

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
ACTIVITY REPORT within the P-MRNRD
APRIL 2005

CONSERVATION PLANNING/APPLICATION

- Burt County received 2 new requests for Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and 2 new wetland determination compliance requests; 4 wetland determinations were completed.
- Thurston County completed 1 certified wetland determination and 1 wetland violation is ongoing.
- Blair field office (FO) has received 21 NRD Conservation Assistance Plan applications for spring conservation practices in Washington County: 13 completed, 4 cancelled, 4 under construction.
- Blair FO has received 11 cropland conversion requests for cost share to seed 207.6 acres of native grasses and wildlife habitat.
- Blair FO has received 10 requests to use the NRD drills to seed 188.9 acres of grasses and Conservation Reserve Program acres.
- Burt County received 2 applications for cost share on terraces.
- Walthill FO staff surveyed 3 terrace projects and 1 waterway.
- Omaha FO staff processed 6 NRD CAP applications for payment.
- South Sioux City FO completed 1 water and sediment control basin project and 2 waterway construction projects.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (EQIP)

- Blair FO has 4 approved EQIP applications: 1 livestock waste facility and 3 terrace systems. Eleven new EQIP applications have been received and ranked.
- Burt County received 13 new terrace projects and 1 animal waste storage/utilization project for EQIP. They are developing EQIP contracts on 5 terrace projects, 2 animal waste projects and 1 irrigation system; they have completed 7 spring terrace jobs.
- Walthill FO staff ranked 28 EQIP applications.
- South Sioux City prepared a plan and contract for 1 approved project.

WETLAND RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (WREP)

WETLAND RESERVE PROGRAM (WRP)

- Burt County received 7 new WREP applications totaling 241 acres.
- The Technical Service Provider (TSP) employee at Walthill wrote a news article on WREP that was sent to surrounding newspapers and a shortened version was given to Thurston County Farm Service Agency for its newsletter.
- Walthill FO staff contacted private landowners within one mile of the Missouri River regarding the WREP program.
- Dakota County had offers made to landowners on 4 WRP applications; 1 has accepted to date. They also have received 1 new WREP application and have a boundary survey underway on 1 WREP parcel along the Missouri River.

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP)

CONTINUOUS CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CCRP)

- Blair FO received 2 applications for continuous CRP: a grassed waterway and a field border.
- Burt County completed 14 CRP revisions: 12 for acre changes and 2 for early successional habitat which includes burning and food plots on 100 acres.
- The grass seeding on 3 CRP contracts in Thurston County were sent in for payment.
- South Sioux City is preparing the following CCRP contracts with landowners: 2 filter strips, 2 waterways, 1 wetland restoration, and 1 habitat buffer for upland birds.
- South Sioux City accepted 4 Pheasants Forever food plot cost-share applications.

- Omaha FO completed 5 contract revisions for reseeding, processed 2 cost-share applications for reseeding and received 1 new application for grass filter strip.

PIGEON/JONES CREEK WATERSHED

- Bid review for construction of sites 4, 5 and 14 was done by NRCS engineering staff on April 1, with Cooney Fertilizer of Walthill submitting the low bid. The construction bid was accepted by the NRD on April 14.
- Letters of notification regarding the upcoming geological investigation for site 15 were sent to 3 landowners.

DAKOTA COUNTY SERVICE CENTER

- The interior painting and finish work is well underway and the exterior brick walls are almost finished; plans to move on June 1, are on schedule.

INFORMATION/EDUCATION

- Neil Jensen, NRCS Blair, participated in an Arbor Day tree planting at Ridgeview City Park.
- Blair FO NRD staff donated 250 seedlings for the Arbor Day celebration at Dana College Campus. Fifty seedlings were also donated to Jim Peterson, Washington County Extension Agent, for students at the Arlington School festivities.
- Terry Schumacher, NRD Blair, is the Habitat Chairperson for the newly established Pheasants Forever Chapter in Washington County. Terry assisted with the first fund raiser and banquet; approximately 250 persons were in attendance.
- Walthill/South Sioux City FO staff distributed tree seedlings and wildflower seed packets to approximately 1,000 5th and 6th grade students at 16 schools in Thurston and Dakota Counties plus the Rosalie-Bancroft school in Burt County. The tree seedlings were purchased by the Papio-Missouri River NRD.
- Walthill and South Sioux City FO staff participated in the Arbor Day proclamation with elementary students at the park in Pender where an 8-ft. tall Black Cherry was planted.
- The South Sioux City staff provided new items and photos with captions for the NRD Share Page published in the Dakota County Star for the month of April. The news items were: 2005 Marks Milestones for NRCS; Additional Wetland Funds for Nebraska Missouri River Counties; Soil and Water Stewardship Week Observed; Lewis and Clark Scenic Byway Annual Meeting. Photos with captions were included of the contractor's site showing for the Pigeon/Jones sites 4, 5 and 14 construction project; Wetland Reserve Enhancement Program fact sheet; and of a rural water line extension project.

TRIBAL ASSISTANCE

- Walthill FO staff presented WREP and WRP program information to the Winnebago tribal council; they also reviewed 3 potential WRP sites.

TRAINING/MEETINGS

- Terry Schumacher, NRD Blair, attended the FSA County Committee Weed meeting.
- NRCS staff, Robert Hall, Omaha, Neil Jensen, Blair, and Neil Stockfleth, South Sioux City, attended Highly Erodible Land/Wetland Determination training in Lincoln.
- Neil Jensen, Blair FO, provided training to field office staff on using the Access Workload Program.
- An engineering quality review was completed in Thurston and Dakota Counties on April 20, by Mitch Keebler and Sam Thomas.
- Dick Leitschuck, retired NRCS conservationist, was honored for volunteer service to Dakota County with an Earth Team award during National Volunteer Week activities on April 22.
- Kelly Fravel participated in a meeting of the South Sioux City tree board in April.