

Having trouble reading this email? [View it in your browser.](#)

RESOURCE

A Monthly Publication of the Nebraska Environmental Trust

February 2017

Executive Director Corner

In the last newsletter I mentioned two of our board members were leaving the board and thanked them for their service. Last week I learned a third board member is leaving the board. Kevin Peterson from Osceola announced he was not seeking reappointment when his current term expires this March. Kevin just served as chairman of the Grants Committee and was more than likely to be the next Chairman of the board. Kevin has served on many boards and has been part of a lot of agricultural organizations. He brought a perspective that we need on the board with that background and as the father of three young children. Having three young children getting more involved in school and sports was a large part of Kevin's decision and I can't blame him for wanting to spend quality time with his family. As a father of an 18 year old daughter about to go off to college, these are precious years and you won't get them back. We wish Kevin the best and maybe he will rejoin us in the future. Thanks for serving on the board.

The Grants Committee presented their Recommendations for Funding Placed in Rank Order at the last board meeting and the board accepted the list (see story and list link below).

The Legislature has completed over one third of the 90 day



Pete Ricketts, Governor **Board of Trustees**

District I

Vacant - TBA

James Hellbusch - Columbus

Kevin Peterson - Osceola

District II

Gerry Lauritzen - Omaha

Paul Dunn - Omaha

Robert Krohn - Omaha

District III

Sherry Vinton - Whitman

Rodney Christen - Steinauer

Gloria Erickson - Holdrege

Agency Directors

session. I testified on LB 452 this week. LB 452 is one of three bills pertaining to repealing the tax exemption to lottery tickets. The other two bills are LB 312 and LB 563. If any one of these three bills would pass in its current form, the Trust could lose \$1.4 to \$5M annually because the taxes would come out of the beneficiaries' proceeds. Another bill impacting the Trust is LB 331 introduced by Speaker Scheer at the request of the Governor. LB 331 would transfer \$3.3M a year for the next three years to the Water Resources Cash Fund. This represents about 18% of the funds the Trust has available for grants, so it would have a significant impact on the Trust. Another bill we will monitor is LB 610 by Senator Kolowski. LB 610 establishes the Community Solar Energy Economic Development Act and encourages community solar projects to apply to the Trust for grant funds. There are no bonus points or requirements and Senator Kolowski amended the original bill at the request of the Trust, so we will watch for additional amendments.

On the Husker football front, we have made some coaching changes and we gained some really good players and we lost a few, but overall I think we did pretty well. We won't be able to tell much at the Spring Game, so it will be a long summer. The Husker volleyball team lost two assistant coaches as they were offered head coaching jobs and one of those coaches is taking their spouse with them and that spouse had been a volunteer coach. It is sad to see these individuals go, but it is nice that Nebraska is seen as a quality program with excellent coaches that have become very desirable.

Enjoy the great weather, but don't think we have seen the last of the snow this winter.

Mark A. Brohman

Jim Douglas, Nebraska Game
and Parks Commission

Greg Ibach, Nebraska
Department of Agriculture

Jim Macy, Nebraska
Department of Environmental
Quality

Jeff Fassett, P.E., Nebraska
Department of Natural
Resources

Dr. Tom Williams, Nebraska
Department of Health and
Human Services

Trust Staff

Mark A. Brohman
Executive Director

Marilyn Tabor
Grants Administrator

Sheila Johnson
Public Information Officer

Pam Deines
Administrative Secretary

Allison La Duke
Grants Assistant

The Nebraska
Environmental Trust
700 S 16th Street
PO Box 94913

Executive Director

Lincoln, NE 68509-4913

web site:

environmentaltrust.org

Nebraska Environmental Trust Invites Comments on 2017 Board Recommendations For Funding Placed In Rank Order

At its meeting in Lincoln on February 9, 2017, the Board of the Nebraska Environmental Trust received the Grant Committee's proposed funding of 85 projects for a total of \$16,680,000 in grant awards. Of these, 33 were new applications and 52 are carry-over projects. This is the 24th year of grants from the Trust, which has provided over 241 million dollars in lottery revenue to preserve and protect the air, water and land in Nebraska.

As part of the grant making process, the Trust is seeking public input on the proposed grants before announcing final awards on April 5, 2017. A list of all recommended grants and project information is available on the Trust website at: www.environmentaltrust.org. Written public comments will be accepted until April 5, 2017 at the Nebraska Environmental Trust, P.O. Box 94913, Lincoln NE 68509-4913 or via email at: marilyn.tabor@nebraska.gov. Please include your name, address and organizations (if applicable) and be sure to reference the project name and number in your correspondence. Comments can also be presented in person during a public hearing on April 6, 2017. The meeting begins at 1:30 pm at the Ferguson House, 700 South 16th Street, Lincoln NE.

The Nebraska Legislature created the Nebraska Environmental Trust in 1992. Using the revenue from the Nebraska Lottery, the Trust has provided grants to over 2000 projects across the state. Anyone can apply – citizens, conservation organizations, communities,

businesses and individuals that want to protect Nebraska's natural habitat, improve water quality and quantity or find ways to manage our waste. The Nebraska Environmental Trust works to preserve, protect and restore our natural resources for future generations.

