



Nebraska's Natural Resources Districts
Making the Good Life Better Since 1972

Fall, 2016



The NRD partnered with Seward County on the 168th & Pioneers Road Dam ("Havlat Dam") south of Pleasant Dale during the summer. The dam will improve flood control in that area of the district at a total cost of \$456,000. Improvements to 168th Street were also a significant part of the project. Seward County is responsible for 25% of the cost and the NRD 75%. B-D Construction, Inc., of Columbus was the contractor. The NRD operates and maintains 191 dams throughout the district to help protect lives and property.

Diverse Budget

by NRD Board Treasurer Ray Stevens



To realize how many ways the NRD protects natural resources, look closely at our budget. The \$26 million plan approved by the Board of Directors in August is typically diverse. From now through next

June, we plan to extend a trail, restore a rare saline wetland, prioritize upgrades to Lincoln's Salt Creek Levee, complete dams in Waverly and near Pleasant Dale, help 250 landowners pay for best management practices, and monitor ground water for quality and quantity. In partnership with other natural resource interests, we'll continue studying the district's geology from 100 feet in the air and determine likely water resources for future regional needs. All that, and the NRD Board was able to cut \$5.6 million from the initial budget draft. Look briefly at our budget and appreciate that the tax requirement is the same as last year. To get a full appreciation, look closer.

Protecting Lives • Protecting Property • Protecting the Future

Election Preview



Voters in the November 8th General Election will decide four contested NRD races. The NRD Board has 21 members who serve four-year terms. One of the two board seats in each of ten subdistricts is elected every two years. The 21st At-Large seat is not up for election this year.

continued on page 2

Tax Levy Lower, Total Tax Same

In hopes of another successful year of protecting lives, property and the future, the NRD Board of Directors approved a \$26 million budget in August. The new plan requires the same amount of property tax (\$9,257,354) as the previous budget and higher property valuations helped to lower the tax rate.

The NRD Board of Directors reversed original plans to consider budgets for the next two years. State rules would have made it difficult for the NRD to conduct

continued on page 3

Dam to Better Protect Waverly

A dry dam just across Interstate 80, south of Waverly, will control flooding and remove a large area of that city from the 100-year floodplain. The City of Waverly and the NRD are partners in constructing Ash Hollow Dam. Work began in late August and completion is expected late this fall.

The project is the highest priority in a Watershed Master Plan adopted by Waverly in 2010. Waverly Mayor Mike Werner said, "Construction of the dam will

continued on page 4

Election Preview

continued from page 1

Two-year term elections in subdistricts 1 and 5 (see the table) result from appointments of replacement Board members during the first half of those four-year terms. Since a Subdistrict 1 vacancy was declared in August, one candidate, Gary Hellerich, of Valparaiso, was able to gather enough petition signatures to get his name on ballots.



Voters may cast ballots for races in the subdistrict of their residence. An interactive map detailing NRD subdistricts is available at lpsnrd.org; click on “Publications.”

ELECTION 2016		
Subdistrict	Term Years	Candidate (incumbents are in bold)
1	4	Don Jacobson, Lincoln
1	2	Gary Hellerich, Valparaiso
2	4	James Nygren, Ashland Sarah Wilson, Waverly
3	4	Mike DeKalb, Lincoln James R. JJ Johnson, Lincoln
4	4	Joe Skopp, Lincoln Gary R. Aldridge, Lincoln
5	2	Bruce Johnson, Lincoln
5	4	Greg Osborn, Lincoln
6	4	Jeremie Kerkman, Lincoln
7	4	Chelsea Johnson, Lincoln
8	4	Larry Hall, Lincoln Paul Morrison, Lincoln
9	4	Milt Schmidt, Lincoln
10	4	Ray A. Stevens Jr., Lincoln

NRD Board

Here are your NRD Board representatives. The Board meets regularly on the third Wednesday of each month at the NRD office in Lincoln. More information is available at lpsnrd.org, click on About Us, then Board.

Subdistrict

- 1 Don Jacobson, W Lincoln
Mark Christensen, Raymond
- 2 Daryl Bohac, Waverly
Mark Spangler, Murray
- 3 Mike DeKalb, NE Lincoln
Vern Barrett, Ceresco
- 4 Larry Ruth, Walton
Joe Skopp, SE Lincoln
- 5 Greg Osborn, W Lincoln
Bruce Johnson, W Lincoln
- 6 Jeremie Kerkman, NW Lincoln
Deborah Eagan, NW Lincoln
- 7 Ann Bleed, NE Lincoln
Richard Bolte, NE Lincoln
- 8 Larry Hall, SE Lincoln
Ron Svoboda, SE Lincoln
- 9 Milt Schmidt, SE Lincoln
Larry Zimmerman, SE Lincoln
- 10 Ray Stevens, S Lincoln
Karen Amen, S Lincoln
- At-large
David Landis, Lincoln



Potter Joins Staff

David Potter, of Valparaiso, became the NRD’s new Assistant General Manager on August 8th. Potter is a Valparaiso area native and most recently helped communities and counties plan the protection of their natural resources, as an employee of a private engineering firm. He serves as a Butler County Supervisor. He and his wife Cindy have four children.

