

SANDHILLS RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT



2009 FALL NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 2

"Making the Sandhills a Better Life"

Serving Grant, Hooker, Thomas, Arthur, McPherson, Logan, Keith and Lincoln Counties.

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SANDHILLS RC&D COUNCIL CELEBRATES OUR VOLUNTEERS...

NATIONAL RC&D WEEK SEPTEMBER 20-26

Forty-five years ago, a brand new program began. It had the hopes and dreams of people who believed in the power of the community.

RC&D Week was declared in recognition of that program and the Sandhills RC&D Council joins the National Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils to salute all of its volunteers who continue to "Make It Happen" across our country.

Joan Smith Freeman, President of the National Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils, is looking forward to celebrating with the thousands of volunteers to commemorate the Service that RC&D Councils provide to America. She noted, "Local

people who determine their community needs and create solutions to these needs should be honored in our communities and in the media. Their selfless hours of work are an acknowledgment of their belief in the strength of the RC&D program."

Many of the projects that RC&D Councils carry out go unnoticed in our communities. A few of projects that the Sandhills Resource Conservation and Development Council have been involved with include a multi-county housing rehabilitation program, no-till workshops, business development trainings and rural fire protection assistance. Other project include local tourism efforts, rangeland monitoring workshops, and grant writing workshops including associ-

ated grant funding search software. Another natural resource project involved the formation of the West Central Weed Management Area and a large associated project that endeavors to reclaim the Platte River from an invasive plant called Phragmites.

Resource Conservation and Development Councils are made up of volunteers who serve their communities in all 50 states and US territories. RC&D Councils identify, address and solve the challenges needed to sustain and improve the quality of life in their own communities. If you are undertaking a project, and were wondering if the Sandhills RC&D may be able to assist, please contact the office at (308) 546-0636. <http://www.sandhillsrcd.org>

Our Mission

..to create an environment where all the citizens of the region work together to revitalize the rural economy, enhance and protect the natural resources, improve community infrastructure, and improve and increase tourism opportunities.

WIND POWER 2009 CONFERENCE

The Wind Power 2009 Conference will be held November 9th - 10th at the Holiday Inn Hotel and Convention Center in Kearney, NE. This conference will feature nationally known wind experts and sessions on small wind, land issues, financing and energy efficiency. For more information and registration materials see: www.neo.ne.gov/renew/wind-working-group/2009conference/conferencesignup.htm



GROW NEBRASKA MARKETING WORKSHOPS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

Do you want to beef up your bottom line? Reach new markets and expand your client base? Grow your business? If you answered yes, you will gain important information by attending a GROW Nebraska Marketing Workshop.

Reaching your target market and customer base today has become more challenging! There are so many ways to reach your target market with all the online applications and tools available today - Facebook, Delicious, YouTube, Flickr, Twitter, Friendfeed to just name a few! As part of your online presence, learn

how to enhance your chances of effective customer communication with search engine optimization and incorporate these online tools into your marketing strategy. It is all about making sure your website is search engine and customer friendly!

The marketing workshops will be held across Nebraska.

- September 22 - 3-6 PM at Chadron State College Student Center
- September 23 - Scottsbluff - 8:30-11:30

AM at UNL Panhandle Research and Extension Center

- September 24 - Sidney- 9 AM-12 PM at Western Nebraska Community College - Room 112
- October 28 - Fremont - 9-12 at First State Bank & Trust
- October 28 - Omaha - 3-6 at New Development Corp.
- October 29 - Nebraska City 9-12 at Kimmel Research and Education Center
- November 17 - Valentine - 9-12 at Niobrara Lodge
- November 17 - Bassett - 3-6 at North Central NE RC&D
- November 18 - Norfolk - 9-12 at Northeast Community College

To register visit grownebraska.org/workshops. Ten participants must be registered to hold the workshop.

GRANT WRITING WORKSHOP TO BE HELD

The Sandhills RC&D council is working in cooperation with Mid Plains Community College to present a grant writing workshop to area residents. Participants will be guided step-by-step through the process of researching potential funders to completing a proposal package. Come to the workshop with a project

idea in hand and leave the last day with a general proposal. Classes will be held at the North Platte campus November 2-11 on Monday and Wednesday evenings from 6:00 - 10:00 p.m. The class will also be available at area schools via distance learning.

Cost of the class is \$95.

For more information, contact the Sandhills RC&D office at 308 546-2540 or Melissa at 308.535.3682 or garciam@mpcc.edu. Registration deadline is Oct. 26th.

ANNUAL 4-H FOUNDATION TRAIL RIDE



The Nebraska 4-H Foundation Annual Trail Ride Benefit will be held October 10-11, 2009 at the Nebraska State 4-H

Camp and Nebraska National Forest at Halsey. Take part in a wonderful weekend riding trails in the Nebraska National Forest near Halsey, NE. Enjoy great meals, activities and live entertainment at the Nebraska State 4-H Camp. This fun-filled weekend will include lots of adventure and plenty of riding. If you don't have a horse, sign

up as a non-rider and ride the wagon. Saturday evening events include a steak fry, dance and auction. Proceeds from the event benefit youth across the state. For registration forms or more information, see the website at: www.ne4hfoundation.org/trailridebenefit.htm.

