

SANDHILLS RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT



2009 SUMMER NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 1

"Making the Sandhills a Better Life"

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

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2009 NEBRASKA GRAZING CONFERENCE AUG. 11-12

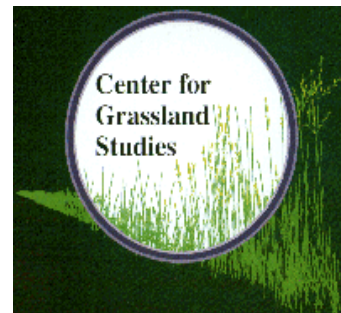
The 9th annual Nebraska Grazing Conference will be held at the Kearney Holiday Inn on Tues. and Wed., August 11 - 12, 2009. Speakers will discuss Nebraska's competitive advantage in the grazing industry, grass-finished production and marketing, impacts of grazing conservation practices and fence/water development on livestock and wildlife, and research results from studies of rotational vs. continuous grazing. Other topics include designing fence and water systems, becoming a grass farmer, mentoring, the 100 Cow Program, invasive species, production issues, and passing on the legacy.

Those attending the banquet Tuesday evening will get a spe-

cial treat as they listen to cowboy poet R. P. Smith from Broken Bow. A fourth-generation rancher, Smith also hosts "Home Grown" on the rural radio network and has been a featured entertainer at some of the largest cowboy poetry gatherings in the country.

The two-day pre-registration fee of \$75 is due to the Center for Grassland Studies by August 1. The fee covers lunch each day, evening banquet, break refreshments, and conference proceedings. One-day registrations are also available. Registration fee will be waived for students who will still be in high school next year and who pre-register by the Aug. 1 deadline, compliments of the UNL College of Agricultural Sciences and Natu-

ral Resources. Reduced registration fees apply for other full-time students. More information and the registration form may be found on the Center for Grassland Studies website www.grassland.unl.edu. The conference is a collaborative effort among many supporters and sponsors including the Sandhills RC&D.



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.

PRESIDENT'S PONDERINGS WHAT/WHY IS AN RC&D

We are private citizens, doing public good in your neighborhood. The Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) program, established over four decades ago, is a unique partnership between the United States Department of Agriculture and local volunteers. USDA, through the Natural Resource Conservation Service, provides each RC&D Council a

coordinator, technical assistance and funding for office operation. Local RC&D councils develop programming responsive to community needs and generate funding for local projects through grants and partnerships with other project supporters.

The Sandhills RC&D is the newest of Nebraska's twelve RC&D areas and is comprised of the

eight counties of Grant, Hooker, Thomas, Arthur, McPherson, Logan, Keith and Lincoln. I invite you to become familiar with the work of the Sandhills RC&D and how we can help bring possibilities to reality in your community.

Virginia Sizer
Council President

2009 MARKETPLACE CONFERENCE

The 3rd Annual Market Place Conference was held in North Platte on February 25th, 2009. Through the Youth Leadership Seminars Project, Sandhills RC&D was able to send 56 students and 9 high school business teachers to the conference. This opportunity was offered to all high schools in the Sandhills RC&D areas with 11 schools taking advantage of the offer.

Students selected to attend

were chosen based on entrepreneurial interest and a desire to create rural opportunity. For the first time, a full day "Youth Track" was offered at the Market Place Conference. This track was strategically planned to help address youth retention and business recruiting that is desperately needed in many rural communities. The project goal was to encourage business development by youth entrepreneurs by exposing students to business education op-

portunities and business successes. The students learned business skills from six hours of learning sessions geared directly to a youth audience.

Sandhills RC&D partnered with the Turner Youth Initiative, Mid-Nebraska Community Foundation, and local community foundations to provide funding for the registration costs with the schools involved providing transportation.



Networking is important for business minded individuals. Dr. Weldon Sleight, Dean of the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture at Curtis visits with youth that attended the 2009 Market-Place Conference.

SANDHILLS RC&D ASSISTS WITH YOUTH RANGE CAMP

The Sandhills Resource Conservation and Development partnered with the Nebraska Section of the Society for Range Management to seek funding in support of the annual Nebraska Youth Range Camp. Through a generous grant award from the Virginia Smith Charitable Trust, the Sandhills RC&D was able to provide \$1,000 to be used to off-set camp rental costs.

The Sandhills RC&D serves

an area with abundant range resources and has adopted this project that assists the Youth Range Camp with the objective to keep the training affordable. The RC&D council considers well informed and educated youth, a community element that is vital to the social and economic wellness of the area.

The Nebraska Section of SRM, in cooperation with other conservation part-

ners, annually hosts this camp for high school students across Nebraska. The 2009 camp will be June 8 - 12, 2009 at the Nebraska State 4-H Camp in Halsey, Nebraska. This year will be the 46th annual Camp. Over the years, the Camp has provided education to many young people from Nebraska who are interested in rangelands and practical range management.