[2017 Grant Committee Recommendations for Funding Placed in Rank Order](#)

Fire Training Exchange in Nebraska - submitted by Rich Walters, The Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy in Nebraska is preparing for the 2017 Fire Training Exchange at the Niobrara Valley Preserve. This effort – which will be the eighth annual event – draws participants from across the United States and as far away as Spain and South Africa. The exchange was designed to meet the training needs of fire practitioners – those who serve state and federal conservation agencies and fire departments, as well as private sector nonprofits, students, businesses, and landowners. It is also a way to bring much-needed fire to land that will benefit from it.

“We know this landscape is a fire-adapted one, and we’ve seen the good results of regular prescribed burns for wildlife and for grazing on the Preserve,” said Rich Walters, Director of Stewardship for The Nature Conservancy. “We’ve also seen what happens when too much fuel builds up. Recent wildfires are a stark reminder of that. Having the personnel to get fire on the ground safely is essential. It’s a great two-way street of teaching and learning.”

Large numbers of workers means a high level of vigilance

in planning. Safety is paramount to the exchange's leaders, who work under national standards. "We choose the safest time of year to hold this training. We anchor into previously burned areas, spend months working on burn plans, and relentlessly monitor weather reports," said Walters.

These exchanges continue to grow. What started as an idea in Nebraska is now being replicated all over the country.



**Central Platte Grassland Conservation Project -
submitted by David Carr, Range Management
Specialist, Central Platte NRD**

The Central Platte Grassland Conservation Project is a three-year project supported by the Nebraska Environmental Trust. It is sponsored by Central Platte Natural Resources District, and partners include local producers, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, and the NRCS.



Figure 1 2016 Dawson Co. Prescribed Burn Sites

This project is focused in the Dawson County Loess Canyon areas, but also is available throughout the Central Platte NRD.



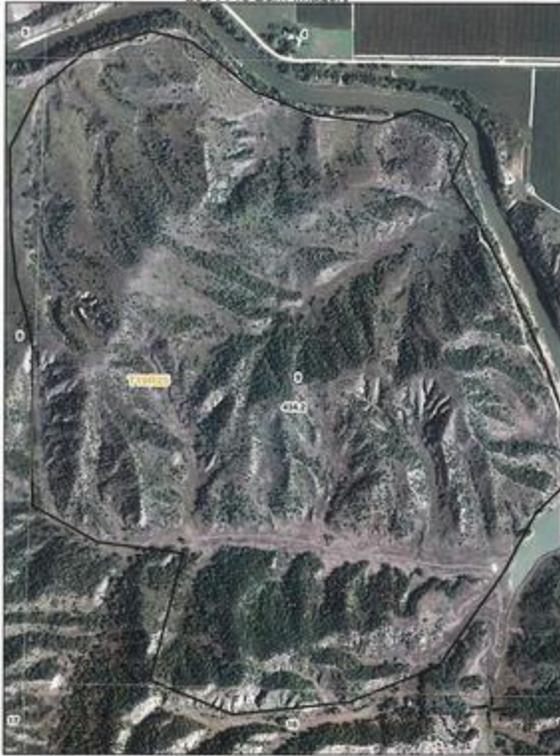
The goals of the project include habitat restoration for native grassland species, as well as pasture reclamation, and reducing the potential for disastrous wildfire. This area has moderate to severe Eastern Red Cedar infestations which, if left unchecked, will result in a complete cedar forest. For successful habitat restoration to occur, strong partnerships between local producers and conservationists must be formed. This grant brings together all concerned

parties to be able to facilitate real improvement in the landscape. Project activities so far include:

- 1081 acres of pasture mechanically cleared of Eastern Red Cedar.
- 7952 Acres of pasture safely treated with prescribed fire (17 burns).
- Estimated well over 100,000 cedar trees removed from the landscape to date.
- Restored native tall grass communities and at-risk wildlife habitat.
- Educational events: prescribed burn schools, and a field tour.

The initial goal was to treat 12,000 acres in three years with prescribed fire and cutting. With the help of the Nebraska Environmental Trust funds, the project is well on its way to meeting and exceeding that goal!

Dalrymple Burn Unit
2014 Pre Burn Imagery



0 0.075 0.15 0.3 Miles



Before and After Burn Comparison (See photos above)

Grantee Seminar Dates

It's that time of the year again for our Grantee Seminars. Grantees will receive an invite soon with specific details. The Grantee Seminars this year will be on April 10, 12 & 14th. The seminars on April 10 & 12th will be in Lincoln and the last one held on the 14th, will be in Grand Island. Stay tuned for more details.

Upcoming Events

- March 16-19, 2017 - The 47th Annual Audubon Crane Festival, Kearney NE.
 - April 6, 2017 (Thursday) - 2nd Quarter Board Meeting
 - April 10, 2017 (Monday) - Grantee Seminar, Lincoln
 - April 12, 2017 (Wednesday) - Grantee Seminar, Lincoln
 - April 14, 2017 (Friday) - Grantee Seminar, Grand Island
 - April 22, 2017 (Saturday) - Earth Day Omaha, Elmwood Park, Omaha NE.
-

Stay Connected with The Nebraska Environmental Trust:



SUBSCRIBER SERVICES:

[Manage Subscriptions](#) | [Unsubscribe All](#) | [Help](#)