

# The Pipelining Newsletter

South Platte Natural Resources District

Spring 2009  
Volume 15, Number 2

## SPNRD Board, NDNR Taking Final Steps On OA Plans

At its April meeting, the Board of Directors approved a letter to the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources acknowledging the South Platte NRD and NDNR have agreed on amendments proposed to the District's Integrated Management Plan (IMP).

Exchanging such letters is one of the steps needed to finalize the Overappro-

priated Section of the IMP. The IMP went into affect last June, but the OA Section was updated to meet provisions of the Basin-Wide Plan for the Overappropriated Portions of the Platte River.

The Board and NDEQ plan to hold public hearings on the proposed IMP changes and the Basin-wide plan in mid-June.

Following review of public input, the Board and NDNR will see if changes need to be made before final approval of the measures.

To meet the requirements of state statute, both the Basin-Wide Plan and the District's complete IMP (with the final approval of Rule 9) must be agreed to and implemented by September 15.

### Citizens Group Helps Monitor CHESI Impact

In keeping with its mission to protect and manage natural resources, one activity the District is involved with is the Citizen's Monitoring Committee (CMC) at Kimball.

The local group, established by the South Platte NRD and the Kimball community, monitors the environmental

See **CITIZENS** page 4

### Possible Allocation Changes On Slate

The Board will soon be addressing possible changes to allocations that have been in affect since 2007.

The second allocation period begins in 2010. The current review is in accordance with the Districtwide Ground Water Management Area Rules and Regulations, which state that allocations are set at the end of each three-year period for the following allocation period. The

rules provide that changes to the allocation are established one year before the next allocation period begins.

Four District Allocation Subareas are currently under review. They are Wyoming state line to Oliver Reservoir, Oliver Reservoir to Buffalo Bend, Buffalo Bend to Sidney, and Sidney to the Colorado state line. Allocations in

See **CHANGES** page 2

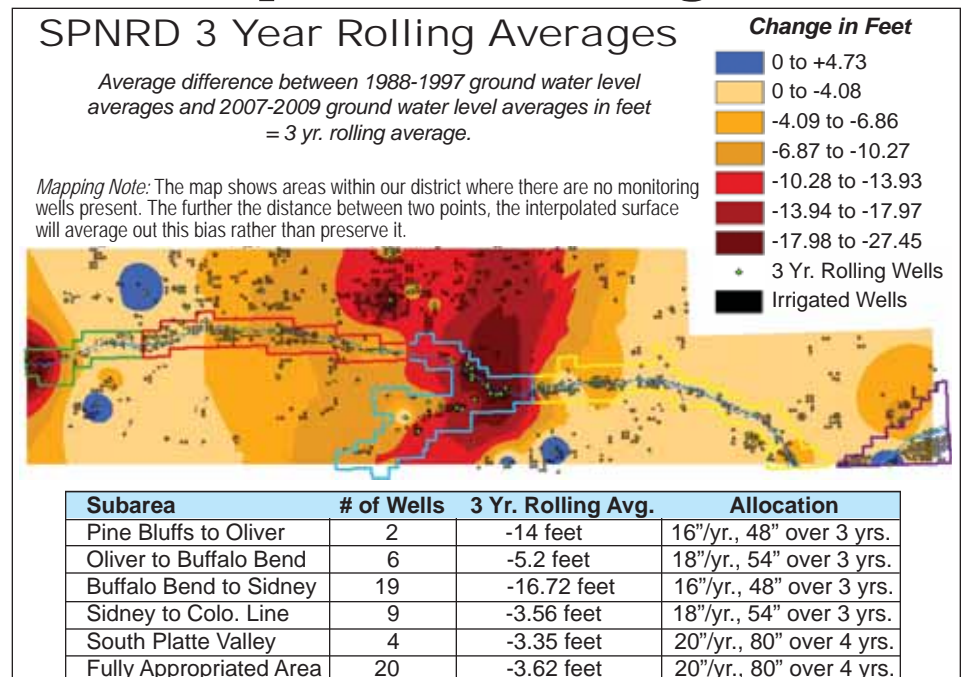
## Spring Ground Water Level Report Shows Average Declines

South Platte NRD staff members recently completed spring ground water measurements at observation wells placed throughout the District. Each year water level readings are taken in early spring and again in the fall.

