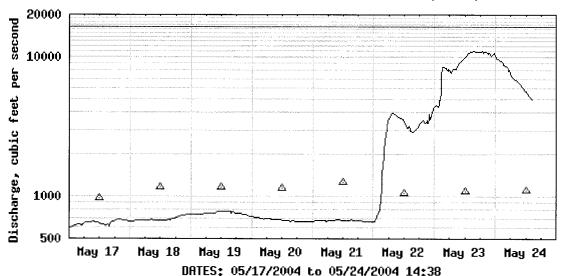
Available data for this site Real-time GO

Available Parameters	Output format	Days	
All 4 parameters available at this site	Graph	7	get data
00060 Discharge (DD 01)		(1.21)	
00065 Gage height (DD 02)		(1-31)	
00045 Precipitation (DD 03)			

### Discharge, cubic feet per second

Most recent value: 5,020 05-24-2004 14:30

USGS 06799350 ELKHORN RIYER AT WEST POINT, NEBR.



### **EXPLANATION**

DISCHARGE

- △ HEDIAN DAILY STREAMFLOW BASED ON 30 YEARS OF RECORD
- --- Discharge at floodstage

Download a presentation-quality graph

Parameter Code 00060; DD 01

Daily mean flow statistics for 5/24 based on 30 years of record in ft<sup>3</sup>/sec

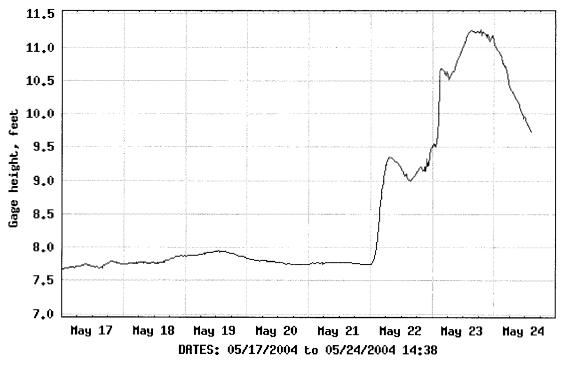
Current Flow	Minimum	Mean	Maximum	80 percent exceedance	50 percent exceedance	20 percent exceedance
5,020	374	1,298	3,270	623	1,100	1,898
Percent exceedance means that 80, 50, or 20 percent of all daily mean flows for 5/24						

have been greater than the value shown.

### Gage height, feet

Most recent value: 9.73 05-24-2004 14:30

### USGS 06799350 ELKHORN RIYER AT WEST POINT, NEBR.



Download a presentation-quality graph

Parameter Code 00065; DD 02

Questions about data <u>gs-w-ne\_NWISWeb\_Data\_Inquiries@usgs.gov</u>
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Real-time Data for Nebraska
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Water Resources

Data Category:	Geographic Area:	
Real-time <u></u> ▼	Nebraska <u></u> ▼	go

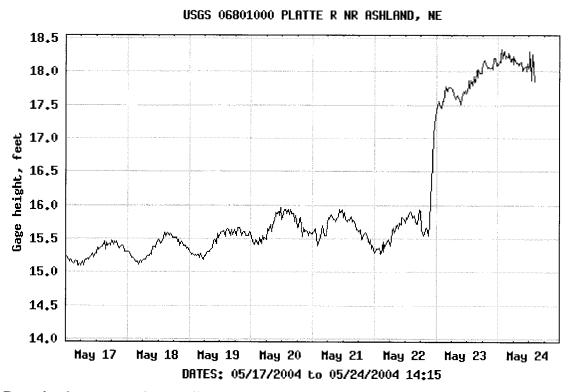
### USGS 06801000 PLATTE R NR ASHLAND, NE PROVISIONAL DATA SUBJECT TO REVISION

Available data for this site Real-time GO

Available Parameters	Output format	Days	
All 3 parameters available at this site	Graph	7	get data
00065 Gage height (DD 03)		(1.21)	
00060 Discharge (DD 04)		$\ (1-31)\ $	
70969 DCP battery voltage (DD 05)			

### Gage height, feet

Most recent value: 17.85 05-24-2004 14:15

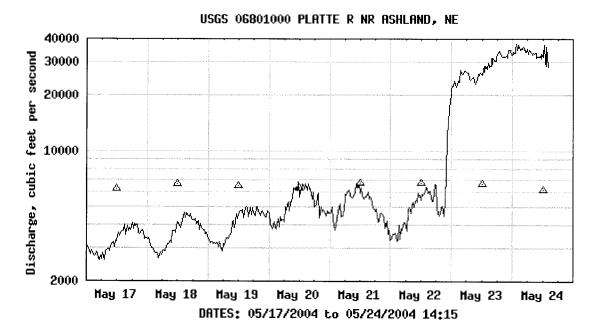


Download a presentation-quality graph

Parameter Code 00065; DD 03

### Discharge, cubic feet per second

Most recent value: 28,400 05-24-2004 14:15



**EXPLANATION** DISCHARGE

MEDIAN DAILY STREAMFLOW BASED ON 46 YEARS OF RECORD

Download a presentation-quality graph

Parameter Code 00060; DD 04

Daily mean flow statistics for 5/24 based on 46 years of record in ft<sup>3</sup>/sec

||Percent exceedance means that 80, 50, or 20 percent of all daily mean flows for 5/24 have been greater than the value shown.

Questions about data gs-w-ne NWISWeb Data Inquiries@usgs.gov Feedback on this websitegs-w-ne NWISWeb Maintainer@usgs.gov

<u>Top</u> Explanation of terms

Real-time Data for Nebraska

http://waterdata.usgs.gov/ne/nwis/uv?

