



Nemaha Natural Resources District

# Insight



Fall 2006

## SERICEA LESPEDEZA??? Find Out More At The September 13 Workshop

What is this strange sounding plant called Sericea Lespedeza? It is a perennial forb also known as Chinese Bush Clover that has been used in the past for erosion control and wildlife cover. Unfortunately, if given the opportunity, it will invade your pastures and reduce their forage capacity.

Several agencies and counties are working with the Five Rivers Weed Management Area (WMA) to alert landowners so they can identify the plant and learn how to treat it. If you are interested in learning more, please plan to attend a *free* workshop on Wednesday, September 13, beginning at 3:00 at the Twin Oaks Wildlife Management Area southeast of Tecumseh.

At the workshop, you will be able to see for yourself the problem this invader is capable of causing. You will also see the effect of various chemical treatments and be able to visit with chemical representatives who will provide information on control.

After the workshop, anticipated to last about two hours, there will be a cookout and refreshments available for participants. In addition, drawings will be held for several prizes.

To get to Twin Oaks, from Tecumseh go 3 miles east of the junction of Highways 136 and 50 to the Elk Creek corner sign, then 4 miles south and ¼ mile west. Signs will be posted to mark the turns.

For more information, call the Nemaha NRD office (335-3325), Five Rivers RC&D (335-3347) or Johnson County Farm Service Agency (335-3377).

**Photo at right: Close-up of the Sericea Lespedeza plant.**



## Hike and Bike along with Lewis and Clark Re-enactment Corps



On Sunday, September 10, the Lewis and Clark Re-enactment Corps are scheduled to pass through the Peru-Brownville area as they travel through Nebraska and head home towards St. Charles, Missouri. The communities of Peru and Brownville along with the Nemaha Natural Resources District are planning to give hikers and bikers a unique opportunity to follow along with the dugout canoes as they paddle their way to Brownville. In addition to the wonderful experience of a late summer excursion on the Trace, users are welcome to enjoy a barbecue at the Peru Trailhead sponsored by the Peru Chamber of Commerce beginning at noon. Interpreters will also be located along the trail to provide insights into the history of the Lewis and Clark expedition through the area as well as information on some of the unique natural features found along the trail. Brownville is also planning to welcome the re-enactors as well as the public with planned events in their historic community that include a public picnic and musical entertainment. The picnic will be on the grounds of the Captain Meriwether Lewis Riverboat Museum beginning at 5 p.m. Lewis & Clark re-enactors will join when they arrive. Plan to provide your own picnic and accessories; drinks will be provided.

As always there is no charge for the use of the Steamboat Trace. Walkers and bicyclists are invited to join the event at anytime during the afternoon of September 10th and travel any portion of the trail they desire. The re-enactors are scheduled to be on the Peru to Brownville segment from around 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Two areas of the trail offer vistas of the Missouri River -- one is located approximately 2 miles south of the Peru Trailhead, and the other is ½ mile north of Brownville. The Peru Trailhead is located just north of the community's business district. Parking near the trail is available in both communities.

More information about the event or the Steamboat Trace is available by contacting the Nemaha NRD at 402-335-3325 or at [www.nemahanrd.org](http://www.nemahanrd.org).

---

# Jim Masters And Kathy Harlow Are New Staff In NRD Ranks

## Jim Masters-NRD Clerk in Syracuse

Producers in Otoe County may have barely noticed a vacancy in the clerk's position at the NRCS office in Syracuse. That's because Jim Masters stepped into the role on July 19, even before Carolee DeVorss had spent the last day of her 30-years there. Jim had been working as a temporary field assistant with the Farm Service Agency next door and previously as a soil conservation aid in the NRCS office. Starting before Carolee left allowed for a smooth transition, and Jim's prior experience in the office has proven to be a valuable benefit as well.

Jim holds a degree in accounting and economics from the University of Nebraska and still actively farms. He and his wife, Phyllis, live near Syracuse.

## Kathy Harlow-NRD Clerk in Pawnee City

Almost simultaneously with the Syracuse opening, the NRD Clerk position in Pawnee



**Jim Masters,  
Clerk @ Syracuse NRCS**

City also became vacant. Cheryl Skinner left the job early in July to return to college. On August 1 Kathy Harlow stepped into the job. Kathy brings with her almost ten years of previous experience working at the Richardson County Farm Service Agency



**Kathy Harlow,  
Clerk @ Pawnee City NRCS**

as a Program Assistant. Most recently, though, she had worked at CJ Foods in Pawnee City.

Kathy grew up in the Elk Creek area and currently resides southeast of Humboldt with her husband, Dave, and two children.

## DeVorss Bids Farewell

Who works 30 years at one place anymore? Well, evidently Nemaha NRD employees do! On July 21, however, Carolee DeVorss said a fond farewell to her 30-year career with the NRD to take up a new one; it's called retirement! Back in 1976 Carolee started as a Clerk working for the NRD in the Pawnee City Soil Conservation Service office. Though the old "SCS" changed its name to the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Carolee transferred from the Pawnee City office to the Syracuse office in 1994, the two remained companions through the years.

