

# **SANDHILLS RC&D**

## **PLAN OF WORK 2009**



**Sandhills  
RC&D**

**FY 2009  
Budget**

**Income**

Interest Income	\$100
Membership	
Dues	\$850
Project Income	\$203,410
Other Income (includes NRCS Cooperative Agreement)	\$32,750
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$237,110</b>

**Expense**

Association Dues	
State	\$300
Western	\$200
National	\$450
Accounting	\$300
Treasurers Bond & D&O Insurance	\$760
Meeting Expense	\$100
Office Supplies	\$500
Travel Expense for Council	\$1,250
Project Expense	\$211,000
Misc. (includes petty cash)	\$250
Employee Expense	\$17,000
Endowment Fund	\$5,000
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$237,110</b>

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

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

**Strategy** Develop a plan of action with appropriate partners to offer Range Management Workshops for ranchers in the west central Nebraska region in 2009.

Project: Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition Partnership  
Contact: Jim Carr

**Strategy** 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** *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: \$3,000,000

NRCS Contribution: 120 hours

Progress: Treatments demo sites established fall 07. Grant app submitted to National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Inter-local agreement draft complete in 2008. In 2008, grants apps were submitted to Nebraska Department of Ag and Nebraska Environmental Trust. During the fall of 2008, a total of 2,694 acres of the invasive Phragmites were treated on the Platte Rivers in Lincoln County by North Star Helicopters. This completed treatment on the first three project priority areas that were designated earlier in the year. The project will use a regional watershed approach encompassing the North Platte River from Kingsley Dam and the South Platte from the Colorado state line through the Platte River system down to the confluence with the Loup River covering approximately 257 'river' miles of the Platte River between Ogallala and Columbus. By focusing on the entire system, the project can maximize control, efficacy, and long-term maintenance, while restricting re-infestations from up-stream seed sources.

A long-term management strategy being developed will work with the landowners to implement grazing systems focused on maintaining native wildlife habitat. Fence-line visual observations show that grazing significantly reduces stands of phragmites.

Project: 2009 Cedar Tree Removal Workshop

Contact: Kevin Hood

Estimated Cost: \$500

NRCS Contribution: 20 hours

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

**Strategy** 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 conferences

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Strategy** 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 Business Development Training

Estimated Cost: \$11,000

Contact: Melissa Garica

NRCS Contribution: 16 hours

**Strategy** Promote and attend the 2009 MarketPlace: Opening Doors to Success Conference in North Platte.

Project: 2009 MarketPlace Conference

Contact: Joy Marshall

**Strategy** Develop a plan of action with the appropriate partners to send students and business teachers to the 2009 MarketPlace Conference.

Project: Sandhills Youth Leadership Development

Estimated Cost: \$3,500

**Strategy** Develop a plan of action with the appropriate partners to move renewable energy development forward in the west central Nebraska region.

Potential Project: Renewable Energy Development & Energy Efficiency Project

Contact: Mary Gambill, Lory Cappel

**GOAL 3: IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES.**

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

**Strategy** Build capacity in Old West Regional Network and providing grant writing education to the RC&D area through grant writing courses hosted by Sandhills RC&D (2009-2010).

Potential Project: Grant Writers Training 2009

Estimated Cost: \$5,700

**OBJECTIVE** *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** Continue Phase III of housing rehabilitation for residences of Arthur, Grant, Hooker, Logan, McPherson, and Thomas in 2009.

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.

December 08 – three additional applications accepted

Since the beginning of this project in 2005, the Sandhills RC&D has been awarded \$350,000 for the Nebraska Affordable Housing Program through the Nebraska Department of Economic Development.

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

**Strategy** 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 are in progress.

2008: Discussion with Hooker County as to who would own facility.

Project: Mullen Park Improvements

Contact: Barb McIntosh

Estimated Cost: \$15,000

NRCS Contribution: 4 hours

Progress: Potential funding sources identified. Applications are in progress.

**Strategy** Develop a plan of action with the Upper Loup NRD to implement an NRD area recycling project in 2009.

Project: Mullen Park Improvements

Contact: Denise Vinton

**Strategy** Develop a plan of action with the Hooker County Library Board to replace the exiting roof on the library.

Project: Hooker County Library Roof  
Contact: Julie Pfeifer

**Strategy** Develop a plan of action with Rural Fire Protection Districts to improve the capacity of their districts.

Potential Project: Mullen Rural Fire Protection District Upgrades  
Contact: Don Earl

**Strategy** Assist the Village of Sutherland with a funding plan to replace the community swimming pool.

Project: Sutherland Pool Project  
Contact: Tammy White

**GOAL 4: INCREASE AND IMPROVE TOURISM AND RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.**

**OBJECTIVE** *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** 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

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

**Strategy** 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** Continue tourism pilot project.

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 committee is developing strategic plan. Grant application for website upgrades has been submitted.

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

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

**Strategy** 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** *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 2009 Plan of Work and agrees to effectively use the assistance provided by the NRCS-USDA to achieve the goals outlined.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Virginia Sizer, President  
Sandhills RC&D Council

January 27, 2009  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tammy White, Secretary  
Sandhills RC&D Council

January 27, 2009  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Steve Chick, State Conservationist  
USDA, NRCS, Nebraska

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*“All programs and assistance of the RC&D Program are available without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital status. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the USDA’S TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 14<sup>th</sup> and Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*”