Retrieved on 2004-05-24 16:12:05 EDT Department of the Interior, U.S. Geological Survey **USGS Water Resources of Nebraska** Privacy Statement | Disclaimer | Accessibility 2.6 1.43 ca



**Water Resources** 

Data Category:	Geographic Area:	
Real-time 💌	Nebraska <b>y</b>	go

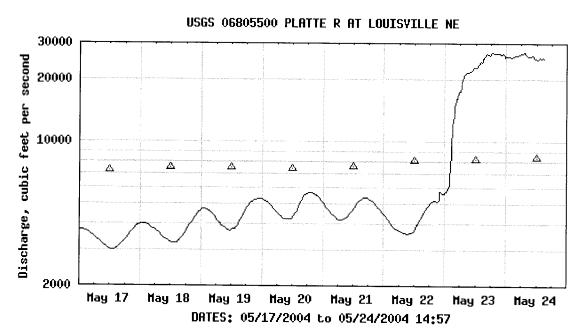
# USGS 06805500 PLATTE R AT LOUISVILLE NE PROVISIONAL DATA SUBJECT TO REVISION

Available data for this site Real-time GO

Available Parameters	Output format	Days	
All 4 parameters available at this site	Graph	<sub>7</sub>	get data
00060 Discharge (DD 01) 00065 Gage height (DD 02)	J	(1 21)	-
00065 Gage height (DD 02)		$\ (1-31)\ $	
00045 Precipitation (DD 03)			

#### Discharge, cubic feet per second

Most recent value: 25,500 05-24-2004 14:45



EXPLANATION — DISCHARGE

△ MEDIAN DAILY STREAMFLOW BASED ON 49 YEARS OF RECORD

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Parameter Code 00060; DD 01

Daily mean flow statistics for 5/24 based on 49 years of record in ft<sup>3</sup>/sec

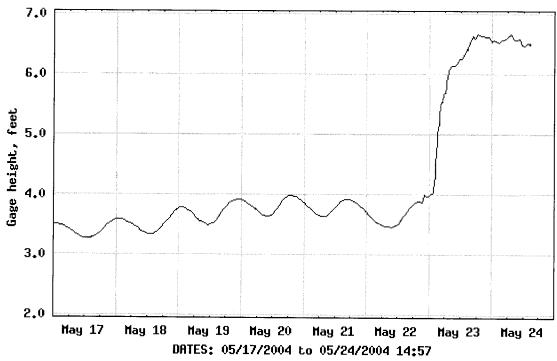
Current Flow	Minimum	Mean	Maximum	80 percent exceedance	50 percent exceedance	20 percent exceedance
25,500	2,100	9,701	35,000	5,180	8,350	14,299
Percent exceedance means that 80, 50, or 20 percent of all daily mean flows for 5/24						

have been greater than the value shown.

## Gage height, feet

Most recent value: 6.50 05-24-2004 14:45

# USGS 06805500 PLATTE R AT LOUISVILLE NE



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Parameter Code 00065; DD 02

Questions about data <u>gs-w-ne\_NWISWeb\_Data\_Inquiries@usgs.gov</u>
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Real-time Data for Nebraska
http://waterdata.usgs.gov/ne/nwis/uv?

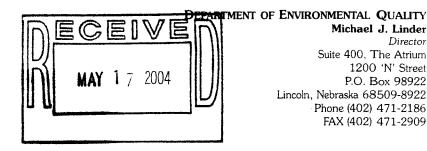
<u>Top</u> <u>Explanation of terms</u>

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# TATE OF NEBRASKA



Governor



Michael J. Linder Director

Suite 400, The Atrium 1200 'N' Street P.O. Box 98922 Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-8922 Phone (402) 471-2186 FAX (402) 471-2909

TO:

NRD Managers

FROM:

Gary Buttermore,

Agriculture Section - Water Resources Division

DATE:

May 14, 2004

SUBJECT:

Chemigation Program Summary

The enclosed report summarizes chemigation program activities in Nebraska for 2003. Information used in this report was gleaned from reports from the 23 Natural Resources Districts, from information provided by UNL Cooperative Extension, and from the Department's records. The report includes a brief summary from a reported chemigation accident in the Lower Republican NRD that resulted in a fertilizer spill, as well as a chronological summary of a chemigation enforcement case handled by the Lower Platte North NRD.

A big THANK YOU goes to the Natural Resources District personnel for their chemigation program efforts and timely reporting of chemigation activities this past year. Thanks also to UNL Cooperative Extension for their conduct of the chemigation applicator training. The Nebraska chemigation program continues to be a success story because of everyone's efforts.

/GB

## Chemigation in Nebraska – 2003

#### **Background**

Natural Resources Districts (NRDs) have inspected chemigation safety equipment and issued chemigation permits in Nebraska since 1987, when a total of 7,181 chemigation permits were issued. Since then, the number of permits issued has risen steadily until apparently reaching a plateau of more than 14,000 permits issued each of the last three years. The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) coordinates and provides oversight for the chemigation program statewide.

Safety equipment must be inspected and approved for all new chemigation permit applications before a permit can be issued. Each district has its own policy regarding inspection of chemigation safety equipment for permit renewals. Some NRDs inspect all permitted systems every year, while some inspect the equipment for permit renewals on a rotating basis of either once every other year, every third year, or every fourth year. Any permit not renewed by June 1 is treated as a new application, with the appropriate fee and inspection required, as provided for in the Chemigation Act (§46-1121(2)) and repeated in the Title 195 – "Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Chemigation" (Chapter 4, Section 003).

A certified chemigation applicator is required to operate the chemigation system and must be listed on the permit application. UNL Cooperative Extension conducts chemigation applicator certification training and testing sessions, with the results forwarded to the Department. Attendance at a training session and a score of 35 or better on the 50-question test is required for initial certification or subsequent renewal. Chemigation applicator certification cards are issued by NDEQ. A list of currently certified chemigation applicators is maintained by the NDEQ on its website at <a href="https://www.ndeq.state.ne.us">www.ndeq.state.ne.us</a>. Certification expires on January 1 of the fourth year following the date issued.

#### 2003 Summary

The districts reported that 14,508 permits were issued in 2003, with 30 of these permits later revoked or suspended. A summary of the permit totals for each NRD is provided below.

UNL conducted a total of 87 training sessions in 2003. NDEQ issued a total of 1,885 chemigation applicator certification cards to persons that applied for certification, attended a training session, and passed the test.

