



Corner

Your NRD does a lot for you!

Mckenzie's

It always seems the New Year is a time for reflection. As I gave some thought to my education work here and all the wonderful teachers, students and schools the NRD has visited with outreach it dawned on me ----How many of you know everything else your NRD does for you?

You are part of the Lower Platte South NRD. Every year, the NRD monitors hundreds of ground water wells to ensure protection of ground water quality and quantity; maintains and inspects over 200 dams and levees that protect property in your neighborhoods; provides cost-share to landowners on trees, soil protection measures, and efforts to protect quality and quantity of ground water and surface water; maintains public access lakes and public recreation trails; supports conservation easements to help protect unique and fragile eco-systems, and provides information and education to our constituents about the importance of protecting natural resources.

In my 11 years with the NRDs there is one thing that I am sure of....we work to the best of our ability to manage and protect your natural resources. Local control for schools works, and local control of natural resources works well for the NRDs.

Many of you are familiar and happy with the opportunities the NRD provides you with for environmental education programs, presentations and projects. And we are happy to work with you and your schools. The work we do in all the other areas I mentioned above is no different.

I have dedicated part of this newsletter to providing more information to you about everything your NRD does for you. Please take time to look over it.

As always, please contact me if you would like to book a presentation – we love visiting your schools and helping with environmental education efforts!

Reach me at mbarry@lpsnrd.org or (402) 476-2729.

Outdoor Classroom Grants Still Available!

With spring right around the corner, you may be thinking of ways to improve your school grounds for nature play, building habitat and to tie in with school curriculum. The NRD provides grants, up to \$2,000 per fiscal year to help with these spaces. These areas are designed in cooperation with the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum based on input received from your school, administration and parent groups and tailored specifically to meet your school's needs. Contact McKenzie at mbarry@lpsnrd.org or (402) 476-2729 to receive a grant packet today.



Please share your Resource Corner with other Educators who are interested in Environmental Education

CORNER

RESOURCE

Spring 2009

discover nature

As winter turns to spring and the weather gets nicer, now is the perfect time to discover nature in your school grounds and backyards. Try some of these fun activities!

- Build a bird feeder using an empty 2-liter soda bottle. Hang it from a tree and watch your feathered friends visit.
- Go on a simple scavenger hunt looking for: five different colors, four kinds of leaves, three different nature sounds, and various shaped rocks. Or, make up your own nature scavenger hunt!
- Go outside at night to look at the moon... how does it change over time? Record your observations in a nature journal.
- As you sit outside enjoying the sun, try your hand at writing poetry. Use nature as your theme!
- Watch for emerging plants – flowers, grasses, and even the buds of trees. How are they different? How are they the same?
- Check out “Crane Cam” to see the Sandhill Cranes migrating through Nebraska along the Platte River. To view, visit <http://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/cranecam>.

go outside

What color is your Creature?: Colorful Creature Contest

The Nebraska State Museum is hosting a contest for children to create a “colorful creature.” Each drawing will be displayed in the museum in May. For more information or an entry form, visit www-museum.unl.edu.

Don't Forget!

Its not too late! Call to book a presentation for your classroom today! Presentations available include: Ground Water Flow Model, Nebraska Mammals, Wildlife CSI, Wetlands in a Bag, GPS & Geo-caching, and Tree Trivia. We also have openings for field trips to local NRD “wild” places! For more information, or to book a presentation, contact McKenzie at mbarry@lpsnrd.org or (402) 476-2729.

Published by the LOWER PLATTE SOUTH NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT



Lower Platte South NRD Protecting YOUR Natural Resources since 1972



Formed by watershed boundaries in 1972 by the Nebraska Legislature, there are 23 NRDs across the state of Nebraska. Unique to our state, the NRDs were created to provide local control for the management and protection of natural resources. Here is a sampling of what your NRD does for you!



Ground Water Quality Testing

Every year, to Protect Water Quality & Quantity Your NRD:

- Collects 310 ground water samples and analyzes them for over 50 potential pollutants
- Measures ground water levels in 334 wells
- Maintains 200 flood control structures to protect farms and communities from flooding
- Maintains 13 miles of levees on Salt Creek in Lincoln
- Spends over \$1 million with 200 landowners for soil conservation
- Since 1990 has decommission 839 wells which prevents ground water contamination



Oak Creek Trail

Your NRD also provides:

- 800 Acres of NRD community wetlands
- 8 public recreation areas
- 9 Wildlife Management Areas
- 50 miles of trails
- Environmental Education to over 10,000 youth & adults every year



Fishing at Wildwood Lake

*Please note, a "Know Your NRD" Fact Sheet has been included with your Resource Corner. Check it out to learn more about the projects and programs your NRD is involved with.

