

FEBRUARY
2019

STAFF REPORT

Little Blue Natural Resources District



INTERESTING ICE FORMATION AT LIBERTY COVE TAKEN BY DONNIE ENGELHARDT'S DRONE.

UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY 12

WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE (6 PM)

PROJECTS COMMITTEE (6:30 PM)

REGULAR MEETING (7 PM)

FEBRUARY 18

CENTRAL REGION ENVIROTHON

PRESIDENT'S DAY - OFFICE CLOSED

MARCH 4

NRD WATER TECHNICIAN CONFERENCE

MARCH 5

WATER PROGRAMS CONFERENCE

SOUTHEAST REGION ENVIROTHON

MARCH 6

MANAGER'S MEETING

MARCH 10

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME

MARCH 10-11

NARD BOARD MEETING

MARCH 12

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

MARCH 30-APRIL 3

ANNUAL WASHINGTON DC
CONFERENCE

ASSISTANT MANAGER - DONNIE ENGELHARDT

JANUARY REPORTS

January was a very eventful month. Luckily the calls into the office have really slowed down now that pumpage reports, and certified acre reports are almost all in. I must report that everyone in the office seems to be adjusting well to the changes, but still very busy.

NARD LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

Just finished up the NARD Conference where many bills were discussed and voted on which Lyle Heinrichs will give the update on. Once again it was very nice to collaborate with other NRD managers, agencies, and other innovative people.

NRCS MEETING

On February 5th the NRCS will be joining us here in Davenport to discuss ways to enhance our relationship, cost share procedures, and update our agreements and memorandums.

MEETINGS

Board Orientation will be February 8th to get the new board members up to speed on our authorities and responsibilities, and current state of our NRD. Between board meeting preparation, projects, cost share, orientation, meetings, and communication it has and will be a very busy next couple months.



ICE FISHERMEN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF NICE WEATHER AT LONE STAR REC AREA.

ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY - MARIE HERBEK

TAX SEASON

Marie has finished up tax season, W-2's were electronically submitted to the State of Nebraska and the Social Security Administration on January 23rd and the 1099's were mailed to the IRS on January 25th.

NARD LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE

I served on the Administrative Staff Committee for our meetings held during the NARD Legislative Conference. We met Monday and Tuesday afternoon. On Monday we spent an hour with Matt Wullenwaber of Mid-American Benefits as he reviewed our insurance program and updated us on the changes that took effect on January 1. Tuesday Meghan Vesper, Wage and Hour Investigator for the U.S. Dept. of Labor's Wage and Hour Division, gave a presentation on the Fair Labor Standards Act. Some of the topics she talked about were: minimum wage, compensatory time off, overtime and record-keeping. We also received training on the use of Adobe Acrobat Pro. Another informative session was on Nebraska Open Meetings Act Wednesday morning.

DATABASE SPECIALIST - ALICIA EPPS

CERTIFIED ACRES

January Alicia and Erika spent the month double checking assessor records and Beehive to get an accurate count of people that we have yet to receive their certified acres. 102 certified acre reports were sent out January 30-31.

Some of these were ones that haven't turned them in, some were where a corporation was missed. Alicia's goal for February is to complete all irrigated acres

PROJECTS SUPERVISOR - KEVIN ORVIS

NEW WELLS

There was a varied list of new well permits this last year, 37 in total that added approximately 1576 newly irrigated acres. Of those there were 3 new municipal, 1 commercial, 1 stock, and 1 recovery. The list of approved wells is included, I – S is a new irrigation well in series with another and I – R means a replacement irrigation.

RURAL WATER PROJECTS

Staff had a water project advisory board meeting this last month, recommendation came from that committee to adjust water rates and

ask the Board to apply for a State Revolving Fund grant of \$15,000. With the inevitable rate increase from Fairbury they thought they should consider potential for having their own wells and test wells is specifically noted in the application as a use for this grant.

FLOW METERS

Meter data is entered, as of this writing there were a few irrigators that didn't have the numbers in but very few. A summary sheet of 2018 irrigation use is included with the Water Resources Committee agenda and we'll send out the individual reports after the February board meeting.

