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LOWER PLATTE NORTH NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
Protecting Lives • Protecting Property • Protecting the Future

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Fall/Winter 2011
www.lpnnrd.org

Wanahoo on Schedule for Spring Opening

Outdoor enthusiasts in southeast Nebraska will have a reason to celebrate next spring when the long-awaited Lake Wanahoo Recreation Area opens to the public.

Major construction at the 1,600-acre site one mile north of Wahoo is complete and the final touches are being put on the recreation area now, with everything on track for a grand opening next April or May.

The recreation facilities straddle the 662-acre Lake Wanahoo, with camping and boating access on the west side and a day use area on the east. A rocked hiking/biking trail winds throughout the park, linking the east and west side recreation areas over a breakwater levee one mile north of the dam. Mowed trails north of the levee provide access to undeveloped areas set aside for wildlife habitat.

Speaking of wildlife, some notable visitors have already been making use of the recreation area - a bald eagle pair fledged two chicks at the lake this year. The fledglings could often be spotted perching on one of the rest rooms in the day use area.

Campers of the human variety should find plenty to like at the lake too, with 74 camper pads and 60 tent camping sites. All camper pads are equipped with electrical hookups and 50 of them are hard surfaced, with the remainder on grass. All tent sites will have fire rings and picnic tables.

The camping area also offers easy access to a large boat ramp that's wide enough to accommodate three boats at a time. Boating at the lake will be no-wake only.

The day use area on the east side of the lake will be a great location for groups both big and small, with two large picnic shelters and two smaller ones, all offering scenic views of the lake.

Both the camping and day use areas will provide excellent fishing access, with a total of seven fishing jetties. One jetty on each side has an attached handicapped pier. The lake was stocked with largemouth bass, bluegill, blue catfish, crappie, northern pike, and walleye in 2008. The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission conducted several fish surveys earlier this year that showed all of the stocked species have good numbers and are at catchable sizes.

Limited hunting opportunities will continue to be available at Lake Wanahoo through the popular PATH Program, where adults can schedule a time to mentor a youth hunter at designated hunting sites north of the recreation area.

A firm date for the grand opening of the Lake Wanahoo Recreation Area will be decided by the end of this year, so watch our website at www.lpnnrd.org or follow us on Facebook or Twitter for updates. For a map of the recreation area, check out page two of this newsletter.

One of the last pieces of the Wanahoo project will get underway later in 2012, when the Nebraska Department of Roads starts taking bids for the Highway 77 Expressway. The expressway will skirt the west edge of Wahoo and run across the Lake Wanahoo dam to link up with the current Highway 77 junction north of Wahoo.



The Lake Wanahoo Recreation Area one mile north of Wahoo will open in spring 2012 and provide a day use area with four picnic shelters on the east side of the lake along with 74 RV camping sites and 60 tent camping sites on the west side. Other amenities include four miles of hard-surfaced hiking/biking trails, 3 miles of mowed trails, seven fishing jetties (two handicapped-accessible), and no-wake boating. (See map on page 2 for more details.)

The recreation area has already proved popular with area wildlife - seen at right (perching on one of the restrooms in the day use area) is one of two bald eagle chicks fledged at the lake this year.





Wildlife Trails

- Mowed trails provide access to undeveloped wildlife habitat areas

Breakwater Jetty

- Pedestrian bridge
- Hiking/biking trail links east & west side recreation areas

Boat Ramp

- Three-wide boat ramp
- No-wake boating only

RV Camping Area

- 50 hard-surface pads on east side of loop
- 24 natural surface pads on west side of loop
- All pads have electrical hookups

Day Use Area

- Two large picnic shelters
- Two smaller picnic shelters
- Rock surfaced trail throughout

Fishing Jetties

- Lake stocked with bass, bluegill, blue cat, crappie, pike & walleye
- Handicapped accessible piers on two jetties

