

CENTRAL PLATTE NRD

Board Meeting Minutes

February 24, 2022

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Mick Reynolds called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. He reported that the NRD abides by the Open Meetings Act in conducting business and said that a copy of the Open Meetings Act was displayed on the south wall of the conference room, that the Board reserves the right to change the order of an item on the agenda, and some items on the agenda are subject to closed session.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ATTENDANCE: Board members present were:

LeRoy Arends	Charles Maser	Mick Reynolds
Jim Bendfeldt	Jerry Milner	Jay Richeson
Alicia Haussler	Barry Obermiller	Steve Sheen
Ryan Kegley	Keith Ostermeier	Ed Stoltenberg
Brian Keiser	Doug Reeves	Deb VanMatre
Dwayne Margritz	Marvion Reichert	Jerry Wiese

Excused Absences: Lon Bohn, Tom Downey, and Ed Kyes

Staff present: Lyndon Vogt – General Manager, Jesse Mintken – Assistant Manager, Kelly Cole – Administrative Assistant, Tricia Dudley – Water Quality Programs Specialist, Marcia Lee – Information/Education Specialist, Dan Clement – Water Resources Specialist, Dean Krull – UNL/CPNRD Demo Project Coordinator, Darren Cudaback – Precision Conservation Specialist, Courtney Widup – Water Resources Technician and Brody Vorderstrasse – Communications Assistant

Others present: Joe Krolikowski – NRCS District Conservationist, Carrie Thompson – NRCS Resource Conservationist – Lexington Office, Jackson Stansell Ph.D – UNL Student & CEO of Sentinel Fertigation, Taylor Cross – UNL Student, Nick Lammers – Precision Agronomy, Matt Malone – Precision Agronomy, Curt Malone – Precision Agronomy, and Ron Woitaszewski - Landowner

MEETING NOTICES: Chairman Reynolds reported that the notices of the meeting had been published in the Grand Island Independent and the news release was provided to other media outlets in the District.

MEETING MINUTES: Alicia Haussler made the motion to approve the January board meeting minutes. Marvion Reichert seconded the motion. All board members present, voting by roll call vote, were in favor, except Brian Keiser, Steve Sheen and Jerry Wiese who abstained. Motion carried.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & OTHER BUSINESS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS:

Chairman Reynolds asked if there were any announcements or suggestions for future

meetings. There were none.

PUBLIC FORUM: Chairman Reynolds asked if anyone wanted to address the board on any item not included on the agenda. There were none.

EXCUSED ABSENCES: Chairman Reynolds reported that Lon Bohn, Tom Downey and Ed Kyes requested to be excused from the board meeting.

Marvion Reichert made the motion to approve the absences as requested. Deb VanMatre seconded the motion. All board members present, voting by roll call vote, were in favor. Motion carried.

IMAGERY-BASED FERTIGATION PROGRAM: Jackson Stansell Ph.D, UNL Student and CEO of Sentinel Fertigation provided results from his data driven framework that uses imagery data and soil spatial variability data. Stansell reported that 96% of farmers increased their efficiency and 56% increased their profitability.

NRCS REPORT: Carrie Thompson, NRCS Resources Conservationist, introduced herself and reported on the Great Plains Grassland Initiative available (see attached).

Joe Krolkowski, NRCS District Conservationist, reported on the CRP signups (see attached).

CRANE VIEWING DECKS UPDATE: Jesse Mintken, Assistant Manager, reported on the recently completed upgrades at the Richard Plautz Crane Viewing site near Gibbon, which was provided by NET and the Nebraska Game & Parks grants, with CPNRD contributing 20% match.

Mintken also reported that a grant from the Nebraska Game & Parks was recently awarded for the Alda Crane Viewing site to pave the recreational trail and three gravel parking lots with concrete. CPNRD is currently waiting to hear if a \$75,000 grant from NET will be funded for non-trail related improvements for the Alda Crane Viewing site.

BUILDING COMMITTEE: Brian Keiser, chairman, reported that the Building Committee meet earlier today.