At her farewell luncheon, Carolee remarked that she has enjoyed her job and getting to meet and help the many producers and cooperators over the years. As for the future, she and husband, Ron, hope to spend time taking it easy, doing some traveling, and enjoying their families.

**Right: NRD Manager, Bob Hilske, presents retirement gifts to Carolee DeVorss during a luncheon in her honor on July 20.**



## NRD Seeks Funding for "Drinking Water for Southeast Nebraska" Project

For the past two years, the Nemaha NRD has been working with the Five Rivers RC&D and USDA Rural Development to put together funding to assist with a framework public water supply evaluation and development of a conceptual regional water supply plan for Johnson, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee and Richardson Counties. Several efforts were made to secure federal funding but proved unsuccessful. As a result the NRD is now turning to the Nebraska Environmental Trust for assistance. The NRD is submitting a grant application to the Trust in hopes of obtaining \$145,000 from the program to fund a project we're calling "Drinking Water for Southeast Nebraska's Future". Local and potentially federal dollars would bring the total funding for this project to \$225,000.

What exactly is a regional water supply plan? With the exception of the Missouri River, there isn't a single source of water in southeast Nebraska that could supply the 40,000 residents living in the area. The plan for southeast Nebraska would more likely involve getting several suppliers to work together at the county or sub-regional level. In some cases neighboring systems could consolidate while others may simply work together cooperatively to share a source of potable water. One objective of this project is to help show the options that communities and rural water districts have available to assist them with making decisions regarding their systems in the future.

Another part of the Drinking Water for Southeast Nebraska's Future project is to

audit each system to determine how efficient water use is. There may be management practices a supplier could incorporate to reduce water use, particularly during peak summer periods. It is hoped that two or three communities can be selected to participate in a pilot project focused on implementing practices and education programs geared towards reducing water use.

We won't know until early 2007 whether this project is selected for grant funding. If selected the NRD plans to hire a consultant to assist with the majority of the project. It is also hoped that the District and Five Rivers RC&D could work with Peru State College on the extensive data collection that will be necessary for this project. The project would take two years to complete.

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

### Are Those NeRAIN Drops Falling on My Head?

It's August, and it has finally started to rain. I'm happy for all those folks who volunteered to be part of the NeRAIN program this summer. We provided free rain gauges to people who are dedicated enough to check them every day and report in via computer so the whole world can find out how much precipitation they received. For awhile things were looking pretty bleak for our intrepid volunteers. They checked the gauges every day only to find them drier than a high priced martini. A few clouds and a little rain and now they are starting to have some fun.

I'm pleased to report that we had an excellent response to our request for help as we have over 50 volunteers in the NRD. We still have a few gauges left, and we'd like to fill in some blank areas of the District. I'm certain that it does actually rain in Peru, Steinauer, and Otoe. Just think what a big shot you would be as you walk into Cotty's Place or the Turkey Creek Tavern and everyone is hitting you up for the latest rainfall amount. I'm seeing a few free lunches in your future.

It's not really that hard; all you need is some dedication and an hour or so to take our grueling "How to Read a Rain Gauge Course". In no time you'll get your junior meteorologist badge and a rain gauge. (Sorry, no post will be provided.) Once you get certified, I'm sure it won't be long and you'll be doing hurricane reports from a beach in the Bahamas for *The Weather Channel*. If you are interested in participating, just call our office for more information. I will warn you we are into honesty here at the NRD, so no rounding up to the nearest tenth or adding a quarter inch to beat out the gang in the coffee shop.

If you have not had an opportunity to check out the NeRAIN website, I'd encourage doing so. Just log on to our website at [nemahanrd.org](http://nemahanrd.org) and click on the NeRAIN icon right in the middle of our homepage. To speed things up, I suggest book marking it for future reference. Just tuck it right in there between *Ebay* and your favorite online poker site. It will be sort of like your own in-home, small town café; playing cards and finding out how much it rained. When you do get to the NeRAIN page, simply click on "Maps" and hunt down your favorite NRD (hopefully Nemaha) or county. You can actually find how much it rained almost anywhere in Nebraska. This way you can keep old cousin Mary out in Benkelman honest when she doesn't come through with a birthday present because she claims all the crops dried up.

Again I think that the NeRAIN project has been quite successful and will continue to grow. We are very appreciative of all the volunteers who take the time to read their gauges every day. I am sorry to say we can't do anything about all the weight you'll gain from the free lunches, but maybe we'll give a free sprinkler to the person who records the least rainfall for the year.

