



LOWER PLATTE SOUTH

natural resources district

Know Your NRD • Fall 2019

WHAT'S INSIDE

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- Educating Youth
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Protecting Natural Resources for Future Generations.



DEADMANS RUN UPDATE

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has been in recovery mode since a bomb cyclone flooded Nebraska and the Missouri River starting in March. The Corps staff has been designing repairs of levees and other infrastructure, in response to the resulting damage. To allow Lincoln's Deadmans Run (DMR) Flood Reduction Project to keep moving forward, a private contractor has been hired by the Corps to do hydraulic modeling work that will help determine the final design configuration for:

- Widening the main DMR channel, from Cornhusker Highway, upstream to 48th Street
- Constructing a concrete flume under two railroad bridges
- Relocating a street access
- And planting trees and native grasses throughout the project

In addition, the UNL College of Engineering has been contracted to build a physical scale model of the flume to test and refine the flume configuration. After modeling and initial flume results, the final project design could be completed next summer. That will allow, the City of Lincoln (City) and UNL to finalize the designs of three replacement bridges at 33rd, 38th and 48th Streets, and LPSNRD will finalize the design of a stormwater detention basin at the Fleming Fields sports complex. Recently, the City purchased land it will need to widen the 48th Street Bridge. LPSNRD has completed test soil borings and the drilling of monitoring wells along DMR to aid in the design process. Because a portion of the DMR work will be on UNL property, an agreement creating a partnership with UNL is also being prepared.

MARCH STORM REPAIRS

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is working to repair March storm damage to several flood control projects within LPSNRD. The Corps has hired a private consultant to design repairs by the end of this year to 14 sites along Lincoln's Salt Creek Levee that were damaged by high water. Damage near UNL's Hibner Stadium soccer and tennis complex is shown at right. Because the Salt Creek Levee system was a federally built project operated and maintained by LPSNRD, and we work actively to protect and maintain the levee system, the Corps will pay 100% of the design and construction cost of these repairs.

Repairs have also been designed by the Corps for the Cedar Creek Platte River Levee protecting the Omaha Fish & Wildlife Club and the Western Sary/Clear Creek Levee, which protects thousands of acres, the National Guard Camp, near Ashland, and the Lincoln well field. The City of Plattsmouth is working to restore its water and wastewater plants. The Plattsmouth water plant became functional in September, after six months of repairs.





MAKING CONNECTIONS

This fall LPSNRD environmental education staff have been busy facilitating field trips to over 2,000 district high school biology students. These trips are designed to enhance curriculum while students make discoveries that extend their classroom learning beyond textbooks. Students make connections with natural resources while hiking and dipping/netting for macroinvertebrates. The trips get students outside to explore and, for many, it provides an experience they have never had. Students tell us, "Best Field Trip EVER." Lincoln Southwest teacher Charles Bittle said, "Students come alive during these field trips and investigate what lies just beyond their adolescent bubble." He said, "We are truly lucky, grateful and honored to have dedicated Nebraskans sharing their love of the outdoors with the youth of today, inspiring them to become stewards of all of our natural resources."

LPSNRD Environmental Education programs impact 40,000 kindergarten through high school age students a year. Our largest programs include Field Trips, classroom presentations, Family Nature Nights, the earth wellness festival and Test Your Well Nights. This year we'll also host the East Central Land Judging Contest for over 200 FFA students. We have programs at each grade level that enrich and enhance current curriculum and bring nature into the classroom. Some of these include Native Seed Kits, Butterfly Larvae, Red Worm Wigglers, Earth Day Kits, and our Outdoor Classroom grant program.

All of our programs are designed to help spark an interest in youth while helping them learn more about protecting and conserving natural resources. Learn more about our Environmental Education programs at LPSNRD.org. Look for our podcast!



TAMING DEADMANS RUN

The Deadmans Run Flood Reduction Project will remove about 500 homes and businesses from the 100-year FEMA floodplain (story on page 2). Here's a historical look at the creek and area over 50 years ago, before much of today's development existed. To see more historical photos, visit LPSNRD.org



33. Dead Mans Run channel looking west from Missouri Pacific bridge. 0 Street at left. Note proximity of eroded channel to roadway. Storm sewer outlet at left foreground. March 1967.