#### PERMIT TOTALS BY NRD

	NRD	Permits Issued	Notes
	Upper Big Blue	333	Includes 15 revoked permits
	Lower Big Blue	92	
	Upper Elkhorn	1841	
	Lower Elkhorn	1176	
	Little Blue	305	Includes 1 suspended permit
	Upper Loup	152	
	Lower Loup	1599	Includes 5 suspended permits
	Nemaha	22	
<	Papio-Missouri River	40	
	Lewis & Clark	170	
	Upper Niobrara-White	872	Includes 9 revoked permits
	Middle Niobrara	306	
	Lower Niobrara	886	
	North Platte	397	
	South Platte	270	
	Twin Platte	979	
	Central Platte	543	
	Lower Platte North	194	One operator fined-see below
	Lower Platte South	10	
	Upper Republican	2446	
	Middle Republican	825	
	Lower Republican	422	Fertilizer spill – see below
	Tri-Basin	628	
	2003 PERMIT TOTAL	14508	

#### Chemigation Accident Summary - Lower Republican NRD

In 2003, one chemigation related accident was reported. A chemical injection line broke, releasing fertilizer. Subsequent inspection by the NRD of the area affected by the spill found no evidence that fertilizer had reached the well casing or impacted ground water. The soil contaminated from the fertilizer spill was excavated and spread on cropland in an agronomic manner.

#### Chemigation Enforcement - Lower Platte North NRD

The following is a chronological summary and discussion of the Lower Platte North Natural Resources District (LPN NRD) chemigation enforcement case, which was initiated in 2002, but resolved early in 2003. Larry Angle provided the information used in this summary.

• July 30, 2002 – LPN NRD inspector found chemigation in progress at a non-permitted site with limited safety equipment and no certified chemigation applicator.

NRD personnel were able to obtain the name of the applicator (referred to as the defendant from here on) from a nearby resident. As part of the investigation, a sample was taken from the chemical tank, placed on ice in a cooler, and delivered to the laboratory the next morning. Pictures and videotape were taken of the chemigation equipment and a GPS unit used to further document the locations of the irrigation wellhead and the center pivot irrigation system. Chain of custody procedure was followed for the chemical tank sample. The Water Center Lab split the sample with the Agronomy Lab.

- August 2, 2002 LPN NRD issued a suspension order.
- August 19, 2002 LPN NRD held a hearing as requested by the defendant. As a result of the hearing, the NRD Water Committee recommended to the full Board that the case be taken to County Attorney.
- Fall 2002 Case filed by LPN NRD with the County Attorney.
- February 2003 Evidence requested by defendant's attorney. Requested items included a copy of the pictures and videotape from the inspection and a copy of either the tape or transcript from the hearing. The attorney also requested that the sample from the chemical tank be sent to MidWest Laboratories in Omaha for additional analysis.
- March 2003 Platte County Court fines the defendant \$250 plus \$32 court costs for illegal chemigation.
- Ending note: The field was planted to corn in 2002 when enforcement action was initiated. No permit was applied for in 2003, but the field was planted to soybeans.

## 

- 1. Record a tape of the Hearing, as well as a written transcript. At the Hearing, the defendant said that he was a certified operator in the past and thought that certification was good forever. This and other comments tended to incriminate him and would likely have been more powerful in court on a tape than just reading the written transcript.
- 2. Specifically request that the laboratory keeps and maintains chain of custody on the sample until told to dispose of it. The Water Center split a small amount of the sample with the Agronomy lab, which worked out very well in this case, because the Water Center disposed of the sample after testing but the Agronomy lab did not. It seemed to help in court to be able to present the same sample results from two different laboratories. We were probably lucky in that some sample was left when requested by the defendant's attorney. However, we have not seen any results from the lab that the defendant's attorney used, so it is not clear whether they actually planned to have it analyzed or were simply attempting a distraction or issue over possible missing evidence.

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

May 18, 2004

Mr. Joshua B. Bolten, Director Office of Management and Budget 725 - 17th Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20503

#### Dear Director Bolten:

We are writing to thank you for the efforts of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to complete the approval reviews of three Nebraska Corps of Engineers projects now before the Water and Power Branch. Representatives of the local sponsors for these projects met with members of the branch on March 23, 2004. We appreciate the cordial meeting with OMB staff on that date, as well as all subsequent efforts to complete the Administration's review of these projects in connection with the development of the fiscal year 2006 budget request to Congress for the Corps of Engineers.

As you are aware, all three projects were authorized by the Water Resources Development Act of 2000; and all have feasibility study reports timely approved by the Chief of Engineers and the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works. In addition, all three projects are supportive of the Administration's policies and reflect core missions of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

# Western Sarpy-Clear Creek (WS-CC) Flood Damage Reduction Project

The WS-CC project was sent to OMB in February 2004. The WS-CC project, which received construction funding in fiscal years 2003 and 2004, is designed to protect vital infrastructure, including the Lincoln, Nebraska, water supply well field and the transport pipes at the Platte River water treatment plant site. One of two transport pipes to Lincoln was washed away by an ice-jam-induced flood in 1993, and this same area is at risk of such flooding annually. Other infrastructure at this location include Interstate 80 and Platte River bridge, U.S. Highway 6 and bridge, Burlington Northern-Santa Fe railroad line and bridge, transcontinental fiber optic cables, and other vital infrastructure.

The upstream Clear Creek segment levee must be built before construction on the adjoining National Guard Camp levee can be completed. Funding for the latter levee was provided by Congress in the fiscal year 2004 Military Construction Appropriations bill. Construction on WS-CC can be completed during fiscal year 2006 if the President and Congress provide the funds we have requested in fiscal year 2005.

May 18, 2004 Page 2

#### Sand Creek Environmental Restoration Project

The Sand Creek project, received at OMB in January 2003, was provided construction funding by Congress in fiscal years 2003 and 2004. Construction of the main wetlands restoration structure must begin as soon as possible because the structure also serves as the roadway for the U.S. 77 Expressway, which has already been delayed for nearly two years because of delays in funding the flood control structure–expressway right-of-way.

