



Nemaha Natural Resources District

# Insight



Winter 2006

## March 1 is Filing Deadline for Candidates

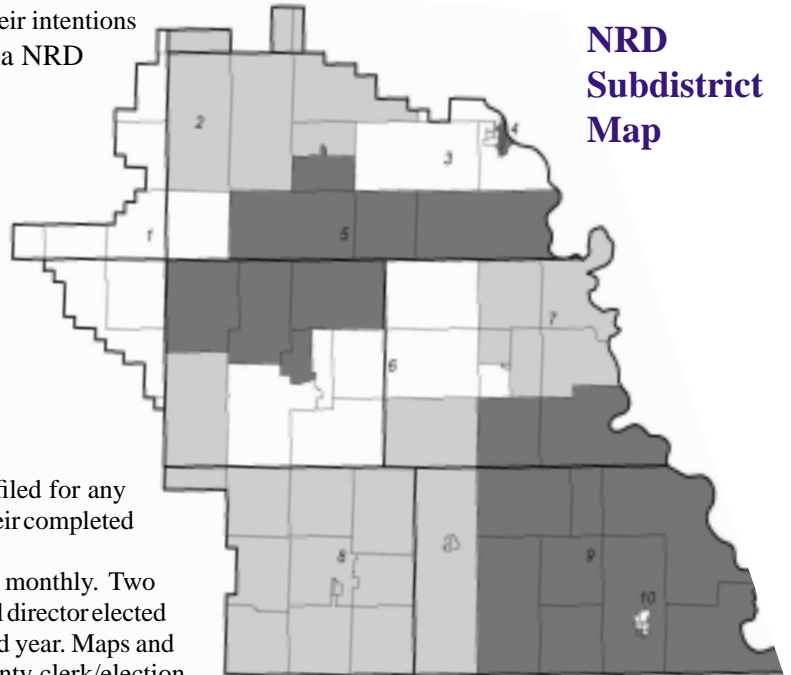
With the February 15 deadline for incumbents to record their intentions past, a full slate of incumbents have filed for the Nemaha NRD Board of Directors.

Incumbents who have filed include:

Subdistrict 1	Paul Weber, Firth
Subdistrict 2	Dan Watermeier, Syracuse
Subdistrict 3	Jim Wirth, Nebraska City
Subdistrict 4	John Albrecht, Nebraska City
Subdistrict 5	Duane Sugden, Sterling
Subdistrict 6	Jim Rush, Tecumseh
Subdistrict 7	Scott Kudrna, Auburn
Subdistrict 8	Don Siske, Table Rock
Subdistrict 9	Ron Heskett, Nemaha
Subdistrict 10	Bruce Walker, Falls City
At-Large	Gerald Royal, Palmyra

At the date of this printing, no additional candidates had filed for any spots on the board. Non-incumbents have until March 1 to get their completed paperwork to the Secretary of State's office in Lincoln.

Nemaha NRD directors serve four-year terms and meet monthly. Two directors represent each of the ten subdistricts with one additional director elected at-large. Half the membership is elected in each even numbered year. Maps and descriptions of the subdistrict boundaries are available at county clerk/election commissioner's offices or at the Nemaha NRD.



**NRD  
Subdistrict  
Map**

## Discussions Continue on How to Proceed with the Pawnee County Lake Project

The Nemaha NRD continues to look at options on how to proceed with the Pawnee County Lake project. For the past six months staff has been working with representatives from Louisiana Purchase Group to develop a conceptual plan showing how the NRD, Pawnee City, Pawnee County, and the private group could work together to plan and construct the lake. LPG met with the board in Tecumseh on January 19<sup>th</sup> to introduce the players on the team they would use and better explain how they could assist the NRD on proceeding with the project. The plan called for the dam and reservoir to be constructed privately with the NRD obtaining ownership of the land needed for the 3,000+ acre lake. The NRD would also be responsible for developing a public recreation area, which according to a recent study could attract 200,000 visitors annually. Around 130

people attended the meeting. The board has taken no action on the proposal.

There has also been some discussion about the possibility of developing an entity under the State Inter-local Cooperation Act to take on the challenge of proceeding on with the project. Under the Act the NRD could combine its powers and authorities with other governmental agencies such as Pawnee City and Pawnee County to evaluate and administer the project. The created entity might better encompass the authorities needed for a complex project such as the proposed lake. More evaluation is being done on this option.