This year's report shows one year ground water levels in Cheyenne County declined 0.83 feet on average with 79.79 percent of wells measured showing declines. Deuel County showed an average decline of 0.07 feet with 56.52 percent of measured wells showing declines. Kimball County showed 70.97 percent of measured wells declining with an average decline of 0.46 feet.

Five year results comparing water levels from spring of 2005 with spring of

See **WATER LEVELS** page 2



# Natural Resources Responsibilities Include Erosion Protection

One of the District's responsibilities in natural resources management is laid out in the state's Erosion and Sediment Control Act.

The Act was developed in 1986 when the Nebraska Legislature recognized serious erosion and sedimentation problems throughout the state. At the time a number of land-disturbing activities had caused excessive wind erosion and water runoff and accelerated the process of soil erosion and sediment deposition. That resulted in the pollution of the waters of the state and damage to domestic, agricultural, industrial, recreational, fish and wildlife, and other resources.

The state's goal was to strengthen and extend erosion and sediment control activities and programs of the state for both rural and urban lands, to improve water quality, and to establish a state-wide, comprehensive, and coordinated erosion and sediment control program to reduce damage from wind erosion



Various problems can be addressed through the District Erosion and Sediment Control Program.

and storm water runoff, to retard non-point pollution from sediment and related pollutants, and to conserve and protect land, air, and other resources of the state.

Implemented through the Director of Natural Resources and the Nebraska Natural Resources Commission, the legislation specified the program would

be carried out by the natural resources districts in cooperation with counties, municipalities, and other entities.

In 1987, the SPNRD board of directors adopted the District Erosion and Sediment Control Program, designed to reduce soil erosion in the District to tolerable levels.

The program has a number of provisions relating to tolerable erosion levels, the complaint process and how to maintain compliance.

The District program, following state law, outlines a system for filing and processing of complaints concerning land where erosion is exceeding the soil loss limits established by the District. Complaints may be filed by any owner or operator being damaged by sediment, by any state agency or political subdivision whose roads or other public facilities are being damaged by sediment or

See **EROSION** page 7

## CHANGES *Lower Allocations Considered* Continued from Page 1

the two remaining subareas, the Tablelands and South Platte Valley, went into effect in March of this year and are for a four year period.

A number of factors were taken into account when the allocations subcommittee made its recommendations to the SPNRD board of directors and during subsequent Board discussions. Among those are overall water use within the subdistrict, ground water level trends and the state's requirement that water use within the over-appropriated subdistricts, (where water use is greater

than recharge capability) be returned to 1997 levels.

Allocations for each subdistrict are listed in acre-inches, or the amount of water needed to cover an acre of ground with one inch of water. Current allocations under review are

- Wyo. to Oliver Reservoir: 16"
- Oliver to Buffalo Bend: 18"
- Buffalo Bend to Sidney: 16"
- Sidney to Colorado: 18"

At its March meeting, the Board of Directors proposed lowering each allocation two acre-inches.

## WATER LEVELS *Under Review* Continued from Page 1

2009 showed 78.5 percent of all measured wells, across the District, showing a decline. Five year results show the largest decline in Cheyenne County with an average decline of 3.75 feet and 88 percent of wells showing a decline. Kimball County has an average decline of 3.53 feet with 83 percent of wells showing a decline. Deuel County has an average decline of 0.24 feet with 43 percent of wells showing a decline.

Twenty year results show the largest

decline in Cheyenne County, where average water levels show a 13.74 foot drop compared to 1990 levels. Deuel County has an average of 3.03 foot decline while Kimball County averages show a 5.13 foot decline. Overall, twenty year results for the entire district show that 87 percent of wells have declined.

The full report can be seen by contacting the South Platte NRD or on the Website, [www.spnrd.org](http://www.spnrd.org).

