



The Nebraska
Environmental Trust

preserving NATURAL NEBRASKA™ for future generations



Explore Nebraska

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Mission Statement:

The Nebraska Environmental Trust is established to conserve, enhance and restore the natural environments of Nebraska. A prosperous future requires a sound natural environment. We must act dynamically, progressively and systematically to ensure bountiful and thriving natural resources.

The Trust is to complement existing activities, stimulate private investment and emphasize long term gain. The Trust is to lead in the development of a vision of Nebraska's future environment. The Trust is to collaborate with public and private efforts to achieve that vision.

TRUST FUNDING CATEGORIES:

- HABITAT
- SURFACE & GROUNDWATER
- WASTE MANAGEMENT & RECYCLING
- AIR QUALITY
- SOIL MANAGEMENT

2016 Nebraska Environmental Trust Board



Front Row: Rod Christen, Steinauer; Henry "Rick" Brandt, Roca; Sherry Vinton, Whitman; Robert Krohn, Omaha.
Second Row: Jim Macy, Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality; Jim Douglas, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission; Kevin Peterson, Osceola; Jeff Fassett, Nebraska Department of Natural Resources; Gloria Erickson, Holdrege; Gerry Lauritzen, Omaha, Paul Dunn, Omaha.
Not Pictured: Greg Ibach, Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Jim Hellbusch, Columbus

Message from the Chairman

As the leaves rustle over the trail we walk I reflect on my past four years of service for the Nebraska Environmental Trust (NET). I am honored to be serving the beautiful state of Nebraska and captivated by the tremendous accomplishments the NET has enabled. As an avid bird watcher and outdoor enthusiast, I have always enjoyed the sights and sounds our state has to offer. Whether it was the quiet streams or the wide-open sand hills, the call of the frogs or the song of the meadowlark, I grew to love the benefits of clear water, clean air and the well managed expanses our state offers.

These last four years have granted us the good fortune of enabling successful partnerships for projects as diverse as the Spotted Tail Creek Restoration, the Heron Haven Wetlands Sanctuary, Bike Share, Fire Training Exchange and the High Plains Weed Management Area Landowner project sites. We have watched thousands of birds rediscover the Rainwater Basin wetlands and private and public resources contribute to the rebirth of the Republican River. It is my hope that the NET can continue to be a part of these ambitious unifications of public and private entities that seek to manage and revitalize our Natural Resources for the benefit of all Nebraskans.

We continue to monitor the success of numerous NET funded projects throughout the state. We received updates from the Director of the Nebraska Forest Service on the ongoing research at the Horning Farm Demonstration Forest. We were educated about the confluence of the Missouri and Platte Rivers and the associated acquisition projects that seek to preserve this unique area for everyone to enjoy. We visited Fort Robinson State Park, the Northern Cheyenne Monument, Sowbelly Canyon, and dialoged with landowners about conservation easements near the Pine Ridge land trust projects.

As a board, community and state we don't always agree with the priorities we set or the direction we take, but we dutifully listen to the professionals, our experienced staff and the opinions of all involved who help us find resolutions that best meet the interests of current and future Nebraskans. Working with a knowledgeable, dynamic and diverse team from across the state has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my service. I continue to enrich my understanding of the elements that make our state so unique while furthering my love for the many natural resources Nebraska offers. And I encourage all Nebraskans, set aside your technology, get off the interstate, smell the air, listen to the wind, hike the trails and discover the gems that exist in the state we call home.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve the State of Nebraska in such a personally meaningful way. Every time I jump in the car and head home to Omaha I truly relish being part of an organization dedicated to ensuring that the Good Life will always be found so close to home.



Gerry Lauritzen



Explore Nebraska

Over the years, the Trust has had many opportunities to make a difference in the lives of various communities in Nebraska. Our Annual Report this year is intended to take you through a journey of some of these phenomenal projects and amazing treasure sites that line the seven districts of Nebraska. These projects are remarkable and their uniqueness and beauty is certainly something to be proud of as a Nebraskan.

The months of July and August are usually a crucial and important time for board and staff members. It is when the board gets to make field trips, during the 3rd Quarter Board Meeting to assess and evaluate some of the project sites where grant funds had been disbursed to in the past. They get first hand experience and knowledge from grantees on how Trust funding is utilized as seed money to attract other matching dollars to the State and is crucial in creating jobs and bringing an economic boost to the various regions in Nebraska. The Trust has supported many community initiatives directly and indirectly, from agriculture to education, forestry to tourism, transportation to health to name a few. These projects are varied and have diverse interest and benefit residential and commercial sites and private citizens in one way or another.

These projects could not have been accomplished without the support of the Nebraska Lottery, the only funding source of the Trust. What better way to make Nebraska a better place!

“Even before we sold our first tickets in 1993, the Nebraska Lottery was dedicated to helping environmental needs. The scope and variety of projects funded by the Nebraska Environmental Trust are statewide reminders of our mission, and the support and loyalty of Nebraska Lottery players and retailers.”

