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RESOURCE

A Monthly Publication of the Nebraska Environmental Trust

April 2019

Executive Director Corner

It has been a crazy winter-spring in Nebraska. We saw record floods, massive devastation, dams break, bridges and roads washed out, cattle float away, fields washed out or covered with silt and sand. Our thoughts go out to everyone that sustained any damage or loss. Many past Trust projects have sustained damage and will require repair.

Earlier this month the Trust board approved the final grants for 2019. The awarded grants cover a wide variety and came from across the State. See more details below.

Last month the conservation world lost a great man. Harold Edwards passed away on March 9th. Harold had served for 35 years as the Division Chief of Resource Services for the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. Harold mentored a lot of staff over his career and contributed much to the State's natural resources.

The Unicameral is 2/3rd through the 90 day session. Today is the 62nd day. We will continue to monitor a number of bills. The big issue facing the Legislature continues to be taxes, property taxes to be specific. The Revenue



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Committee has released their suggestions and a hearing will be held to take input on their ideas.

The Husker men's and women's basketball teams had a tough season, but a new coach hire has the men's basketball fans excited. Fred Hoiberg might be what this team needs. Hoiberg played and coached at Iowa State and even coached the Chicago Bulls. Only time will tell. I joined 85,945 other Husker fans at the football Spring Game. Nebraska had the highest attendance of any Spring Game, beating Alabama 62,219; Ohio State 61,102; Penn State 61,000 and Clemson 60,000.

Both the baseball and softball teams have showed some promise, let's see what happens. The women's bowling team is usually as reliable as the volleyball team and this year was no different. We ended up ranked #3, but they were in the hunt right up to the semi-finals.

Spring is here.

Mark A. Brohman
Executive Director

Trust Announces 2019 Grant Awards

At a meeting in Lincoln on April 4, 2019, the Board of the Nebraska Environmental Trust announced that 117 projects will receive \$19,501,444 in lottery proceeds for natural resource work in Nebraska. Out of these, 85 are newly funded grants and 32 are carry-over projects. This is the 26th year of grants from the Trust, which has provided over \$305 million dollars in lottery proceeds to preserve and protect the air, water and land of our state. Some of the projects receiving funding include:

Sherry Vinton - Whitman

Rodney Christen - Steinauer

Quentin Bowen - Humboldt

Agency Directors

Jim Douglas, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

Steve Wellman, Nebraska Department of Agriculture

Jim Macy, Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality

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

[Vacant], Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

Trust Staff

Mark A. Brohman
Executive Director

Marilyn Tabor
Grants Administrator

Sheila Johnson
Public Information Officer

- Nebraska State Historical Society Foundation – Grasslands at Chimney Rock Land Acquisition
- Lincoln – Parks and Rec. – Prairie Corridor on Haines Branch – Phase III
- Habitat for Humanity of Omaha – Deconstruction Project
- Four Corners Health Department – Household Hazardous Waste Events

A complete listing of all approved 2019 grants and summaries can be found on the Nebraska Environmental Trust web site at www.environmentaltrust.org.



Photo of a bio blitz on site.

Kearney Outdoor Learning Area: Wetlands for Communities and Schools

The Kearney Outdoor Learning Area is an outdoor classroom located near the newly-constructed Kearney

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High School. This 18-acre natural area is bordered by Turkey Creek and includes remnant wet meadow habitat as well as the school's geothermal wastewater pond. The project is a collaboration between Audubon and Kearney Public Schools.

In April of 2017, the Nebraska Environmental Trust awarded Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary and Kearney High School \$50,518 to restore the site and increase its function as a wetland. With cooperative funding and planning resources provided by Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, work began in fall of 2017 with the excavation of old slough channels to form more linear wetlands as well as improvement of the waterway flowing from the geothermal pond to Turkey Creek.

The following spring high diversity, local eco-type native seeds were planted on site with the help of over 100 students. Student monitoring projects were begun in Kearney High School classes to record the changes the site underwent after restoration work was complete. Additionally, Kearney High School formed a student club responsible for upkeep of the outdoor classroom. Restoration work was officially completed in July of 2018.

The Kearney Outdoor Learning Area will provide Kearney area students and community members with a world-class outdoor classroom. This program will help instill a greater appreciation of natural resources and help create the next generation of conservation leaders. The collaborative effort with Audubon and the local community is engaging more people in the importance of wetlands and native ecosystems for Nebraska.



Part of the outdoor wetlands.

Upcoming Events

- April 26, 2019 - Wesleyan EcoFair, Nebraska Wesleyan University, 9:30am - 1:00pm, Lincoln NE.
 - April 27, 2019 - Lincoln Earth Day, Union Plaza, 10am - 3pm, Lincoln NE.
 - August 5-6, 2019 - 3rd Quarter Board Meeting, Beatrice NE.
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