## SOUTH PLATTE



### NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

#### Board of Directors

Keith Rexroth	Chair
Cheryl Burkhart-Kriesel	Vice-Chair
Tom Biggs	Secretary
James C. Johnson	
Bill Halligan	
Paul A. Hutchison	
Larry L. Rutt	

#### Staff

Rod L. Horn	General Manager
Galen Wittrock	Assistant Manager
Linda Suhr	Administrative Secretary
Jodi Livingstone	District Secretary
Kyle Liebig	Water Resources Coordinator
Travis Glanz	Water Resources Technician
Chris Kaiser	Natural Resources Coordinator
Don Ogle	Information & Ed. Coordinator
Jane Joyce	NRCS/NRD Field Office Secretary
Hilary Cook	NRCS/NRD Field Office Secretary

The Pipeline is published quarterly by the South Platte Natural Resources District, 551 Parkland Dr. P.O. Box 294, Sidney, NE 69162 (308) 254-2377  
 Edited by Don Ogle  
 Information & Education Coordinator.  
 For the latest NRD news and program updates, visit our Website at [www.spnrd.org](http://www.spnrd.org)

# Cash For Grass Program Protects Water Supply

The South Platte Natural Resources District is once again sponsoring its Cash For Grass program, which gives landowners in certain areas the opportunity to help protect ground water supplies by choosing buffalograss over traditional cool season lawns.

Cash For Grass began as a pilot program in 2005 within the city of Sidney, with the goal of replacing 12,000 sq. ft. of traditional lawn area with buffalograss. That initial goal was easily surpassed and since then, the program has expanded throughout the South Platte NRD and seen about 38,000 sq. ft. of lawns converted to buffalograss.

As the program enters its fifth year, Cash For Grass Coordinator Don Ogle says it will see a number of changes to allow different types of projects and make it easier to afford for those with large projects.

“Last year we replaced the largest amount of lawn with buffalograss since the pilot year,” Ogle said. “But one thing that hampered several projects was product cost.”

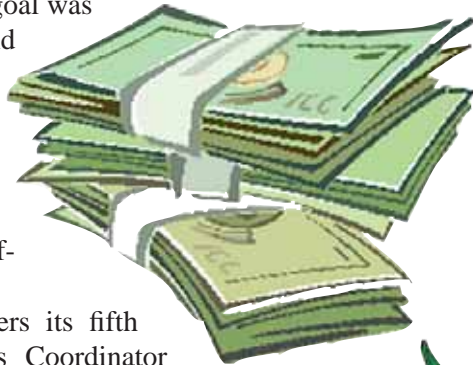
In response, this year’s program offers the use of Cody and Bowie buffalograss seed, both proven successful cultivars in the region, instead of Legacy sod. Using the seed, owners could get reimbursement for enough seed to install a 5,000 sq. ft. project. While Legacy in its sod form will not be the program’s mainstay, Legacy buffalograss plugs remain a viable option.

Another program change is that it will be open to any property in qualifying areas where someone wants to establish a lawn.

“The program initially provided for replacement of a cool season lawn or new construction,” Ogle says. “We have had a number of requests where people are revitalizing a property and have wanted to use buffalograss. We feel that if they are going to plant grass anyway, we’d like to allow them the option to use buffalograss if they’d like. We see it as a great option to help maintain the health of our ground water.”

Properties selected for program enrollment must be located in communities served by public water suppliers, including Kimball, Sidney, Chappell, Potter, Dix, Bushnell, Dalton, Gurley, Lodgepole, and Big Springs or within wellhead protection areas. Installations may be located in either the front yard or back yard, but no single converted area shall be less than 300 square feet.

Applicants must agree to a brief pre-inspection before their project begins. As a method of follow-up, a post-inspection will be conducted before rebates are issued, and participants must agree to not remove the new turf for at least five years, or as long as they own the property. Yard signs would identify the Cash For Grass project areas and be left in place for not less than two years to advertise program benefits.



for



Buffalograss has been deemed the best program choice for benefits in several areas. In most cases .5 to 1 lbs of nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft. is appropriate for a low to medium maintenance turf, about one-third the amount required for a healthy cool grass lawn. In addition, maintaining buffalograss has a lower water requirement, approximately 50-75% less than cool season grasses, depending on conditions. Less water application greatly reduces the chances of nitrogen leaching into ground water, lessens the chance for runoff into storm drains and has the added benefit of less water being drawn from the aquifer. Buffalograss also is less susceptible to many of the pests associated with traditional turf grass, potentially reducing the amount of pesticides used.