2---Dead Mans Run channel looking east. 48th Street bridge. Note exposed sheet piling cut off wall and cast iron water main at right immediately downstream from cut off wall. Pipe extending from bank at left is drain tile from field. March 1967.



9. Dead Mans Run channel at 33rd and Baldwin bridge looking northwest. March 1967.

WORKING TO RE-OPEN LIED BRIDGE

FEMA has agreed to help fund cleanup and repairs to the Lied Platte River Bridge, near South Bend. The bridge connecting the Lower Platte South and Papio-Missouri River (Papio) NRD trail systems has been closed since severe flooding in March. Consistently high flows in the Platte River this summer have prevented any complete inspection of the bridge for damage, but officials hope to get a good look at the bridge this winter, after the removal of debris from around bridge pilings by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

LPSNRD General Manager Paul Zillig said, "We're hoping the Lied Bridge can be re-opened sometime in 2020. Right now, that seems like a reasonable goal." The Papio NRD is the lead agency in repairing the bridge and submitted the application for FEMA assistance earlier this year.

The photo at left shows debris piled against the upstream side of the Lied Platte River Bridge in late March.



LOVE US BACK

CAPTURE THE MOMENT

While at our NRD public use areas, we invite you to Capture the Moment! Snap a selfie, group picture or scenic shot next time you enjoy one of our trails, lakes or wetlands, then tag us with #lpsnrd. If we choose your photo for a Fan Photo Friday post, your picture will be featured on our social media and you'll receive an NRD shirt! Don't forget to tag us using #lpsnrd.

OUT FISHING?

We especially like photos of fish caught at any of our eight lakes. Catch a fish, take your picture with it and send it to fish@lpsnrd.org. Include your name, hometown and the lake where you caught the fish, then watch our social media.

PODCASTS

Want to learn more about NRD programs and projects? Each of our on-line podcast topics features a conversation with NRD staff and a storytime. You can choose from the History of the NRDs, Ground Water Management, Forestry, Flood Management, Recreation Areas and our Environmental Education programs. Visit lpsnrd.org and listen now to our podcasts!

WE'RE OPEN ALL YEAR

LPSNRD operates and maintains eight lakes, three excellent recreational trails and rare saline wetlands that remain open to the public year round. Our public use lakes are primarily for flood control, but are also managed for recreation. Visitors can fish, hunt, camp, hike, enjoy no wake boating or just sit and enjoy the view. In the colder months, many ice fish at our lakes! State hunting and fishing permits are required for those activities.

Most choose to hike or bike our MoPac East, Oak Creek and Homestead trails and some bring their pets. LPSNRD.org offers information about equestrian use on each trail. Bring your cross-country skis to any of the trails the next time it snows.

Our public saline wetland areas offer great opportunities to walk and observe different animals and plants in a truly rare environment. Click on Recreation at LPSNRD.org!



RESPONSIBLE BUDGET

BY LPSNRD BOARD TREASURER DAN STEINKRUGER

The Fiscal Year 2020 Lower Platte South NRD Budget, approved by the Board of Directors in August, is a merging of two responsibilities for the board: fiscal responsibility and the responsible management of our natural resources. Over a several-month period, the board weighs input from the public, LPSNRD staff and several subcommittees of the board to forge a plan for revenues and expenditures through next June, the end of the fiscal year.



The new budget, totaling \$31.2 million, requires a property tax levy that is slightly lower than a year ago, due to increased property valuations in LPSNRD's six counties. The budget continues our commitment to projects like Lincoln's Deadmans Run Flood Reduction Project and other channel, levee and dam maintenance across the district. The tallgrass prairie restoration along the Prairie Corridor on Haines Branch, between Lincoln's Pioneers Park and Spring Creek Prairie, south of Denton, is another priority. The budget also continues our work with smaller communities and provides cost-share assistance to landowners for soil and water conservation practices. See complete budget details at LPSNRD.org - About.