**LITTLEBLUE
NRD
IS ACTIVELY
SEARCHING
FOR A NEW
GENERAL
MANAGER.**

INTERESTED?

SEND RESUMES TO:

MARLIN KIMLE

MKIMLENRD@GMAIL.COM

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS - ELYSABETH KIERL

OPERATOR TRAININGS

Liz worked with Donnie, Kevin, Dylan & Mike to complete the 2018-2019 Operator Training events. Ninety total operators were reached this year during these events with the last meeting held on January 17th in Davenport being the most popular site since Liz sent out reminders to those who needed to update their certifications.

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER TRAINING

Liz attended a NEMA training in Norfolk on January 7th & 8th. This training enables Liz to lead media in a crisis situation such as a natural disaster. Sixteen hours of training earned Liz the G-290 Basic Public Information Officer Certificate.

LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE & MEETINGS

Liz attended the Information & Education Meeting at Lower Platte South on January 28th. Olsson did an inspiring presentation on how they rebranded their company. After which, discussion was held on the NARD brand. A committee was formed with Liz, Dave Wolfe from North Platte NRD & Mike Mascoe with Lower Platte South to update the general brochure as well as the fact-sheet template. Liz would like the Little Blue BoD to consider re-branding as well to put a fresh face and spin on the NRD. Liz is also now on the ACE Camp committee and will be heading out to Halsey in June to help with the camp, just like last year. Liz attended several workshops at Legislative conference on January 30 and learned how other NRDs are approaching their educational outreach with both adults and youth.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Liz has spent some time updating the scholarship applications - not changing content, but changing the format of the scholarships. She updated school mailing lists and sent out the college scholarship applications to all area counselors. The Little Blue NRD offers six \$500 dollar scholarships for those interested in natural resources or conservation. She also sent out scholarship applications for ACE Camp for children interested in attending this year to FFA advisors & extension personnel. The Little Blue offers a total of \$1000; each camp registration is \$215. Liz also created a free tree order form for area schools to order trees from the NRD for their Earth & Arbor day celebrations. So far, three schools have taken advantage of the program for a total of 372 trees and three programming events to be taught by NRD staff.

TRAILBLAZER RC & D

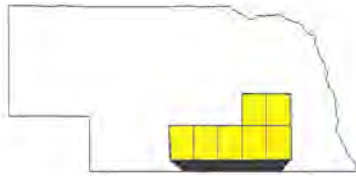
Liz submitted the Scrap Tire Cleanup Reimbursement form to the Nebraska DEQ on January 16th. She received word on February 1st that all the requested funding reimbursements she requested were accepted. Payments for the three scrap tire collections that the Little Blue NRD totaled \$45,747.25 for a 476.37 tons of tires collected.

Late last week, we were informed that Trailblazer RC&D was awarded a Household Hazardous Waste Grant totaling \$12,481 to take place in 2019 at four different sites. Dates & locates yet to be set.

It is also time to renew our partnership with the Trailblazers RC&D. The price was raised from \$200 to \$350 this year. Liz highly recommends that we partner once and has an annual report available for anyone interested in what the Trailblazer RC&D does for the Little Blue NRD constituents.