This project represents local community and regional action to restore and protect truly historic wetlands areas, reflective of the Administration's net wetlands gain policy, and to improve water quality in the wider Platte River watershed. The project will serve wildlife and waterfowl using the North American Central Flyway. The feasibility report includes information quantifying the long-term environmental benefits, as is being urged by the Administration.

### Antelope Creek Flood Damage Reduction Project

The Antelope Creek project received construction funding in fiscal years 2002, 2003 and 2004. The Feasibility Study Report was forwarded to your office in September 2003. The flood damage reduction project is part of a wider Antelope Valley Project, including transportation and community-revitalization elements. Together, these elements support the Administration's policy to improve America's urban areas. Construction on the flood-reduction element must proceed before the transportation and community-development elements can begin. An amendment to the project coordination agreement is pending before your agency under Section 215 of the Flood Control Act of 1968; further information on this issue has been previously provided to OMB.

In closing, completion of the Administration's review and approval for these projects would be very much appreciated. Certainly, your staff's responsiveness and many courtesies at the March 23 and April 12 meetings were helpful in reaching this goal; and we appreciate their efforts. Please let us know if there is any other information OMB may need to consider approval of these projects.

Sincerely,

cc:

E. Benjamin Nelson

Charles T. Hagel
United States Senate

Douglas Bereater Member of Congress

David W. Hobbs, Assistant to the President

# NRD rejects Omaha bid for permits

build wells in Saunders County considering a lawsuit so it can The city's utility district is

**BY ALGIS J. LAUKAITIS** 5 - 73 - 60Lincoln Journal Star

ties District has accused the Lower Platte North Natural Resources District board of discrimination after it rejected general manager of Omaha's Metropolitan Utili MUD's applications for well permits in Saunders County.

"There's a lot of discriminatory feeling out there against Omaha and the kinds of people who live in Omaha," MUD general manager Tom Wurtz said Wednesday.

For years, Wurtz said, Lincoln has taken water from the 'It's outright discrimination."

Platte River near Ashland and "we never hear anything." Lincoln gets more than 90 percent of its drinking water from well fields on an island in the Platte and on the river's

the NRD board voted 15-4 to deny permits for 18 wells in Saunders County. The NRD contends that MUD needs the permits to pump millions of gallons of water for its At an emotionally charged meeting Monday in Wahoo new treatment plant along the Platte River.

About 100 people attended the meeting. Some voiced concern the MUD project —known as Platte West could lower water tables and pull contaminants from the former Nebraska Ordnance Plant near Mead

said. And the district is considering legal action against the NRD because of the denial, he added. ing were "verbally abused" by members of the audience and the board. He won't send his people there again, he Wurtz said MUD employees who attended the meet-

"If there is any delay, the cost will not be borne by MUD customers," Wurtz said. "We will sue individual board members who acted against the law and their own (legal) counsel and management. They didn't have the authority

Tom Mounford, assistant manager of the NRD, said there was no discrimination. He did acknowledge some verbal abuse but said it wasn't "terrible."

to do that.

ly they are worried about their water quality," Mountford said. "In their mind, this is a potential threat." cerns about the project and felt MUD's well applications Mountford said the NRD staff and its board had con-"These landowners, these folks from Ashland, truthful

were incomplete. More computer modeling is needed to get a comprehensive look at how MUD's wells would af-

fect ground water supplies, he said.
"Whenever you pump that many gallons, which is equivalent to about 500 irrigation wells, it just gets people

excited in an agricultural area about what's going to happen,' Continued from Page 18 Mountford said.

luted by solvents and explosive A major concern is that MUD's wells could draw contaminants miles away. About 12 square miles nance Plant near Mead, several of the local aquifer has been polfrom the former Nebraska Ordcompounds from wartime bombmaking activities.

The ordnance plant is listed as a millions of dollars cleaning up the Superfund site, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is spending

groundwater, a process experts say could take at least a century.

eral and state permits needed to proceed. He called the NRD perect has been studied for more than Wurtz said the Platte West proj 15 years and MUD has all the fed mits an administrative matter.

"That NRD has no authority to do this," Wurtz said. "We have been through a lengthy state permitting Mountford disagreed, The NRD process that took four or five years.

has authority to manage ground-water in the area, which includes issuing permits for drilling wells, he said. And he didn't know how MUD could proceed without those permits, he said.
"We know MUD was very dis-

appointed. They were looking to

The NRD board is expected to discuss the matter again at its June

14 meeting. "For our directors, it's a very big felt that they didn't want to rush through this. They felt they can make a better decision if they have issue that could potentially impact the area," Mountford said. "They more information."

ing to court.

"I think we have a good relationship," he said. "It came down to this vote where I think the hard feelings kind of turned." Mountford said the NRD has worked well with MUD over the years. He hopes they can avoid go-

Reach Algis J. Laukaitis at 473-7243 or alaukaitis@journalstar.com.

# Omaha World-Herald

JOHN GOTTSCHALK, Publisher

LARRY KING, Executive Editor CHARLES REINKEN, Editorial Page Editor

DEANNA J. SANDS, Managing Editor

# Stop the train wreck

oard members of the Lower Platte North Natural Resources District have made a major—and potentially costly—mistake.

Blame it on misplaced zeal. Blame it on a shortage of the brand of courage it takes to stand up to angry constituents. Blame it, if you must, on politics

But blame the NRD's board members who, against their own attorney's advice and contrary to state law, denied MUD a well field permit for its new Platte West water treatment facility.

This kind of permit is supposed to be issued automatically by an NRD staffer to anyone who submits a form, pays the fee and meets three broad conditions. MUD's proposed well field meets them, as NRD officials have conceded. The fact that the board even took up the topic of issuance of a routine permit is unusual, perhaps unprecedented.

But then, MUD's path to expanding the water supply for metropolitan Omaha has been rocky from the start. And the major rocks have been thrown by Saunders County officials. (Saunders is in the Lower Platte North NRD.)

The well field straddles the Platte River. MUD has secured state and federal permits and has complied with requirements for studies, mitigation and other conditions. Work on the \$295 million plant is poised to go. The well field permit was among the very last pieces of paper needed.