Keiser indicated that there are 6 steps that it would take to complete a new Education Center and NRD office. After some discussion, Keiser indicated that at this time the board would need to consider phases 2 and 3, which would develop a schematic design and development. The fee for the design process is approximately 10% of the estimated cost of construction. Steps 2 and 3 will comprise 25% of that 10% cost.

Keiser made a motion that having completed step 1, the building committee recommends proceeding with steps 2 and 3, with a cost not to exceed \$225,000. Keith Ostermeier seconded the motion. All board members, voting by roll call vote, were in favor. Motion

carried.

WESTERN PROJECTS COMMITTEE: Ryan Kegley, chairman, reported that the Eastern Projects Committee meet earlier today.

Amendment #1 in the amount of \$10,900 for the Richard Plautz Crane Viewing Site Trail Rehabilitation was presented to the committee. The amendment is to cover the additional fees due to greater than originally anticipated permitting.

Ryan Kegley made a motion to approve Amendment #1 with JEO Consulting in the amount of \$10,900 for the Richard Plautz Crane Viewing Site Trail Rehabilitation. Marvion Reichert seconded the motion. All board members, voting by roll call vote, were in favor. Motion carried.

The committee reviewed the current lease that Central Platte NRD has on the Dawson County land the NRD owns. After some discussion the committee recommended that the lease be increased from \$28,407 to \$31,500.

Ryan Kegley made a motion to increase the Dawson County land lease from \$28,407 to \$31,500. Marvion Reichert seconded the motion. All board members, voting by roll call vote, were in favor. Motion carried.

PRESCRIBED FIRE BIDS: David Carr, Range Management Specialist, reported that only one bid for a contractor to burn this spring was received. The contractor is one that Central Platte NRD has used in the past.

Marvion Reichert made the motion to accept the Prescribe Fire bid from Scholl Fire & Fuels Management, Inc in the amount of \$76,960 for spring burning. Doug Reeves seconded the motion. All board members voting, by roll call vote, were in favor. Motion carried.

MONITORING WELL BIDS: Dan Clement, Water Resources Specialist, reported that only one bid was received for the 9 monitoring wells Central Platte NRD would like drilled in Hall and Howard County.

Marvion Reichert made the motion to accept the bid from Downey Drilling in the amount of \$21,212.06 for the 9 monitoring wells in Hall and Howard County. Jay Richeson seconded the motion. All board members voting, by roll call vote, were in favor. Motion carried.

MANAGER'S REPORT: Lyndon Vogt, General Manger, reported that the Nebraska Recycling Council is looking to interview local farmers and feedlot operators to evaluate the benefits and barriers to composting operations and marketability of the finished product on cropland. If you're interested, please contact them.

The District received a copy of LR 286 which recognizes the 50th Anniversary of the NRD's. Marcia will frame and hang it in the board room.

Vogt introduced our newest employee, Darren Cudaback, who was hired as the Precision Conservation Specialist. Darren introduced himself to the board.

COST SHARE PROGRAMS: Applications –Kelly Cole, Administrative Assistant, reported that we have received cost share applications for the following programs: Burn Preparation and Well Decommissioning (see enclosed). She said the applicants are in compliance with the district's rules and regulations, funds are available, and she recommended they be approved.

Marvion Reichert made the motion to approve the cost share applications as reported. Jay Richeson seconded the motion. All board members present, voting by roll call vote, were in favor. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Lyndon Vogt, General Manager, reviewed the February financial report.

Marvion Reichert made a motion to approve the February financial report as presented. Alicia Haussler seconded the motion. All board members present, voting by roll call vote, were in favor, except Jim Bendfeldt who abstained. Motion carried.

NEBRASKA ASSOCIATION OF RESOURCES DISTRICT: No report

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION: Mick Reynolds, Middle Platte Basin Representative, reported that the Water Sustainability Fund has closed out 32 projects and currently has 49 active projects.