2018 WELL PERMITS

PERMIT NO	LEGAL	WELL OWNER	USE	CONDITION	RISK AREA	NEW ACRES	SOIL SCORE	AQUIFER SCORE
LBMA-2366	W½ NE¼ 14-4N-05W	Amy S Bartels	I	none	Moderate	58.7	143.78	121.55
LBMA-2367	W½ SW¼ 13-5N-12W	Christopher Hammer	I	soils	Moderate	80.35	72.47	146.83
LBMA-2368	NW¼ 13-5N-12W	Christopher Hammer	I	none	Moderate	75.92	87.44	146.52
LBMA-2369	SW¼ 18-4N-02W	Elting 1950	I - S	none	High	0		127.31
LBMA-2370	NE¼ 15-06-05W	KC Farms	I - S	none	High	0		107.38
LBMA-2371	NW¼ 09-5N-08W	Warren Wilson Foundation	I	soils	Moderate	83.1	79.89	143.24
LBMA-2372	NE¼ 10-5N-04W	Walden Biegert Trust	I - R	none	Low	0		
LBMA-2373	E½ SW¼ 09-5N-02W	Michael Hinrichs	I	none	Moderate	65.2	87.57	123.34
LBMA-2374	SW¼ 18-5N-03W	Brinkman Farms	I - R	none	Low	0		
LBMA-2375	SW¼ 05-5N-06W	Darren Shaw	I	none	Low	98	83.49	117.22
LBMA-2376	NE¼ 36-8N-12W	Robert Herman	I - R	none	low	0		
LBMA-2377	N¼ SW¼ 22-6N-11W	Joel Zubrod	I - R	none	low	0		
LBMA-2378	NW¼ 21-4N-02W	Max Hinrichs	I - R	none	Moderate	0		
LBMA-2379	N¼ NE¼ 21-6N-10W	Timothy Hoffman	I	none	Low	57.62	50.53	199.01
LBMA-2380	NW¼ 08-5N-01W	Village of Ohioa	M	none	Less Than 10	0		
LBMA-2381	SE¼ 09-05-08W	Dave Essink	I	none	Moderate	0		134.93
LBMA-2382	NW¼ 10-05-06W	Nancy Overturf	I	none	Moderate	0		160.35
LBMA-2383	SW¼ 30-5N-10W	Bert Rostvet	I - R	none	Moderate	0		
LBMA-2384	SW¼ 07-5N-02W	Nebco, Inc	C	none	Low	0		
LBMA-2385	SE¼ 09-05-08W	Allen Sippel	I	none	Moderate	0		139.58
LBMA-2386	SE SW 35-06-05W	USFWS	O - R	none	Low	0		
LBMA-2387	SE NW 15-05-02W	RM Farms	I	none	High	0		111.16
LBMA-2388	NE NW 01-8N-11W	V Vojta	I	none	High	26.6	103.82	133.16
LBMA-2389	NW¼ 11-8N-11W	Delano Jacobitz	I - R	none	Very High	0		
LBMA-2390	SW¼ 21-3N-02W	L & M Schardt Farm Inc	I - S	none	High	0		100.7
LBMA-2391	SW¼ NW¼ 21-7N-09W	US EPA	R	none	Low			
LBMA-2392	NE¼ 19-2N-3E	Fairbury Feedyard	S	none	High			
LBMA-2393	SE¼ NW¼ 08-6N-08W	Village of Glenvil	M	none	Low			
LBMA-2394	S½ SW¼ 20-4N-04W	Dennis Grone	I	none	Moderate	0		149.45
LBMA-2395	C W¼ 17-4N-01W	Milton Ag Consulting	I - S	none	Moderate	0		135.71
LBMA-2396	N SW 17-4N-01W	Milton Ag Consulting	I - S	none	Moderate	0		154.51
LBMA-2397	N SW 26-8N-12W	Lloyd Fischer	I	none	Moderate	61	68.71	150.09
LBMA-2398	NE¼ 13-7N-09W	Quirk Land & Cattle	I	none	Low	0		158.89
LBMA-2399	SE¼ 36-3N-04W	Brad Elting	I	none	High	10	126.47	113.13
LBMA-2400	SW¼ 31-6N-08W	R Lazy K Farms	I - R	none	Low	0		
LBMA-2401	C¼ S¼ 23-6N-09W	La-Dine Inc	I - R	none	Low	0		
LBMA-2402	SW¼ 03-7N-11W	Katzberg Farms Inc	I - R	none	Moderate	0		
LBMA-2403	SE¼ 15-2N-03E	Dale & Marilyn Stertz-Trustees	I	none	Very High	131.1	58.34	46.25
LBMA-2404	W¼ NE¼ 26-2N-03W	RJW Farms LLC	I	aquifer	Very High	122.4	128.26	56.38
LBMA-2405	SE¼ 34-7N-11W	Chad & Leah Trausch	I - R	none	Low	0		
LBMA-2406	E½ SW¼ 11-2N-03E	Christ Family Farms	I	soils/aquifer	High	62.8	40.68	66.96
LBMA-2407	SE¼ 34-6N-08W	Tom Shane	I - R	none	Low	0		
LBMA-2408	S¼ NW¼ 28-8N-12W	Ann Utter	I	none	Moderate	65		171.11
LBMA-2409	E¼ NW¼ 03-2N-02W	Poppleton Farms	I	soils/aquifer	Very High	67.16	66.35	55.18
LBMA-2410	NE¼ NE¼ 23-1n-02W	Village of Hubbell	M	none	High			
LBMA-2411	NE¼ 28-5N-10W	Kevin Atwater	I	none	High	152.1	116.11	100.18
LBMA-2412	SE¼ SE¼ 12-7N-11W	Ryan Weeks	I	none	Moderate	56.6	96.81	155.56
LBMA-2413	SE¼ NW¼ 05-7N-12W	Jamie Johnson	I - R	none	Moderate			
LBMA-2414	NE¼ 35-6N-09W	Richard Hinrichs	I - R	soil	Low	65.4	65.4	
LBMA-2515	C W¼ 01-3N-02W	Louise Fince	I	none	Low	120.5		
LBMA-2516	SE¼ 08-2N-04W	Joel Maschmann	I - S	none	High			
LBMA-2517	SW¼ 32-4N-02W	Bunting Farms	I	none	Low	116.6	135.59	214.98
						1576.15		