SANDHILLS RC&D OFFICERS

Virginia Sizer
President

Willis Roethemeyer
1st Vice Chair

Berva Arensdorf
2nd Vice Chair

Tammy White
Secretary

Mitch Glidden
Treasurer

RC&D STAFF

Twila Phillips

Executive Secretary

NRCS STAFF

Bob Broweleit

RC&D Coordinator

RANGELAND MONITORING PROGRAM

The Rangeland Monitoring Program, developed by the Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition, is an on-site pasture monitoring system available to landowners and managers across the state. The program incorporates both plant and soil monitoring and includes technical assistance laboratory analysis and interpretation of data. For the low, cost-recover fee of \$25, participants will receive an initial on-site consultation with an NGLC Rangeland Technician, as well as assistance in establishing one monitoring site and collecting samples. With enrollment, participants will receive a professional monitoring kit that

includes a clipping frame, grazing enclosure, scale, tape measure, clippers, clipping bags and a grazing stick – a \$175 value.

It is hard to measure change – both positive and negative without data. Monitoring is key in evaluating progress. With the lab results from the soil and plant samples along with professional recommendations, participants will be well informed as they make management decisions based on the data. In addition, a record of monitoring data can help in receiving assistance through many NRCS cost-



share programs, and is required for enrollment in most emerging carbon credit programs.

Above all, ranchers and landowners who are dedicated to improving the quality of their grazing lands will ultimately see results in

profitability, with economic and environmental changes that benefit the long-term sustainability of their business and the land. To learn more or to enroll visit the NGLC website at: www.nebraskagrazinglands.org

NRCS BEGINS NEW CONSERVATION PROGRAM

The Natural Resources Conservation Service announced the new Conservation Stewardship Program.

Steve Chick, NRCS State Conservationist said this program was announced August 10 by USDA officials. This is the first nationwide sign-up for this program. Previous sign-ups under a similar program were on a watershed or area basis.

Farm and ranch operators will have until September 30 to apply for this first program sign-up at local NRCS offices. The Conservation Stewardship Program is a voluntary program that encourages ag

producers to maintain existing conservation practices and adopt new ones in their operations. This program was authorized through 2017 in the last farm bill. NRCS will be taking applications on a continuous sign-up and periodically ranking applications for funding in the future also.

“During the application process the operator will have to provide some documentation of their operations, and if they rent land be able to show control of the land for the length of a five year contract,” said Chick. There are also some

operators, especially grazing folks that may not have a Farm Service Agency number for their operations. That number will be needed for the CSP application. These meetings will give more producers time to get ready, he added.

CSP is not a cost-share program but rather pays for conservation work already accomplished and offers incentives to apply additional conservation practices.

Further information is available at any NRCS office or the Nebraska website of www.ne.nrcs.usda.gov or the national NRCS website www.nrcs.usda.gov.

2009 RC&D STATE ASSOCIATION MTG

“Nebraska Like You’ve Never Seen It!” will be the theme for the 2009 RC&D State Association meeting to be held Oct 4 – 6 at the Gering Civic Center in Gering, NE.

Topics on Monday include concurrent sessions: RC&D 101, Record Keeping & Financial Reporting; Residential Wa-

ter Use Efficiency, River Ront Project; Fundraising in NE; a Wind Energy panel, Agri-Tourism in the Panhandle; and Recruiting & Retaining New Residents. Dinner that evening will be at the Farm and Ranch Museum.

A Tuesday morning bus

tour will highlight Soil Health for Success in Organic & No-till Operations; Weed Management Association; and sight seeing at local attractions. The annual RC&D business meeting will be held Tuesday afternoon followed by the Annual Banquet and Awards.

Registration forms may be found online at www.nercd.com and are due Sept. 21st.

BOARD MEMBERS

Eric Hansen
Dr. Steve Boyer
Dan Deibler
Cliff Welsh
Merlin Ring
Toni Ring
Stan Pettit
Rex Lanka
Carl Rundback
Lonnie Peters
Tom Witt

We're on the web!

www.sandhillsrcd.org

SANDHILLS RC&D

Resource Conservation & Development

P.O. Box 28
102 SE 2nd Street
Mullen, NE 69152

Phone: 308-546-0636

Fax: 308-545-0637

E-mail: info@sandhillsrcd.org



“ M A K I N G T H E S A N D H I L L S A B E T T E R L I F E ”

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sept. 20-26—National RC&D Week

Sept. 29—7:00 CT—Sandhills RC&D Council Annual Meeting—McPherson County Courthouse

Sept. 30—Sign-up ends for new NRCS Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

Oct. 4-6—State RC&D Association Conference—Scottsbluff

Oct. 10-11—Nebraska 4-H Foundation Annual Trail Ride Benefit—Halsey

Oct. 14—Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway Monthly Meeting—SJSB Visitor Center—Broken Bow

Oct. 20-22—Nebraska Travel Conference—Norfolk

Oct. 27—Sandhills RC&D Council meeting

Nov. 2-11—Grant Writing Workshop—Mid-Plains Community College or via distance learning

Nov. 6—Governor's Conference on Rural Development — Kearney

Nov. 9-10—Wind Power 2009 Conference—Kearney

Nov. 11—Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway Monthly Meeting—Dunning

Nov. 24—Sandhills RC&D Council meeting

Dec. 13-16—National Conference on Grazing Lands—Reno, NV

Feb. 24—Marketplace Conference—Kearney