

SANDHILLS RC&D

PLAN OF WORK

2007



GOAL 1: PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF ALL NATURAL RESOURCES

OBJECTIVE 1. *The Sandhills RC&D Rangelands Resources Committee will educate 50 agricultural producers in the management of sustainable rangeland.*

Strategy 2: Support the SRM Youth Range Camp at the 4-H Camp at Halsey by developing grant proposals for funding assistance to the camp (2007-2010).

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|------------|----------|
| Youth Range Camp Grant Proposal | 11/06 | 7/07 | \$500 | Mary Reese | |

OBJECTIVE 2. *The Sandhills RC&D will educate 200 land owners regarding potential threats to natural resource sustainability.*

Strategy 1: Facilitate the formation of a Weed Management Area in the counties of Lincoln, Keith, Arthur, McPherson and Logan in 2006-2007.

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|---|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|--|---|
| # 0608 West Central Weed Management Area | 5/25/06 | 9/25/07 | \$5,000 | Bill Carhart, Mitch Huxoll T.J. Walker | Organized in Sept.2006 North Plate River Weed Tour Sept. 28, 2006 Three organizational meetings by January 17, 2007. In process of developing strategic plan. Received \$10,000 from NE Dept of Ag grant for WMA use in 2007 through Lincoln County Weed Authority. Weed Control Demonstration site planned in Lincoln County |

GOAL 1: PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF ALL NATURAL RESOURCES

OBJECTIVE 2. *The Sandhills RC&D will educate 200 land owners regarding potential threats to natural resource sustainability.*

Strategy 2: Partner with the North Central Nebraska RC&D and the Loup Basin RC&D to assist the newly formed Sandhills Weed Management Area to inform land owners concerning invasive plant threats in Grant, Hooker, Logan and Thomas counties (2006-2007).

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|---|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|---------------|--|
| #0607 Sandhills Weed Management Area | | 28-Sep-07 | \$5,000 | Larry Gibbens | Organized and elected officers. -Planning inventory work along rivers in Blaine and Thomas counties, summer 06. Received Forest Service grant to work in Cherry, Thomas and Blaine counties. |

OBJECTIVE 3. *The Sandhills RC&D will educate 100 producers on the economics of producing alternative agricultural commodities and adding value to current agricultural production.*

Strategy 1: Develop a plan of action with appropriate partners to offer educational opportunities about direct marketing and sustainable alternative agriculture.

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|---|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|-------------|---|
| #0704 2007 Opening Doors to New Rural Opportunities Conference | 10/06 | 2/14/07 | \$500 | Lynn Wilson | Partnering with SW RC&D. Conference date set for 2/3/07 in Curtis, Ne |

OBJECTIVE 4. *The Sandhills RC&D will increase the use of residue management techniques and practices on 5% more acres in the RC&D area.*

Strategy 1: Co-sponsor three workshops to educate agricultural crop producers about the benefits of increased residue farming practices (2007-2010).

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|---|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------|--------------------------------|
| 2007 Great Plains Conference on Improving Crop water Productivity | 10/06 | 9/28/07 | \$500 | Alan Corr | Conference date set for 8/9/07 |

GOAL 1: PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF ALL NATURAL RESOURCES

OBJECTIVE 5. *The Sandhills RC&D will increase the economic benefits to area citizens from the available water resources in the Sandhills RC&D area.*

Strategy 1: Develop and implement a plan of action with the Upper Loup Natural Resources District and the Middle Loup Reservoir Committee for the Middle Loup Reservoir Project through the use of grant writing resources (2006-2010).