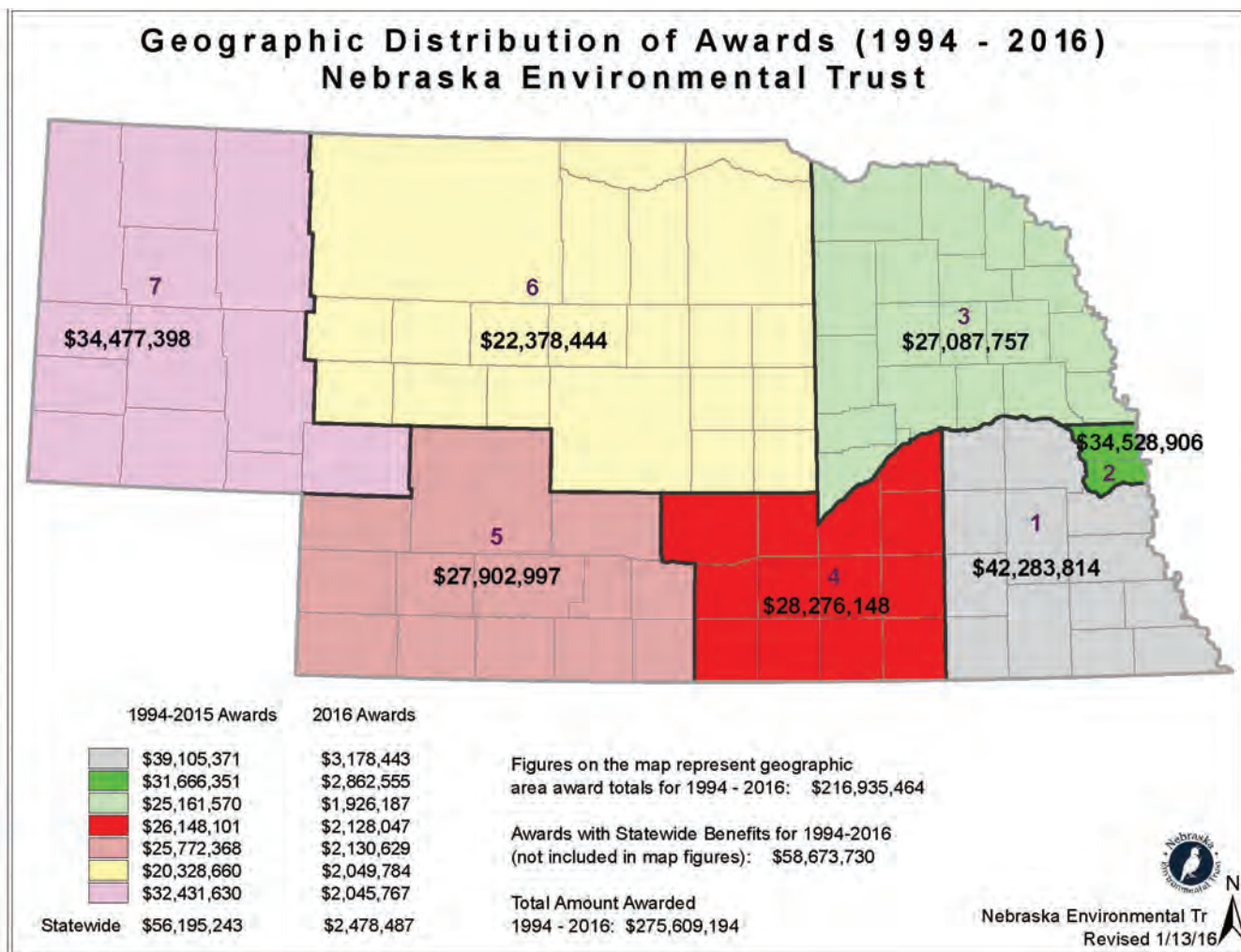
– Brian Rockey, Nebraska Lottery Director

The photos below say a million words about these Lottery dollars that have come a long way to make a difference. Here are some memorable photos of projects funded in our amazing Nebraska over the last two decades.

The corresponding pages will also give you insight on more projects and their unique features.



Geographic Distribution of Awards (1994 - 2016)



Nebraska Land Trust



Sowbelly Ranch: A Pine Ridge jewel where beauty is more than skin deep

In 1983, the late Fred Thomas wrote a popular, well-informed column for the Omaha World-Herald titled “Your Environment.” On one occasion, he “asked a few veteran Nebraska travelers to select the prettiest places in Nebraska.” According to Fred, “Sowbelly Canyon drew more mention for No. 1 than any place else.”

Sowbelly Canyon creases the north slope of the Pine Ridge in the northwest corner of Nebraska. With weather-sculpted sandstone buttes, prairie, pine forest and a trout stream, it is easy to envision as the prettiest place in the state. All of these resources are found on the 1,304-acre Sowbelly Ranch north of Harrison in the heart of the canyon. Last December, its owners Jim and Chris Voeller, permanently conserved the land through a conservation easement with the Nebraska Land Trust.

Pines and Buttes Preservation Project

Jim and Chris Voeller were especially keen on conserving the unfragmented habitat their ranch provides for elk and bighorn sheep. In 2012, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission gained permission to use their ranch as a reintroduction site for bighorns. Usually, release sites are on public land owned by the agency. The Voellers provided a rare opportunity to release bighorns in ideal habitat on private land. The land is also home to other creatures great and small, as the Pine Ridge is a biologically unique landscape where eastern and western species mingle at the edge of their range.

It always takes willing landowners to permanently conserve private land, but in this case one could add the term “generous.” With limited funds to purchase the easement, the Voellers offered to donate more than half of the easement’s value to the NLT through a bargain sale at less than appraised value. The Nebraska Environmental Trust, which receives 44.5% of state lottery proceeds, provided most of the balance through a grant for conservation of bighorn habitat. Other funding partners included the Nebraska Big Game Society, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Wild Sheep Foundation, and the Iowa chapter of the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep. The diversity of partners speaks to the land’s value for wildlife. The Sowbelly Ranch is truly a place where beauty is more than skin deep.



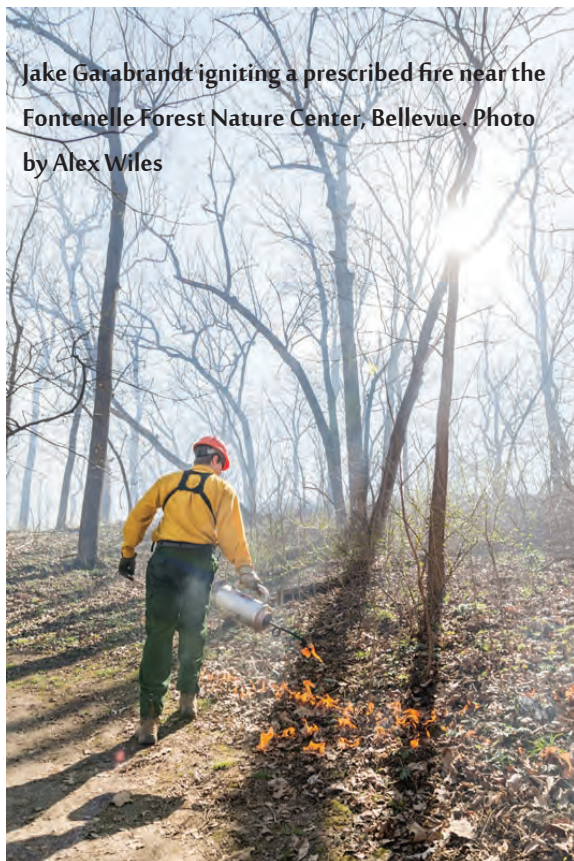
Photo by Larry Radant



Fontenelle Forest

Fontenelle Forest (FF) is a private non-profit organization, a National Natural Landmark and a National Historic District. FF owns and manages 2053 acres which are comprised of upland oak/hickory woodlands with interspersed restored prairies, and floodplain wetlands. With 25 miles of hiking trails, 1 mile of wooden boardwalk trails, over 60 Nebraska Phase Earth Lodge sites, and the largest urban nature center in the region, FF provides exceptional opportunities for nature and history lovers to explore this beautiful landscape in Nebraska. Upon European settlement of the area, grazing by large herbivores and fire were eliminated from the landscape. As a result, FF properties have become severely degraded by an increasingly shade-tolerant canopy and sub-canopy, invasion by exotic plants, lack of fire, and little natural oak regeneration, all contributing to the decrease in native flora and fauna and reduced recreational opportunities.