Tent Camping Area

- 60 tent camping sites
- Fire rings & picnic table at each tent site

County Road 17

Highway 109

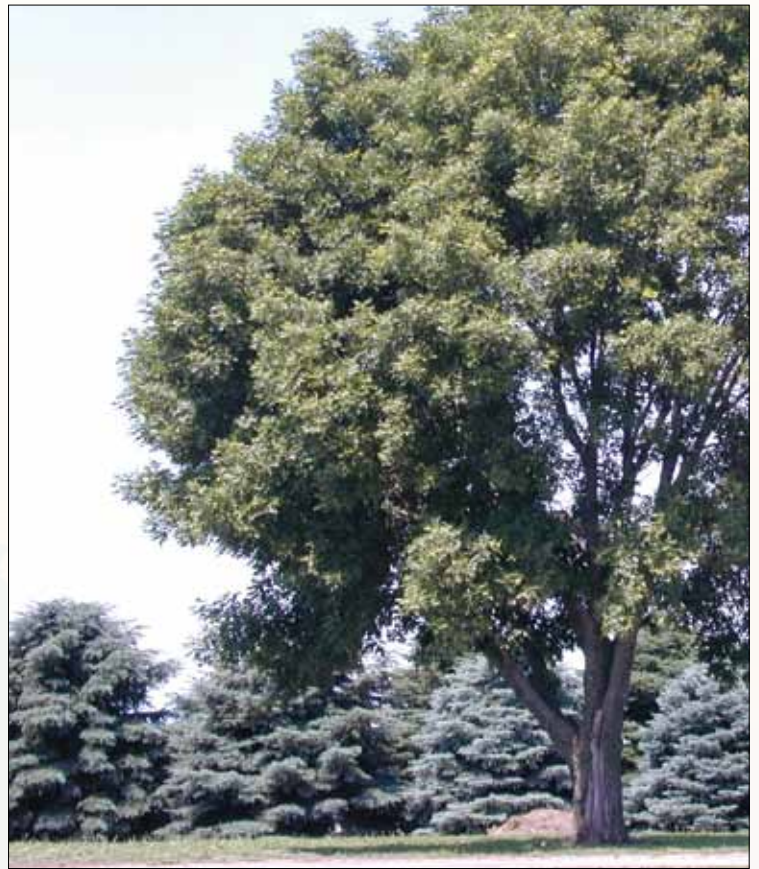
County Road M/Future Highway 77 Expressway

get in the green

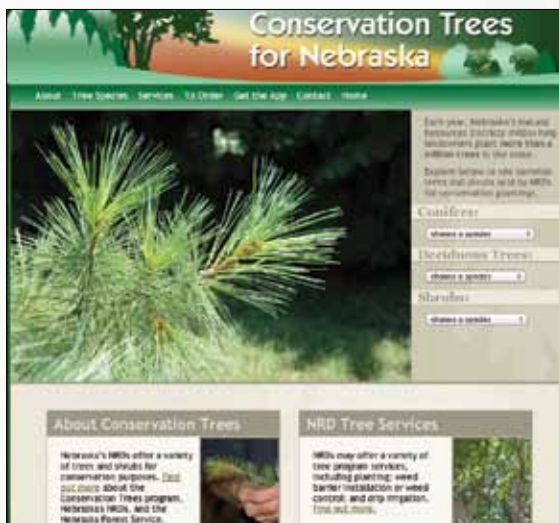
Fall is an excellent time to start thinking about planting new trees next spring. The Lower Platte North NRD offers a wide variety of low-cost, conservation-friendly trees and shrubs for purchase by district residents, including very popular evergreen and deciduous varieties, many of which are covered in the *Conservation Trees for Nebraska* booklet, website and app (see below).

Popular varieties often go out of stock by the end of the spring ordering period, so now is a great time to get your trees ordered and your ground prepared for planting next spring.

Online ordering is available at www.lpnrd.org, as well as a downloadable PDF order form if you'd prefer to mail in your order. You can also call our office at (402) 443-4675 if you have questions or would like to request a brochure and order form.



www.nrdtrees.org



Each year, hundreds of thousands of trees are sold by Nebraska's Natural Resources Districts for use in conservation plantings. Explore the options and find species that are right for you:

Conservation Trees for Nebraska Booklet

The *Conservation Trees for Nebraska* booklet has photos, species descriptions, spacing requirements, maps and more for a wide variety of trees suited for conservation plantings in Nebraska. Request your free copy at www.lpnrd.org or call (402) 443-4675.