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|--|--------------------|----------------------|-------------|-----------|--|
| # 0502 Middle Loup River Lake Project | 3/22/05 | 4/7/10 | \$7,296,000 | Anna Baum | Planning Started 7/7/2004 Organizational meeting at RC&D office - see attendance record in permanent file 11/12/2004 Upper Loup NRD holds public meeting - standing room only at Stub's 12/9/2004 Upper Loup NRD becomes lead sponsor - development committee formed - see permanent record 1/13/2005 Upper Loup NRD hires HDR to develop proposal to Neb. Resource Development Fund 2/10/2005 Upper Loup NRD funding drive to off set HDR proposal costs 4/14/2005 First Draft of HDR proposal available 5/12/2005 Development Committee/stakeholder meeting to review proposal 9/8/2005 Development Committee/stakeholder meeting to review proposal concerns 9/21/2005 Contacted Loup Power District regarding hydro power potential 10/10/2005 Upper Loup NRD Submitted NRDF app in Spring 06 and was approved. Later the app was denied due calculation error in benefits reported from recreational boaters. Working with Upper Loup NRD to submit comment to NRC regarding priority ranking system for NRDF. |

OBJECTIVE 5. *The Sandhills RC&D will increase the economic benefits to area citizens from the available water resources in the Sandhills RC&D area.*

Strategy 2: Initiate a Stakeholder Involvement Group working with Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality to develop a water quality plan for the lake project watershed (2007-2008).

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|-----------|----------|--|
| Stakeholder Involvement Group | Pending lake project progress | | | | Project is dependent upon lake project status. |

GOAL 1: PROTECT AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF ALL NATURAL RESOURCES

OBJECTIVE 6. *The Sandhills RC&D will work to assure that recreational/tourism activities display high levels of stewardship on private and public lands.*

Strategy 1: Develop a program to train RC&D area educators in an interdisciplinary conservation ethics curriculum by partnering with Nebraska Pheasants Forever Chapters to bring The Leopold Education Project to the Sandhills RC&D area (2007-2008).

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|---------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------------|----------|
| Leopold Education Project | 10/06 | 9/25/07 | \$5,000 | Pete Berthelsen | |

OBJECTIVE 7. *The Sandhills RC&D will initiate a forestry conservation program in its rural communities.*

Strategy 1: Implement a plan with the Nebraska National Forest Friends committee to develop their capacity to assist the U.S. Forest Service and engage the local community in forest management and conservation issues on and around Nebraska National Forest and Grasslands by assisting Nebraska National Forest Friends to obtain seed money and tax exempt 501 (c)(3) status (2006-2008).

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|--|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------------|--|
| # 0606 Nebraska National Forest Friends | 5/25/06 | 9/30/08 | \$15,000 | Shirley Gouldie | Nebraska National Forest Friends has been meeting for over a year and now is ready to organize formally to pursue projects. Submitted \$15,000 seed grant to National Forest Foundation in Sept. 06. Proposal request denied. Committee continues to meet and develop funding strategy for forest swimming pool. |

OBJECTIVE 7. *The Sandhills RC&D will initiate a forestry conservation program in its rural communities.*

Strategy 2: Develop a plan with community tree boards to strengthen community forestry programs by identifying funding sources appropriate to propose grant requests to inventory community forestry needs (2007-2008).

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|---------------|----------|
| Community Forestry Inventory | 9/07 | 9/25/08 | \$4,000 | Rachel Alison | |

GOAL 2: REVITALIZE THE RURAL ECONOMY WITH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

OBJECTIVE 1. *The Sandhills RC&D will strengthen the regional economy by sponsoring business development programs.*

Strategy 2: Implement a plan with the University of Nebraska to host two trainings that promote advanced technology development, utilization of internet resources, and provide necessary instruction so citizens may more fully utilize its capabilities (2006-2008).

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|-------------|--|
| # 0609 E-commerce Training | 6/27/06 | 1/1/07 | \$2000 | Jana Jensen | Working with Home Town Competitiveness to host four training sessions in Mullen. Training completed Nov. 06, with 14 participants. Four individual indicated they would start an eBay business as a result of the training. |

OBJECTIVE 3. *The Sandhills RC&D will develop a plan of action to work with schools to inform youth about the rewards and benefits of small town and rural living.*

Strategy 1: Partner with NRCS and appropriate organizations to procure funding to promote business startups targeted toward youth entrepreneurs that may include invasive weed control services and natural resource related businesses (2007-2008).