Trailblazer

Resource Conservation & Development Council

Clay ♦ Fillmore ♦ Franklin ♦ Harlan ♦ Nuckolls ♦ Thayer ♦ Webster

TRAILBLAZER RC&D ANNUAL REPORT 2018

Trailblazer RC&D Council continues to meet monthly, and we will continue to operate in 2019.

Officer nominations for 2019 are: David Pedersen, President; Larry Cerny, Vice-President; Chris Frye, Secretary; and Jim Farmer, Treasurer. The Trailblazer RC&D Council is requesting sponsor fees from the following seven counties and two NRD's: Clay, Fillmore, Franklin, Harlan, Nuckolls, Thayer and Webster, and the Lower Republican NRD and the Little Blue NRD.

Grant received for Electronic Recycling was \$16,500.00.

With the following results:

Harlan: 6,843 lbs.
Franklin: 8,965 lbs.
Webster: 22,753 lbs.
Clay: 11,824 lbs.
Thayer: 31,256 lbs.
Fillmore: 28,965 lbs.
Nuckolls: 11,824 lbs.

Grants received for Tire Recycling were for a total of \$68,488.00

With the following results:

Harlan: 76.95 tons
Franklin: 54.72 tons
Webster: 72.70 tons
Clay: 201.77 tons
Thayer: 117.27 tons
Fillmore: 157.33 tons

We have been awarded a Household Hazardous Waste Grant for \$12,481.00 and will have four collection sites this year.

Thank you for your past sponsorship. We would again appreciate your \$350.00 sponsor fee for 2019.

Sincerely,

Elysabeth Kierl
Your Trailblazer RC&D Council Representative





Twin Valley Weed Management Area
437 N. Elm St., Red Cloud, NE 68970
Phone: (402) 746-3560
www.twinvalleywma.com

NEBRASKA ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST GRANT PROJECT #17-103
Final Report for Eastern Republican & Little Blue Riparian Improvement Project
January 7, 2019

Environmental Trust Funds received: \$98,449.00

Funds utilized from July 1, 2017 to December 31, 2018: \$98,449.00

Funds turned back: \$0.00

Project Area: 142 mile stretch of Republican River from Cambridge, NE diversion eastward to the Nebraska-Kansas state line just south of Hardy, NE. There are a total of 255 different landowners that own property adjacent to the river. Harlan County Reservoir is also included in project area. We commenced work five years ago on the Little Blue River, consisting of a 125 mile stretch across four counties and entailing 265 landowners. Needless to say it has been a very busy year for our group.