Saunders County officials have flung up one objection after another against the treatment facility in the past couple of years. Each has been answered, patiently, by MUD officials. None has stood up to scientific analysis.

MUD has sunk millions of its customers' dollars into this project, which is vital for providing sufficient water to fast-growing western Omaha and Douglas County. Its general manager, Thomas Wurtz, is

Unlawfully blocking MUD water project may be costly for Platte NRD. rightly angry at this ploy. It has the potential to cost attorney fees and, perhaps, delays in the project.

MUD has recourse, since it is on the right

side of the law. Wurtz laid out some possible consequences in a letter to Dean Johnson, chairman of the NRD. Treating MUD differently from other permit applicants is "improper, discriminatory and illegal," he wrote.

MUD has agreed to join the NRD in a levee project to the tune of \$180,000, and the NRD apparently plans to ask for more. But by blocking the well field (which is the reason MUD is partnering with the NRD), the board jeopardizes that contribution, Wurtz said. Moreover, "MUD will not pay into a project if it is required to take legal action simply to obtain well permits."

Another consequence could be individually painful for board members: If the NRD's illegal stance creates costs for MUD customers, Wurtz said, "We will look to the (NRD) for reimbursement, including the possibility of personal liability of board members for acting outside the scope of their authority." Harsh, yes. But, in our opinion, justified. Enough is enough.

How unfortunate it would be if the utility had to assert its rights that vehemently.

The repercussions may not end at the boundaries of the NRD. The enabling legislation that set up the Nebraska NRD system hasn't been tested in this way before. If an NRD refuses to follow the law, it is conceivable that the state would have to step in. That, no one wants to see.

There is time, though, to prevent this train wreck. Board members could still listen to the voices of reason trying to explain their duty—their attorney, NRD director John Miyoshi and others.

They could let the NRD's staff do its lawful job. They could let the permit be issued. Now.

# Both sides dig in heels on well field

Foes of MUD's plan file a complaint with the state, and the utility threatens to sue the Lower Platte North NRD.

By Nancy Gaarder
WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

An eleventh-hour effort to derail the Metropolitan Utilities District's \$300 million expansion along the Platte River has laid bare the frustration on both sides of the project.

Opponents of the well field and water treatment plant have filed a complaint with the Nebraska Attorney General's Office, charging that MUD is not reasonably complying with the open-records law. And they have complained to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that MUD isn't complying with some of the condi-



tions attached to its federal per-

On a parallel track, the board for the Lower Platte North Natural Resources District has added significantly to the work that it wants MUD to do before granting permits for new wells.

For its part, MUD has threatened to sue not only the natural resources district, but also to See MUD: Page 2

# **MUD:** Both sides dig in heels on planned well field

Continued from Page 1

hold liable the district's elected board members individually. Furthermore, MUD has told the district that it will withhold a \$180,000 contribution to a Platte River levee if the drinking-water project doesn't move forward.

The entire metro area has a stake in the issue, said Tom Wurtz, general manager of MUD, because an expanded water supply is essential to economic growth. The project will add about 40 percent to MUD's peak capacity, allowing the utility to meet demand for at least 30 years.

Opponents, largely Saunders County residents but also Douglas, Sarpy and Lancaster County residents, oppose the project for two primary reasons. First, it will lower the water table, possibly dropping water levels in ponds and wells on adjacent property. Second, MUD's property is near a highly contaminated federal cleanup project, creating fears that MUD's pumping will draw polluted groundwater across clean parts of the aquifer.

Monday and Tuesday, members of a citizens group opposing the MUD wells went to the

utility's headquarters to review documents relating to the expansion. They were turned down.

In a subsequent letter to MUD, Lynda Wageman, one of the group's leaders, wrote that MUD's "steadfast refusal" to provide documents "gives the appearance that the project cannot withstand public scrutiny."

But, Wurtz said, the project has been through an extensive public review spanning years. This group, at this late hour, he said, is simply trying to slow the project by making unreasonable demands.

"It's obviously a bunch of people who don't want the project, and they're using harassment as a means to tie up our staff, period," Wurtz said. "We'll just let the lawyers sort it out."

As for the well field and water plant, he said, it ultimately will move forward.

In part to address environmental issues and concerns about the aquifer, the Corps of Engineers attached 86 conditions to MUD's federal permit. The citizens group, the Water Quality Environmental Council, says it thinks MUD is violating some of the conditions of that permit. The Corps of Engineers

disputes that.

One of the conditions stipulates that MUD complete a baseline study of ponds "in the period prior to construction and operation of the well field." Another stipulation indicates that "prior to proceeding with construction," a formal plan will be in place to compensate for adverse impacts.

Construction has begun, and the ponds have not been studied. MUD's proposal for compensating landowners, which has been presented to the corps, relies on Nebraska's courts to act as arbiters. Wurtz said that is standard for governmental bodies.

Rodney Schwartz, the Corps of Engineers project manager who wrote the permit conditions and is overseeing MUD's compliance, said the utility is fulfilling the intent of the conditions

The plant is about four years away from operation, Schwartz said, and although the timing may change on some things, MUD will not be allowed to start up the plant without fulfilling the conditions.

Schwartz said the corps added the compensation condition for two reasons: to get MUD on record and to indicate that the corps would step in if the state's tort system failed to do its job.

The utility has accelerated an expanded study of demands on the aquifer, Schwartz said, which will provide more complete data. The best data to date, he said, indicate that MUD's pumping will have a negligible effect on the section of the aquifer that is contaminated.

fer that is contaminated.

"From my perspective,"
Schwartz said, "MUD is bending overbackwards."

To explain why feelings are running so high, John Miyoshi, general manager of the natural resources district, likened the situation to the controversy two years ago when Colorado businessmen proposed hauling Nebraska water to Colorado.

"People in Saunders County feel the same way that people of the state felt," Miyoshi said, "a sense of outrage that MUD is allowed to come in here and pump."

MUD, Wurtz said, is committed to avoiding the problems that landowners and environmentalists fear.

