

RESOURCE

A Monthly Publication of the Nebraska Environmental Trust

March 2019

Executive Director Corner

Water, water, water everywhere. Central and eastern Nebraska is seeing historic flooding and western Nebraska has seen as much as 18-20 inches of snow from the last storm the last few days. I have seen numerous pictures and videos of bridges and highways washed out, towns flooded, the Interstate closed, dams being breached or over topped, and cars floating in water. Any dams or reservoirs that have held are being filled to the brim. I saw a map of Nebraska roads closed due to flooding or snow and it was almost the entire state.

I want to congratulate Marilyn Tabor, our Grants Administrator, for receiving the Ducks Unlimited 2019 Partnership Award. See the photo and story below. The award is a very attractive decoy that she displays proudly in her office. Marilyn has put a lot of hard work into processing payments and tracking hundreds of grants for the Trust. Her work has resulted in thousands of acres and projects that benefit not only ducks, but all wildlife.

I would like to recognize a great cowboy we lost earlier this year. Orval "Lynn" Meyers (1950-2019) of rural Lewellen passed away January 23, 2019. He spoke all over the county on range management and grazing



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conservation. He mentored many young ranchers. Last year he was awarded the Lifetime Conservation Stewardship Award from the Nebraska Grazing Land Coalition. I was proud to be in attendance that evening and I know it meant a lot to Lynn because it was from his peers.

The Trust board will approve the 2019 grants at the April 4th board meeting. The full list of recommendations can be seen on our website. The recommendation is to award \$19.5M this year. Following the award of grants, the Trust staff will hold three Grantee Seminars, see the story below for details. These seminars allow staff an opportunity to describe to successful grantees what is required from them to get reimbursed and how to complete quarterly and final reports as well as how to publicize their grants.

The Unicameral is almost half way through the 90 day session. Today was the 42nd day. We will continue to monitor a number of bills including one of the Governor's budget bills (LB 298) that has the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources applying for an additional three year grant to begin in fiscal year 2020-2021 seeking \$3.3M each year from the Trust for the Water Resources Cash Fund. The same bill includes language appropriating General Funds to both the Water Resources Cash Fund and Water Sustainability Fund.

March Madness has begun. The Husker men's basketball team had a spark at the end of the season. They beat Iowa at the last home game of the season, then went to the Big 10 conference and so far has beat Rutgers and then Maryland. Let's see if they pull another rabbit out of the hat against Wisconsin. By the time you read this newsletter, you will probably know if the Huskers beat Wisconsin, they play today (March 15th at 2:00pm). The Lady Huskers didn't last long in the Big 10 Tournament, but it is a young team and next season is looking promising. Both the baseball and softball teams had some

Sherry Vinton - Whitman

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early success, but the weather hasn't cooperated for home games. The Spring Football Game will be held April 13th and it is sold out.

Spring is coming.

Mark A. Brohman
Executive Director

Marilyn Tabor wins 2019 Annual Nebraska Ducks Unlimited, Inc. Award!

Marilyn Tabor, Grants Administrator for the Nebraska Environmental Trust, won the 2019 Annual Nebraska Ducks Unlimited, Inc. Partnership Award. This was the 2nd year of the award, and the previous awardee was Andy Bishop of the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture. Marilyn was recognized by John Denton, Ducks Unlimited's Manager of Conservation Programs for Nebraska at the Annual Lancaster County Ducks Unlimited Banquet held February 28. "Marilyn and the Nebraska Environmental Trust have been crucial partners to Ducks Unlimited's habitat conservation efforts in Nebraska. When I first began, Marilyn was crucial to me keeping this program moving forward. I had 17 NET grants to administer along with dozens of projects and other federal grants and without her assistance and efforts above and beyond the call of duty to train me on the NET grant process, we would likely not be the thriving conservation program we are today."