Owners of approved project properties can receive up to \$150.00 reimbursement for their choice of either Cody or Bowie brand buffalograss seed, or Legacy® buffalograss plugs. Owners will purchase approved varieties, then receive reimbursement following the property’s post-inspection.

Those interested in choosing buffalograss for their project are urged to contact the SPNRD at 308-254-2377 for more information. Application deadline is May 15, 2009. Once approved, project yards should be prepared and ready to have buffalograss seeded or installed between June 1 and June 15 so proper growth can be obtained by the time project post-inspections are done, expected to be around September 1.

# Range Camp Scholarships Available

Each year the South Platte NRD board of directors provides scholarship opportunities to District students who are interested in learning about rangeland and management.

The SPNRD is currently accepting applications for students age 14-18 interested in attending the 46th Annual Nebraska Range Youth Camp sponsored by the Nebraska Section of the Society for Range Management, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, IANR and the Cooperative Extension Service. The camp will be held at the State 4-H Camp in Halsey, Nebraska on June 8 through June 12, 2009.

The NRD scholarship covers the camp's \$275.00 registration fee. Camp information can be obtained through the SPNRD, NRCS, UNL Extension or

at [www.ianr.unl.edu/srm/rangeCamp](http://www.ianr.unl.edu/srm/rangeCamp).

The camp's purpose is to provide education to young people in Nebraska who are interested in rangelands and practical range management.

The camp also encourages leadership and good rangeland stewardship by Nebraska youth through increased awareness of natural resource issues.

The program emphasizes plant-soil-animal relationships, range livestock management, ranching, economics, and wildlife habitat management. The week's emphasis is on field and classroom activities designed to provide management education. Field activities include a forest tour, a ranch visit, and numerous hands-on exercises designed to introduce and develop the skills important for range management and

**See RANGE CAMP page 7**

## **CITIZENS** *Monitoring Facility's Impact* Continued from Page 1

impact of operations at Clean Harbors Environmental Services, Inc. (CHESI).

The facility is an incinerator operation five miles south of Kimball which disposes of about 54,000 tons of hazardous waste each year.

Under an agreement between the District and CHESI, the groups work together to maintain the program, which provides the District the opportunity and ability to monitor the facility's impact throughout its active life and 30 years after it closes.

The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency are the agencies that regulate operations, while SPNRD and the CMC work with CHESI based on the voluntary agreement, which allows local input.

Part of the CMC's mission is to collect information regarding the plant's operation and look out for the welfare of residents. The committee has a comprehensive monitoring program, which employs specialists from MILCO Environmental Services to help perform reviews of Clean Harbors' monitoring

practices, files and records.

The Committee recently hosted NDEQ and EPA officials at an information session. The meeting was part of the process required for CHESI to renew its primary operating permit in accordance with the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and the Nebraska Environmental Protection Act. CHESI is also seeking changes to its permit to operate a Class I Air Contaminant Source.

The CMC encourages area residents to attend such sessions, as well as regular meetings throughout the year, where they can receive information regarding the CHESI operation and given an opportunity to ask questions regarding permits, technical data or other items.

The Committee is chaired by Larry Stahla. Vice-chair is Jim Cederburg and Duane Janicek is secretary. Peggy Sanders and Will Brown also serve. All are from Kimball.

SPNRD board member Jim Johnson and General Manager Rod Horn are also on the committee.

## **Invasive Species Targeted by HPWMA**

As a response to the increasingly persistent problem of noxious weeds and invasive species in the Nebraska Panhandle, the Counties of Scotts Bluff, Banner, Kimball, Morrill, Cheyenne, Garden, Deuel, and southern Sioux have joined together to create a partnership that will address this growing need.