OTHER NEWS



The Oak Creek Trail is closed one mile west of Valparaiso, between county roads 29 and 30, due to severe stream bank erosion. The entire Oak Creek Trail will be closed during firearm deer hunting season, November 16-24.

A public hearing on proposed changes to our Ground Water Rules & Regulations is October 21, 2019, starting at 7:00 PM at the NRD office in Lincoln. See proposed changes at LPSNRD.org - News & Events.



District landowners can order seedling trees and shrubs starting November 8 and have them in time for spring planting. More than 30 varieties will be available at less than \$1 per plant. Watch LPSNRD.org for details.

LPSNRD and the Norris FFA will host a Test Your Well Night, October 24, 6:00 - 7:00 PM at Norris High School. FFA members will test your well sample for FREE. See LPSNRD.org - About for the full schedule and more information.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Here are your LPSNRD Board representatives. The Board meets regularly on the third Wednesday of each month at the NRD office in Lincoln. More information is available at lpsnrd.org - About.

- 1 Don Jacobson, W Lincoln
Gary Hellerich, Valparaiso
- 2 Sarah Wilson, Waverly
Mark Spangler, Murray
- 3 Mike DeKalb, NE Lincoln
Vern Barrett, Ceresco
- 4 Larry Ruth, Walton
Gary Aldridge, SE Lincoln
- 5 Greg Osborn, W Lincoln
Bruce Johnson, W Lincoln
- 6 Anthony Schutz, NW Lincoln
Deborah Eagan, NW Lincoln
- 7 Chelsea Johnson, NE Lincoln
Luke Peterson, NE Lincoln
- 8 Dan Steinkruger, SE Lincoln
Tom Green, SE Lincoln
- 9 Milt Schmidt, SE Lincoln
Bob Andersen, SE Lincoln
- 10 Ray Stevens, S Lincoln
Karen Amen, S Lincoln

At-large
David Landis, Lincoln

MEET US!



TRACY ZAYAC is our new Stormwater/Watershed Specialist. She provides technical assistance for stormwater and floodplain management throughout the District and for erosion and sediment control outside the City of Lincoln. Tracy also coordinates our Urban Water Quality and Community Assistance programs and is shown here inspecting the bioretention system at Lewis Ballfields, in Lincoln. The project was part of a cooperative agreement between the City of Lincoln and LPSNRD. Tracy has a Bachelor of Science degree in Geology from Georgia Southern University and a Master of Science degree in Geoscience from UNL. She was most recently employed at the Kansas Department of Health and Environment in Topeka, KS. Prior to that, she spent three years at the North Platte NRD and almost ten years with the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources. Tracy lives in Lincoln.

DREW RATKOVEC, an East Butler High School and Doane University graduate, is our newest maintenance technician. He earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology at Doane and minored in natural resources and agriculture, graduating last December. Drew is responsible for Platte River ice monitoring and our Weed Control Program. He also assists with maintenance of our projects and properties and is pictured forming a concrete pad for a ground water monitoring well. The native of Bruno now lives in Lincoln.



LPSNRD PROJECT UPDATE



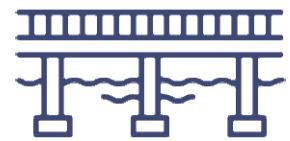
Oak Middle Dam 82-B Rehabilitation

Rehabilitate dam, 5-miles south of Dwight, to federal high hazard standards. Construction was expected to begin in October, with completion next spring or summer. \$485,000.



56th & Morton Streets Flood Reduction Project

Widening of a drainage channel to protect businesses is nearly completed. Fletcher Avenue is open and will be asphalted in the spring. Total cost, \$3.8 million; 75% federal, 25% LPSNRD & City of Lincoln.



Ashland Community Assistance Projects

Cost-sharing on drainage improvements and bank stabilization (two projects), along Salt Creek, in Ashland. Drainage work completed. Completion of bank stabilization work was expected sometime in October.

KEEP UP

Besides our new-look *Know Your NRD* newsletter, we've also started a monthly LPSNRD email blast, to help subscribers learn more about us. Look for the link at LPSNRD.org to sign up.

FOLLOW US



www.lpsnrd.org