In 2015, FF was awarded a grant from NET to support oak woodland and savanna restoration efforts. Additional partners on the grant included Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and private donors.



Jake Garabrandt igniting a prescribed fire near the Fontenelle Forest Nature Center, Bellevue. Photo by Alex Wiles

By thinning out high stem-density areas, implementing prescribed fire, and inter-seeding high diversity local eco-type seed into prairies and savannas, a healthier, more resilient landscape is created.

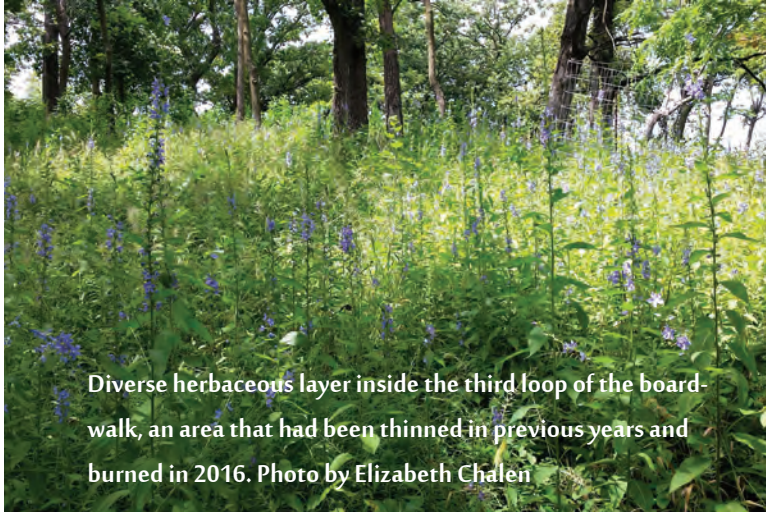
With a more diverse and healthy herbaceous layer, you will see less soil erosion and an increase in biodiversity. Conducting controlled burns will aid in building soil organic matter, provide a more efficient method of controlling invasive species, and stimulate oak regeneration.

Measuring success:

During the first year of insect baseline surveys, researchers found over 500 species, many of which were previously unknown on the properties. Also found were the Dun Skipper, *Euphyes vestris*, and Banded Hairstreak, *Satyrium calanus*, both Tier II species of conservation concern. Two oak savanna dependent insect genus's (*Leptogaster* sp. – robber fly, and *Formica* sp. – ant) were found in areas which had been thinned and burned.

Vegetation surveys have been taking place for two years. Contractors found that transects located in areas that had been burned and thinned also had the highest Floristic Quality Index.

Exploring the Oak Woodlands



Diverse herbaceous layer inside the third loop of the boardwalk, an area that had been thinned in previous years and burned in 2016. Photo by Elizabeth Chalen



Bird survey baseline data indicate that House Wrens are the most abundant species at Fontenelle Forest and Neale Woods.

To date, 240 acres have been burned, 230 acres have been thinned with a hack and squirt method, and 5 acres have been thinned using light to moderate chainsaw work. During the dormant season of 2016-2017 plans are being made to burn an additional 900 acres.

Hikers, birdwatchers, butterfly enthusiasts, history buffs and other nature lovers will enjoy a more open oak canopy on ridgetops, better views of wildlife, breezy hilltops and perhaps even fewer mosquitos as they stroll over the trails of Fontenelle Forest thanks to support from the Nebraska Environmental Trust and other partners.



Red-headed Woodpecker on bur oak tree. Photo by Josh Preister

Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary - Integrating New Core Habitat

The Iain Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary is known around the world for hosting a spectacular natural event each Spring: the annual migration of Sandhill Cranes. During this time more than 500,000 Sandhill Cranes, endangered Whooping Cranes and millions of other waterfowl and shorebirds converge on the Platte River in central Nebraska and the Rowe Sanctuary offers people a front row seat.

For more than 40 years, Rowe Sanctuary has protected habitat along the Platte River for the benefit of migratory birds in the Central Flyway. While their mission is to conserve a globally important bird resource, the Iain Nicolson Audubon Center's unique outdoor, experienced-based education is the heart of what they do. Conservation and education are both highlighted in a current project funded by the Nebraska Environmental Trust.

With funding and support from the Trust and other conservation partners, Rowe Sanctuary is improving habitat for cranes and other wildlife on a recent expansion at the core of the contiguous, protected habitat complex. The project centers on the restoration of upland prairie and wet meadow habitat, increasing native plant diversity, and will include reducing habitat fragmentation and removing hazards to at-risk species. On-the-ground work will include reseeding, tree removal and the development of grazing management infrastructure. One unique aspect of the project is the removal of nearly one mile of above-ground power line bisecting the grasslands. The line represents a significant threat of bird collisions due to its proximity to one of the largest crane roosts in the world.

Perhaps the most exciting piece to the project is a new opportunity for outreach and education related to this and other work being completed at the Sanctuary. A new vehicle pull-out will be constructed where visitors can learn more about the species and habitats that Rowe Sanctuary protects and take in views of one of the largest, intact wet meadows remaining in the Platte River valley and a significant day-time feeding and loafing location for migrating Sandhill Cranes.

This project represents early steps toward the realization of a new, long-term vision of a biologically rich and diverse Platte River, buoyed by the work and resources at Rowe Sanctuary, where people locally and globally can connect with nature and the power to protect it.



Cranes flying in at the Platte River

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission - Nebraska's Natural Legacy Project



Turk's-cap lilies had not been found at Indian Cave State Park for many years, but successful forest management efforts have now cleared the way for their growth. Photo by Northern Prairies Land Trust.

The Nebraska Natural Legacy Project works to conserve declining and common wildlife and their habitats. Habitat improvements not only benefit native animals but also offer people beautiful places to explore and enjoy. Nebraska's natural areas help clean the water we drink, shelter pollinators needed for many of the foods we eat, and clean the air we breathe.

One prime example is Indian Cave State Park (SP) located in southeastern Nebraska. This park is within the Indian Cave Bluffs Biologically Unique Landscape (BUL) which means it is a priority for conservation because of its intact habitat and at-risk wildlife. Biologists realized that the oak forest was aging and that young oak trees were not surviving.