The six primary aspects that Twin Valley Weed Management Area (TVWMA) focused on and utilized the grant funds for were:

- A. Chemical Spraying – Terrestrial and Aerial
- B. Cedar Tree Cutting within the Riparian Area
- C. Nebraska Leafy Spurge Tour & Conference
- D. Medicine Creek Cleanout
- E. Follow-up on Pollinator Sites
- F. Information Program and Grant Administration

A. CHEMICAL SPRAYING – TERRESTRIAL AND AERIAL:

Spraying activities on the river was delayed considerably this year because of high water flows. It appeared like a high infestation of phragmites this year. Harlan Lake was up higher than normal this year which cut down on the amount of exposed shoreline. Terrestrial spraying was completed on the river this year however, because of an early frost; we did not get to all the infested areas off the river.



Pictured above is terrestrial spraying of phragmites in Furnas County,
just above the Cambridge Diversion Dam

Aerial spraying efforts were a complete disaster this year, as our aerial spray pilot Dan Lyle from Sky Copters crashed his helicopter in Kansas and totaled it. He did get up here later with a backup helicopter. We had a considerable amount of spraying lined up for him on and off the river (including a 14 mile stretch of river in Franklin county to be solid sprayed), approximately 240 acres on Harlan Lake and numerous infested areas off the river. Adverse weather conditions and early frost limited the amount of spraying done. We did however spray out 220 acres of Canada thistle infestation on the shoreline of Harlan County Reservoir.

B. CEDAR TREE CUTTING WITHIN RIPARIAN AREA:

We have had cedar tree cutting sign-up for the riparian area of both the Republican and Little Blue River's now. Response has been tremendous and excellent feedback from landowners saying this is the best program ever offered. (Referring to EQUIP and other government programs) We presently have 50 applications waiting to be processed. What has been so tremendous about this 50% cost share program is it gave landowners a real incentive to get out and get the tree cutting done. The landowner also have a tremendous investment in their tree shearing effort which is quite evident by the amount of in-kind and matching funds also recorded in this report.



Pictured above is before and after cedar tree cutting on Don Klein property in Webster County

C. NEBRASKA LEAFY SPURGE TOUR & CONFERENCE:

TVWMA was the host of the Annual Leafy Spurge Working Task Force Tour and Conference in early August. This tour took place on the Republican River in Franklin and Harlan County. This group got to view the work and accomplishments which has occurred since the inception of TVWMA ten years ago. (Please see copy of the attached Program Agenda and an article that appeared in the Fall 2018 edition of the Weed Watch on page 3)

D. MEDICINE CREEK CLEANOUT:

The cleanout effort of Medicine Creek, a nine mile stretch from Medicine Creek Dam to where it empties into the Republican River south of Cambridge, Nebraska is starting to materialize quite rapidly. We have signed a partnership agreement with Southwest WMA (as a portion of the creek

runs through their WMA) and recently we had a landowners meeting to discuss the project. Overall the meeting went quite well and the cleanout work should be done in March 2019 by Frahm Construction. (See attached copy of (1) Invitational letter to attend the meeting, (2) Agreement form for landowners to sign, (3) News article from the Cambridge Clarion Newspaper.

E. FOLLOW-UP ON POLLINATOR SITES:

One year ago TVWMA planted three pollinator plots along the Republican River in areas that had trees and vegetation removed. These three riparian areas had physical obstacles that were a concern, such as sandy loam soil, 25% tree canopy remained, rough terrain, and tree stumps that still existed. We had to contend with a lot of weedy cover the first year. This spring it was a different story. We do have grass appearing and many pollinators (flowering plants) starting to appear. It was our intent to clip the weed vegetation off the plots this spring, but have decided to just let nature take its course and leave it alone.



Pictured above is one of the pollinator test plots in Furnas County with grass and flowering plants starting to appear.

F. INFORMATION PROGRAM AND GRANT ADMINISTRATION:

This grant #17-103 was extended from June 30, 2018 to December 31, 2018 to allow for adequate time to obligate funds of \$38,687.99 at the end of June 30. This remaining balance was completely spent over the next six months.