## Water Resources Cost-Share Assistance

### Well Abandonment

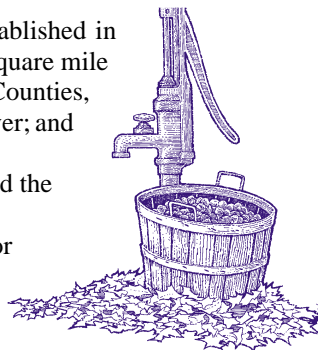
- The District provides 75% cost-share for the decommissioning of abandoned wells with a maximum of \$500 for each small diameter cased type well and \$700 for each large diameter, hand-dug type well. Approval prior to the closure is required.
- Funds are available – Contact the office for an application, and Sign Up Today!

### Phase II GWMA

• A Phase II Groundwater Management Area was established in January, 2004, for northwest Richardson County. The 73 square mile area includes all land east and south of Pawnee and Nemaha Counties, respectively; north of the North Fork of the Big Nemaha River; and west of Highway 75.

• Elevated levels of nitrate in the groundwater prompted the designation.

• The District is offering 50% cost-share assistance for soil sampling & complete fertilizer flow control systems – contact the District office for more information.



### 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,  
Resources Specialist  
Seasonal Staff:  
Phil Vance,  
Doug Schmidt

### NRD STAFF IN NRCS OFFICES

Deb Kreienhop, Auburn  
Glenda Bates, Tecumseh  
Jim Masters, Syracuse  
Lori Foster, Falls City  
Kathy Harlow, 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](http://www.nemahanrd.org)

## Election, 2006, Is Right Around The Corner

November 7 will be here before you know it – do you know who you will be voting for in the election for Nemaha NRD board members? Eleven positions are up for election this year; one in each of 10 subdistricts as well as an at-large position. It appears just one race will be contested, however. Incumbent Gerald Royal of Palmyra will face Lisa Beethe, Elk Creek, for the sole at-large position on the board. Beethe is the only non-incumbent running in the Nemaha NRD this time. Initially it appeared the Subdistrict 6 position would also be contested this year; however, due to a filing error, incumbent, Jim Rush, will run un-opposed.

The full slate of candidates for the fall general election is:

Subdistrict	Candidate	Address
01	Paul Weber	Firth
02	Dan Watermeier	Syracuse
03	Jim Wirth	Nebraska City
04	John Albrecht	Nebraska City
05	J. Duane Sugden	Sterling
06	Jim Rush	Tecumseh
07	Scott Kudrna	Auburn
08	Don Siske	Table Rock
09	Ron Heskett	Nemaha
10	Bruce Walker	Falls City
At Large	Lisa Beethe	Elk Creek
At Large	Gerald Royal	Palmyra

Nemaha NRD directors are elected by only the registered voters from within their subdistrict of representation, with the exception of the at-large position, which appears on all ballots throughout the District. Directors serve four-year terms, which will begin January 1; and regular meetings are held monthly. About half of the 21-member board is up for election in each even-numbered year.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS



### September

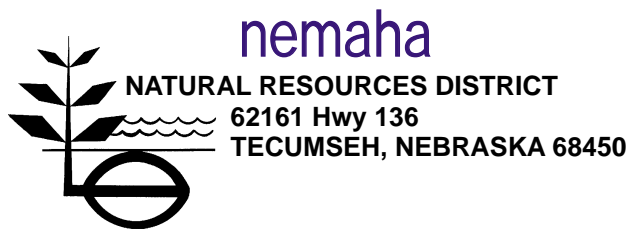
- 10 Lewis & Clark Events on the Steamboat Trace
- 12-14 National Watershed Coalition Workshop, Nebraska City
- 12-14 Husker Harvest Days, Grand Island
- 13 Sericea Lespedeza Workshop, Twin Oaks Wildlife Management Area
- 14 NRD Board Meeting & Budget Hearing, Tecumseh
- 25-26 NARD Annual Conference, Kearney
- 26 Natural Resources Commission Meeting, Kearney

### October

- 9 Columbus Day Holiday, NRD Office Closed
- 11 Southeast Area Land Judging Contest, Johnson County
- 12 NRD Board Meeting, Tecumseh

### November

- 7 Election Day
- 9 NRD Board Meeting, Tecumseh
- 10 Veteran's Day Holiday (Observed), NRD Office Closed
- 11-19 Steamboat Trace Closed During Rifle Deer Hunting Season
- 23 Thanksgiving Day Holiday, NRD Office Closed



## Stories This Issue:

- **SERICEA LESPEDEZA???**  
*Find Out More At The September 13 Workshop*
- **Hike and Bike along with**  
*Lewis and Clark Re-enactment Corps*
- **Jim Masters And Kathy Harlow Are New Staff In NRD Ranks**
- **DeVorss Bids Farewell**
- **NRD Seeks Funding for**  
*"Drinking Water for Southeast Nebraska" Project*
- **From the Manager's Desk**
- **Water Resources Cost-Share Assistance**
- **Staff Listing**
- **2006 Election Is Right Around The Corner**
- **Calendar of Events**

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