Potter’s new job meant leaving the NRD Board, where he had also served since 2003, and at the time of his resignation he was the board’s representative to the Nebraska Association of Resources Districts Board of Directors. The local board elected Larry Ruth (Subdistrict 4) to fill that position and Milt Schmidt (Subdistrict 9) was elected as the alternate.

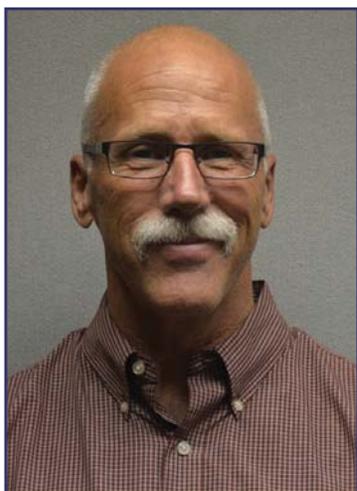
Tax Levy Lower, Total Tax Same

continued from page 1

multi-year projects. The NRD Board had hoped planning two budgets every-other-year would reduce budget planning time.

The complete FY 2017 Budget is available at lpsnrd.org. The budget features these projects and activities:

- Continue assessing needed upgrades to Lincoln’s Salt Creek Levee, prioritize those needs and develop designs and cost estimates (\$495,000)
- Cost-share to construct Ash Hollow Dry Dam with the City of Waverly (\$2,500,000)
- Continue aerial geological mapping to gain information that includes locations of secondary aquifers (\$421,000)
- Help reduce ground water nitrate levels in Davey, Elmwood, Hickman, Pleasant Dale, Union, Valparaiso, Weeping Water/Otoe Rural Water District #3 and the lower Salt Creek corridor from Waverly to Ashland.
- Begin a drought contingency study with five other partners; Lower Platte North and Papio Missouri River NRDs, Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, Lincoln Water System, and Omaha’s Metropolitan Utilities District; of long-term water supplies to support Platte River public water systems (\$460,000, with much of that to be reimbursed by the other partners)
- Saline wetland restoration at Marsh Wren, along 40th Street, just south of Interstate 80, in Lincoln (\$840,000)
- Complete Havlat Dam, south of Pleasant Dale (\$216,000)
- Construct Salt Creek Levee Trail, 14th Street to 23rd and Cornhusker, in Lincoln (\$408,500)
- Cost-sharing with landowners to install Best Management Practices (\$1,200,000)



Board Selects Christensen

The NRD Board of Directors declared a vacancy in Subdistrict 1 in August and then selected Mark Christensen, of rural Raymond to fill the seat, from among several applicants. Christensen grew up in a western Nebraska farm family and has been an attorney at Cline Williams Law Firm, in Lincoln, for 32 years. He has degrees from Doane College and the University of Nebraska. He and his wife, Lana, have four children.

Christensen’s appointment will expire in January, when whoever is elected to that seat in November will take office and serve the remaining two years of the current four-year term. Candidates may register with the Nebraska Secretary of State as a write-in candidate until October 28th. An interactive map detailing NRD subdistricts is available at lpsnrd.org; click on “Publications.”

Seedling Sales Soon

We’ll soon begin our annual sale of seedling trees and shrubs. Watch lpsnrd.org for details on ordering seedlings this fall or winter for delivery just in time to plant next spring!

Pokemon Traffic Welcomed

The LPSNRD office happens to be a gym, where players of the PokemonGo interactive video game come to battle other players, electronically, and take over the gym. So, lots of traffic converged on our parking lot in June and July. We took advantage by posting the sign below, promoting our public use areas.



Dam to Better Protect Waverly

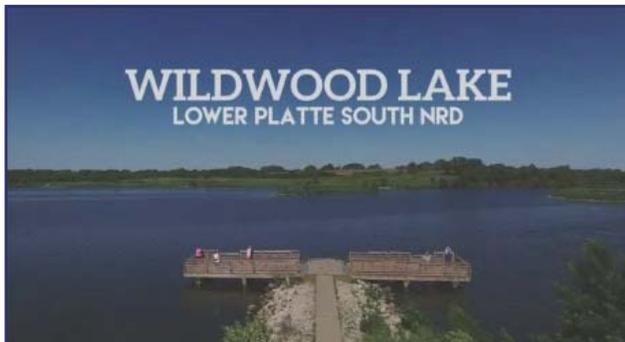
continued from page 1

remove approximately 90 properties from the floodplain.” Northwest Waverly also experiences flooding from Salt Creek. The mayor said the dry dam, “will not prevent (Salt Creek) flooding, but it will help decrease it.” Waverly and the NRD will evenly split the cost of constructing the \$1.2 million earthen structure. Owners of land taken out of the floodplain will no longer have to purchase flood insurance on their property. While the city as a whole will also benefit from more potential for economic development, a larger tax base and a more stable population, Mayor Warner said the most important benefit will be an improvement in public safety.