The forest floor was also being overtaken with invasive species. Indian Cave SP was transitioning away from an open oak forest, and forming a dense tangled understory. Immediate intervention was needed. The park was selected as a Natural Legacy Project Demonstration Site because of the high diversity of eastern deciduous forest plant and animal species that inhabit the bluffs, where visitors can learn about ongoing management activities and view the changes over time. Well over 3,000 acres of public lands in the Indian Cave Bluffs BUL have been improved so far. Habitat management includes prescribed fire and invasive species control, such as labor-intensive hand pulling of prolific garlic mustard, in order to sustain healthy oak woodlands.

The project also supported two graduate students who were studying tree community composition and tracking actions that were leading to successful oak seedling regeneration. The results of their research are being used to inform decisions being made for the Indian Cave Bluffs BUL. Because of sound management, campers and park guests have the opportunity to see numerous woodland wildflowers bloom that had not been seen in the park for many years, enjoy the shade offered by the deciduous trees during picnics or hikes on the trails in the summer, watch leaves turn the colors of fall, and catch a glimpse or the sounds of local wildlife throughout the seasons.

The Nebraska Natural Legacy Project touches many landscapes. Mixed-grasslands south of the Platte River in Lincoln, Dawson, and northern Frontier counties form the Loess Canyons BUL which supports wildlife, grazing, and a way of life for ranchers and those who appreciate the resources offered by the prairie. The mixed-grass prairie is both rangeland and wildlife habitat, threatened with uncontrolled spread of eastern redcedars. Many landowners recognize that prescribed fire is economical and one of the most effective methods of halting the spread of eastern redcedars that otherwise degrades the prairie. The Natural Legacy Project has been working with landowners and local prescribed burn associations. Over the last three years, controlled burns have reduced cedars and improved the ecological integrity of more than 32,000 acres of mixed-grass prairie in the canyons. A rare bright orange and black beetle seems to also like the conservation efforts. Biologists are finding more American burying beetles, a Nebraska Tier I at-risk species, in locations cleared of cedars in the Loess Canyons. Wapiti Wildlife Management Area is a protected public area in the BUL, where visitors can enjoy the wild and remote landscape filled with birds, elk, and the rare American burying beetles.

Bird Conservancy of the Rockies

Mountain Plovers are a small ground-nesting bird only associated with the Great Plains of North America. Over the past 15 years, with investment from the Nebraska Environmental Trust, Bird Conservancy and their partners have worked with farmers to conserve this state-threatened bird in southwestern Nebraska.

The Plover story could just as easily be called a happy accident. About 15 years ago, Larry Snyder, a local farmer, was fishing with his kids at Oliver Reservoir in Kimball when a young lady named Cris Carnine introduced herself. She was the first biologist for the Nebraska Prairie Partners, a collaboration between Bird Conservancy and Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. After talking to Cris for a while about birds, Larry realized he had a rare bird nesting in his fields, the Mountain Plover. Soon after, Larry was hired to help talk to other farmers about Mountain Plovers. Little was known about the species in Nebraska. How many were there? What habitat did they prefer? After several years of filling in the knowledge gaps it became quite obvious these birds were using crop fields for breeding.

More than ten years later, with landowner collaboration, they have found and marked 900 plover nests on crop fields. Marking nests with tall, brightly colored stakes enables farmers to drive around nests and continue farming. This method has resulted in an estimated 105-200 chicks hatching per year! Today, they have an ongoing collaborative effort with 80 farmers across approximately 200,000 acres of cropland in southwest Nebraska. They knew this would be good for the birds. But they had no idea how much saving these birds would also benefit people. "Our" landowners take such pride in "their" birds. Working together, each year, they find, mark and save nests.



In addition, these birds have become an economic driver. Landowners and the Kimball County Tourism Department now partner to promote grassland bird tours. In case you did not know, bird watching is the fastest growing pastime in the United States. Birders travel from afar, which supports rural communities. In Kimball, we see folks coming from over 400 miles to add a Mountain Plover or McCown's Longspur to their "life list". Who knew that what started as a conversation in passing would make such a positive impact on people, birds, and land.

"I grew up with them since this all started...got attached to the little things, I see little broods with their families and see how camouflaged they are and it brings you closer to nature being out here. Why not let them have their nest, and I am learning with them too." - Local landowner

Omaha's Lauritzen Gardens Fosters Environmental Stewardship

Lauritzen Gardens is an urban oasis, encompassing 100 acres of riverfront hills just minutes from downtown Omaha. The garden is one of Nebraska's most highly visited attractions, welcoming 222,402 guests in 2015. Renowned for its beautiful gardens and plant displays, Lauritzen Gardens is also committed to environmental stewardship.

The conservation program at Lauritzen Gardens is dedicated to the conservation of plants, the advancement of conservation principles, and the stewardship of the region's biological diversity. The recently-opened Conservation Discovery Garden, funded in large part by a grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust, visually weaves this mission into the landscape of Lauritzen Gardens.



Conservation Garden Pond by Larry Fasnacht

The interpretive concept of this beautiful and innovative garden is that of a "conservation walk" along which visitors encounter demonstrations of conservation practices including stormwater management, rainwater harvesting, and landscaping with native plants. These practices are on vivid display through landscape features including a series of bio-retention ponds, an above-ground rainwater storage silo, and a woodland restoration area.

The garden features are supported by interpretive signage that identifies (1) the conservation challenge (e.g., stormwater pollution), (2) solutions being demonstrated in the Conservation Discovery Garden, and (3) actions that can be taken by individuals to address the challenge. The Lauritzen Gardens website also has a page devoted to the Conservation Discovery Garden that provides additional information as well as ideas for personal implementation through links to conservation agencies and organizations and other web-based materials.

The Conservation Discovery Garden was profiled at the 9th International Congress on Education in Botanic Gardens in St. Louis in 2015. Attended by participants from over 40 nations, the congress was focused on leveraging the vibrant global network of botanic gardens to think big about engaging the public in biodiversity issues. In his presentation, "A Conservation Walk: Conveying Conservation Messaging through a Garden Landscape," Lauritzen Gardens director of conservation, Jim Locklear, described the innovative design and interpretive concept for the new garden.

One of the unanticipated values of the Conservation Discovery Garden is aesthetic rather than educational. As visitors make their way up the paved walkway they are also rewarded with a beautiful view back into the garden and across the Missouri River valley to the east. The Conservation Discovery Garden has become an integral part of the visitor experience at Lauritzen Gardens.

Public Information and Education Grants

2016 marks the seventh full year that the Nebraska Academy of Sciences (NAS) has administered the Nebraska Environmental Trust (NET) Public Information and Education mini-grant program. The first grants that NAS reviewed were submitted in the fourth quarter of 2009 and were awarded in 2010. Since then NAS has reviewed and awarded over \$290,000 to numerous recipients all across the state.