PRIMARY ELECTION: Kelly Cole, Administrative Assistant, reported that as of Thursday, February 24th the following board members have refiled for the NRD Board: Brian Keiser, Tom Downey, Lon Bohn, Ryan Kegley, Deb VanMatre, Jerry Milner, Steve Sheen, Ed Stoltenberg, Alicia Haussler, Ed Kyes, Keith Ostermeier and Charles Maser. Non-incumbents have until March 1st to file.

UPCOMING EVENTS: Chairman Reynolds reviewed the upcoming events.
Next Board Meeting – Scheduled for the afternoon of Thursday, February 24. Details to follow.

OTHER BUSINESS: None

ADJOURN: Chairman Reynolds adjourned the board meeting at 3:17 p.m.

USDA Announces Conservation Reserve Program Signups for 2022

Contact: FPAC.BC.Press@usda.gov

WASHINGTON, Jan. 26, 2022 – Agricultural producers and landowners can sign up soon for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), a cornerstone conservation program offered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and a key tool in the Biden-Harris Administration effort to address climate change and achieve other natural resource benefits. The General CRP signup will run from **Jan. 31 to March 11**, and the Grassland CRP signup will run from **April 4 to May 13**.

“We highly encourage farmers, ranchers and private landowners to consider the enrollment options available through CRP,” said Zach Ducheneaux, Administrator of USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA). “Last year, we rolled out a better, bolder program, and we highly encourage you to consider its higher payment rates and other incentives. CRP is another way that we’re putting producers and landowners at the center of climate-smart solutions that generate revenue and benefit our planet.”

Producers and landowners enrolled 4.6 million acres into CRP signups in 2021, including 2.5 million acres in the largest Grassland CRP signup in history. There are currently 22.1 million acres enrolled, and FSA is aiming to reach the 25.5-million-acre cap statutorily set for fiscal year 2022.

CRP Signups

General CRP helps producers and landowners establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees, to control soil erosion, improve water quality and enhance wildlife habitat on cropland.

Meanwhile, Grassland CRP is a working lands program, helping landowners and operators protect grassland,

including rangeland and pastureland and certain other lands, while maintaining the areas as working grazing lands. Protecting grasslands contributes positively to the economy of many regions, provides biodiversity of plant and animal populations and provides important carbon sequestration benefits to deliver lasting climate outcomes.

Alongside these programs, producers and landowners can enroll acres in Continuous CRP under the ongoing sign up, which includes projects available through the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE).

Climate Benefits

Last year, FSA enacted a Climate-Smart Practice Incentive for CRP General and Continuous signups, to better target CRP on addressing climate change. This incentive aims to increase carbon sequestration and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. CRP's climate-smart practices include establishment of trees and permanent grasses, development of wildlife habitat and wetland restoration. The Climate-Smart Practice Incentive is annual, and the amount is based on the benefits of each practice type.

Additionally, in order to better target the program toward climate outcomes, USDA invested \$10 million last year in the CRP Monitoring, Assessment and Evaluation (MAE) program to measure and monitor the soil carbon and climate resilience impacts of conservation practices over the life of new CRP contracts. This will enable the agency to further refine the program and practices to provide producers tools for increased climate resilience.

More Information on CRP

Landowners and producers interested in CRP should contact their local [USDA Service Center](#) to learn more or to apply for the program -- for General CRP before the **March 11 deadline**, and for Grassland CRP before the **May 13 deadline**. Service Center staff continue to work with agricultural producers via phone, email, and other digital tools. Due to the pandemic, some [USDA Service](#)

Centers are open to limited visitors. Additionally, fact sheets and other resources are available at fsa.usda.gov/crp.

Signed into law in 1985, CRP is one of the largest voluntary private-lands conservation programs in the United States. It was originally intended to primarily control soil erosion and potentially stabilize commodity prices by taking marginal lands out of production. The program has evolved over the years, providing many conservation and economic benefits.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

United States Department Of Agriculture



Natural Resources Conservation Service
Grand Island Field Office
703 S Webb Rd., Suite B
Grand Island, NE 68803
Phone (308) 395-8586 (Ext. 3)

<http://www.ne.nrcs.usda.gov>

February 18, 2022

Central Platte NRD
215 North Kaufman Avenue
Grand Island, NE 68803

February Report to CPNRD

Please find attached a General and Grassland Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Signup News Release from the Nebraska United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA). The signup for General CRP began January 31st and is open until March 11, 2022, and the Grassland CRP signup will run from April 4th to May 13, 2022. CRP is a competitive program that is administered by the Farm Service Agency.

