

2017 South Platte NRD Board

For the first time in over two decades the South Platte NRD Board met without Keith Rexroth as an official board member. Rexroth, a SPNRD Board member since 1993, gave his official resignation from the board just before the January, 2017 meeting.

The Board and Staff of the South Platte NRD are going to miss Rexroth's leadership and friendship cultivated in the past 24 years. During his tenure the NRD experienced many changes, especially in water management in the District. Keith helped guide the NRD through rough waters to develop the Integrated Management Plan and served as a Commissioner on the Nebraska Natural Resources Commission. Through it all he kept his wit and wisdom. Thank you to Keith Rexroth for his service.



Keith Rexroth

With the resignation, changes were made to the Board. Bill Halligan, who had previously served as the Vice-Chair, was selected as the Board Chair with Tim

Maas taking over the role of Vice-Chair. Jim Johnson remained the Secretary.

Rexroth's resignation left a vacancy on the board, specifically Subdistrict 5, which covers southeastern Cheyenne County from roughly Highway 19 to the west, Highway 30 to the north, the Cheyenne and Deuel County line to the east, and the Nebraska/Colorado border to the south. During the February 14, 2017 Board meeting the Board appointed Chris Meyer to fill the vacancy.

Meyer comes to the Board as both an irrigator and dryland farmer and knows that there is a balancing act between having enough water today and for the future. During his interview with the Board, Meyer stated that he is a stone's throw from Colorado but farms land in many parts of southern Subdistrict 5.

Meyer takes over the four year term of the newly elected Rexroth, but will only serve two years before having to be re-elected as stated in Nebraska State Statutes.



2017 SPNRD Officers: Tim Maas, Vice Chair; Bill Halligan, Chair; Jim Johnson, Secretary



Chris Meyer, newly appointed SPNRD Board member

Conservation Tree Order Form See Page 4
ACE and Range Camp Scholarships See Page 6
Protecting Lives, Property and Natural Resources



Sidney Team 2 Tops Western Regional Envirothon

Sidney High School's Envirothon Team 2 will represent the Panhandle for the Nebraska Envirothon Contest near Gering at the Wildcat Hills Nature Center Wednesday, April 26, 2017. The first place team, comprised of Chantal Riggs, Mitchell Porter, Kollyn Weimer, William Castner and Lindsey Deaver, earned the state berth with a score of 109 on Wednesday, February 1 at the contest held in Gordon. 30 students competed in the regional contest from six schools including Sidney, Gordon-Rushville, Creek Valley, Banner County, Garden County and Leyton.

On the way to the Western Region title, the top overall placing Sidney team tied with Banner County for the highest score on the Soils test. Sidney team 1 was the second place team in the Western Region. They are hopeful their score will earn one of eight wild-card entries into the state contest.

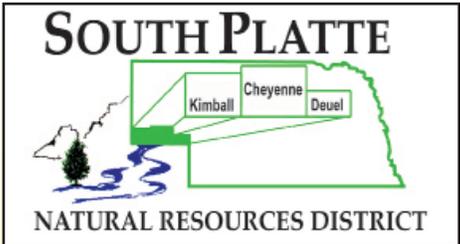
The state champion then goes

on to represent Nebraska at the National Envirothon contest which will be in Emmitsburg, Maryland July 26 through July 29, 2017. Members of the top ten teams from that event will be awarded National Scholarships that can be used toward a four year university, two year college or trade school.

The Envirothon is open to all 9-12th grade students and encourages high school students to learn more about the natural environment. The contest challenges students' knowledge on aquatics, forestry, wildlife, range, soils, land use and natural resource policy or issues and one special topic of national interest. Up to five-member teams compete in a setting where they learn that cooperation is needed to achieve success.



**2017 Sidney 2 Team - (L-R)
Chantal Riggs, Lindsey Deaver,
William Castner, Mitchell Porter
and Kollyn Weimer**



Board of Directors

Bill Halligan	Chair
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Larry L. Rutt	
Phil Grabowski	
Kathy Narjes	
Chris Meyer	

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Linda Suhr	Administrative Manager
NaManet Keller	District Secretary
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Ryan Reisdorff	Water Resources Specialist
Chris Kaiser	Natural Resources Coordinator
Donald Davis	Information & Ed. Coordinator
Tyler Sanders	Water Resources Technician
Michelle McMillen	NRCS/NRD Field Office Secretary
Hilary Cook	NRCS/NRD Secretary/Technician

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 For the latest NRD news and program updates, visit our Website at www.spnrd.org

Water Markets - The Wave of the Future?