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Youth Entrepreneurs Project | 3/1/07 | 9/31/08 | \$2000 | | |

GOAL 3: IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES.

OBJECTIVE 1. *The Sandhills RC&D will develop a resource network to assist communities with development needs.*

Strategy 2: Partner with the Mid-Nebraska Community Foundation to provide Western Nebraska with public access to the Foundation Center's FC Search database in the North Platte Public Library (2006-2007).

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|------------------|----------|
| Public Access to Foundation Database | 3/1/07 | 9/31/07 | \$1200 | Cecelia Lawrence | |

GOAL 3: IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES.

OBJECTIVE 2. *The Sandhills RC&D will develop a plan of action with communities to offer safe and affordable housing within the RC&D area where these services are not currently provided.*

Strategy 1: Develop a feasibility plan with the Thedford Community Development Corporation to address housing planning in Thomas County (2006-2007).

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|---|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|-------------|--|
| #0613 Thomas County Housing Planning Project | 7/25/06 | 9/31/07 | \$13,500 | Steve Brown | Village of Thedford has applied to be a partner with Mullen for \$150,000 housing assistance to meet work force demands. Application was accepted by DED (8/06) |

OBJECTIVE 2. *The Sandhills RC&D will develop a plan of action with communities to offer safe and affordable housing within the RC&D area where these services are not currently provided.*

Strategy 2: Continue housing rehabilitation project into Phase II by targeting \$200,000 for housing assistance in Logan and McPherson Counties (2006-2007).

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------------|--|
| #0508 Housing Rehab - Phase II | 1/18/05 | 9/31/07 | \$200,150 | Leigh Alexander | 1) Form a committee to work on phase 2 housing rehab 3/1/20052) Arrange town hall meeting Stapleton/Tryon for 3/15/2005 3) Submit Legal Notices of meeting in local papers 3/3/20054) Town Hall Meeting 3/15/20055) Submit application for NE Affordable Housing Program 3/22/20056) Assist Leigh in answering questions from the Housing Program department about questions on the app 4/25/20057) Acceptance notice received; receiving \$200,000 12/8/20058) Mailed State Treasurer ACH Enrollment Form to Lincoln 1/11/20069) Applications open for assistance to residences 4/25/06 August 06 Sandhills RC&D requested to expand service area of project to include county wide housing in McPherson and Logan counties. January 07 – Three applications accepted for rehab funds. |

GOAL 3: IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES.

OBJECTIVE 2. *The Sandhills RC&D will develop a plan of action with communities to offer safe and affordable housing within the RC&D area where these services are not currently provided.*

Strategy 3: Initiate Phase III of housing rehabilitation for rural residences of counties that are not currently serviced by rural housing projects with \$150,000 of DED set a side funds (2006-2008).

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|--|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------------|--|
| Housing Rehabilitation Phase III Project | 3/25/07 | 9/31/08 | \$150,000 | Leigh Alexander | DED has set-a-side \$150,000 for Sandhills RC&D housing programs (1/06) January 07 - Program targeted at locations un-served by housing rehab funds in the past 3 years. Counties include Arthur, Grant, Thomas and Hooker. |

OBJECTIVE 4. *The Sandhills RC&D will assist communities to develop funding strategies that address community infrastructure needs.*

Strategy 1: Initiate a project with the Thedford School board to build a school addition that will house a fitness and physical therapy room, two locker rooms along with a music room that doubles as a community meeting room (2006-2007).

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|--------------|--|
| # 0610 Thedford School Expansion | 3/25/06 | 9/31/07 | \$150,000 | Sally Sawyer | Funding research has been in progress. |

OBJECTIVE 4. *The Sandhills RC&D will assist communities to develop funding strategies that address community infrastructure needs.*

Strategy 2: Develop a plan of action with the Thomas County fire department to build a new fire hall in Thedford (2006-2009).

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|------------|--|
| # 0516 Thedford Fire Hall | 7/14/05 | 9/31/09 | \$200,000 | Kevin Hood | Floor plans drawn up. Fire Department is working on land purchase agreement. |

GOAL 3: IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES.