Conservation Trees for Nebraska Website

The *Conservation Trees for Nebraska* website at www.nrdtrees.org has photos, species descriptions, spacing requirements and more for a wide variety of trees suited for conservation plantings in Nebraska.

Conservation Trees for Nebraska App

Have an iPhone, iPod Touch or iPad? There's an app for that too - search for "NRD Trees" on the App Store to download the *Conservation Trees for Nebraska* app, with species descriptions for dozens of recommended conservation tree and shrub species along with full photos and detailed close-ups, planting information, and more.



is the quarterly publication of the Lower Platte North Natural Resources District and is edited by Troy Thompson, Information & Education/Computer Specialist.

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HOMESTEAD LAKE

10 YEARS
2001-2011

Homestead Lake, a recreation area tucked midway between Abie and Bruno in Butler County, celebrates its 10th anniversary this year. The lake opened to the public in the spring of 2001.

The lake, known during construction as “Site #55”, was built by the NRD as part of the Skull Creek Watershed Project, with major funding assistance from the Nebraska Resources Development Fund and the Nebraska Environmental Trust. Landowners played a vital role in the project as well, cooperating with the NRD to install more than 20,000 feet of terrace and 9,000 feet of tile outlet upstream of the dam.

The 37-acre reservoir provides flood control for Abie, Linwood and surrounding areas, preventing an estimated \$40,000 per year in damage.

However, flooding seemed a distant concern to many when the lake was completed in 2001. Nebraska was in the grip of a suffocating drought, and the lake was slow to fill. Bass, bluegill and channel cat were stocked in 2001 and



2002, but low water levels slowed establishment of a good fishery and made the boat ramp barely functional for long stretches of time.

Thankfully, after this less-than-auspicious debut, the drought receded and Homestead Lake filled (and remained) at capacity. Despite the slow start, a strong fishery was eventually established, and in 2003 part of the rec area was opened to upland game hunting as well. Today, Homestead Lake is the popular outdoor getaway the NRD envisioned when it opened in 2001, while continuing to fulfill its primary mission of flood control.

More Improvements On Tap at Czechland Lake

The past summer saw a long-requested feature come to Czechland Lake Recreation Area when eight camper pads were outfitted with electrical hookups. The improved pads proved to be an immediate hit and saw heavy use throughout the rest of the camping season.

Because the camper pads were used so heavily during the summer and fall, the NRD decided to add three more camper pads (without electrical hookups) to the north of the existing pads. Those pads were completed in October and will be available for public use when the camping areas open next spring.

Tent camping has also seen increased demand, so a new tent camping area is being developed south of the camper pad sites. At least eight tent sites with fire rings and picnic tables will be available in the new area when it opens next spring, along with several stand-up grills. Tent camping areas are also being more clearly marked to make them easier to find.

Admission to Czechland Lake is free. Camper pads with electrical hookups are available on a first-come, first-served basis for a fee of \$18/night (the fee applies to both RVs and tents). There is no fee for non-electrical camper pads and tent sites.

Tekamah-Herman, Norris, Franklin, Arapahoe, and Raymond Central Qualify for National Land Judging

Teams from Tekamah-Herman, Norris, Franklin, Arapahoe and Raymond Central came out on top at the State Land Judging Contest, held Nov. 2 near Mead.

One hundred students on 25 teams from across the state braved cold weather and intermittent rain to compete in the contest, which tests students on their knowledge of soil types, topography, proper land use practices, and related topics. The top five teams qualify for national competition in Oklahoma.

Tekamah-Herman was the 1st place team overall, scoring 967 out of a possible 1,200 points. Team members included Matt Anderson, Katelyn Petersen, Meagan Anderson, and Kyle Olson. Olson also took 1st place in individual competition and Anderson placed 10th.

The second place team was from Norris. Team members Tom Docter, Jordan Damkroger, Elizabeth Ehman, and Jordon Vietz scored a combined total of 946 points. In individual competition, Ehmen took 4th place and Vietz placed 6th.

Franklin scored 945 points to capture 3rd place, with team members Bethany Aberle, Dylan Kahrs, Josh Siel, and Kirk Lennemann. Siel was 3rd in individual competition and Kahrs placed 5th.

The 4th place Arapahoe team of Ryan Gardner, Jared Crosley, Isaac Watson, and Reid Stagemeyer scored 900 points. Crosley placed 9th in individual competition.