The board plans to determine what direction the project will go in the next few months. Comments are welcome on any aspect of the project, and the board has suggested that written comments would be particularly useful.

## Conservation Loses a Long Time Friend

Pastures and grasslands in southeast Nebraska will be a little lonelier following the recent death of Bob Baum. Bob was a true friend of conservation having spent most of his adult life sharing his love and knowledge of the prairie with countless others. After retiring from a 30-year career with various federal agencies and the NRCS in Colorado and Idaho, Bob returned to his southeast Nebraska roots. For the past 10 years and until his death, Bob was a Nemaha NRD employee, working as a part-time technician in the Tecumseh NRCS office. However, he also volunteered his time to help with many other conservation activities and organizations.

Bob died on February 3 at the age of 74 following a heart attack nearly a week earlier. He is survived by his son, daughter, grandson, two sisters, three brothers, and one sister-in-law.

Bob will be sincerely missed and fondly remembered by all who knew him.

# Project Updates

## Buck and Duck Creek

Geology field work was completed at the proposed Duck Creek dam site near Peru in early February. HWS Consulting was hired by the NRD to collect samples at numerous locations at the site to determine if the site is suitable for constructing a dam and aid in the design of the structure. Archeologists from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) have also been evaluating the site to assure that there are no significant artifacts that may have to be considered when planning the structure. Nemaha NRD staff has also been assisting with this effort.

As the geological investigation phase wraps up, the project will move into the design phase. Design on the project will be provided by NRCS. As design progresses it will provide the NRD and NRCS a better picture of the concerns and issues that will have to be addressed.



NRD employees, Shawn Kreienhop (L) and Aaron Stalder (R), assist with cultural resources investigations at Duck Creek site.

## Groundwater Management Plan Update

The Nemaha NRD has started the process of updating and revising the District's groundwater management plan. No revisions have been made to the plan since 1995, and most of the quantity portion of the plan has not been updated since the mid 1980s. In recent years there have been a number of changes to state statutes that the NRD will have to consider when updating the plan. There are also a number of management activities that the NRD can utilize that were not allowed in state law at the time of the last revision. The District has collected a considerable amount of groundwater data the past 10 years which will have to be incorporated into the plan. Present day computer and mapping technology will allow the use of more and better quality maps and data presentation making the plan much better to read and understand.

As the plan is updated the NRD will look for opportunities to obtain public input on the plan. State statutes require that the NRD hold public hearings to obtain testimony on proposed changes. Revisions must be approved by the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources.

## Attention Certified Chemigators

Is your chemigation certification expired? Now is a good time to check. With a quick call to the NRD office, staff can look up your certification expiration date. Or if you would like to check yourself, you can log on to the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality's website at [www.deq.state.ne.us](http://www.deq.state.ne.us) and click on the "Water Division" link on the left hand side of the page. From there scroll down and click on the "Chemigation Program" bullet and then to the "Chemigation Applicator List" link. Click on the "Search Chemigation Applicator List" link toward the bottom of the page, and type in your last name. Find your name within the list and click on the "APPL#". This will bring up your information and when your certification expires. If your name does not appear on the list, your certification has been expired for more than a year; or you may have mistyped your name.

If your certification has expired, the Saline County Extension Office is offering a recertification course in Wilbur (306 West 3<sup>rd</sup> Street) on March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 9:00 a.m. Contact Lou Hajek at (402) 821-2151 for more information.

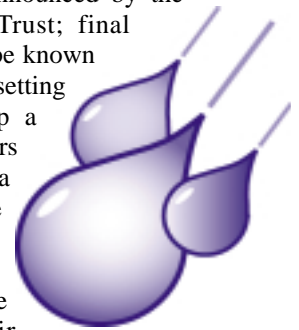
## Nebraska Rain Looking for Volunteers

Nebraska and rain: two words that haven't been used together much recently; but if you're an optimist, perhaps you'd also like to serve as a volunteer, backyard weather watcher. The Nemaha NRD is looking for people who are willing to spend a few minutes each morning recording precipitation measurements using gauges provided by the NRD.

Preliminary approval to fund the Nebraska Rainfall Assessment and Information Network (NeRAIN) in nine NRDs was recently announced by the Nebraska Environmental Trust; final word on the funding won't be known until April. However, we're setting the stage now to develop a network of weather observers throughout southeast Nebraska to monitor precipitation. The precipitation data is submitted to the Department of Natural Resources and made available for public access on their website.