The High Plains Weed Management Association is charged with the mission of coordinating invasive plant species/noxious weeds education, research and control with various partners/entities concerned with promoting invasive plant-free habitats.

Targeted species include Phragmites, Salt Cedar and Russian Olive

Coordinating the efforts of the partners provide a broad spectrum, innovative approach for improving/rehabilitating local natural habitat. Education, awareness and participation encompasses what HPWMA hopes to accomplish by providing a resource for landowners, organizations, local municipalities, and authorities in the field of invasive species.

Key benefits include restoring native habitat and pastureland - with the hopes of enhancement of water quality and quantity.

A number of cost-share opportunities and methods are available through HPWMA, depending on landowner needs.

To find out more about HPWMA and program participation, contact them at 308-633-1264 or email [highplainsweed@allop-phone.com](mailto:highplainsweed@allop-phone.com).

# Chemigation Permit Renewals Due June 1

Nebraska law requires anyone who chemigates (applies fertilizer or other agricultural chemicals through an irrigation system) to follow a number of regulations.

The first requirement is for operators to obtain certification from the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality. Certification depends on the applicant attending an educational course sponsored by UNL Extension. Courses are provided through Extension each year.

Anybody who chemigates also must have a chemigation permit to indicate that the chemigation system includes required devices to protect groundwater from chemical spills and prevent personal injury. Natural resources districts issue the permits, which are good for one year.

Chemigation permits must be renewed on or before June 1st if you plan on chemigating this year. Operators who had chemigation permits last year were sent reminders regarding renewal. If the June 1st deadline is not met, a new permit must be obtained before any chemigation takes place.

Once you have completed the necessary information and signed the application, please return the application(s) along with the renewal fee of \$10.00



**If you use an irrigation system to apply chemicals or fertilizer, it's time to renew your chemigation permit. Deadline for renewals is June 1, applications for new permits can be made any time.**

per application to the NRD before June 1st. Checks should be made payable to the South Platte NRD.

If you are considering chemigating through other irrigation systems not permitted last year, application forms are available at our office at 551 Parkland Drive, Sidney; the Extension Ser-

vice offices; and the Natural Resources Conservation Service offices in Cheyenne, Deuel and Kimball Counties. The permit fee for new applications is \$30.00 each.

Each application for renewal will be subject to inspection of chemigation safety equipment.

## ***Earth Team Volunteer Flohr A Valuable Asset To NRCS***

As part of its program, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Sidney recently recognized Earth Team volunteer Ryan Flohr of Dalton for his work.

As a volunteer, Ryan is one of nearly 2,000 volunteers statewide who assist NRCS offices. Ryan has Down's Syndrome, and part of his development is to go to work at a job. He volunteers for NRCS two hours a week. His duties include recycling, shredding paper, printing soils descriptions, mailings, notebook assembly, filing, organizing pictures and slides.

The NRCS Earth Team Volunteer Program, created in 1985, offers numerous



**Earth Team volunteer Ryan Flohr**

volunteer opportunities for individuals 14 years of age or older. With increasing workloads and a declining workforce, volunteers help NRCS carry out

its mission of "Helping People Help the Land." They help NRCS conservationists across Nebraska with diverse activities - from providing conservation technical assistance, to teaching and generating awareness about conservation through community projects.

"We really enjoy having Ryan as part of the NRCS team," says District Conservationist Kristin Miller. "He provides really good help with many big projects like mailings and keeping our soils descriptions current in our case files."

Young people wishing to participate in the Earth Team program should contact Miller at 308-254-4507 ext. 3.

# Search For Hydrogeology Information Continues

The South Platte NRD continues to work with other agencies in seeking information about the area's hydrogeology and see what that information could mean in water management.

For the second time, a torpedo-shaped object will be in the air over the District this spring, part of a larger project in five areas across Nebraska. The device, slung underneath a helicopter which flies 100 feet over the ground, carries geophysical equipment which uses very high and very low radio frequencies to map geologic structures beneath the earth, similar to taking a "cat scan." The Helicopter Electromagnetic (HEM) system also flew over areas of the southern Panhandle last June.

