

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

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**CONSERVATION PLANNING/APPLICATION**

- Blair field office (FO) has received 78 Highly Erodible Land (HEL)/wetland determinations/noncompliance determinations for FY2005.
- Blair FO has received 35 applications for conservation practices for fall, 2 applications for 18 acres of fall seeding and 26 requests for ordering trees.
- Burt County received 3 requests for certified wetland determinations and completed 6 plan revisions for HEL compliance.
- Burt County processed 3 Conservation Assistance Program applications for terraces to be constructed this fall.
- Dakota County completed 9 HEL determinations, 7 wetland determinations and completed conservation plan revisions on 15 tracts.
- Dakota County received an application for a grade stabilization structure.
- Omaha FO received 2 new requests for HEL determinations and completed 10 plan revisions.
- Thurston County completed 1 wetland determination and continued ongoing activities on a certified wetland appeal.
- Cut-off dates to have applications evaluated for ranking for 2005 for CRP, WRP and EQIP are November 30, 2005 and February 28, 2006.

**ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (EQIP)**

- Blair FO has written EQIP contracts for 15 terrace practices, 1 Ag Waste and 1 No-till; they have also received approval for 17 EQIP applications for \$365,451 total for year.
- Dakota County certified the completion of an irrigation conversion project and developed a conservation plan for a pasture improvement project which includes a grade stabilization dam.
- Burt County had 5 additional terrace projects approved and scheduled for fall construction; they have surveyed and designed 4 fall terrace projects that are ready to begin construction.
- Omaha FO had 5 EQIP applications approved for 2005; Omaha FO revised 3 EQIP applications to improve ranking.
- Walthill FO completed 5 and modified 2 plans for EQIP; 7 EQIP applications were approved.

**WETLAND RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (WREP)**

**WETLAND RESERVE PROGRAM (WRP)**

- Dakota County submitted 1 new application for WREP.
- Don Doty, NRCS WRP Team, spent 2 days in Dakota County preparing final restoration plans on 4 parcels.
- Burt County received 8 new applications for WRP/WREP totaling over 600 acres with bio-engineering team appointments scheduled in October.
- Walthill staff and Omaha tribal employee visited 3 potential WREP sites.

**CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP)**

**CONTINUOUS CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CCRP)**

- Blair FO completed 1 contract for filter strips.
- Dakota County received 3 applications for filter strips for fall installation; they also revised 15 conservation plans to include haying and grazing practices.

- Burt County has completed conservation plans on all 25 General CRP participants. Also, an additional 10 CCRP contracts were completed enrolling more than 100 acres into conservation buffers.
- Thurston County checked for eligibility on 3 filter strip applications.

#### **PIGEON/JONES CREEK WATERSHED**

- Sites 4 and 5 have been completed and construction on site 14 is nearly finished.
- Representatives from Olsson and Associates, under contract to the P-MRNRD, have completed a wetland assessment of the recreational site. An archeological investigation is scheduled to be completed after crop harvest.

#### **PL-566**

- Walthill FO staff and an Omaha tribal employee directed PL-566 staff members to several sites in the Blackbird Creek watershed. The Omaha tribe had expressed interest in a PL-566 project.

#### **INFORMATION/EDUCATION**

- Blair FO staff, Neil Jensen and Darlene Hensley, assisted the Loess Hills RC&D with the collection of microwaves, televisions, computer monitors and media items for recycling.
- The Dakota City staff provided news items for the NRD Share Page published in the Dakota County Star for the month of September. The news items were: Continuous Conservation Reserve Program enrollment, Wetland Reserve Enhancement Program availability, Fall Noxious Weed control, and RC&D scrap computer and electronics collection efforts. Photos with captions were included of wetland restoration planning activities at the Blyburg Lake site, dam construction underway at Pigeon/Jones site 14, and the dedication ceremony held for the new service center in Dakota City.
- Omaha FO staff, Robert Hall, made a presentation on conservation practices to the Sherman Elementary 6<sup>th</sup> grade class in Omaha.
- Walthill FO staff coordinated radio interview personalities and places for USDA public affairs specialist, Brenda Curtis. Subsequently, Brenda conducted interviews with John Blackhawk, Winnebago tribal council chairman, and Tony Provost, Omaha tribal council member.

#### **DISTRICT PROGRAMS/INFORMATION**

- Walthill NRD FO personnel conducted maintenance on Blackbird scenic outlook and Pigeon/Jones and Silver Creek structures.
- Walthill NRD staff finished recycling process for 14,000 pesticide containers.

#### **TRAINING/MEETINGS**

- Terry Schumacher, NRD Blair, attended the 2-day NARD conference at Kearney.
- Neil Stockfleth, NRCS Dakota City, made an informational presentation on the wetland restoration efforts planned for the Blyburg Lake area to landowners and neighbors on September 25.

Reported by: Robert Hall, Resource Conservationist, NRCS, Omaha, October 6, 2005