Just in... And, Ready to Go Out!

The NRD has been busy all winter working to create a series of "Classroom Kits." These Kits are FILLED with resources to help you and your students learn about natural resources through hands-on activities and projects aligned to state standards.

The series includes three Kits:

- **Discovering Trees** (geared for 4th grade)
 - Paper making kit
 - Tree ring dating kit
 - Hardwood and Softwood comparison mount
 - 13 children's books, 3 activity guides, and 5 field guides
- **Butterfly Basics** (geared for 2nd grade)
 - Butterfly life cycle mount and stamps
 - Puzzles, matching games, and puppets
 - DVDs and videos
 - 8 children's books, 5 activity guides, and 4 field guides
- **On the Trail with Lewis and Clark** (geared for grades 4-8)
 - Plant presses
 - 7 student books, 6 educator guides, and 3 field guides
 - DVDs and videos
 - Skulls and pelts
 - Classroom set of compasses

Best of all, the NRD has classroom presentations coordinated to each of the Kits and we can come to your classroom!

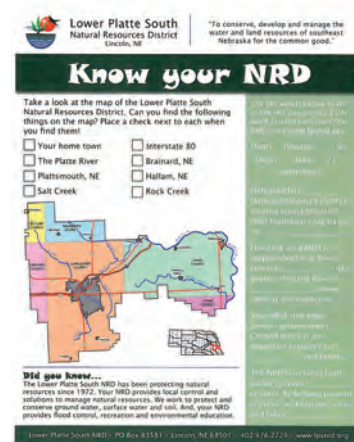
The Kits are here for you to use... free of charge.

For more information or to check-out a Kit, contact Lindsay at Irogers@lpsnrd.org or (402) 476-2729.

NEW! NRD Activity Sheets

What is a 5 letter word for a large, brown animal which once roamed the prairies of the central United States? Bison of course!

Hot off the press, these sheets are geared to specifically fit your curriculum. The front page provides basic information about the NRD, and the back page contains word searches and crosswords with key terms and vocabulary that fit the following study areas: prairie, ground water, wetland, soil erosion and conservation. There is also a lower elementary version with simpler activities for your students. Available in classroom sets, these come with a teacher answer key and will make a nice supplement to the units you teach.



To receive a classroom set of Know Your NRD activity sheets, please contact Lindsay at Irogers@lpsnrd.org or (402) 476-2729.

Mark Your Calendar! NRD Workshops you won't want to miss

Healthy Water, Healthy People

June 10, 2009; 8:30am – 4:00pm, \$75 stipend

Healthy Water, Healthy People is a water quality curriculum activity guide sponsored by Project WET. The 250 page guide offers 25 hands-on activities geared towards grades 6-12. Workshop participants will receive the curriculum activity guide, a water quality testing kit containing 5 testing parameters, a water quality testing kit manual, lunch and a \$75 stipend!



Project WET & Project Learning Tree (PLT)

June 18, 2009; 8:30am – 4:00pm, \$75 stipend



Project Learning Tree (PLT) and Project Water Education for Teachers (WET) are interdisciplinary curriculum activity guides which provide educators with both background information and activities dealing with our natural resources. The guides are designed for grades PreK - 8 and are aligned with Nebraska State Standards. Workshop participants will receive both curriculum guides, lunch, and a \$75 stipend!

Worms! Workshop

August 6, 2009; 9:00am – 12:00pm

Calling all 1st grade teachers! This is your chance to learn about the NRD's newest program to provide district schools with kits to learn about and have fun with worms and composting. Workshop participants will receive a FREE kit to use in their classrooms which include live worms!

For more information about these workshops, or to receive a registration form, please contact Lindsay Rogers at (402) 476-2729 or Irogers@lpsnrd.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Richard Louv
April 2, 2009, 7:00pm
Countryside Community Church, Omaha, NE
Contact: www.radicalamazementomaha.org

Nebraska Alliance for Conservation and Environment Education
Annual Conference
May 29 – 30, 2009
Holiday Inn Convention Center, Kearney, NE
For more information, visit www.nacee.org