General CRP helps producers and landowners establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees, to control soil erosion, improve water quality and enhance wildlife habitat on cropland. While the Grassland CRP is a working lands program, helping landowners and operators protect grassland, including rangeland and pastureland and certain other lands, while maintaining the areas as working grazing lands. Protecting grasslands contributes positively to the economy of many regions, provides biodiversity of plant and animal populations, and provides important carbon sequestration benefits to deliver lasting climate outcomes.

Landowners and producers interested in CRP should contact their local [USDA Service Center](#) to learn more or to apply for the program before the deadlines. Service Center staff continue to work with agricultural producers via phone, email, and other digital tools. Due to the pandemic, some Service Centers are open to limited visitors. Additionally, fact sheets and other resources are available at fsa.usda.gov/crp. Signed into law in 1985, CRP is one of the largest voluntary private-lands conservation programs in the United States. It was originally intended to primarily control soil erosion and potentially stabilize commodity prices by taking marginal lands out of production. The program has evolved over the years, providing many conservation and economic benefits.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ Joe Krolikowski

Joe Krolikowski
District Conservationist

Attachments: Conservation Reserve Program Signup News Release

Helping People Help the Land

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer



GPGI-
Great
Plains
Grassland
Initiative



What is GPGI?

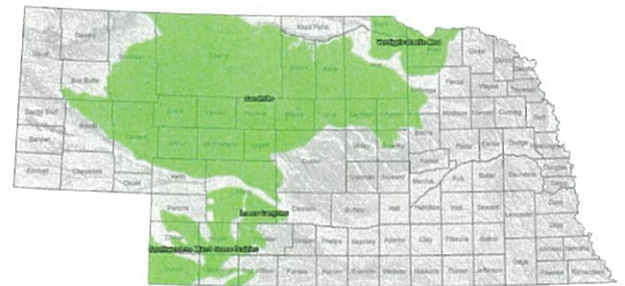
- Special initiative through EQIP that targets treating the spread of Eastern Red Cedar Trees and other woody vegetation on rangeland

Priority areas

- Loess Canyons, Verdigris-Bazile, Southwestern Mixed Grass Prairies and Sandhills

Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service
nrcs.usda.gov/

Nebraska Great Plains
Grassland Initiative (GPGI)



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United States Department of Agriculture
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Great Plains Grassland Initiative Areas

Eligible Practices

- 314- Brush Management
- 528- Grazing Deferment
- 338- Prescribed Burning
- 383- Fuel break
- 394- Firebreak
- 595- Pest management

5 Encroachment Stages

- **Intact**- Treeless grassland with no incoming seed
- **Dispersal**- Treeless grassland compromised by incoming seed
- **Recruitment**- Early-successional brush, immature seedlings present
- **Encroachment**- Spread by mature reproducing plants
- **State transition**- State transition to woody dominance

Key Points to GPGI

- Targeting land that already has intact grasslands
- Strive to plan for treatment areas that are in the early stages of encroachment
- Using the appropriate practices- ensuring that no trees left behind
- Groupings of applications to increase the treatment area, working together with groups of landowners

Questions

Reference the “Reducing Woody Encroachment in Grasslands” Booklet

A guide for understanding Risk and Vulnerability

CENTRAL PLATTE NRD
Cost Share
Thursday, February 24, 2022

BURN PREPARATION COST SHARE PROGRAM	\$	1,200.00
Heath Johnson – Dawson	\$	1,200.00
WELL DECOMMISSIONING COST SHARE PROGRAM	\$	1,750.00
Michael Patrick Hannon – Buffalo	\$	750.00
William Anderson – Buffalo		1,000.00
Total	\$	2,950.00