



Lower Platte River
CORRIDOR ALLIANCE

October 2003 Edition

from the Coordinator...

Rodney L. Verhoeff, Coordinator

Infrastructure Study & Lower Platte River Utilities Board (RUB)

The final Infrastructure Study Report for this project was submitted to the LPSNRD by HDR at the end of October. This project entails looking into water quality, water supply, and wastewater issues for the region in Cass County from Ashland to Louisville. HDR was contracted by the LPSNRD to complete an investigative study to look at the needs of the area and possible approaches to addressing any needs. Copies of the final report were distributed to all stakeholders including Cass County, Louisville, South Bend, and Ashland. All parties have signed the agreement to create a Lower Platte River Utilities Board (or RUB) except Ashland, which has been waiting for the final report to make a decision. Sarpy County is considering conducting a similar study and I plan to give a short presentation to the Sarpy County Sewer and Water Group this week.

The study includes HDR's assessment and recommendations for future actions. Everyone has been eagerly awaiting this report from HDR, which contains results from a recent pumping test near a potential wellfield site (near South Bend). There are six phases proposed by HDR in their yet to be released report: Phase I - Water system for the Louisville/South Bend area; Phase II - Wastewater treatment system for the Fountain Creek area near South Bend; Phase III - Wastewater treatment system for the Pawnee Creek area near the I-80/Platte River interchange (Horseshoe Lake); Phase IV - Wastewater treatment system for the Camp Joy Holling area; Phase V - Water supply system to the South Bend to Exit 426 area; and Phase VI - Water supply system from Exit 426 to Ashland. All of these are merely suggestions and are independent phases that can be constructed in any order depending upon the needs and the action of the yet to be formed RUB. Currently, HDR is preparing to do a preliminary study on the engineering of Phase I of the project, which is the development of a wellfield near South Bend and associated storage facilities, pumping facilities, and a pipeline to transmit water to Louisville. This study is being initiated by the LPSNRD.

Instream Flow Rights – Central Platte NRD I recently attended a meeting facilitated by the Central Platte NRD (CPNRD) to start work on their renewal of instream flow rights on the Platte River from Chapman to Columbus. Every 15 years, DNR reviews Instream flow rights and in 2007, the CPNRD flow rights will be up for review. They currently have rights for 500 and 600 cfs in the stretch referenced above. The purpose of these instream flow rights is to support habitat for forage fish to maintain the least tern population and to support habitat for macroinvertebrates to maintain the piping plover population. These rights are year-round. Currently, there is limited data and information on this stretch of the Platte River and in the years leading up to the 2007 review by DNR, the CPNRD is looking for any assistance from other entities including information, studies, financial support, in-kind, technical support, or even moral support. They are inviting both friends and foes to get involved. Although it is upstream from the lower Platte River corridor, it does affect us since we all live downstream and we do have a stake in the area near Columbus. I also think that we can learn a great deal from the process, since it is a new process and there really is no history on how these DNR reviews are conducted. I will be forwarding some additional information to everyone in the near future.

Sand and Gravel Working Group – P.A.C.E. On November 5th, P.A.C.E. (People- Aggregate - Community - Environment) met to discuss the next move for this cooperative group, which includes sand/gravel operators, conservation organizations, and governmental entities. The focus is to bring together these groups to design plans and protocol for reclamation of mining operations PRIOR to commencement of mining. In this manner, we can talk about how to preserve the natural qualities of the area and guide the operations to implement conservation measures. Currently, the group is working on developing a mission statement, goals, and an administrative history. The group meets every couple of months. The next meeting is scheduled for January 14th at 10:00 a.m. at the TNC facility in Wood River.

Lower Platte Weed Management Area (LPWMA) The LPWMA group continues to meet monthly at the UNL ARDC site near Ithica. Currently, the group has created a grants committee and is applying for funding from two grant sources. The first grant has already been submitted to the Nebraska Env. Trust Fund (NETF) for ATVs to assist county weed supervisors reach inaccessible areas such as islands and rough terrains with their spraying equipment. The second is currently being developed, but entails funding from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (not Service) for part time help, material and chemicals, and development of educational/promotional materials. The second grant is due December 1st, 2003. The next meeting of the LPWMA is Thursday, November 20th, 2003 at 9:30 a.m. at the ARDC facility.