When the HEM returns to the South Platte NRD, it will add to geological data obtained last summer with new surveys not only along Lodgepole Creek, but also on the northern tablelands between the Wyoming state line and Potter. Flights will also take place southwest of Chappell and in the South Platte Valley southeast of Big Springs.

Other Nebraska flights will be near Wahoo and Swedeburg in Saunders and Sarpy counties, respectively; Hickman, Sprague, Hallam and Firth in Lancaster and Gage counties; Morrill in Scottsbluff County; Bridgeport in Morrill County; and Crescent Lake in Garden County.

The geophysical data collected will provide information about water resources - including helping determine



**Canadian company Geotech makes passes over the SPNRD with its 'spider web' array. The system might give scientists a look at geology as far as 600 feet below the earth's surface.**

the extent of the sand and gravel aquifers in these areas. The USGS Nebraska Water Science Center and USGS Crustal Imaging and Characterization Team are performing this work in co-

operation with the Lower Platte North, Lower Platte South, North Platte and South Platte Natural Resources Districts, the Eastern Nebraska Water Resources Assessment (ENWRA) group, as well as the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Conservation and Survey Division and the Nebraska Environmental Trust.

Geologists are still evaluating the data received from last summer's flights. The upcoming survey flight lines are based in part upon the need for additional information in some of those areas, as well as initial data in other areas.

Additional information about the area's hydrogeology could also be possible from another unrelated aerial survey set up through the USGS.

Recently crews from Geotech Ltd., of Aurora, Ontario, Canada, headquartered in Sidney and performed a number of flights to cover a block about 25 miles long and three miles wide north of Sidney, stretching into the North Platte NRD in Morrill County.

Geotech performed the survey without cost to the NRDs. The company's work is under an agreement with USGS, while hoping to demonstrate its abilities to provide useful information on the area.

While its process is similar, Geotech's scientific equipment is towed about 100 feet below the helicopter in a 'spider web' array. It is possible the Geotech survey could map geological structure as deep as 600 feet.

## New Ground Water Specialist Studies COHYST Information

Brush, Colo. native Thad Kuntz has joined the team looking at the area's ground water situations as a ground water modeler/hydrogeologist for the South Platte and North Platte NRDs.



**Thad Kuntz**

A ground water model is a scale model of an area's ground water characteristics or aquifers, usually in a specialized computer program.

In Thad's case, his primary duty at this

time is the review of hydrogeologic data in the Cooperative Hydrology Study (COHYST) western model unit, commissioned to study the impact of ground water use on area aquifers.

Thad's background includes education at Northeastern Junior College in Sterling, Colo. and a degree in geology from Colorado State University.

He comes to the area from a hydrogeologist position with a Denver consulting firm, where he worked on ground water computer modeling throughout the west. His experience includes aquifer explora-

tion, water well design, on site geologist, and aquifer testing and interpretation throughout the west, including Colorado, Arizona, Texas, Utah, New Mexico and Idaho.

So far the bulk of Thad's time has been spent reviewing the COHYST model. Within the next six months he plans to update the western model unit with more current information.

Thad and his wife Amber live in the Scottsbluff area. Thad's office is at the North Platte NRD in Scottsbluff.

# Many Programs Available for Rural & Urban Tree Planting

Two of the District's most widely used opportunities are the Conservation Tree Program and Community Forestry Program. Both offer cost-share dollars used to enhance both rural and urban landscapes.

Being as popular as they are, allotted funds for both are often spoken for quickly in each program year. But there are many other options.

In rural areas, most common programs, offering technical and financial assistance, are the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Continuous Conservation Reserve Program, or natural resources district programs. Some other examples that also offer tree and shrub assistance in rural areas are:

- the Wetlands Reserve Program is administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. In some locations, planting hardwood trees

and shrubs in the uplands near the actual wetland can diversify the landscape and offer additional wildlife habitat;

- the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, also by NRCS, offers landowners payments for developing wildlife habitat, including pivot corners and irregular areas;

- the Continuous Conservation Reserve Program offers cost share funds for planting riparian forest buffers. Trees planted along streams offer wildlife or aquatic habitat, and improve water quality by shading and cooling the water;

- the Conservation Security Program, when it is announced by USDA, may also be an option for planting trees and shrubs;

- the Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever organizations have a "Corners for Wildlife" program for establishing permanent wildlife habitat in pivot corners. From 1987 to 2007, Pheasants

Forever and Quail Forever have helped landowners' plant more than 4.5 million trees and shrubs in Nebraska.