OBJECTIVE 4. *The Sandhills RC&D will assist communities to develop funding strategies that address community infrastructure needs.*

Strategy 3: Develop a funding strategy with the Seneca Historical Preservation Society in obtaining funding for renovation of the Seneca Community Building (2006).

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|--|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|---------------|--|
| #0605 Seneca Auditorium Restoration | 6/27/06 | 6/1/07 | \$40,000 | Lavina Seiver | Made application to USDA- Rural Development under community facilities program July 06. Seneca Historical Preservation Society received \$5000 from Burlington Northern Foundation and took in over \$1300 at community rummage sale. Grant proposal made to Sterns Foundation on January 18, 2007 for \$10,000. |

GOAL 4: INCREASE AND IMPROVE TOURISM AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

OBJECTIVE 1. *The Sandhills RC&D will assist the Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway organization to improve awareness of the economic benefits of tourism in the central Sandhills region.*

Strategy 1: Develop a strategic outreach plan to increase membership from the current 74 members to 150 members by December 2007.

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|---|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|---------------|--|
| Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway Membership | 10/31/06 | 12/31/07 | \$1000 | Terri Licking | Oct. 06 - Membership committee formed and active. January 07- Byway photo contest developed to increase byway awareness. January 07 - Assisted with Tourism Marketing grant app for bannerstands and travel show assistance. |

GOAL 4: INCREASE AND IMPROVE TOURISM AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

OBJECTIVE 1. *The Sandhills RC&D will assist the Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway organization to improve awareness of the economic benefits of tourism in the central Sandhills region.*

Strategy 2: Provide technical information and assistance to the Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway organization to become the first Nebraska Byway to be designated as a National Scenic Byway in 2007-2008.

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|---------------|--|
| National Byway Designation | 9/26/06 | 12/31/07 | \$5,000 | Terri Licking | Oct. 07 - Committee formed and very active. January 07 – Hired consultant to develop Corridor Management Plan and National Byway application. |

OBJECTIVE 2. *The Sandhills RC&D will increase recreational opportunities within the RC&D Area.*

Strategy 4: Implement an action plan with the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission and Nebraska Department of Roads to improve canoe access to the Dismal River off Highway 97 and control erosion at the site (2007-2009).

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|---------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|---------------|----------|
| Dismal River Canoe Access | 9/31/07 | 12/31/09 | \$20,000 | Mitch Glidden | |

OBJECTIVE 2. *The Sandhills RC&D will increase recreational opportunities within the RC&D Area.*

Strategy 5: Create proposals with two communities to host the Tourism Assessment Resource Growth Evaluation Team (TARGET) that will put together a TARGET Report evaluating tourism potential (2007-2008).

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|---|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|---------------|----------|
| Tourism Assessment Resource Growth Evaluation | 5/31/07 | 12/31/08 | \$1000 | Mitch Glidden | |

GOAL 5: STRENGTHEN RC&D PUBLIC RECOGNITION AND THE SANDHILLS RC&D PROGRAM

OBJECTIVE 1. *The Sandhills RC&D will establish an outreach program that will increase awareness the RC&D program through strategic promotional campaigns and activities.*

Strategy 1: Make application to and become a member of National Association of Resource Conservation & Development Council's Circle of Diamonds Standards of Excellence Program (2006-2007).

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|----------|---|
| Circle of Diamonds | 9/26/06 | 12/31/07 | \$500 | Council | Application made December 06. Pending approval. |

OBJECTIVE 1. *The Sandhills RC&D will establish an outreach program that will increase awareness the RC&D program through strategic promotional campaigns and activities*

Strategy 2: Host the 2007 Nebraska Association of RC&D Councils Annual meeting.

| Project | Planned Start Date | Est. Completion Date | Est. Cost | Contacts | Progress |
|---|--------------------|----------------------|-----------|----------|------------------------------------|
| 2007 Nebraska Association of RC&D Councils Annual meeting | 10/31/06 | 12/31/07 | \$2,500 | Council | December 06 - Planning in progress |