The District is looking for one volunteer in each township throughout the Nemaha NRD. Volunteers will be provided with rain gauges and must attend a training session; access to the Internet is also preferable.

If you might be interested in becoming a Nebraska Rain volunteer, contact the Nemaha NRD in Tecumseh at 335-3325. Be prepared to provide your name and contact information as well as directions or a legal description for your backyard.



## From the Manager's Desk —→ by Bob Hilske

### Talk to Chuck

One of our biggest challenges is keeping the public informed on what we are doing, so maybe the NRD needs some kind of fancy advertising slogan to help us get our mission across to the people. You know what I mean, something like "Pork, the Other White Meat" or "Budweiser, the King of Beers". Problem is, I majored in natural resources; so if we rely on my creativity, we'll wind up with something like "The Nemaha NRD – Doing Our Dam Best for the Public." I'm thinking that it probably won't be enough to catch the eye of the public, so my next option is pirate something from somebody else.

After thinking this over I realized we need to focus on someone that is popular with the masses. There is such a person employed by the NRD: our Water Resources Manager, Chuck. So with apologies and thanks to the investment firm, Charles Schwab, I think our new slogan should be "Talk to Chuck." These days while I'm counting my paperclips, there are so many people parading past my office door to "talk to Chuck" that I'm convinced that there is a Rolling Stones concert going on in the back of the office somewhere. We won't even have to train our secretaries to use the new catchphrase because they already do. Whenever somebody calls or comes in they pretty much say, "You have to talk to Chuck". They have to keep rotating the buttons on their phones because the "Chuck" button is wearing out.

So why is Chuck so popular? Chuck talks water, and Chuck draws maps. These days everyone wants to know about water. They want to know if drinking water contaminated with nitrates will stop the aging process or why the State says that according to their records a well they drilled in Nemaha County is really located near Kearney. Chuck says he might be able to convince the state to at least move the well to Crete, and he is making me drink a gallon of water a day to test out the aging thing. I look one month younger already!

Chuck also likes to draw maps on his computer. Ten years ago our high tech maps consisted of photocopying the plat book and using a yellow highlighter. Today Chuck can draw maps of about anything by hitting a few buttons on his computer. He can draw maps of counties, dams, aquifers, or well locations. If we checked Chuck's family tree, I'm sure we'd find Rand McNally hanging from a branch somewhere.

Judging by the interest in water these days, I'm guessing that this public love fest with Chuck is destined to continue. So remember, if you need some help with a water related issue or would like to look at a map, expect to "Talk to Chuck". Of course, if you need to know how many paper clips it takes to make a chain a foot long, ask for the manager.

## Got an old well that needs to be closed?

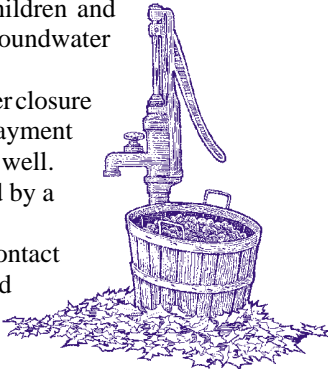
Abandoned wells are not only a safety issue with children and pets but are points of entry for contaminants to enter groundwater (southeast Nebraska's sole source of drinking water).

The Nemaha NRD provides 75% cost-share for the proper closure of abandoned wells. There is a maximum cost-share payment of \$300 for each cased well and \$700 for each hand dug well. Nebraska law requires the decommissioning be conducted by a licensed well driller or pump installation contractor.

If you have a well that you would like to have closed, contact the NRD office for a program application. Approval is required prior to closure.

Abandoned water wells are any wells that fit the following criteria:

- the use of which has been accomplished or permanently discontinued;
- is in such a condition that it cannot be placed in active or inactive status;
- is in such a state of disrepair that continued use for the purpose for which it was constructed is impractical;
- poses a health or safety hazard.