In calendar year 2016, NAS received a total of 49 grant applications and a total request of \$133,484. Over \$40,000 has been awarded to date and the fourth quarter award is yet to be determined. Grant applications for the first quarter of 2017 will be accepted until January 6th, 2017.

This past year NAS received applications for numerous types of projects; recycling guides, garden greenhouses and garden projects, many different types of water quality and conservation projects, as well as habitat and environmental education and improvement projects. Grants were awarded to a few research projects and quite a number of grants were given to entities for conference or meeting support in order to bring in special speakers, publish educational materials, or provide activities to help attendees understand environmental concepts. Awards were granted to school groups, private foundations, individuals, and government entities such as NRDs, and city and county governments.

These projects all promise to improve our environment, increase education in environmental areas, and touch many of our Nebraska citizens in meaningful ways. Here are some of the projects from 2016: Engaging Nebraska Students in Environmental Science; The Central Nebraska Prairie Reader; Soil Rebuilders Advanced Composter Training; Train the Trainer Prescribed Fire Program; Groundwater Education Getaway.

One of the guidelines NAS reviewers use in evaluating grant applications is how many people are reached with the limited funds available and how easy it would be for other groups to use the same materials or process to reach an even wider audience. The groups mentioned above have done an excellent job of making the best use of grant funds in reaching the widest audience.

The Nebraska Environmental Trust Public Information and Education Mini-Grant Program awards mini-grants of up to \$3,000 each, to support the presentation and dissemination of information and perspectives that will stimulate enhanced environmental stewardship in any category eligible for NET funding. These categories are habitat, surface and ground water, waste management, air quality, and soil management. The grant expands dialogue on important current conservation topics and provides information on emerging or highly useful conservation methods. All Nebraska individuals, private organizations, and public entities are eligible to apply for these funds. For more information on these grants, contact:

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Trust Office and Staff



From left to right:
Mark Brohman - Executive Director
Marilyn Tabor - Grants Administrator
Sheila Johnson - Public Information Officer
Allison La Duke - Grants Assistant
Pam Deines - Administrative Secretary

Pictured left: Lori Moore, whom the Trust lost on May 21, 2016. Lori worked for the Trust for 8 years and will be remembered for her contributions.

Office of The Nebraska Environmental Trust - The Ferguson House

The Ferguson House was built between 1909 and 1911 by William Henry and Myrtle Ferguson and is considered to be one of the finest examples of Second Renaissance Revival architecture in the area. Mr. Ferguson helped introduce winter wheat and alfalfa to Nebraska and was owner of Yankee Hill Brick and co-owner of Capital Beach Amusement Park, President of Beatrice Foods and owner of Woodlawn Dairy. The State of Nebraska acquired the property from the Ferguson family in 1961 and the property was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The house is a well-known landmark in Lincoln located across from the Nebraska State Capitol. The staff of the Nebraska Environmental Trust have occupied the second floor of the Ferguson House since 2005 and manage the entire property. The first floor living and dining rooms are available to rent for meetings and events to the community. For more information, you may call the Ferguson House Coordinator at 402-471-5417.



Facts and Financials

The Nebraska Environmental Trust...

... is funded by the Nebraska Lottery. The Lottery has transferred more than \$260 million to the Trust in the last 22 years.

... covers the cost of operations through interest earnings. The Trust has operated with overhead expenditures equaling less than 2.5 % of income since it was created.

... has completed 23 grant cycles and will announce the results of the 23rd round of award recommendations in February 2017.