Rounding out the top five national qualifiers was the Raymond Central team of Josie Ang, Tim Hoffbauer, Jacob Huck, and Matthew Grimes, with 894 points. Grimes was the 2nd place finisher in individual competition.

The final top-10 finishers in individual competition were Alex Cornwell of Twin River (7th place) and Kolin Scheele of Diller-Odell (8th place).

The contest was sponsored by the Lower Platte North Natural Resources District and the Saunders County Natural Resources Conservation Service, and hosted at the University of Nebraska Agricultural Research and Development Center. A soil probe was presented to the top team by the Nebraska Agricultural Education Soils Project with grant funding from the Nebraska Environmental Trust.



1st place, Tekamah-Herman
(L-R) Matt Anderson, Katelyn Petersen, Meagan Anderson, and Kyle Olson. Olson also took 1st place in individual competition and Anderson placed 10th.

2nd place, Norris
(L-R) Tom Docter, Jordan Damkroger, Elizabeth Ehman, and Jordon Vietz. In individual competition, Ehmen took 4th place and Vietz placed 6th.



3rd place, Franklin
(L-R) Bethany Aberle, Dylan Kahrs, Josh Siel, and Kirk Lennemann. Siel was 3rd in individual competition and Kahrs placed 5th.



4th place, Arapahoe
(L-R) Ryan Gardner, Jared Crosley, Isaac Watson, and Reid Stagemeyer. Crosley placed 9th in individual competition.



5th place, Raymond Central
(L-R) Josie Ang, Tim Hoffbauer, Jacob Huck, and Matthew Grimes. Grimes was the 2nd place finisher in individual competition.



REMINDER: Annual Fertilizer and Water Use Reports Due

All producers who use nitrogen fertilizer in the Lower Platte North NRD's Bellwood and Richland-Schuyler Phase 2 Areas are required to submit annual fertilizer use reports to the NRD **by Dec. 31 each year**. If you haven't submitted your 2011 report yet, please do so as soon as possible to remain in compliance. All producers should have received a report packet in the mail, and forms are also available for download at www.lpnnrd.org.

Annual water use reports are due to the NRD by **January 31, 2012** for any landowner who:

- received a **new** well permit after October 10, 2005;
- received **any** well permit (new or replacement) after May 2008; and/or
- received an approved variance in one of the NRD's Limited Development Areas.

Anyone who is required to submit a water use report should have received a form in the mail.

If you have questions about fertilizer or water use reports, please call us at (402) 443-4675, toll-free 1-888-764-0543.

Certification Class Schedule for 2012

One of the primary requirements of the Lower Platte North NRD's Groundwater Management Area is that all operators of irrigation, municipal, and industrial well systems, as well as operators who use any type of fertilizer (either commercial or organic) in production agriculture, are required to be certified by attending NRD education classes or by passing a take home test designed by the LPNNRD. Certification is valid for four years, after which recertification is required. Uncertified producers are not eligible for any of the NRD's cost-share programs or for irrigated acre certification. Certification classes are held at various locations throughout the NRD January through March each year (see below).

The training is conducted by NRD staff in cooperation with University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension staff. The training sessions are free and no preregistration is required. Producers may attend whichever session works best for their schedule. Training sessions last approximately two hours. For more information, contact Water Resources Specialist Russell Oaklund at roaklund@lpnnrd.org or call our office at (402) 443-4675.

DATE	TIME	LOCATION
Thursday, January 5th	3:00 p.m. (after Corn Expo)	Fremont - Christensen Field
Friday, January 27th	1:00 p.m.	ARDC - Mead
Monday, January 30th	1:00 p.m.	Columbus - Ag Park
Thursday, February 2nd	1:30 p.m.	David City - Hruska Library
Monday, February 6th	1:00 p.m.	Lindsay - Village Office
Friday, February 24th	9:00 a.m.	Fremont - Extension Office
Friday, February 24th	2:00 p.m.	Schuyler - St. Benedict Center
Monday, March 19th	9:30 a.m.	David City - Hruska Library
Thursday, March 22nd	7:00 p.m.	ARDC - Mead
Thursday, March 29th	7:00 p.m.	Columbus - Ag Park



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