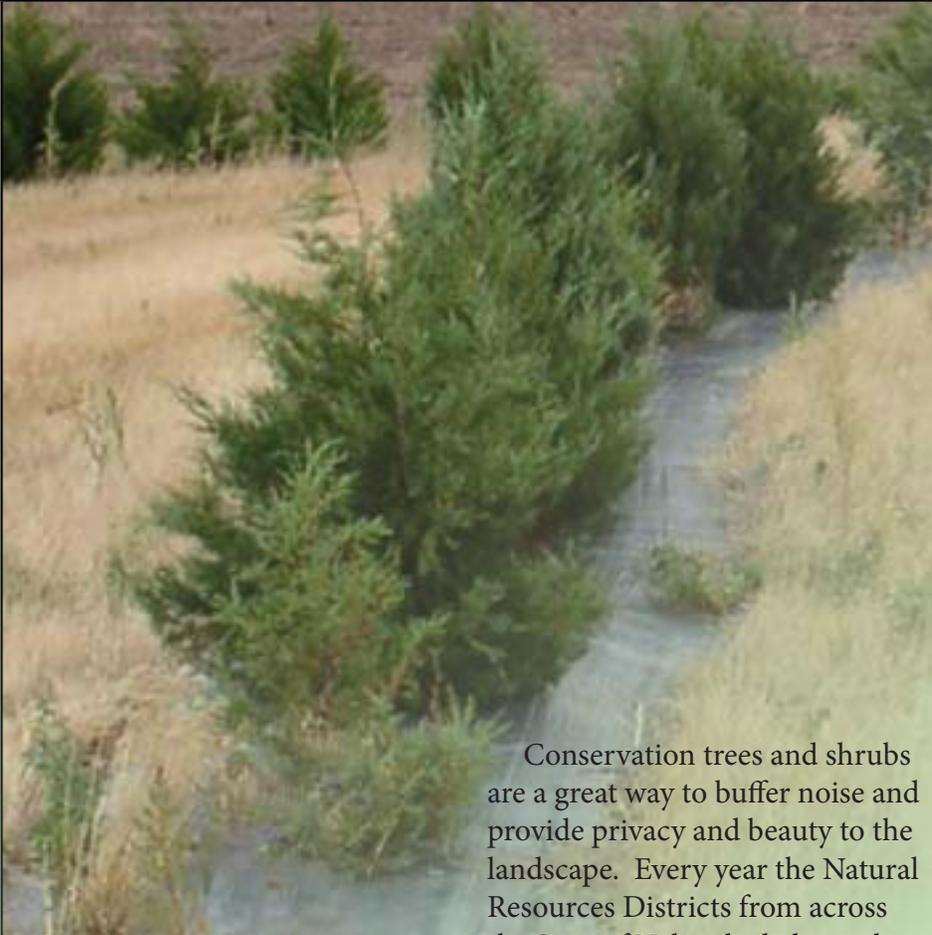
Water markets, or ground water transfers, are not new. In fact the transfer of water has been around for decades and is practiced in various parts of the world where water issues such as contaminated water or drought have forced farmers to look for alternative ways to water their crops.

While water markets or transfers are not new, the concept of a water market has not taken hold in the South Platte NRD. "The ability to transfer water can help with the planning of a rotation of crops," stated Travis Glanz, Water Resour-

ces Coordinator for the District. "Utilizing a water market a farmer could have the extra inches needed for a sugar beet crop one year, then sell those inches the next while in fallow. It can be another tool in managing the operation."

Currently in the District there are two entities that can facilitate ground water transfers, Golden Triangle Land Services, Inc. and Mammoth Trading. For questions about water markets or transfers please contact Travis Glanz at the District offices at 308-254-2377 or via e-mail at tglanz@spnrd.org.

Conservation Tree Taken Through Early April



Conservation trees and shrubs are a great way to buffer noise and provide privacy and beauty to the landscape. Every year the Natural Resources Districts from across the State of Nebraska help to plant nearly a million trees. Over four million trees have been planted in the South Platte NRD since 1977.

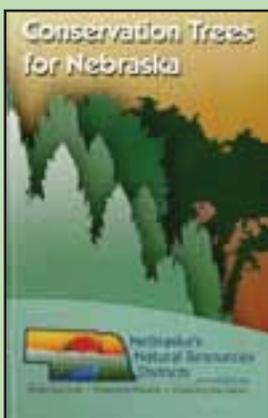
Several varieties of bareroot trees are available. The Colorado Blue Spruce and Ponderosa Pine along with Black Walnut and Cottonwood are just some of the Conifers and Deciduous trees available for purchase this year. Shrub choices include Chokecherry and Lilac along with several others. Each of the bareroot Conifers, Deciduous,

and Shrubs are \$.90 each with a minimum order of 10 per species.