"Water is a shared resource," he said. "We're going to pump this well field in a way that it does no damage."

# Late hits, little substance

he Midlands Voices article by Lynda Wageman, chairwoman of the Water Quality Environmental Council, on the opposite

page is a fine example of sound and

fury, signifying not much.

Wageman's group was formed recently, apparently to fight the Metropolitan Utilities District's new \$300 million Platte West well field and water treatment plant.

To reiterate a few facts, the well field is not in any meaningful way hydrologically connected to the Superfund site at Mead, Neb., meaning there is next to no chance of cross-contamination.

Foes say otherwise, but the weight of science says they're wrong.

Tom Wurtz, general manager of MUD, said the utility has to monitor and "model," or project, what may happen to the Superfund site as the water plant is put into operation.

If by some far-fetched happenstance it were to turn out that the Mead contamination should move toward the well field, MUD has an approved plan to stop it.

Wageman's objection to two-yearold data used by the U.S. Army

Opposition to MUD wells digs up nothing of significance to worry about.

Corps of Engineers puzzles us. Decisionmaking in such situations takes months, even years. If "newer" data were always demanded. such pro-

cesses would never end.

Much of the Wageman article is based on cherry-picking statements out of the massive pile of letters, studies, e-mails and other paperwork relating to the project. Isolated statements may appear to support her, but their relevance is open to question.

Suffice it to say that MUD received federal and state approval for the project. If it were in any reasonable way dangerous, that would

not have happened.

Wageman's group has leapt into the fray at the last possible instant, throwing punches in an attempt to shut down what will not, at this point, be stopped. MUD is committed to the well field to supply water for the metropolitan area's westward growth. Wurtz said it will solve all problems rather than surrender.

Good. This project, more than a decade on the drawing board, is vital to the area's future. We're glad the utility intends to see it through.

# Midlands Voices

# NRD board did duty in slowing MUD wells

#### BY LYNDA WAGEMAN

The author, of Ashland, Neb., is chairwoman of the Water Quality and Environmental Council, a Nebraska environmental group with members from Saunders, Douglas, Lancaster and Cass Counties

Several statements in the May 14 World-Herald editorial, "Stop the train wreck," need to be addressed regarding recent actions by the Lower Platte North Natural Resources District regarding the Metropolitan Utilities District's well permit applications for its Platte West well field project in Saunders County.

First, the NRD did not deny MUD's permit applications. Instead, the NRD required MUD to submit additional information regarding its applications.

Its board called on MUD to perform comprehensive groundwater modeling to update the limited, two-year-old data that the Omaha District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers used in issuing MUD a "404 permit" in 2003 (allowing discharge of dredge and fill material into the waters of the United States associated with wellfield construction).

As attorneys for both the City of Ashland and the Water Quality and Environmental Council explained at the May 10 NRD board meeting, the NRD's authority to require additional information before issuing a permit to construct water wells is spelled out in state statute (Section 46-656.29 (3)(i)) and in the NRD's rules (Rule 6.1(3)(i)).

Second, the NRD board's actions were neither illegal nor

outside its scope of authority. In addition to the legal authority already noted, the importance of Natural Re-

The NRD board took prudent action to protect groundwater in service area. sources Districts in regulating activities to conserve and protect Nebraska's groundwater is stated in several state statutes.

For example, Section 46-656.03 says, "Natural resources districts have the legal authority to regulate certain activities and, as local entities, are the preferred regulators of activities which may contribute to groundwater contamination in both urban and rural areas."

Recently, Assistant Attorney General David Cookson said that local NRDs — not the state — have been granted the power to regulate groundwater.

Third, the board's action is neither discriminatory nor unprecedented. In at least two other permit applications previously reviewed by the Lower Platte North NRD, it was necessary to consider additional information because of circumstances unique to each application.

By requiring updated information from MUD, the NRD board took prudent action in an effort to protect groundwater in the district. This is especially wise, since we contend MUD's pumping could pull contaminants from the Mead Superfund site, including TCE and the explosive RDX.

With proposed average pumping of 52 million gallons a day — and maximum pumping allowed at twice that level — the 42-well MUD project easily dwarfs all other projects that have come before the NRD.

In addition, we contend the contamination of groundwater originating from the Mead Superfund site has not been ade-

quately studied, given the extent of MUD's proposed pumping.

We argue that the current studies have not taken into account the effects of pumping by municipal wellfields, including those of the City of Ashland and the City of Lincoln, or transient conditions such as pumping during the growing season or during drought.

We argue that critical information has come to light since the Corps approved MUD's project. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says there is "considerable uncertainty in the understanding of the plume dimensions" and recommends that the Mead Superfund site be characterized further because the data upon which the modeling has been made are sparse.

According to the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, the modeling of hydraulic conductivity at the Mead Superfund site does not accurately reflect conditions

Therefore, predictions of how the contaminants are transported are not reliable. In addition, available information demonstrates that contamination at the Mead site has not been contained.

The NRD would shirk its responsibility if it treated MUD's

mammoth project with no more review or consideration than a permit to drill an irrigation well that pumps a fraction of what

MUD's wells are slated to pump.

Unlike MUD, which has the option to draw water from the Missouri River to keep Omaha's lawns and golf courses green, most folks in the Lower Platte North NRD's service area do not have other choices for their drinking and irrigation water — a fact that NRD board members understand.

Fourth, no environmental permit is issued automatically if the regulatory agency is carrying out its responsibilities properly.

Vigilant and responsible regulators recognize that the permits they issue are not mere paperwork. They know permits can open the door to many potential costly risks and, therefore, must be handled with appropriate deliberation and investigation.

Giving MUD an additional 60 days to provide updated and comprehensive modeling before its applications are considered complete is not only legal, it's common sense.

MUD ratepayers also should be grateful that the board of the NRD has had the foresight and courage to require additional information, despite MUD's threats of lawsuits alleging personal liability by board members.

If MUD's pumping adversely impacts the Mead Superfund site cleanup, MUD ratepayers will have to help pay for the multimillion-dollar effort, which currently is projected to take more than 100 years. (See editorial.—Ed.)

