

PANHANDLE RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT INC. 2012

Background and Council Structure: The Panhandle Resource Conservation & Development area includes all of Sioux, Dawes, Sheridan, Box Butte, Scotts Bluff, Morrill, Garden, Banner, Kimball, Cheyenne, and Deuel Counties in Western Nebraska.

The Panhandle Resource Conservation and Development, Inc. is a public benefit “501(c) (3) non-profit organization,” The Panhandle RC&D, Inc. is a member organization. Sponsoring Membership is open to natural resources districts, county governments, corporations, incorporated cities and villages, special purpose districts and non-profit organization within the boundaries of the RC&D. Individual members that subscribe to the general goals and policies of the RC&D and wish to provide support to achieve these goals shall have all rights and privileges as Sponsoring and At Large members except the benefit of a seat on the Board, and the right to vote.

The Resource Conservation & Development Program continues as “open ended” in that project proposals are continually being received by the Board while other projects are being completed.

The Panhandle RC&D was first organized in 1968.

Vision: “A well adjusted and developed Panhandle community incorporating social and natural resources, agriculture, industry, tourism, recreation, and commercial enterprises to promote an economy that will enhance the quality of life for all families and individuals.”

Values: *To create solutions for communities and their natural resources*

Mission: “Regional betterment for the eleven Panhandle Counties in Nebraska through mutual cooperation and participation of private and public interests.”

2011 to 2012 Projects:

High Plains Weed Management Association addressing North Platte River Invasive Species: (Land Conservation and Land Management)

The High Plains Weed Management Association (consisting of eight Panhandle Counties) has taken on the responsibility to address expansive growth of invasive species. Three main invasive species (Russian olive, Salt Cedar, and Phragmites) are targeted to be controlled in the watershed. With the help of Earth Team Volunteers the organization expended over \$300,000 dollars in addressing approximately 3,800 acres, improving over 140,000 acres in the watershed by addressing invasive species. Eight businesses were expanded or supported this year. The RC&D is providing technical and administrative assistance. Project value this year \$120,000

Organic Farming Collaborative Effort: (Land Management)

This is in cooperation with 9 out of the 12 RC&D's in Nebraska to help support Organic Farming through workshops and providing technical education and help to NRCS staff and those looking to be certified. This year Ron Miller our Organic Technician provided technical assistance to growers in the Panhandle of Nebraska. Special emphasis has been on soil health and salad bars of different plants to improve the soil health. A Soil Health conference was held on March 22, 2012 with 20 in attendance. This conference show cased “Terra Biotics” (biological products.) Project value this year \$10,000 to the Panhandle RC&D area.

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Panhandle Continuous No-Till Cropping Partnership: (Land Conservation)

The 2012 Panhandle No-Till Partnership Winter Conference, was held February 22 & 23. The Panhandle-wide project brought the latest information and best-practices to local producers regarding the benefits and opportunities no-till practices can provide. The Upper-Niobrara White, North Platte, and South Platte Natural Resources Districts, Panhandle Natural Resource Conservation Service offices, the Nebraska No-Till Cadre, UNL Cooperative Extension, and Panhandle RC&D are working together on the Panhandle No-Till Partnership. These local partners are dedicated to building upon and expanding efforts to increase the promotion and adoption of Continuous No-Till (CNT) cropping systems. The Conference provided education on the benefits of no-till, but also provides methods to take regarding Conservation Reserve Program acres and converting to a no-till operation. Project Value \$29,000 additional benefits were not able to be captured over 250 participated in this conference.

The Friends of the Intertribal Gathering: (Community Development) This is a local American Indian Powwow held at Fort Robinson State Park—is an annual event designed to celebrate and promote cultural awareness in northwestern Nebraska. Participants observe and display traditional Native American music, dance, crafts, and other traditions. The Gathering focuses on American Indian heritage and artistic performances including drumming, singing, storytelling, and dance. There is also a great opportunity to encourage and take part in the modeling of a healthy lifestyle through the 5-K Run/Walk and the ½-K Fun Run. Panhandle RC&D has provided all aspects of implementation, including committee development, website design, publications, meeting coordination, and grant application and administration. This year the event will be held on June 8th, 9th, and 10th in 2012. The Intertribal Gathering was awarded one of the top 100 events to see in North America by the American Bus Association for 2012.

We had seven drum groups, over 100 dancers with 23 Tribal Nations represented from Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Montana, South Dakota, and Wyoming were represented. This year's theme "Honoring People through Drum, Dance, and Song. Project Value to the region estimated at \$350,000 based on tourism benefits.

Bridges to Buttes: The Bridges to Buttes Scenic Byway Committee is working toward the enhancement of the travel industry along Highway 20 from Valentine, Nebraska to Harrison, Nebraska. We helped write a grant to Nebraska Tourism for a website. The Website has been completed with The Panhandle RC&D being the fiscal agent for the Byway Committee. Go to <http://www.bridgestobuttes.com/> for more information. Cost of the Website was \$3200.