Two new grants were approved this past year. An NET grant #18-126 for \$143,000 and a Department of Agriculture grant #18-06-161 for \$90,000. A new grant has also been submitted to NET for the 2019 grant cycle in the amount of \$120,000. This new grant will focus on funding for river maintenance and also include the revegetation of areas where woody vegetation has been removed using pollinators, as well as cedar tree cutting.

TVWMA had their website re-vamped and the committee is very pleased with the outcome. Marty Craig, Dawson County Weed Superintendent did the work on it. www.twINVALLEYWMA.com All local news media along the Little Blue River ran an article on the cedar tree cost share program that we implemented. We also got front page coverage in the "Weed Watch" (copy attached) for invasive vegetation work on Harlan County Lake, which entices Whooping Cranes to stop over.

We hosted the Leafy Spurge Task Force Tour and Conference which was a huge success with 50 in attendance. We gained excellent exposure by showing and telling this group of our accomplishments.

We have also been working and meeting with Southwest WMA to try and get them up to speed and more accessible to the general public.

In summary, the work completed with the 2017-18 grant includes:

- Cedar Tree Cutting 3820 acres
- Vegetation Clearing along perimeter of river 1060 acres
- Chemical Spraying – Terrestrial (145 miles of river, 470 miles of shoreline
On Harlan Reservoir) 220 acres
- Aerial Spraying – Canada thistle 240 acres

If there are any questions, please contact me, and thanks to the Nebraska Environmental Trust for your continued support and assistance.

Merle Illian, Project Coordinator
Twin Valley Weed Management Area

~SUPPLEMENT~

Twin Valley Weed Management Area Project Summary To Date – December 2018

FUNDING TO TWIN VALLEY WEED MANAGEMENT AREA

YEAR	FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT	IN-KIND	IN-KIND TO GRANT RATIO
2006	Environmental Trust	\$10,200	\$21,300	85%
	Pioneer Seed	\$ 5,000		
	Corp of Engineers (Habitat)	\$10,000		
2007	Pulling Together Initiative	\$73,500	\$24,020	28%
	Corp of Engineers (Habitat)	\$13,750		
2008	LB 701	\$604,807	\$115,701	19%
2009	LB 701	\$500,945	\$ 69,155	14%
2010	Environmental Trust	\$545,000	\$501,152	92%
2011	Environmental Trust	\$650,000	\$362,000	56%
2012	Environmental Trust	\$400,000	\$124,000	31%
2013	Environmental Trust	\$568,000	\$ 63,500	10%
2014	Environmental Trust	\$277,000	\$ 95,865	35%
2015	Environmental Trust	\$328,000	\$122,269	27%
2016	Environmental Trust	\$125,000	\$ 32,000	26%
2016	Nebraska Dept. of Ag.	\$100,000	\$100,000	100%
2017	Environmental Trust	\$147,000	\$ 62,000	42%
2017	Nebraska Dept. of Ag.	\$ 93,500	\$ 93,500	100%
2018	Environmental Trust	\$143,000	\$ 67,500	32%
2018	Nebraska Dept. of Ag.	\$ 90,000	?	?
TOTALS:		\$4,679,702	\$1,853,962	38%

COMPLETED PROJECTS TO DATE – January 2019

Vegetation Treatment:

• Aerial on river **	1380 ac.
• Aerial on Harlan Lake **	2465 ac.
• Ground Application **	860 ac. Republican River
• Ground Application **	325 ac. Little Blue River
• Debris Removal (follow-up on 82 mi.)	142 mi. Republican River
• Debris Removal	125 mi. Little Blue River
• Deep Disking (1296 ac.)	133 mi.
• Thinning & Pruning perimeter of river	4200 ac.
• Fencing riparian area of river	37,500 ft.
• Control Burn of islands (658 ac.)	47 mi.
• Sediment removal from river channel (64,000 cubic yards)	5-3/4 mi.
• Creek Tributary Work (Turkey, Indian, Center, Spring & Sappa)	104.2 mi.
• Tree Thinning & Pruning	1074 ac.
• Revegetation Program – Fruit Tree Planting	690 ea.
• Cedar Tree Cutting	4600 ac.
• Pollinator Plantings	45 ac.

**** Follow-up performed each year**