# Approval likely for test run of tire burning at Ash Grove

■ The Department of Environmental Quality says its research indicates the alternative fuel plan is safe.

5-14-04 By John Ferak

WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

LOUISVILLE, Neb. — The Ash Grove Cement Co. probably will be allowed to conduct a 60-day trial run to burn scrap tires at its plant here.

During the past three months, the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality has researched burning scrap tires as an alternative fuel in cement kilns, which already occurs in 22 other states.

The results were shared Thursday night with about 35 people who attended the second and final public hearing the department held on Ash Grove's proposal.

"It is DEO's initial determi-

nation that tires have been safely used as a fuel in cement kilns," a department handout states.

The department's study found 37 cement kilns that are permitted to burn tires for fuel. Ash Grove would be the first business in Nebraska to do so if the trial run is approved.

Ash Grove officials maintain that the project would not hurt air quality and would reduce Nebraska's scrap tire problem. About 2 million tires are scrapped annually in Nebraska, and many are trucked to Kansas landfills.

Ash Grove estimates its reliance on coal would be cut 20 percent if it used tires as a supplemental fuel to make cement.

"Other states have determined that burning tires in cement kilns does not present an injury to or interference with the health and physical property of the people in their jurisdictions," the department said. "We would expect that given proper monitoring and safeguards, the same would be true in Nebraska."

Ash Grove would still need another set of permits to burn tires on a permanent basis.

Brian McManus, the Department of Environmental Quality's public information officer, said his agency will submit its formal recommendation in early June. Department Director Michael Linder probably will announce his decision in mid-June.

The department will accept public comments by phone, in writing or by e-mail through May. Public comments are not the only consideration in making the final choice, McManus said.

"The real analysis will be on the technical issues," McManus said.

The City of Louisville, Cass County government and the City of Plattsmouth also have announced support for Ash Grove's project.

The Omaha chapter of the Sierra Club, an environmentalist group, has launched opposition, citing worries about air quality and compliance issues.

Jim Sitrick, health director for Sarpy and Cass Counties, said tire burning probably won't raise asthma levels in Omaha, as opponents claim.

"I see that as a stretch," Sitrick said.

# Lake algae blamed for dog deaths

By Nancy Gaarder

WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

With two more dog deaths over the weekend, Sarpy County officials are advising that people and pets stay out of five lakes along the Platte River because of concerns about toxic algae.

The dogs died after being in Hanson's Lake 2, said John Lund of the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality. Three other dogs became ill after being in that lake or Chris Lake. About two weeks ago, three dogs died after being in nearby Buccaneer Bay Lake.

All the lakes are old sand pits along the Platte River near U.S. Highway 75.

Samples from three lakes have been taken, and results have confirmed the presence of a toxic bacteria in Buccaneer Bay Lake. Results for Chris Lake and Hanson's Lake 2, which were tested Monday, will be available later this week. Tissue from the dogs also is being analyzed.

Algae is common in Nebraska lakes, but "toxic algae" is rare because it requires a certain combination of temperature, light and nutrients. A bacteria, it is not actually an algae but is referred to as one because of its appearance.

If toxic algae has been the problem in these lakes, the drought, combined with the annual spring "turning" of the lakes, probably has played a key role, said Tadd Barrow, a water resources specialist at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Barrow ran the tests last week for Buccaneer Bay Lake.

The drought, he said, has lowered lake levels, allowing sunlight to reach deeper, making it easier for nutrients at the bottom of the lake to stimulate the growth of algae. Furthermore, in the spring, Nebraska lakes "turn over" — temperature changes cause water at the bottom and top of a lake to trade places, bringing nutrients to the surface. Blooms can occur and disappear quickly and then reoccur.

While the toxins from the algae can also be fatal to people, human deaths are rare because people are unlikely to wade into and swallow the soupy algae.

Although this weekend's problems occurred in only two lakes, Sarpy County Sheriff Pat Thomas and Health Director Jim Sitrick Jr. closed those and three other neighboring lakes as a precautionary measure.

Buccaneer Bay Lake, which was closed two weeks ago, no longer is considered closed, "per se," Sitrick said. But people should give the Buccaneer Bay a good look, he said, before allowing their pets in the water.

Lund said that well water in the area is safe to drink.

#### Water trouble

Lakes closed: Haïnson's Lakes 1, 2 and 3; Betty Lake; and Chris Lake.

**Toxic algae:** Bacteria that, under the right conditions, release toxins that can be fatal to animals and humans.

**What to look for:** Algae that is bluish-green, a dull pea green or "John Deere" green.



Children will make their mark on Bellevue history through their drawings of the adventures of explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark.

The drawings will be featured on a \$250,000 permanent art wall constructed at Haworth Park.

The Lewis and Clark Children's Interpretive Art Wall will be unveiled Saturday with a series of events at the park.

The event begins at 7:30 a.m. with a pancake breakfast that costs \$5 per person. At 10 a.m., the wall will be unveiled and a dedication ceremony held. The rest of the day includes free children's art activities and a Lewis and Clark re-enactment that will include the firing of a cannon. Vendors will also have arts and crafts for sale.

The event concludes with

Howard Wolf speaking at 3:30 p.m. Wolf is a direct descendant of the last Omaha chief, Oliver Little Chief Turner.

The art wall, located on the peninsula at Haworth, is 65 feet long and 8 feet tall. Artwork will be featured on both sides of the wall, and there is room for the drawings of 750 local and out-of-state artists.

Each of the selected drawings will be displayed on a 6-inch-by-6-inch weatherproof tile.

Art for the wall was accepted from children in grades three through six, who live in any of the counties that were explored by Lewis and Clark.

Also accepted was artwork from Native American children, who may not live in the designated counties, but whose ancestors lived along the expedition route.



