



Corner Happy New Year!

As many of us begin a New Year, we take time to reflect on our past, and look to the future. The NRD had a wonderful year in 2009 with all of our outreach

and environmental education efforts. Thank you to all who invited us into your classrooms, attended workshops we hosted, and took advantage of the many curriculum based programs the NRD offers. All of these efforts aim to help educate the future stewards of our planet about the importance of natural resources and conserving them for the future.

With the New Year, I find myself making my list of New Year's resolutions:

- To continue growing the programs here at the Lower Platte South NRD – to potentially have a presence at each grade level through programs and presentations we offer.
- To help teachers and students go beyond textbook learning and offer real life, memorable and meaningful experiences.

What is on your list of New Year's resolutions? Is #1 "Contact the NRD"? OK, maybe not your #1, but I hope you will consider adding this to your resolution list.

I would love to talk to you about the different programs and presentations the NRD offers that will fit well at your school and with your classrooms.

Contact me at mbarry@lpsnrd.org or 402-476-2729.

Mckenzie's

discover nature

Despite what you might think, winter is a great time to explore nature. Try sharing these activities with your students to encourage them to get outside and explore nature!

- Look for animal tracks in the snow. Going out in the morning is a great time to see what animals have been lurking in the night.
- Make a bird feeder from a empty 2-liter bottle or a pinecone covered in peanut butter and seed. Watch closely to see what birds visit!
- Build a snowman. Get creative in your decorations... your snowman could be a firefighter or a dancer?
- Take a dark colored blanket outside when it is snowing. Lay the blanket on the ground and explore the shapes and sizes of the snowflakes.
- Winter nights are often cloudless which makes them perfect for exploring the night sky. Try finding constellations or even planets.

go
outside

Join the Fun: Nebraska Envirothon!



This competition is designed for high school age students, 9-12th grade to test their knowledge about the environment. Five member teams compete on the regional level in seven areas of environmental studies: soil, aquatics, forestry, policy, wildlife, range and a current environmental issue. Students participate in hands-on testing with specimens in each category, and there is a guidebook available for download to help groups study and prepare. The NRD can also provide

curriculum and presenter support for Envirothon teams on topics as needed, as well as financial help to compete at the state level and potentially national level.

The top scoring teams from each region become eligible to compete at the Nebraska State Envirothon Competition that will be held at the Nebraska Nature Tourism and Visitor Center in Alda on May 1, 2010. Awards are given to the winning team of each category and a championship award is given to the team with the highest overall score.

The Winner of the state competition will represent the state of Nebraska and get to compete at the National Canon Envirothon in Fresno, California, August 1-7, 2010!

For Schools wishing to participate from the Lower Platte South NRD, 2010 Regional Locations and dates are listed below. Contact McKenzie for more information at mbarry@lpsnrd.org or 402-476-2729.



Nebraska 2009 State Envirothon Champions from Ord, NE. Pictured at the Envirothon National Competition in the Smokey Mountains.

- March 2 – 9 am - CCC, Columbus
- March 2 – 9am – SCC, Beatrice
- March 3 – 10:30 am & 4 pm – Calco Hills, Omaha

*To learn more about Envirothon visit www.nrdnet.org.

Don't Forget!

The NRD provides Outdoor Classroom grants, up to \$2,000 for District schools. Outdoor Classrooms add value to classroom learning and allow curriculum connections to take place outside of the classroom and textbooks.

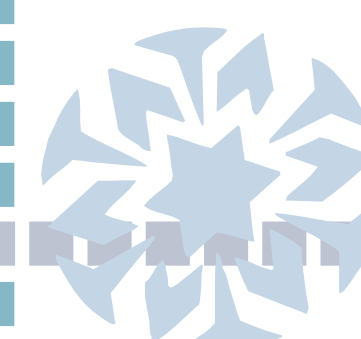
If you are interested in receiving an Outdoor Classroom Grant Application Packet, please contact McKenzie at mbarry@lpsnrd.org or 476-2729.



