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RESOURCE

A Monthly Publication of the Nebraska Environmental Trust

January 2016

Executive Director Corner

The Holidays have come and gone. If you are like me, you are still changing those “5s” to “6s” when you date things. It is pretty easy to change a 5 to a 6, but next year, changing a 6 to a 7 won't be so easy.

The Grants Committee rankings are out and posted on our website. There is a link below to also get to the list. Unfortunately there were a lot of great projects that did not get funded. With over \$58M in requests, our \$18.8M did not go nearly far enough. That recommendation will go to the full board at the February 4, 2016 meeting and final decisions will be made at the April 7, 2016 meeting.

The Legislature is underway and the last day to introduce new bills has passed. There are two pieces of legislation directly concerning the Trust. LB711 sets up a Riparian Vegetation Management Task Force with members appointed by the Governor. It directs the Department of Agriculture Director to “apply for a grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund”. The other legislation is LR380CA is a proposed Constitutional Amendment that would reduce the Trust's lottery allocation from 44.5% to 26.5% and reduce the State Fair's from 10% to 7.5%. The change would result in approximately a \$6M annual loss for the Trust. That is about 1/3 of the Trust's funds and would result in 1/3 fewer projects being funded. The funds from the Trust and the State Fair would be reallocated “for education as the Legislature may direct”.

This is the short session (60 days) and is scheduled to end April 20th. Any bills that are not passed at the end of this session will die and next session is a new two-year cycle



Pete Ricketts, Governor
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Henry "Rick" Brandt - Roca

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Rodney Christen - Steinauer

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Agency Directors
Jim Douglas, Nebraska Game
and Parks Commission

with all new bills being introduced. The Speaker of the Legislature has indicated that only bills with Priority designations will be given floor debate time and the session is already 1/6th over, so stay tuned.

Stay safe as you travel this winter.

Mark Brohman
Executive Director



The Rainwater Basin Joint Venture will host its 21st Annual Informational Seminar on Tuesday, February 9, 2016 at the Midtown Holiday Inn, 2503 S. Locust Street, Grand

Island.

The one-day seminar is an opportunity for landowners, agriculture producers, natural resource professionals and other interested individuals to learn about and discuss conservation issues, research and habitat work in the Rainwater Basin and Nebraska's mixed-grass prairie region.

Four sessions this year will explore current pivot system technology and ways to integrate wetlands into farm operations. Discussions will be led by landowners and by representatives of irrigation system manufacturers.

Additional discussions will include conservation projects and opportunities in the Rainwater Basin, Sandhills, Central Loess Hills and other areas of Nebraska, as well as research on wildlife habitat and natural resources. The complete agenda is located at <http://rwbjv.org>

The seminar is open to the public. Registration is available at <http://rwbjv.org>, or by email at niki.messmer@rwbjv.org, or by phone at 308-382-8112.

A \$35 fee, payable at the door, covers all sessions, snacks and a buffet lunch. Pre-registration by February 1 is

Greg Ibach, Nebraska
Department of Agriculture

Jim Macy, Nebraska
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Jeff Fassett, P.E., Nebraska
Department of Natural
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Trust Staff

Mark A. Brohman
Executive Director

Marilyn Tabor
Grants Administrator

Sheila Johnson
Public Information Officer

Lori Moore
Administrative Secretary

Allison La Duke
Grants Assistant

The Nebraska
Environmental Trust

700 S 16th Street
PO Box 94913
Lincoln, NE 68509-4913

web site:
environmentaltrust.org

requested, to ensure an adequate lunch count, but registrations will be accepted at the door.

Landowners and agriculture producers are invited to register free of charge and to enter a drawing to win a \$50 Cabela's gift card.

The Informational Seminar is funded in part by a grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust.

The Rainwater Basin Joint Venture is a public-private partnership composed of conservation agencies, local government bodies, non-profit organizations and individuals, all cooperating in the protection and restoration of wetlands and other native habitats in Nebraska's Rainwater Basin and mixed-grass prairie regions.

2016 Committee Recommendations for Funding Placed In Rank Order

A copy of the 2016 Committee Recommendations for Funding Placed in Rank Order has been made available on the Trust website. To view this list, click on the link below:

[2016 Committee Recommendations for Funding Placed In Rank Order](#)

Upcoming Events

- February 9, 2016 (Tuesday), 9:30 am - Rainwater Basin Joint Venture Informational Seminar, Grand Island NE.
- February 4, 2016 (Thursday), 1:30 pm - 1st Quarter Board Meeting, Ferguson House, Lincoln NE.
- March 17 - 20, 2016 - The 46th Annual Audubon Nebraska's Crane Festival, Kearney NE.
- April 7, 2016 (Thursday), 1:30 pm - 2nd Quarter Board Meeting, Ferguson House, Lincoln NE.
- April 16, 2016 (Saturday) - Earth Day Omaha, Omaha NE.
- April 23, 2016 (Saturday) - Lincoln Earth Day, Lincoln NE

- May 10, 2016 (Tuesday) - 8:00am - 4:00pm
Nebraska Children's Groundwater Festival, Grand Island NE.
- May 13 - 14, 2016 (Friday - Saturday) - Spring Into Spring at Lauritzen Gardens, Omaha NE.