AUBAINNS/THE WORLD-HERALD

Conrad Shiu, 6, was among those gathered at Memorial Park on Sunday for Earth Day Omaha 2004. Conrad led the way on a "Cosmic Walk," in which the candle in the foreground represented the big bang that cosmologists think started the expansion of the universe. Organizers of Earth Day Omaha, respecting the power of nature, had a backup plan as Saturday's big storms took shape: The celebration was moved to Sunday.

# A down-to-earth celebration

5-24-04

By Kristin Zagurski World-Herald Staff Writer

Love for Mother Nature shone like the sun Sunday afternoon at Memorial Park.

People walked dogs, rode bikes and tossed Frisbees atop the still-moist grass during the Earth Day Omaha 2004 celebration.

The event originally was scheduled for Saturday, but the threat of severe weather forced organizers to postpone.

John Carpenter, who lives near the park, brought son Payson, 5, for the festivities.

# Wildlife shows and exhibits help educate people on how to take care of the planet.

They had come Saturday to find the event rained out, Carpenter said. He said he hoped the rain would hold off Sunday for them to see the evening's musical acts perform.

In the meantime, the pair enjoyed other activities at the park. They sat in the grass, eating corn dogs and chips and drinking sodas.

Carpenter used the opportunity to teach Payson about Earth Day — specifically, the impor-

tance of not littering.

Melissa Gardner, co-chairwoman of the coalition of local organizations that sponsored the event, asked every person there to help protect the earth by doing things like recycling newspapers or cleaning up after dogs in the park.

The theme of Earth Day Omaha 2004 was "Lewis and Clark: Share the Journey." Gardner said she wants to see the land Lewis and Clark trekked across preserved for future explorers.

Earth Day was commemorated worldwide April 22, but Omaha has held its celebration during May in recent years in hopes of warmer, drier weather.

Activities included wildlife shows, pony rides, hands-on learning exhibits, art projects and a presentation by American Indian dancers.

Carpenter and his son picked up a free tree from the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District — one of more than 2,000 given away.

# City plans to take over county parks

## ■ In return, City Hall would give up purchasing duties.

By Joseph Morton WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

The City of Omaha will take over the parks and trails maintained by Douglas County under a proposal expected to be released in the next month, aides to Mayor Mike Fahey said Tues-

The aides hope the parks plan will make it easier for the County Board to accept taking over the city's purchasing duties.

The County Board and the City Council have delayed consideration of a proposal to transfer the city's purchasing department to the county.

Under the plan, the city would continue to pay for employees in the purchasing department during a five-year transition period.

By that time, merger supporters hope, duties in the department could be combined and the number of employees could be pared down through attrition.

But some County Board members have balked at the proposal, citing concerns that the county is taking on the city's responsibilities with no promise of getting anything in return.

Offering the parks proposal at the same time as the purchasing plan shows the city is willing to take on responsibilities as its

part of the merger process, Fahev aide Jennifer Mahlendorf

The specifics of the parks merger are still being ironed out, but they are expected to follow the same structure as the purchasing proposal - the city would assume the financial burden after a transitional period.

Douglas County has Heartland of America and Hefflinger Parks, as well as the Keystone and Field Club trails. The City of Omaha maintains more than 200

# Plan for Platte River will get more tweaking

DENVER (AP) — A Platte River management plan in the works for seven years is getting a second look from water managers in three states because of possible changes prompted by a federal study.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, after reviewing a report by the National Academies of Science, has suggested changes to ensure there's enough water for endangered species.

The report, released last month, endorsed the science behind efforts to save critical habitat in central Nebraska for the whooping crane, piping plover, least tern and pallid sturgeon. However, the study raised some concerns.

The Platte River provides water for about 3.5 million people, irrigates millions of acres of farmland and generates millions of dollars in hydroelectric power in Wyoming, Nebraska and Colorado.

Those involved in the negotiations on managing the river said Fish and Wildlife has determined some changes are needed before it can declare the agreement won't harm wildlife.

"The changes aren't much, but they're certainly more than cosmetic," said Dan Luecke, a consultant to the National Wildlife Federation.

The adjustments, however, shouldn't be a deal breaker, he said.

"It fixes a few of the problems that were discovered after the deal was made," Luecke said.

The process will take a little longer, he added. The federal government's final decision, planned for year's end, probably will be pushed back to March, Luecke said.

Others, while agreeing the plan is still on track, said last week's discussions among representatives of the three states, water districts and the federal government have led them to regroup.

"From a water users' standpoint, we want to understand what the changes are," said Alan Berryman, head of engineering services for the Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District in Loveland.

The Fish and Wildlife Service will issue a biological assessment on the plan before a final decision is written.

W-H - OH

# Keep hope flowing

idlands residents are well acquainted with the impact drought can have on this part of the country. Congression-

al testimony by a U.S. State Department official recently put the issue of water scarcity in a global per-

spective.

"By 2015, nearly half of the world's population will live in countries that are water-stressed," John F. Turner, assistant secretary of state for oceans and international environmental and scientific affairs, told the House Committee on International Relations.

Sometimes the problem is too little water. At other times, it is too little clean water. Turner explained: "Water mismanagement and water pollution can reduce GDP (gross domestic product) by more than 2 percent — enough to keep a country in poverty or, if remedied, set it on a path toward economic growth."

Happily, government cooperation can provide hope. The United States is supporting United Nations efforts to promote river basin agreements among developing countries. Such an approach has proved its value in our own region at the inter-

Water issues
have enormous
impact in
nations around
the world.

state level, through the cooperative agreement among Nebraska, Wyoming and Colorado for responsible management of the Platte River.

The United States also is providing direct assistance to poor countries for development of sanitation systems and other water management needs.

(One of the somber facts of life in developing countries is the astounding number of people who are sickened, often fatally, from diarrhea, usually after drinking unsanitary water. Each year, this problem takes the lives of an estimated 2 million children worldwide.)

U.S. assistance is helping to make a positive difference, however. During fiscal 2003-04 alone, Turner told the congressional committee, such aid allowed some 19 million people to gain access to improved water management and sanitation.

These worthy initiatives are tackling some of the most formidable developmental challenges facing poor countries. Through technical knowhow and cross-border cooperation, much can be done to relieve the world's struggles for ample and safe water.