Nebraska’s NRDs promote their tree planting programs each December during the Nebraska Power Farming Show at the Lancaster Event Center. We share our booth with the Nebraska Forest Service, so, while browsing the show, look for our booth to learn about NRD programs and talk to a forester about your tree concerns. This year’s show is December 6-8.



Work on Ash Hollow Dry Dam, south of Waverly, began in August and should be completed this fall.



Like Us?

The number of Facebook and Instagram users following the NRD has been growing quickly in recent months, thanks in part to great drone video promoting our public use lakes and trails. Social media is a great way to keep up with NRD programs and activities. Like us on Facebook at LPSNRD, follow lowerplattesouthnrd on Instagram and search lower platte south nrd on You Tube!

Marsh Wren Progress

Marsh Wren, the district's latest saline wetland restoration, should be completed this fall. Ironically, heavy machinery was utilized throughout the summer to enhance the fragile 150-acre saline wetland, south of 40th Street and Arbor Road in Lincoln. A Nebraska Environmental Trust grant to the City of Lincoln, through the Saline Wetland Conservation Partnership has helped fund the project.

The project's goal is to restore saline water hydrology back to the land using the salt water underground and flowing in adjacent streams. A newly excavated bank along Little Salt Creek will allow part of the property to be more easily flooded. In addition, two salt water production wells and distribution systems have been installed on the property, all to help restore the salinity of the saline wetlands. NRD Resources Coordinator Dan Schulz hopes a re-accumulation of salt in the soil, "will result in an ecosystem of primarily salt tolerant plants and animals; a land type that was once common in northern Lancaster and southern Saunders counties, but has deteriorated due to agricultural and urban development."

If successful, Marsh Wren will be the latest in a list of saline wetland restorations by the NRD that also includes the nearby Whitehead Saline Wetland and the Lincoln Saline Wetlands Nature Center at Capitol Beach. A new parking area and observation deck will allow the public to witness the transformation. Bring your birding binoculars!

Web or Print?

Our *Know Your NRD* newsletter is available in both printed and electronic versions. Look for the printed newsletter in District newspapers in February, June and October. You can have a link to the electronic version delivered right to your inbox. All you need to do is visit our newsletter subscription page, at lpsnrd.org, under Publications, to sign up. The NRD will not share your email address.

Levee Website

The NRD continues to work with JEO Consulting Group to prioritize and design needed updates to Lincoln's Salt Creek Levee. Keep up with the multi-year project at saltcreeklevee.jeo.com.



This new observation deck will allow visitors to watch Marsh Wren reclaim the properties that once made it a saline wetland.

State Range Judging at Spring Creek Prairie



LPSNRD hosted the 2016 State Range Judging Contest on September 28th at Spring Creek Prairie, near Denton. 41 high school teams from as-far-away-as Scottsbluff competed. A team from West Holt High School, in Atkinson, won the Senior Team division. Range judging teaches students about range ecosystems in order to make good livestock and natural resource management decisions.

The NRD is proposing a list of changes to its Ground Water Rules and Regulations. The public process began with a public hearing on the proposed changes in late September and the NRD hopes to have the changes in place by January 1st. The proposals relate to water well permit requirements, decertifying irrigated acres, suspending and reinstating Phase II and Phase III ground water quality designations, ending irrigation allocations in part of the Dwight-Valparaiso-Brainard Special Management Area and more. Details on the proposed changes and the complete Rules and Regulations are available at lpsnrd.org.

NRD Project Update

Waverly Ash Hollow Dry Dam - Under construction just south of Waverly & I-80. See page 1.

Rosa Parks Way Trail Project, Lincoln - Salt Creek Levee connector trail undercrossing at First and "J" streets. Awaiting BNSF right-of-way. Completion late 2017.

Salt Creek Levee Trail Extension, Lincoln - Innovation Campus at 14th Street to 23rd & Cornhusker. Design is being finalized.

Salt Creek Levee, Lincoln - Multi-year project to update levee. Updating operation and maintenance manual. Replacement of temporary Middle Creek tie-back levee at Folsom and Rosa Parks Way with permanent levee to be built in 2017.

MoPac East Trail, Elmwood to Wabash - Bridge repaired, trail to be cleaned up and reopened late fall.

Havlat 168th & Pioneers Road Dam - South of Pleasant Dale. Construction nearly completed. See page 1.

Antelope Creek, 39th to 40th Streets - Storm repairs from spring, 2015. Awaiting FEMA approval.

Red Cedar Lake Boat Ramp - Six miles north and two west of Valparaiso. Lower lake water level to facilitate boat ramp work. Completion date this winter.

Marsh Wren Saline Wetland Restoration - Under construction east of 48th along Salt Creek. See page 5.

Deadmans Run Flood Reduction Study - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to announce preferred study alternative late in 2016.