CORNER

RESOURCE

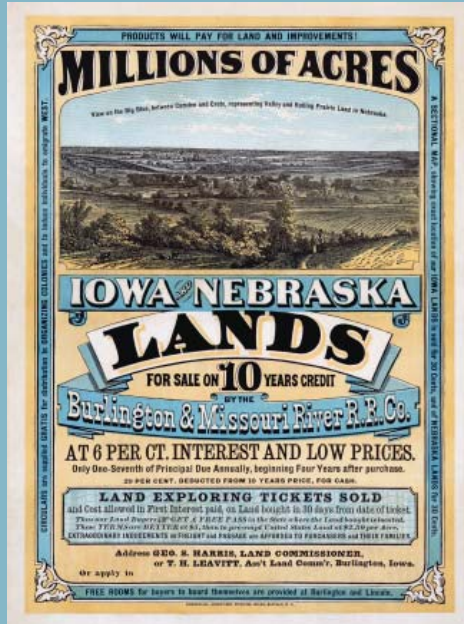
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LOWER PLATTE SOUTH
NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

History Time on Natural Resources and Nebraska's NRDs.

There are 23 NRDs in the state of Nebraska that were formed to protect and conserve Nebraska's Natural Resources. The History of how these were formed is interesting, with pictures telling a great story. Read on!



1870's-1910's (left)

Land Agents (we call them realtors now) were responsible for selling land during this time frame. The poster shows an advertisement trying to draw settlers to the region.

In the advertisements used, settlers were offered 'hook-ups' to the underground aquifer (for drinking water). The result? Windmills could be seen dotting the landscape and were used for cooking, drinking, washing and watering livestock. The average cost to build a windmill for water - \$0.32!

1920's -1930's (right)

The Dust Bowl Years –the Federal Government passes the Soil Conservation Act in 1937 to assist farmers.



1940's -1950's (left)

Soil & Water Conservation Districts are formed across the state of Nebraska county by county to help preserve and protect Nebraska's Natural Resources.

Pictured: The Great Flood of 1952 when the Missouri River overflowed its banks causing massive property damage.

1960's-1970's (right)

Birth of the NRD: in April 1969, four senators introduced LB 1357 – a bill that would consolidate the 154 Soil & Conservation Districts (formed in the 40's) that were by county, into new multi-purpose Districts that would be formed based on watershed boundaries. After considerable debate, on September 18th, 1969, the legislation was passed.

Pictured: LB 1357 –the bill that created Nebraskas NRDs is signed into law.



Furthering Curriculum Connections

Check Out these Kits!

Consider it a 'library' at your fingertips, full of great information and tools that will help you further your curriculum connections. Kits can be checked out for 2-3 weeks at a time.

The following Kits are available for check-out:

Birds – Early Childhood

Most young children are captivated when learning about nature. Why not draw on this interest by using the NRD's Early Childhood Bird Kit to develop a unit on birds! The kit includes numerous children's books, consumable projects like pinecone bird feeders, and age appropriate fun activities.

Worms – 1st grade

Filled with books, puzzles, magnifying lenses, and educator resources, this kit will help you wiggle your way into studying about composting, worms, and recycling. Consider checking out this kit to compliment your Red Worm order from the NRD!

Butterfly – 2nd grade

Teaching about life cycles, metamorphosis, or butterflies? This kit makes a perfect addition to your curriculum. With numerous literature books, puppets, puzzles, and educator resources, this kit will definitely add to your student's exploration. Consider checking out this kit when you receive your butterfly larvae from the NRD!

Trees – 3rd & 4th grade

Field guides, tree cookies, paper-making kit, and several children's books... what more do you need to make your Tree or Arbor Day unit a success? Consider checking out this kit to compliment your tree order from the NRD!

Lewis & Clark – 6th-12th grade

Studying the Lewis and Clark Expedition is a great way to engage your students in multiple subjects - science, social studies, history, writing, and even art. This kit is full of resources including plant presses, skulls, pelts, and a classroom set of compasses in addition to the student and educator books.

Water Kit – 6th-12th grade

Studying water has an amazing ability to connect your students with the environment – and this kit has all the resources you need to create a wonderful water unit. Two water quality testing kits, a Secchi disk, macroinvertebrate nets and containers, and numerous books.

These are great resources for your students and classroom! The first 10 teachers to reserve a kit will receive a prize – be sure to reach Lindsay today at Irogers@lpsnrd.org or 402-476-2729.