Hefty Root Plus, previously called Regular Potted Trees, will be available at \$2.10 each, minimum order of 10 per species and Hefty Root, previously called Small Potted Trees will be available at \$1.45 each, minimum 10 per species.

If unsure what trees or shrubs would be the most effective in the space available or what each tree or shrub looks like, visit www.nrdtrees.org. The website has pictures of available species with descriptions of the average height and suggested spacing between trees and rows for effective planting. There are even charts that tell if the tree or shrub is native to one of four zones in Nebraska and whether it is suggested to plant in each zone. Conservation Trees for Nebraska books are available for free at the District offices during normal business hours.

The South Platte NRD and NRCS offices provide assistance with tree and shrub planting plans and have a list of contractors who have been certified in the handling and planting of trees and shrubs. There is also information about cost share opportunities and other services available on this website by clicking on Conservation Trees or by stopping by the District offices at 551 Parkland Dr. in Sidney.



Conservation Trees for Nebraska Book Updated

During the past year new trees and updated pictures have been added to the Conservation Trees for Nebraska book. Copies will soon be available. Stop by our offices to get your copy.

Visit our website at www.spnrd.org or use the order form on the next page to order your Conservation Trees

Summer Season Just Around the Corner

The calendar may say Spring, but with longer and warmer days, Summer can't be far behind. Oliver Reservoir Recreation Area (ORRA) will be ready to begin with a few more upgrades from last year.

Repairs and upgrades to the restrooms was one of the first priorities for the South Platte NRD since taking over operations in February, 2014. This year more toilet pedestals will be replaced. Several picnic tables are going to be repaired as many tables have been dam-

aged either from neglect or vandalism. Fifteen new fire pit rings have also been added to the existing marked camping spaces.

Two more projects are planned with the goal of being completed by the end of the Summer. A boat ramp is going to be added to the west of the current handicap dock location. Just north of the new boat ramp will be a dedicated parking area for vehicles with boat trailers to park. This is being done to help ease traffic congestion and allow for parking close to the boat ramp.

One ongoing project that started last fall is the addition of gravel to some of the roads in the recreation area. It is hoped the gravel will keep the roads in better shape and avoid mud from snowmelt and rain storms.

2017 will be the second year of required registration at ORRA. When camping at the reservoir, patrons will be asked to register their camping spot. As in years past there is no fee for camping, however donations are accepted.

So get the fishing and camping gear ready, it is almost Summer Season at Oliver Reservoir Recreation Area.



Landscape Wise Workshop June 3

Planning has already started for this years Landscape Wise Workshop to be held during the day on Saturday, June 3, 2017 at the South Platte NRD Conference Room. Two of the presenters will be Amy Sieler, Western Nebraska Community Forestry Specialist with the Nebraska Forest Service, and Lucinda Mays, Chadron State College Administration & Finance Grounds Supervisor. Both bring to the workshop a wealth of knowledge about what works in urban settings in Western Nebraska.

Other topics planned to be discussed include the cost share programs that the District has available. Those programs include Cash for Grass, Rain Gardens, and Rain Barrels.

The Workshop is free. More details will be released closer to the June 3 date. If you have any questions

please contact the District offices at 308-254-2377 or visit us online at www.spnrd.org.

Rain barrels, similar to the one pictured to the right, have become popular in the District. Cost share is available for those interested in installing a rain barrel within a municipality. Contact Ryan Reisdorff at 308-254-2377 or rreisdorff@spnrd.org for more details on cost sharing your rain barrel purchase.



Reminder -

In order to sell water for industrial use you must first obtain a transfer permit. Not obtaining a transfer permit before selling water is a violation of Rule 6.8.4; transferring ground water from an irrigation well for another use without obtaining a Transfer Permit. A copy of the District-wide Rules and Regulations can be found on our website, www.spnrd.org.

Scholarships Available for ACE and Range Camps

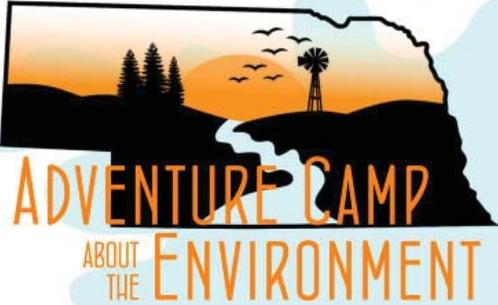
2017 will be the 7th year of the Adventure Camp about the Environment, also known as ACE Camp. The camp's design is to offer students fun and adventure such as tubing and canoeing, building and launching water rockets, and discovering diverse wildlife, all while learning about the environment around them.