FY 15-16

Income

Interest income	\$ 683,021.33
Lottery proceeds	\$18,815,901.00

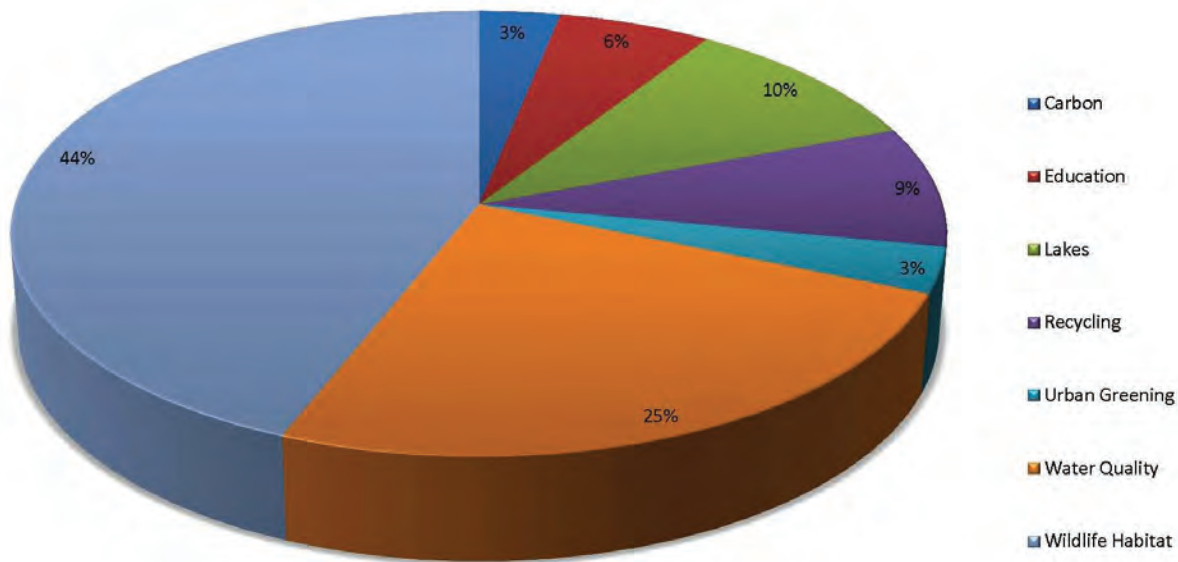
Expenses

Operations	\$ 434,048.15
Grant Awards	\$ 19,491,958.00

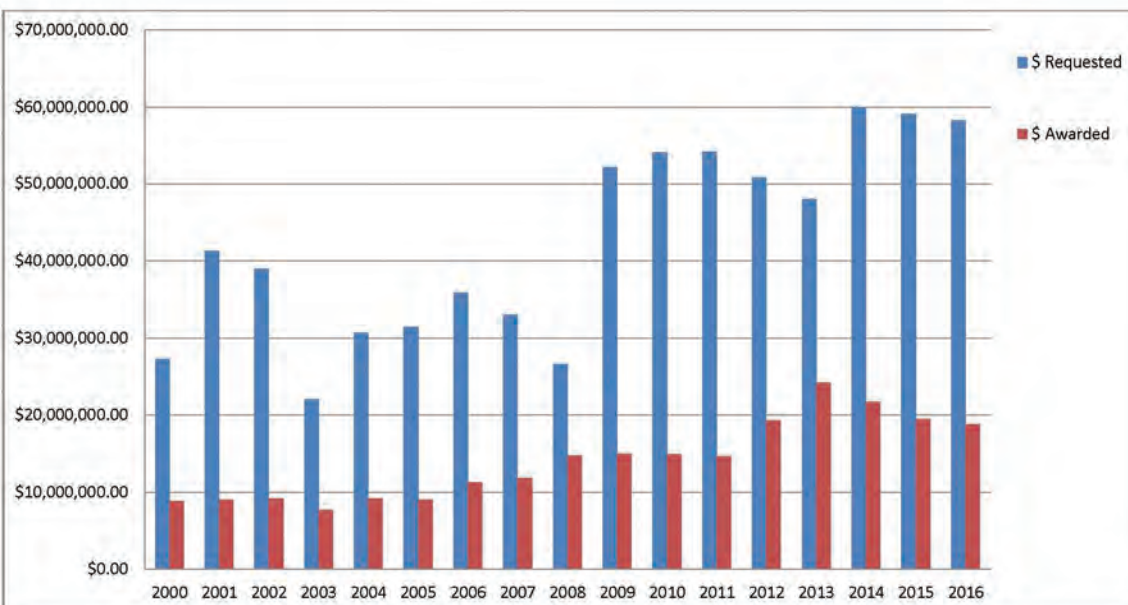
Average Operation expenses to income percentage from 1994-2015 = 2.17%

Distribution of Grants Through The Years

Grant Awards by Category 1994-2016



Amount Requested vs Awarded



2016 Grant Listing

The following is a listing of the 2016 grants awarded by the Nebraska Environmental Trust. The Trust can provide grants over a three year period and the funding is noted accordingly. Due to space limitations, only the project sponsor and a brief description of the project have been outlined; to find additional project information, contact the Trust office at 402-471-5409 or visit our website at: www.environmentaltrust.org

Angels on Wheels

Electronic collection events. \$86,400 (yr. 1 of 1)

Auburn Public Schools

Building a greenhouse educational facility that will serve as a hands-on experience for students. \$220,021 (yr. 1 of 1)

Boy Scouts of America

Replanting trees at Chadron State Park. \$15,000 (yr.1 of 3)

Brownell Talbot School

Emerald Ash Borer project at the school to serve as a pilot and prototype for other schools to replicate. \$21,030 (yr. 1 of 1)

Buffalo County Historical Society

To upgrade lighting, plumbing and HVAC fixtures and systems. \$27,878 (yr. 1 of 1)

Cass County

Facilitate the use of Natural Gas Vehicles (NGVs) in the county, city of Plattsmouth and surrounding communities. \$150,000 (yr. 2 of 3)

Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District

Gathering irrigation water use and environmental data to support the irrigation water management. \$65,460 (yr. 2 of 3)

Central Platte Natural Resources District

A groundwater flow model to simulate current and future groundwater and surface-water interactions within the Central Platte River basin (CPRB). \$305,100 (yr. 1 of 2)

Trust funding to facilitate the mechanical tree clearing and prescribed burn technical assistance. \$259,245 (yr. 2 of 3)

CLEAR Team

Community lake rehabilitation and enhancement projects. \$255,000 (yr. 2 of 3)

Community Investments Opportunities, LLC

Planning phase of an Environmental Improvement Demonstration Project. \$37,500 (yr. 1 of 1)

Ducks Unlimited

Restoration of the degraded emergent marsh wetland habitat located on the property. \$46,458 (yr. 1 of 1)

The North Platte River Invasive Species Removal and Wetland Restoration project is an effort to protect and restore two parcels of land. \$242,040 (yr. 1 of 1)

Habitat restoration for Platte River habitat supporting migrating waterfowl and other wildlife. \$137,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

The restoration of the degraded river and alkaline wetland habitat. \$130,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

Five Rivers Resource RC & D

Household hazardous waste collections events in southeast Nebraska. \$54,446 (yr. 1 of 3)

Aid in controlling troublesome weed species. \$56,579 (yr. 1 of 3)

Fontenelle Forest Association

Restoration of oak woodlands and prairie. \$99,000 (yr. 1 of 2)

Year-round exhibit at Fontenelle Forest showcasing native birds of prey. \$300,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

Friends of Heron Haven

Two environmental education programs at the Heron Haven Wetland sanctuary. \$7,290 (yr. 1 of 3)

Grand Island Area Clean Community System

Continued operation of the Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) facility for proper and safe disposal of HHW and recyclable products. \$55,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

Green Recycling Enterprises

Recycling containers at public events throughout Nebraska. \$147,275 (yr. 2 of 3)

Habitat for Humanity

Selectively dismantling a house through the process of deconstruction. \$160,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

Hastings, City of

Vadose Nitrate Study for the City of Hastings. \$100,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

Ian Nicolson Audubon Center at Rowe Sanctuary

Integrate new core habitat and restore essential interconnectedness between grasslands and the Platte River through execution of the following Nebraska Natural Legacy Project strategies. \$37,551 (yr. 1 of 2)

Joslyn Castle Institute for Sustainable Communities

An annual series of public lectures, workshops, conferences and distributed information on applied practices with emphasis on Habitat, Surface and Groundwater, Waste Management, Air Quality and Soil Management. \$125,000 (yr. 2 of 2)

Keep Alliance Beautiful

Sustain local recycling operations, maintenance and staff wages. \$81,189 (yr. 1 of 1)

Lied Lodge and Conference Center

Educational exhibit located in the Visitor Gallery of the Fuelwood Energy Plant located on the grounds of Lied Lodge & Conference Center at Arbor Day Farm. \$65,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

Lincoln, City of

Construct a facility that will offer year-round collection of hazardous waste from households and small businesses. \$300,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

The Eastern Saline Wetlands Project 2016 will conserve the most imperiled natural community in Nebraska. \$265,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

Lincoln, City of (Parks and Recreation)

Manage and enhance tallgrass prairie, riparian habitat and wetland areas. \$305,000 (yr. 1 of 3)

Little Blue Natural Resources District

Restoring wetlands and provide compatible solutions that will compliment agriculture operations. \$208,865 (yr. 1 of 3)

Live Well Omaha

Public bike sharing program currently operating in the greater Omaha metro area. \$30,000 (yr. 3 of 3)

An expansion to increase the bike share system's ability to function as a transit extender and last-mile solution for bus commuters. \$292,667 (yr. 1 of 3)