Dull Knife College: The Northern Cheyenne have formed a committee under Dull Knife College to identify plans and funding for implementing a visitors center at the Cheyenne Break Out site west of Fort Robinson along Highway 20. The RC&D has helped locate the Cheyenne gravesite for those killed during the Cheyenne Breakout in 1875. We are helping to find dollars for a monument and visitors center at the event site and a similar reflection for prayer at the gravesite area. To date only about \$5,000 in volunteer efforts have occurred.

Banner County Wind Energy Association LLC: (Community Development/Land management). The Banner County Wind Energy Association is a committee under the Panhandle RC&D working to identify State and Federal laws to assist in the development of wind farms. Exporting power west is a goal of the association.

Project on hold at present but we have assisted in sending out newsletters and attended meetings. The value is estimated at \$1,000 accounting for volunteer help.

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Scottsbluff Community Christian School: Board development to insure sustainability and growth. With the assistance last year their Board has launched a Capital Campaign to raise \$500,000 by December to purchase land for a new school. Their vision: “To provide the children of Christian families in the Panhandle Region with a dynamic and accessible Christ-centered education that maximizes the gifts and abilities of every student and prepares each to be salt and light in the world. The RC&D is assisting in the fundraiser and grant writing as well. The value of this effort this past year is estimated at \$10,000 for conducting the feasibility Study to raise over \$500,000.

2011 - 2012 project value	Project Value	RC&D Administrative Cost
Name		
Community Christian School board development and New School feasibility campaign	\$10,000.00	\$500.00
High Plains WMA	\$120,000.00	\$19,992.00
Farm and Ranch Museum accounting assistance	\$15,000.00	\$3,000.00
Bridges to Buttes	\$3,000.00	\$1,960.00
Friends of the Intertribal Gathering	\$350,000.00	\$2,700.00
Northern Cheyenne Monument & Visitors Center	\$5,000.00	\$500.00
Soil Health for drought protection Information Campaign	\$25,000.00	\$2,000.00
Organic Farming Collaborative Effort	\$10,000.00	\$2,000.00
Panhandle No Till Cadre	\$29,000.00	\$3,920.00
Banner County Wind Energy Group	\$1,000.00	\$250.00
Totals	\$568,000.00	\$36,822.00

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Featured Project 13th Annual Intertibial Gathering at Fort Robinson State Park in Northwestern Nebraska.

The 13th Annual Intertribal Gathering held at Fort Robinson State Park in Northwestern. Over 4530 participated in the festivities throughout the weekend. The Gathering focused on the following arts activities: Native American traditional drum, song, storytelling and dancing. This event brought in 12 vendors to display and sell Native American art and crafts. We had 7 drum groups in attendance this year. (Sons of the Oglala were the host drum. We had 7 additional drum groups. The Gathering brought 91 registered Native American dancers, 30 tiny tots and other additional dancers for prayer and honoring. Friday night had 800 in attendance, Saturday afternoon witnessed about 900 with 850 in the evening. Sunday's session had around 850 in attendance. An additional 1,000 people were reported shopping at vendors concessions and moving on through the exhibits. We had 12 vendors of which 80% of the vendors had authentic Native American art on display and for sale. Vendors were from Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, South Dakota and Nebraska. Of the 91 dancers, 23 tribal Nations were represented.

We had two featured" Story Tellers): Rose Red Elk, known as Red Feather Woman an award winning recording artist, for "The Keepers of the Earth" and two time nominated for a Native American Music Award and Indian Summer Music Award for her latest CD-"Distant Drums" She weaves the oral traditional of Native American stories and the new sound of today's music. Richard Williams past executive director of the American Indian College fund was there to tell stories told to him by past medicine men and elders as he was growing up in the Crawford area 60 years ago. Richard also brought historical knowledge of the are in perspective for American Indians and non- American Indians.

Our Master of Ceremonies: Chris Eagle Hawk is a member of the Oglala Lakota Oyate. He is a Cultural consultant proving Lakota knowledge, drum therapy, self-awareness and common man beliefs for youth and adults. Chris has been an Eyapaha (Announcer, MC) for over 35 years for all types Lakota and native gatherings. Chris did an outstanding job of telling the audience the meaning of each dance and a little history behind the dances.

The Gathering provided positive multicultural awareness for those in attendance throughout the Panhandle of Nebraska, Colorado, South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, and other states.

A successful 5-Krun and walk on Saturday provided an opportunity to help reinforce the need for perseverance and a healthy life style in order to compete in the world today. We had over 150 runners and walkers this year.

Intertribal Gathering

June 8, 9, and 10, 2012



Northern Traditional

Intertribal



Participants



Grand Entree



Story Telling
Red Feather Woman

5 K Run and Walk Photo's