Lower Platte River Watershed Nature Center - There will be a meeting on Wednesday, November 12th starting at 9 a.m. until noon at the UNL Ag Research Development Center (ARDC) site near Ithica to bring together potential partners and stakeholders in this project. This meeting will provide an opportunity to gauge interest in the nature center and to explain in greater detail what the project is all about. I would encourage anyone with an interest to attend. Recall, that this project involves the development of an educational nature center at the ARDC facility near Ithica. It will entail the development of a series of trails and interpretive panels along the trails highlighting the many natural features of the ARDC area. There will also be opportunities for hands-on learning and nature hikes through woodlands, wetlands, pastures, fields and feedlots highlighting the benefits of wetlands for stormwater and field runoff, native and planted woodlands and grasslands, wildlife management, and BMPs for agricultural practices.

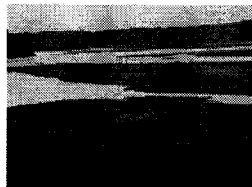
Water Quality/Resources Meetings - I recently met again with the UNL Cooperative Extension to discuss the details regarding our upcoming Water Quality/Resources public meetings. These will be similar to the Water Wellness meetings held a couple of years ago, except we want to add background and treatment components. When I say background component, I am referring to a background on geology, hydrology, the Platte River Valley, and water-related terminology. In order to better understand water resources issues, there must be a background on some of the fundamental issues such as "what is groundwater?" and "what types of soils do we have and what does that mean for groundwater flow?" The idea of surface water - groundwater interaction and interconnectedness will also be introduced. The second component we hope to add is treatment of water with contaminants. At past meetings, we covered issues relating to septic systems, well placement, and potential contamination problems, but we did not cover treatment options. We will offer a variety of tools for assessment of groundwater quality, septic system placement and maintenance, and water well issues including the Farm*A*Syst manual, Water Wellness booklets, Fact Sheets, NebGuides, and a variety others as are determined appropriate. The focus is to provide corridor residents with the proper information and tools to prevent, assess, and treat water quality issues. Right now, the program is still being developed but will include staff from the LPRCA, UNL Cooperative Extension, the NRCS, and the USGS. We've also changed the timing of these meetings from winter of 2003 to spring/summer of 2004 to better accommodate schedules and allow for time to acquire grant funding. Presently, the tentative plan is to hold a series of 8 meetings at specific locations throughout the corridor during both the evening and daytime, possibly some Saturdays, during the months of April through July of 2004. We anticipate a two-hour meeting for each location. I will be meeting again with UNL Cooperative Extension on November 24th starting at 2 p.m. at the LPSNRD to discuss the project in more detail.

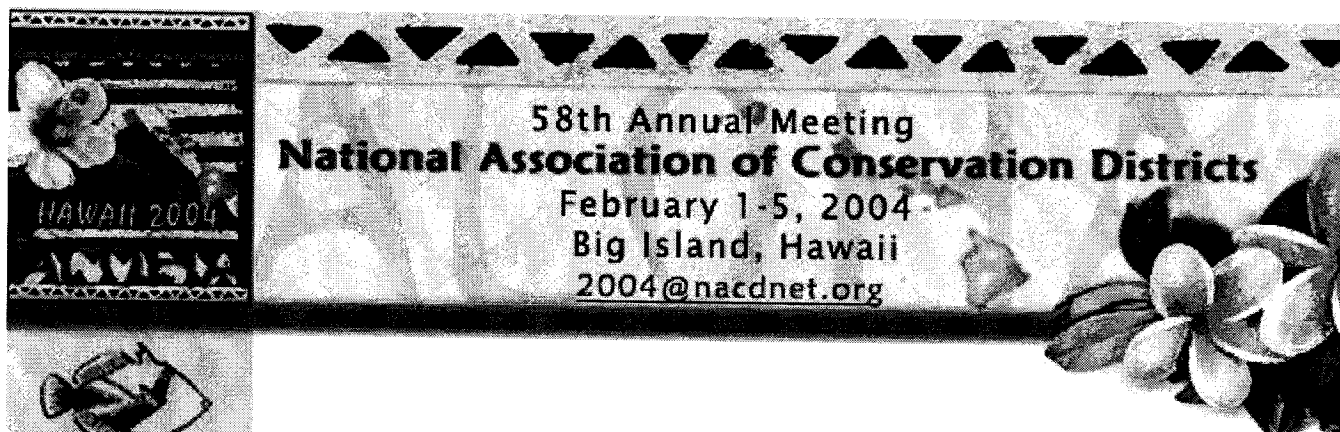
Upcoming NCRD and Alliance Meetings:

- NEXT LPRCA QUARTERLY MEETING - Tuesday, January 13th, 2004 * 9:30 a.m. * LPSNRD Meeting Room located in Lincoln.
NOTE - Meeting back at the LPSNRD and new start time of 9:30 a.m.
- LPNNRD Board Meeting - Monday, November 10th, 2003 * 5:30 p.m. - Wahoo @ 511 Industrial Road
- PMNRD Board Meeting - Thursday, November 13th, 2003 * 8 p.m. - Omaha @ Chalco Hills Rec. Area
- LPSNRD Board Meeting - Wednesday, November 19th, 2003 * 7:00 p.m. - Lincoln @ 3125 Portia Street

Future Meetings - Meetings and Events in the Not-So-Distant Future:

- Lower Platte River Watershed - Nature Center Informational Meeting - November 12th * 9:00 a.m. to noon * ARDC - Ithica
- JCI Meeting - November 13th * 2 p.m. - Omaha @ Joslyn Castle
- Lower Platte Weed Management Area - November 20th * 8:30-9:30 a.m. is grant committee meeting & 9:30 a.m. to noon is regular meeting * ARDC - Ithica





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Hotels

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Tours &
ActivitiesSponsorship
Opportunities

The Big Island

Program

Awards

News



Click on Fish
for conservation
stories from
Hawaii's
conservation
districts

Ho'olaulima Malama 'Āina Hawaii 2004

Coming together to care for our natural resources

Click here to register for the Private Hawaii
host state-sponsored Luau on Anaeho'omalu Beach
(Space is limited!)

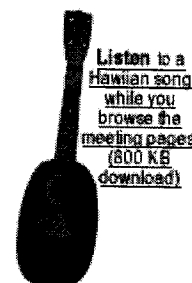
**Catch the Hawaiian Spirit at
NACD's 58th Annual Meeting**

"Ho'olaulima Malama 'Āina" is the Hawaiian expression for this year's NACD Annual Meeting theme, which means "*Coming Together to Care for Our Natural Resources*." And conservation leaders from across the country will be coming together February 1-5, 2004, at the Hilton Waikoloa Village on the Big Island of Hawaii to discuss key issues of importance to private lands conservation.

Program planning for the meeting is well underway. Here's how it's shaping up for the general sessions (GS) and tracks:

- **Monday morning GS:** Welcome from Governor of Hawaii (invited), NACD leadership messages and keynote speaker
- **Tuesday morning GS:** Welcome from the Mayor of the Big Island of Hawaii, addresses by members of Congress (invited) and presentations by administration officials and conservation partners
- **Wednesday morning GS:** A three-part session focusing on achieving district success

In addition to general sessions, the program will feature three concurrent track



Listen to a
Hawaiian song
while you
browse the
meeting pages.
(800 KB
download)



Meeting Attire:
Casual wear expected;
Aloha wear suggested.

NACD Home



sessions on both Monday and Tuesday afternoon that will delve more in depth into topics of interest to conservation district employees, officials and state associations.

A policy and programs track will address such topics as: Understanding NRCS's Conservation Operations program; conservation in Hawaii; urban and community conservation issues; the Conservation Security Program; policy aspects of soil health; conservation trading, biomass and bioenergy; and the districts' role in national preparedness.