### NEMAHA NRD STAFF

Bob Hilske, Manager  
Scott Nelson, Assistant Manager  
Jane Kuhl, Administrative Assistant  
Artis Fisher, Business Assistant  
Allison Caspers,  
Administrative Secretary  
Lisa Bartels, Secretary  
Chuck Wingert,  
Water Resources Manager  
Charlie Pierce,  
Water Resources Technician  
Steve Bartels, Field Representative  
Mark McDonald, Field Representative  
Vernon Speers, Jr., Field Representative  
Aaron Stalder, Resources Specialist  
Tomas Chalé Aké, Projects Crew Leader  
Shawn Kreienhop,  
Watershed Project Coordinator

### NRD STAFF IN NRCS OFFICES

Deb Kreienhop, Auburn  
Glenda Bates, Tecumseh  
Carolee DeVorss, Syracuse  
Lori Foster, Falls City  
Cheryl Skinner, Pawnee City

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Albrecht, Nebraska City  
Jeff Crunk, Nebraska City  
Orval Gigstad, Syracuse  
Ted Godemann, Falls City (**Vice-Chair**)  
Ron Heskett, Nemaha  
David Hunzeker, Humboldt  
Scott Kudrna, Auburn (**Sec.-Treas.**)  
Roland Meyer, Palmyra  
Dave Neddenriep, Johnson  
Gerald Royal, Palmyra  
Jim Rush, Tecumseh  
Steven Sherrow, Nebraska City  
Don Siske, Table Rock  
Mike Speece, Auburn  
Charles Starr, Bennet  
J. Duane Sugden, Sterling  
Bruce Walker, Falls City  
Dan Watermeier, Syracuse  
Paul Weber, Firth  
Tom White, Falls City  
Jim Wirth, Nebraska City (**Chair**)

### NEMAHA NRD OFFICE:



62161 Hwy 136  
Tecumseh, NE 68450  
Phone: (402) 335-3325  
Fax: (402) 335-3265  
www.nemahanrd.org

## Get Your NRD Park Permit Before April 1

Though Nemaha NRD park permits may be purchased any day of the year, you'll save a couple of bucks if you get yours before April 1. Required at Kirkman's Cove Iron Horse Trail and Wirth Brothers Tecumseh, your \$10 if purchased by After that the price additional permit may be purchased expire December date of purchase, transferrable.

To get a permit, Tecumseh office 8 a.m and 4:30 p.m.; office (335-3325) and we'll mail an application to you; or print an application from our website, [www.nemahanrd.org](http://www.nemahanrd.org). A properly completed application with payment, along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope, will hasten delivery of your permit.

No time to get your permit before going to the park? You can even buy a temporary, two-day permit right at the parks for \$5 or request an annual permit through the same temporary permit envelopes.

Last year over \$8,200 was collected from park permit sales; funds are used to help maintain the parks. A new, concrete restroom was installed in 2005 at Kirkman's Cove; and a new boat dock is planned for installation this spring.

**NEMAHA NRD  
PARK PERMIT**

**#00000**

**Expires  
JANUARY 1  
2007**

near Humboldt, Lake near Dubois, Lake near first permit costs the end of March. goes up to \$12. One for another vehicle for \$6. Permits 31, regardless of and are non-

stop by the NRD's weekdays between or you can call our

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS



### February

28 Southeast Regional Envirothon, Beatrice

### March

1 Non-Incumbent Filing Deadline

1 Last Date to Order Trees

3 Chemigation Certification Course, Wilbur

9 NRD Board Meeting, Tecumseh

14 Extension Pesticide Collection

@ Nemaha NRD Office

27-29 NRD Washington, DC, Conference

### April

13 NRD Board Meeting, Tecumseh

22 Earth Day

28 Arbor Day

30-5/7 Soil & Water Stewardship Week

### May

6 Nebraska Envirothon, Hastings

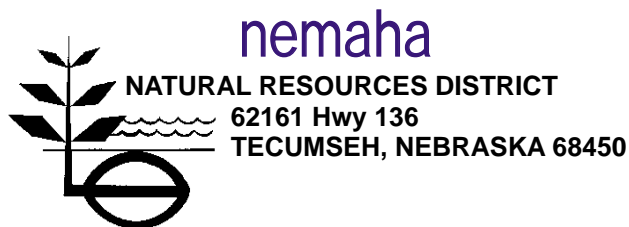
9 Primary Election Day

11 NRD Board Meeting, Tecumseh

20-21 Free Park Permit Weekend

@ Nemaha NRD Parks

29 Memorial Day Holiday, NRD Office Closed



### Stories This Issue:

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The Nemaha NRD's **Insight** is a publication of the Nemaha Natural Resources District. Requests to be placed on the **Insight** mailing list and/or comments regarding information in this publication should be directed to Jane Kuhl, Administrative Assistant, 62161 Hwy 136, Tecumseh, NE 68450. Phone (402) 335-3325