Lower Loup Natural Resources District

Cost-share flowmeters for irrigation wells to increase awareness of pumping totals occurring in the Lower Loup Natural Resources District. \$57,050 (yr. 3 of 3)

Lower Platte Natural Resources District

Wahoo Creek Watershed Water Quality Management Plan. \$106,000 (yr.1 of 1)

Middle Niobrara Natural Resources District

To establish the Long Pine Creek Watershed - Phase I Implementation Project for the priority sub watersheds. \$62,600 (yr. 2 of 2)

Mid Nebraska Disposal

Automated sorting equipment to enable recyclables to be sorted as efficiently and cost effectively. \$200,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

Nebraska Academy of Sciences

Administration of the Public Information and Education grant to support the presentation and dissemination of information that will stimulate enhanced environmental stewardship. \$57,200 (yr. 3 of 3)

Nebraska Association of Resources Districts

Maximize irrigation inputs, restore wetlands, and recharge the aquifer, while being compatible with landowners' agriculture operations. \$183,750 (yr.2 of 3)

Nebraska Cattlemen

Capturing the landowners' ethic in their own words and

images, giving the recipients an opportunity to share their story. \$10,000 (yr. 1 of 3)

Nebraska Community Energy Alliance

Seed fund Central City and Gothenburg to reduce the price per kilowatt of each of the 500 kW solar projects of the Nebraska Flyway Community Solar Project. \$490,030 (yr. 1 of 1)

Carbon reduction and energy savings transportation project to nine new government locations and three returning cities. \$349,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

Nebraska Department of Education

Sponsor a series of workshops across the state that will train teachers to teach about soil conservation practices. \$29,627 (yr.1 of 1)

Nebraska Department of Natural Resources

Water Resources Cash Fund pursuant to legislative mandate of LB229, 2011. \$3,300,000 (yr. 2 of 3)

Nebraska Energy Office

To purchase the ethanol blender pumps and where necessary new biofuel storage tanks. \$500,000 (yr. 1 of 2)

Nebraska Forest Service

Treat at least 2,000 strategically located acres of severely burned forest land to protect the surviving green trees. \$344,834 (yr. 3 of 3)

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

To provide the needed resources to a variety of wildlife species with special attention directed toward pollinators and the Monarch Butterfly. \$50,000 (yr. 1 of 3)

Active management of our State's oak woodlands ecosystem. \$95,000 (yr. 3 of 3)

WILD Nebraska program to encourage conservation and wildlife habitat on private lands. \$90,000 (yr. 3 of 3)

Trout in the Classroom is an environmental education program in which students have the opportunity to raise trout and engage in habitat study. \$45,108 (yr. 3 of 3)

The integration of wise stewardship practices within watersheds and riparian zones, combined with site specific in-stream enhancements to benefit both landowners and sensitive aquatic communities. \$100,000 (yr. 2 of 3)

Constructing sediment retention structures, expanding and improving wetland complexes, creating off-channel wetlands, and improving wetland functions at Conestoga Wildlife Management Area while providing educational and interpretive opportunities. \$300,000 (yr. 2 of 3)

Implement 10,000 acres of intensive wetland management over the next three years. \$75,000 (yr. 1 of 3)

Ongoing conservation actions throughout the State by improving over 100,000 acres of habitat over the next three years. \$430,000 (yr. 1 of 3)

To complete grassland habitat improvements on 25,000 acres of public and private lands. \$300,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition

Cooperative program among local rancher working groups and Nebraska Grazing Lands Coalition (NGLC) technicians that will provide Nebraska landowners with technical assistance and equipment to effectively monitor plant communities and soil resources on their lands. \$100,000 (yr. 2 of 3)

Grazing cover crops on highly erosive row crop acres that are part of routine row crop plant rotations. \$99,066 (yr. 1 of 3)

Nebraska Pharmacists Association

To support collection containers, shipping, and disposal costs to expand the current pilot and statewide efforts to address collection of both noncontrolled and controlled medications in 2016. \$280,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

Nebraska State Irrigation Association

For the continuation and growth of the Academy is an opportunity for the NET to aid in good water resources decision-making into the future. \$61,665 (yr. 2 of 3)

Nebraska State Recycling Association

Recycling equipment grant to build recycling infrastructure across Nebraska by continuing the "smaller grants" program with NSRA. \$292,800 (yr. 1 of 2)

Nebraska Statewide Arboretum

Improving the resiliency and environmental sustainability of community green spaces. \$277,081 (yr. 2 of 2)

Nebraska Wildlife Federation

Restore habitat important for the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*), bees and other pollinators. \$14,358 (yr. 1 of 1)

Nemaha Natural Resources District

Purchase of a new no-till grassland drill. \$22,500 (yr. 1 of 1)

NET Foundation for Television, Inc.

Development of "Imagining The Platte" a visually compelling new environmental education effort in the Platte Basin. \$40,868 (yr. 3 of 3)

North Platte Natural Resources District

Data Access and Monitoring Partnership (DAMP), a telemetry project to determine the viability of telemetry as both a water management and data gathering tool. \$52,342 (yr. 1 of 3)

Northeast Nebraska RC & D

Dispose and recycle approximately 22,500 pounds of household hazardous waste and another 45,000 pounds of electronic waste (E-waste) over a 3-year period. \$20,705 (yr. 2 of 3)

Northern Prairies Land Trust

Enhancement of grassland, primarily through implementation of invasive tree clearing, prescribed fire, planned grazing and reseeding prairie. \$281,000 (yr. 1 of 3)

Omaha Bikes

Addressing air quality in the Omaha Metropolitan (Metro) area by providing free bike parking at major events throughout the community. \$28,900 (yr. 1 of 1)

Omaha, The Transit Authority of the City of Omaha

Upgrade the vehicles in the ongoing Dodge Street Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project to larger, 60 foot articulated buses powered by Compressed Natural Gas (CNG). \$150,000 (yr. 1 of 2)

Design and construct a bus rapid transit (BRT) project in Omaha, Nebraska. \$200,000 (yr. 2 of 3)

Omaha's Henry Doerly Zoo

To install a solar photovoltaic (PV) system to demonstrate renewable electricity production for its 1.7 million visitors per year. \$100,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

Papio-River Natural Resources District

Acquire an estimated 750 acres of floodplain bottomlands, wetlands and riverine habitat at the historic confluence of the Platte and Missouri Rivers. \$300,000 (yr. 3 of 3)

Pheasants Forever (Lewis and Clark Chapter)

A no-till grass drill to be used by landowners to establish wildlife habitat. \$27,500 (yr. 1 of 1)

Pheasants Forever

A no-till grass drill to be used by landowners to establish wildlife habitat in the Loup/Ringnecks Chapter. \$27,500 (yr. 1 of 1)

To develop a statewide Pollinator Habitat Program. \$39,815 (yr. 3 of 3)

Establishing permanent wildlife habitat as landowners have averaged 435 wildlife shrubs and/or trees per corner. \$300,000 (yr. 2 of 3)

Grassland Improvement Program that has changed the culture of prescribed burning on private lands in the regions it has been offered. \$150,000 (yr. 1 of 3)

PrairieLand Gold LLC.

