

SANDHILLS RC&D

PLAN OF WORK 2008



Sandhills RC&D

FY 2008 Budget

Income	Amount
Interest Income	\$250
Membership Dues	\$850
Project Income	\$200,000
Other Income (NRCS Cooperative Agreement)	\$20,000
Total Income	\$221,100
Expense	
Association Dues	
State	\$300
Western	\$200
National	\$450
Accounting	\$300
Treasurers Bond & D&O Insurance	\$750
Meeting Expense	\$100
Office Supplies	\$500
Travel Expense for Council	\$1,250
Project Expense	\$200,000
Misc. (petty cash)	\$250
Employee Expense	\$14,000
Endowment Fund	\$3,000
Total Expense	\$221,100

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 1: Develop a plan of action with appropriate partners to offer three Range Management Workshops for ranchers in the west central Nebraska region in 2008.

Potential Project: Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition Partnership
Contact: Jim Carr

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).

Potential Project: Youth Range Camp Grant Proposal 2008
Contact: Mary Reese
Estimated Cost: \$500
NRCS Contribution: 4 hours
Progress: Project started March 07 with funding search. Two proposals have been submitted. One rejection received by Oct 07.

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

Project: Platte River Habitat Restoration
Contact: Bill Carhart
Estimated Cost: \$1,000,000
NRCS Contribution: 120 hours
Progress: Treatments demo sites established fall 07. Grant app submitted to National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Inter-local agreement draft in progress.

Project: Cedar Tree Removal Workshop
Contact: Kevin Hood
Estimated Cost: \$500
NRCS Contribution: 20 hours
Progress: Vendors identified. Funding sources being contacted.

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.

Potential Project: Carbon Sequestration for Ranchers –educational conference

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).

Potential Project: 2008 Great Plains Conference on Improving Crop water Productivity
Contact: Alan Corr
Estimated Cost: \$500
NRCS Contribution: 8 hours
Progress: Sandhills RC&D was a conference sponsor and had informational booth at the 2007 conference and could continue sponsorship in 2008

Potential Project: No-till Field Tour Workshop
Contact: Mary Reese

Strategy 2: Assist our Natural Resources District sponsors to acquire no-till planting equipment for demonstration and producer use in 2008 through use of grant writing resources.

Project: No-till Drill Purchase
Contact: Angie Jensen
Estimated Cost: \$30,000
NRCS Contribution: 4 hours
Progress: Actively seeking funding resources and developing proposals for equipment purchase.

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).

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).

Potential Project: Leopold Education Project
Contact: Pete Berthelsen
Estimated Cost: \$5,000

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: Retree Ogallala
Contact: Rod Ruzanic
Estimated Cost: \$4,000
NRCS Contribution: 8 hours
Progress: Adopted "Retree Ogallala" project in August 07. Currently seeking funding sources and making application.

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 1: Maintain fiscal sponsorship of the Sandhills Enhancing, Developing and Growing Entrepreneurs (EDGE) Coalition to offer EGDE business training annually in the central Sandhills region (2006-2010).

Potential Project: Sandhills EDGE class 2008
Estimated Cost: \$11,000
Contact: Stacey Nollette
NRCS Contribution: 16 hours

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 (2006-2008).

Potential Project: Foundation Database for West Central Nebraska

Contact: Cecelia Lawrence

Estimated Cost: \$1,200

NRCS Contribution: 4 hours

Progress: Project has been funded 3 years by the Mid-Nebraska Community Foundation

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: Thomas County Housing Planning

Contact: Steve Brown

Estimated Cost: \$150,000

NRCS Contribution: 10 hours

Progress: 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) March 07 - Housing assistance apps being accepted. January 08 – Village of Seneca added to eligible communities.

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: Housing Rehabilitation Phase III

Contact: Leigh Alexander

Estimated Cost: \$150,000

NRCS Contribution: 40 hours

Progress: 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. March 07 – Project accepted and public hearing performed. July 07 -Rehab work being completed on 2 homes in Logan Counties. Aug 07 – Four applications accepted for Hooker and Thomas Counties. Dec 07 Work in progress. November 07 - DED has set-a-side \$150,000 for Sandhills RC&D additional housing programs January 08 – Re-advertised program to attract additional applicants.

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

Strategy 3b: Develop a plan of action with the Mullen committee to fund and build a new Community Building (2007-2009).

Project: Mullen Community Building

Contact: Lyle Phillips

Estimated Cost: \$500,000

Progress: Committee has identified potential building site. Floor plans and details in progress.

Project: Mullen Park Improvements
Contact: Barb McIntosh
Estimated Cost: \$15,000
NRCS Contribution: 4 hours
Progress: Potential funding sources identified. Applications in progress.

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 an All-American Road in 2007-2008.

Project: Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway All-American Road Project
Contact: Terri Licking
Estimated Cost: \$10,000
NRCS Contribution: 40 hours
Progress: Oct. 06 - Committee formed and very active.
January 07 – Hired consultant to develop Corridor Management Plan
Fall 07 -Committee continues to meet and refine draft of CMP

Strategy 3: Develop a grant proposal with Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway organization to receive marketing funds to promote the highway #2 byway and the uniqueness of the Sandhills region.

Potential Project: Byway Tourism Marketing 2008
Contact: Terri Licking
Estimated Cost: \$12,500
NRCS Contribution: 10 hours
Progress: Grant application has been submitted, awaiting award notification.

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).

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: Hooker County Tourism Pilot
Contact: Mitch Glidden
Estimated Cost: \$16,000
NRCS Contribution: 16 hours
Progress: Contracted agreement in place with Hooker County. Lodging community developing strategic plan. Grant application for website upgrades has been submitted.

Potential Project: Tourism Assessment Resource Growth Evaluation
Contact: Mitch Glidden
Estimated Cost: \$5,000

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 3: Develop a plan of action with the Mid-Nebraska Community Foundation to implement an affiliated fund that will build an endowment to support Sandhills RC&D future operations (2008).

Endowment Committee: Eric Hansen, Cliff Welsh, Steve Boyer
Progress: Committee formed in 2007 and developing fund guidelines.

OBJECTIVE 2. *The Sandhills RC&D will support and assist the Nebraska RC&D Association with state wide projects such as the Meth Awareness program as it relates to the Sandhills RC&D area.*

The Sandhills RC&D Council hereby adopts this 2008 Plan of Work and agrees to effectively use the assistance provided by the NRCS-USDA to achieve the goals outlined.

Eric Hansen, President
Sandhills RC&D Council

Date

Tammy White, Secretary
Sandhills RC&D Council

Date

Steve Chick, State Conservationist
USDA, NRCS, Nebraska

Date

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