Pam Deines

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



Marilyn Tabor and John Denton

Grantee Seminars Coming Up in April

For grantees that are successful in their applications, dates for Lincoln and Grand Island grantee seminars have been set. Please block your calendars, if you have received a grant. Invitation letters for these seminars have already been sent out.

Grantee Seminar dates in Lincoln are April 8th and 10th at the Ferguson House, 700 S. !6th St, Lincoln NE. The date for the Grand Island Grantee Seminar is April 12th at the

Central Platte NRD office, 215 North Kaufman Avenue.
Please RSVP by Thursday, March 21, 2019.

You may email Allison La Duke at
allison.laduke@nebraska.gov for any further information.

Restoring Native Mussels to Nebraska - submitted by Dean Rosenthal, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission

Freshwater mussels in Nebraska have declined over time in Nebraska's streams and rivers. Historically 30 species have been found in Nebraska waters. Of these 30 species, only 13 species have been identified as somewhat stable. To address this concerning trend, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission began putting in place a plan to propagate threatened mussels and stock them into streams in Nebraska to establish populations. Initial efforts were began in 2014 using existing staff and equipment at North Platte Fish Hatchery. Funding from the Nebraska Environmental Trust (NET) was used to purchase essential additional equipment and commercial feed to raise the mussels.

As the project has expanded, additional space was required for the continued growth of the program. A dedicated mussel culture facility was constructed during 2018, with funding coming from a SWIG grant and Nebraska Environmental Trust grant. Some specific items provided by NET include: funding for design and construction, drilling and installation of a well to operate the building, installation of water lines from the ponds to the building, tags for marking and monitoring and commercial algal diets which are required to go the mussels at various life stages.

To date, 13,682 Plain Pocketbook mussels and 4,182 Fatmucket mussels have been stocked back into the streams of Nebraska. An additional 10,000 mussels in the

facility will be released in the spring/summer of 2019. This is an ongoing program and additional species will be cultured in the future for stocking. As indicator species, mussels require good water quality, and as a part of Nebraska's native fauna it is exciting that the streams of Nebraska will potentially again be homes to mussel populations.



Mussel Culture Facility at NGPC's district office in North Platte.

**Emerald Ash Borer Intervention Project - submitted by
Lorri B Grueber, City of Lincoln**

The City of Lincoln has been preparing for the arrival of the emerald ash borer for several years; providing public education and proactively removing ash trees smaller than 10" in diameter and replanting a mixture of species in the same neighborhood. A concern that we have had and continue to have is how to we best provide for the under-served areas of Lincoln through this crisis.

For this project, we partnered with the South of Downtown Lincoln organization, who had previously identified F Street

as an area of need and a potential pilot project location. Over the course of one year, we were able to remove (37) large ash trees, replant (63) trees, host (3) public education workshops and a 2-night Urban Wood Network workshop for industry professionals and property owners.

Through the various activities, the community has an increased knowledge of the benefits of trees, the value that trees bring to a neighborhood and a heightened sense of the arts and creative juices trees stir. Perhaps the “loudest” voice we heard was from the “story” that trees create. Everyone has a “first tree” story to which they can relate and over the course of the past year we heard a lot of those stories.

We believe those stories will continue to grow with the new trees along F Street.



Ash Trees Lining the Streets of Lincoln

Upcoming Events

- March 21-24, 2019 - Audubon's Nebraska Crane Festival, Kearney NE.

- April 4, 2019 (Thursday) - 2nd Quarter Board Meeting, 1:30 pm, Ferguson House.
 - April 8 & 10, 2019, Grantee Seminar - Lincoln, 10:30 - 1:00 pm.
 - April 12th, 2019, Grantee Seminar - Grand Island, 10:30 - 1:00pm.
 - April 13, 2019 - Omaha Earth Day, Elmwood Park, 11am - 6 pm, Omaha NE.
 - April 27, 2019 - Lincoln Earth Day, Union Plaza, 10am - 3pm, Lincoln NE.
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