A wastewater treatment and nutrient recovery project. \$400,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

Pyrite Elementary PTO

An outdoor enhancement project aimed at fostering the students' education on environment preservation. \$17,769 (yr. 1 of 1)

Quail Forever

Supporting prescribed burning on private lands in the state, forming prescribed burn associations, conducting landowner education outreach events and increasing the use of prescribed burning on the landscape. \$136,400 (yr. 1 of 1)

Rainwater Basin Joint Venture

Restoring watershed function to Atlanta Waterfowl Production Area located in south-central Nebraska. \$60,375 (yr. 3 of 3)

Central Loess Hills Prescribed Fire Training Exchange program will assist landowners by allowing them to rest their pasture prior to prescribed fire to economically increase the effectiveness of the fires. \$84,500 (yr. 3 of 3)

Rainwater Basin Joint Venture Working Lands Initiative. \$104,480 (yr. 2 of 3)

Integrate Rainwater Basin Wetlands into farm operations and maximize habitat on publically owned wetlands. \$250,000 (yr. 1 of 3)

Sandhills Scenic Byway Visitor/ Interpretive Center

The development of a comprehensive and educational source of birding opportunities along the 272 miles of the Sandhills Journey Scenic Byway—Nebraska Highway 2 between Alliance and Grand Island. \$20,300 (yr. 3 of 3)

Sandhills Resource Conservation and Development

To provide landowners in the central Sandhills region with tools needed to control Eastern Red Cedar encroachment and restore the rangeland to productive grazing land acres. \$33,967 (yr. 3 of 3)

Sandhills Task Force

Assisting private landowners in the restoration of streams, wetlands, and lakes degraded by ditching, channelization, stream erosion, invasive aquatic species, and excessive grazing. \$128,000 (yr. 2 of 3)

Sarpy County

The construction of a compressed natural gas (CNG) fueling station near 96th Street and Portal Road. \$200,000 (yr. 2 of 3)

Schmidt Transportation

To offset the incremental cost of 20 dual fuel vehicles and to build 1 public-access Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) fueling station at Schmidt Transportation distribution center in South Sioux City, NE. \$450,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

Scrap Central

Purchase a wire chopping machine to advance recycling efforts of holiday lights and electronic scrap. \$350,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

South Platte Natural Resources District

The project digitally scans and processes existing oil and gas well geophysical logs to gather information about the aquifer. \$200,000 (yr. 3 of 3)

Southwest Weed Management Area

Best management practices including mechanical, chemical, and biological control methods of the Western Republican Riparian Improvement Project. \$307,500 (yr. 1 of 1)

Spencer Area Development Corporation

Rejuvenate the wildlife habitat of a 9.7 acre lake by dredging to a depth that will increase the capacity to sustain fish and other aquatic wildlife and plant species. \$222,894 (yr. 2 of 2)

The Nature Conservancy

Purchased two ranches along a 25-mile stretch of the middle Niobrara River and established the Niobrara Valley Preserve (NVP). \$164,277 (yr. 2 of 2)

Grassland management for plant diversity, pollinators, and wildlife, to improve management on approximately 30,000 acres of the Platte and Niobrara River valleys. \$57,184 (yr. 1 of 3)

Need to improve Nebraska's grasslands, employing proactive tactics such as prescribed burning, tree thinning, controlling invasive species, and developing community plans. \$66,462 (yr. 1 of 3)

The Nebraska Land Trust Incorporated

Pines and Buttes Preservation Project. \$270,000 (yr. 2 of 3)

Twin Valley Weed Management Area

Eastern Republican and Little Blue Riparian Improvement Project continues ongoing efforts to eradicate invasive species, control vegetation in stream channels, and improve riparian habitat along the Republican and Little Blue Rivers. \$125,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

University of Nebraska, Board of Regents

"Know Your Well" is a program designed for assessing the quality of drinking water derived from rural domestic wells. \$127,546 (yr. 1 of 3)

Project to train students and work with them to set camera 'traps' on their family lands each spring and fall by surveying swift fox on private lands. \$60,670 (yr. 2 of 3)

Tool to enable farmers to quantify and visualize the sustainability of their fields. \$15,587 (yr. 1 of 3)

Through on-the-ground volunteer service, Master Naturalists will provide hundreds of thousands of dollars in salary savings through habitat management in Nebraska. \$91,947 (yr. 3 of 3)

Project is intended to develop and deliver products and educational programming to Nebraska producers that will enable them to assess potential environmental and social risks on their operations. \$50,000 (yr. 2 of 3)

Project to enhance soil ecosystems services with cover crops. \$84,607 (yr. 1 of 3)

An integrated and on-line program using GIS mapping and database of quality assessed data from past and ongoing studies of Nebraska's vadose zone. \$146,600 (yr. 1 of 3)

A new exhibit focused around soil and environmental sustainability to Raising Nebraska. \$250,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

A Tier-1 (screening-level) tool proposed for all of Nebraska to assess the leaching potential of volatile and nonvolatile chemicals. \$90,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

To complete "Cherish Nebraska" project to redevelop the fourth floor of the University of Nebraska State Museum (UNSM)'s historic Morrill Hall. \$233,000 (yr. 1 of 3)

To demonstrate science-based dietary intervention strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emission from cattle in ruminant production systems. \$110,074 (yr. 2 of 3)

Upper Elkhorn Natural Resources District

A new hydrogeologic framework is needed to better understand aquifer characteristics, flow paths and recharge areas in order to better understand past and future water quality information. \$250,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

Upper Loup Natural Resources District

Facilitate a collaborative project to drill test holes, conduct borehole geophysical surveys and to design and install groundwater monitoring wells. \$90,000 (yr. 1 of 1)

Facilitate the collection of airborne thermal infrared data, purchase of additional instrumentation to measure and record groundwater-levels and temperature, and to oversee a study to enhance the understanding of spatial and temporal characteristics of groundwater/surface-water interaction in the Loup River basin. \$95,000 (yr. 2 of 3)

Upper Niobrara - White Natural Resources District

No-till drill in Northwest Nebraska. \$30,000 (yr. 1 of 1)



The Nebraska
Environmental Trust

preserving NATURAL NEBRASKA™ for future generations

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