



PRESS RELEASE

31st Year of the Lower Platte North NRD's Spring Conservation Sensation

WAHOO, NEBRASKA – Over 200 fifth and sixth graders explored the outdoors during a moderately calm and cool spring day at the lake. On Wednesday, May 4, 2022, the Lower Platte North Natural Resources District (NRD) held their 31st annual Spring Conservation Sensation at the Lake Wanhoo NRD Recreation Area.

Each May, the Lower Platte North NRD hosts the all-day event featuring hands-on educational activities focusing on water, wildlife, forestry, nature and more. The annual event is held on the first Wednesday in May for schools within or near the district boundaries which include the counties of Saunders, Butler, Dodge, Colfax, Platte, Madison and Boone. A total of 230 students participated from Logan View Elementary, North Bend Elementary, St. Mary's Elementary (David City), Wahoo Public Elementary, and East Butler Elementary (Brainard).

The Lower Platte North NRD staff led multiple sessions for students including ways to look at the water quality and quantity of a lake by catching microorganisms, the importance of trees and how to plant them, and carrying capacity of habitats. Lower Platte North NRD director and Newman Grove teacher, Mark Seier, along with students from the Shell Creek Watershed Testing Group shared how they use a drone for their research.

Students interacted with tree frogs, a Western tiger salamander and other Nebraska amphibians with guest presenter, Monica Macoubrie from the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. Conservation Officer Mike Luben, also from the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, brought animal pelts for his Nebraska wildlife roundup discussion. Cole Meador and Jenna Hanson with UNL's Saunders County Extension taught students about different frog calling methods with household items. Students were also able to try and catch a fish with the help of Dr. Josh Snyder of Wahoo Public Schools, Lower Platte North NRD staff, and student volunteers from East Butler High School. A nearly two-foot alligator and joey in a homemade pouch made an appearance when students gathered to wrap up the day during a presentation from Wildlife Encounters.

The annual event is a great way for students to learn about Nebraska's natural resources and interact with nature. For some students, this was their first chance to explore wildlife, plant a tree, or cast a fishing line.

“The Spring Conservation Sensation continues to be our flagship youth education event providing amazing outdoor education opportunities to the elementary of our district,” stated Eric Gottschalk, Lower Platte North NRD General Manager. “Programs like this help us achieve our goal of educating individuals about the importance of conservation, preservation and restoration of our natural resources.”

Registration for next year’s Spring Conservation Sensation event will begin in early spring next year. For more information, please visit lppnrd.org or contact the Lower Platte North NRD at 402-443-4675.



Wahoo Elementary students cast a fishing line with the help of Lower Platte North NRD Staff and East Butler High School Students.



Monica Macoubrie, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (right) holds a turtle for St. Mary's Elementary students to touch and examine during the Amphibians and Reptiles session.



North Bend students use strainers to collect microorganisms from Lake Wanahoo during the Lake Ecosystems session.