This year's camp will be held on June 11 - 14 at the State 4-H Camp in Halsey, Nebraska and is for 6th, 7th or 8th graders who have just completed that year in school.

While there the campers will have the opportunity

to learn from experts in the fields of Forestry, Energy, Wetlands, Soils, Range, Water and Wildlife.

The South Platte NRD is offering three scholarships for students in the District to attend this years ACE camp. Scholarship application forms are available either from the District's website, www.spnrd.org, or by stopping by the District offices at 551 Parkland Drive in Sidney. The deadline for applications is May 5. Scholarship winners will be notified shortly after that date.



**Sunday, June 11th to
Wednesday, June 14th**
Four days of Outdoor Fun,
Exploring and Learning at
State 4-H Camp, Halsey, NE

Student Activities



2016 Range Camp Participants

2017 marks the 54th Annual Nebraska Range Youth Camp sponsored by the Nebraska Section of the Society for Range Management, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, University of Nebraska-Lincoln and IANR, and the Cooperative Extension Service. The camp will again be held at the State 4-H Camp in Halsey, Nebraska on June 5

through June 9.

The South Platte NRD will be offering three scholarships for this years camp. Scholarship application forms are available either from the District's website www.spnrd.org or by stopping by the District offices at 551 Parkland Drive in Sidney. The deadline for applications is May 5. Scholarship winners will be notified shortly after that date.

Students who are at least 14 years old but not over 18 by October 1, 2017 are eligible to attend the camp.

Students will be taught a wide range of topics concerning range management including Range Plant Identification, Range and Ecological Sites, Range Condition, Stocking Rates, Live-stock Health, Rangeland Ecology, and Geology.



Visit www.spnrd.org to Print Application Forms

Maintain, Don't Gain Sheds Holiday Pounds

Homemade holiday treats can be hard on the waistline, not to mention the parties and meals that surround celebrations from Thanksgiving into the New Year. Everyone has grandma's recipe or mom's special treat that become part of the required holiday baking. After a month of celebrating and eating stepping on the scale can be a scary thought.

This year seven of the District employees fought off the holiday pounds by participating in the Maintain, Don't Gain challenge as part of the Wellness Program. Participants earned points by trying to create or maintain healthy habits everyday such as exercising, eating breakfast and the very difficult task of limiting sweets to one serving or less. Weekly bonus points could be achieved by either maintaining or losing weight each week. The challenge ran from November through December.

While as a team we did not win the challenge

against several other teams in the panhandle, we were all winners as we learned about healthy habits. Chel McMillen took first place for our District while Hilary Cook was second.

A special thanks goes out to Linda Suhr and Chris Kaiser for helping to organize the Maintain, Don't Gain Challenge for the District.



First Place
Chel McMillen
NRCS - Sidney Field
Office Secretary



Second Place
Hilary Cook
NRCS - Kimball Field
Office Secretary/Conser-
vation Technician

Staff Activities

A Job Well Done

Fourteen years is not a lifetime, nor a career, but the last fourteen years Linda Suhr has been making the drive from her home in Lodgepole to the South Platte NRD offices. On March 17th she will make that drive one last time; as an official employee anyway. One can imagine when her and her husband Leonard make the trip from their new home in Stromsburg, Nebraska, "out west", a stop at the NRD offices will be part of the agenda.

"Working for the South Platte NRD has been an absolute joy for me," stated Suhr. "I will miss just being here, the people, the work, it has always been fun for me."

Suhr's role since day 1 has been as Administrative Manager, a role she has taken very seriously.

Rod Horn, District General Manager praises Suhr for her work ethic and attention to detail. "Linda produces a high volume of work while maintaining high standards for quality and accuracy. She worked with staff, agricultural producers and many others on a daily basis. She always had a positive attitude towards the District's many projects and programs," Horn stated.

Anyone who entered the offices was greeted with a friendly smile and "hello" and made to feel at

home in the place where Linda felt at home and at ease with her job.

Fourteen years is not a lifetime, but it is enough to make a difference, and Linda did just that, made a difference everyday. For that we all say "A job well done."

We all wish Linda and Leonard all the best in their future endeavors.



Linda Suhr

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Protecting The Future

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