FOUNDATION DATABASE AVAILABLE IN NORTH PLATTE

Public access to the Foundation Center's FC Search 12.0 database is in the fourth year of availability located at the technology center at the North Platte Public Library. The Sandhills RC&D has been able to secure funding for this project thanks in part to a grant funded by the Mid-Nebraska Community Foundation based in North

Platte.

This software is a collection of nearly 80,000 foundations, corporate givers and grant-making public charities across the United States. Users are able to target funding prospects from among the universe of every known U.S. grant maker. The user friendly tools allow visitors to quickly browse and search

grant maker and grant records. Entering key words describing the kind of grant being searched for will bring up all of the matches for those types of giving organizations.

This grant searching software is available for public use during normal library hours.

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

NEBRASKA GRAZING LANDS COALITION - RANGELAND MONITORING PROGRAM

The Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition developed the Rangeland Monitoring Program to provide onsite assistance for landowners who are ready to implement a pasture-monitoring system—but would like a little help getting started.

The NGLC Rangeland Monitoring Program is available to landowners and managers across the state on a first-come, first serve basis for a \$25 fee through support of the Nebraska NRCS and the Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund.

The program incorporates both plant and soil monitoring and includes technical assistance, laboratory analysis and interpretation of data.

Participants will receive a professional monitoring kit and initial on-site consultation and training session with an NGLC Rangeland Technician, as well as assistance in establishing one monitoring site and collecting samples. The goal is to provide the landowner with the equipment and skills to replicate and continue monitoring on additional

The rangeland monitoring program will help landowners implement a pasture-monitoring system.



sites. The program will also provide coordination of laboratory analysis of plant and soil samples as well as professional recommendations in management decision based on the data. As part of the enrollment, participants will agree to share their knowledge and

program grow-by committing to help one additional rancher in their region set up a similar monitoring program. For more information and to download a simple interest form visit the website at nebraskagrazinglands.org

SAND HILLS DISCOVERY CONFERENCE

Make plans now to attend the 8th Annual Sandhills Discovery Conference on July 9th, 2009 in Ainsworth, NE. The 2009 theme is “Sea of Grass Revisited” and guest speakers will share a passion and love of the Sandhills. The Thursday schedule features the following presenters: Sarah Polak, Mari Sandoz High Plains Center at Chadron State College; David Wedin, Ph.D, UN-L; Richard Fruehling, M.D., Medicine of the late 1800’s; Mike Voorhies, Ph.D., 1856 Warren/Hayden Expedition &

1871 Marsh Expedition; and Phyllis Stone, Native American use of prairie plants. Other activities on Thursday include 3 break-out sessions, Dutch-oven cooking, catered lunch, exhibitors and vendors, and the very unusual B.E.A.T. percussion group will perform. Guided tours including a fossil dig, tour of the buffalo herd at the Nature Conservancy, scenic drive through Sandhills lakes and float trip on the North Loup River are offered on Wed., July 8th and

Fri., July 10th. This event offers college credit through Wayne State College. Priced to be affordable, youth 18 and under attend free when accompanying a paid adult registrant. For information and registration forms, see the website: www.sandhillsdiscovery.org or call the Chamber of Commerce 866-387-2740. This annual event is sponsored by the Sandhills Discovery Foundation as part of its mission to provide comprehensive information about the Sandhills.

NEBRASKA GRAZING LANDS COALITION SELECTS NEW COORDINATOR

Marcy Hunter has been selected as the new Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition Coordinator replacing Tamara Choat who will be moving to Indiana. Marcy was raised on a fourth generation Nebraska Sandhills ranch five miles north of Sutherland. Marcy earned her degree from UNL

in Journalism and Communications and has a strong background in public relations, communications and marketing. Her strong ties throughout the ranching communities in the Nebraska Sandhills and intense drive to preserve and optimize the abundant re-

sources will help further the goals of the Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition. As the Grants Administrator for the NGLC, the Sandhills RC&D looks forward to working with Marcy to promote the understanding and value of the grasslands of Nebraska.

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

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“ 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

June 8–12—Nebraska Range Youth Camp—State 4-H Camp—Halsey

June 12–9:30 (CT) Value Added Marketing & Entrepreneurship Program—North Platte

June 14-17— 2009 National RC&D Association Conference—*Partnerships Delivering Positive Change in America's Communities*—Albuquerque, NM

June 19 & 20—2nd Annual Ranch Stewardship Live to feature livestock, range clinics—Curt Pate Clinician—Hebron, NE
www.nebraskagrazinglands.org

June 30—7:00 (CT) Sandhills RC&D Council meeting—McPherson County Courthouse—Tryon

July 8—1:00 (MT) Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway meeting—Hyannis

July 9—Sand Hills Discovery Conference—Ainsworth

July 21 & 22—South Dakota/Nebraska Joint Bus Tour, Yankton, SD—co-sponsored by the Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition

August 11-12—Nebraska Grazing Conference—Kearney

Aug 26th—Gudmundsen Sandhills Laboratory Open House—Whitman