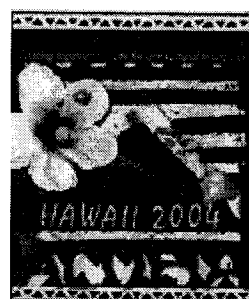
An operational track will focus on topics such as: Fundraising; expanding the local partnership; district level management; technological aspects of soil health; technical service provider issues; and developing an employee manual and supervisor's handbook for the district office.

A track of particular interest to state associations is also in the works, with more details to come soon.

[Click here for preliminary program information.](#) More details coming soon!

Learn About Locally Led Conservation Hawaiian-Style at the 2004 NACD Annual Meeting. [Click here for details on how Hawaiian districts are meeting their conservation Challenges.](#)





58th Annual Meeting National Association of Conservation Districts

February 1-5, 2004
Big Island, Hawaii
2004@nacdn.net



Program Overview*

a more detailed program will be provided after 10/26

TIME/DAY	SUNDAY February 1	MONDAY February 2	TUESDAY February 3	WEDNESDAY February 4
Morning	Board of Directors Meeting	First General Session	Second General Session	Third General Session
Noon			Awards Luncheon	
Afternoon	SHARE FAIR* Committee Meetings/ Regional Meetings	CONCURRENT TRACKS		SHARE FAIR* Board of Directors Meeting
		Training / Operations	Training / Operations	
		Policy / Programs	Policy / Programs	
		Association Executives	Association Executives	
			Board of Directors Meet	
Evening	Inspirational Program	Reception / Auction	Luau - Host State Function <small>Click here for reservation</small>	Social Hour/ Banquet

* NACD's 58th Annual Meeting will include a new event we're calling "**Share Fair**," set up in the main concourse of the convention center from Sunday afternoon, February 1 through Wednesday afternoon, February 4.

The **Share Fair** will feature informative and educational table top exhibits and displays showcasing natural resource, agricultural, historical and cultural aspects of the host state of Hawaii. Representatives will be on hand to give demonstrations, talk with meeting participants and answer questions on both Sunday afternoon and Wednesday afternoon. Featured displays may include such items as the conservation efforts of Hawaii's soil and water conservation districts; local agricultural produce (tropical fruits, coffee and macadamia nuts); lei making, chant and hula demonstrations; island ranching operations; and Hawaiian natural history.



** Don't forget to include plans to participate in the National Conservation Foundation-sponsored golf tournament on Friday, January 30!

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Why Attend?

Hotels

Travel

Register Now!

Tours & Activities

Sponsorship Opportunities

The Big Island

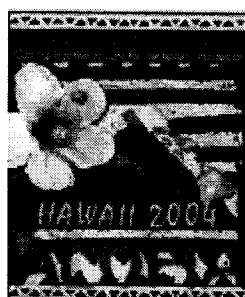
Program

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News



Click on Fish for conservation stories from Hawaii's conservation districts



58th Annual Meeting National Association of Conservation Districts

February 1-5, 2004

Big Island, Hawaii

2004@nacdnet.org



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Hotels

The NACD 58th Annual Meeting will be held at the Hilton Waikoloa Village. Additional housing is available at the Waikoloa Beach Marriott on a space available basis only.

The hotels are one half-mile apart. Attendees can walk, drive (both hotels offer complimentary parking) or use the Holo-Holo Shuttle which operates between the Hilton and the Kings Shops (directly across from the Marriott) from 10:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m. for \$1.00.

Hilton Waikoloa Village

- For reservations click [here](#) to download a hotel reservation form or contact 800.HILTONS.
- Room rates are \$170 - \$227, depending on view, plus 11.41% occupancy tax.
- Make sure to mention NACD in order to receive the group rate.



RESERVATION DEADLINE: January 11, 2004.

[Click here for resort map.](#)

Waikoloa Beach Marriott

- For reservations contact 800.922.5533.
- Room rate is \$150 plus 11.41% occupancy tax, offered on a space available basis only.
- Make sure to mention NACD in order to receive this group rate.

RESERVATION DEADLINE: January 1, 2004.

[Click here for map and directions to Waikoloa Beach Marriott.](#) Click on "Photo Gallery" to view pictures of the island and hotel.