In urban areas, there are opportunities for communities or neighborhoods to plant more trees. "Most individual homeowners will need to seek the help of a commercial nursery," says Dennis Adams, forester with the Nebraska Forest Service. Some examples of urban possibilities are:

- the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum administers funds for several tree planting programs. Check their website at [www. http://arboretum.unl.edu/](http://arboretum.unl.edu/). One current program is called Trees for Nebraska Towns (TNT). Trees must be for public benefit but can be planted on public land, private land or commons

areas. The Arboretum also manages money from the NE Department of Roads for a program called Community Enhancement Pro-

gram aimed at transportation corridors like streets, trails etc;

- another program funded by the NE Dept. of Roads and administered by the NE Forest Service, soon to be released, is called Shade our Streets for tree planting along streets.

Many private foundations also fund tree planting projects and some are listed on the Nebraska Forest Service website at [www.nfs.unl.edu/program-communityforestry.asp](http://www.nfs.unl.edu/program-communityforestry.asp).

"There are many types of cost-share programs available, and there is free technical assistance from foresters working with NRD's, the NRCS, or NE Forest Service," said Adams. "The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago," he said, "the next best time is today.

Further information or assistance with planning and design of a windbreak is available at the South Platte NRD or USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service office.

## EROSION

Continued from Page 2

any entity with responsibility for water quality maintenance, or by a natural resources district representative.

If it is found that damage is occurring as the result of identifiable excessive erosion, the offending landowner(s) may be required to adopt management practices and/or install conservation practices to reduce erosion to tolerable levels.

An integral part of the program's success is the cooperation of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in addressing erosion and sediment concerns. NRCS provides technical leadership and assistance in providing information and education, and assists the District in developing compliance plans.

While the program is in place to help in extreme cases, SPNRD assistant manager Galen Wittrock, who coordinates the program, says its use is not needed in most cases.

"A lot of times all it takes is someone visiting with their neighbor," Wittrock says. "Most people will take care of a problem right away when they're contacted."

If all other avenues have been unsuccessful, residents can follow with a formal complaint.

## RANGE CAMP

Continued from Page 2

range judging. Recreation and group competition will be an important part of the camp program.

Young people at least 14 years of age, but not over 18 by October 1, 2009 are eligible to attend.

Deadline for SPNRD scholarships is Wednesday, May 13. One scholarship will be awarded to a student from each county in the District, or up to three campers.

After attending the camp, scholarship recipients are asked to make a short presentation to the SPNRD board of directors, outlining their experience.

Those interested in attending the camp and receiving a scholarship should send applications to the South Platte NRD, 551 Parkland Dr., P.O. Box 294, Sidney, NE 69162.

***The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The next best time is today.***

# The Pipeline

South Platte Natural Resources District  
Newsletter

South Platte Natural Resources District  
551 Parkland Dr. P.O. Box 294  
Sidney, NE 69162

NONPROFIT ORG.

U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
OGALLALA, NE  
69153  
PERMIT #10

More than 160 students from across the South Platte NRD attended the Western Nebraska Children's Groundwater Festival held April 15th at the Cheyenne County Community Center and Lodgepole Valley Youth Camp.

The festival is held each spring, welcoming fourth grade students to a fun and informative day. This year 40 volunteers from agencies and businesses across the state came to teach students about where ground water comes from, how to use it wisely and how to care for it.

This year a number of students helped the NRD evaluate the Festival by taking tests before and after attending. So far, the tests show a 40 percent increase of students' ground water knowledge.

That's thanks to informative lessons like the one show here, where students learn how water carries pollutants.

