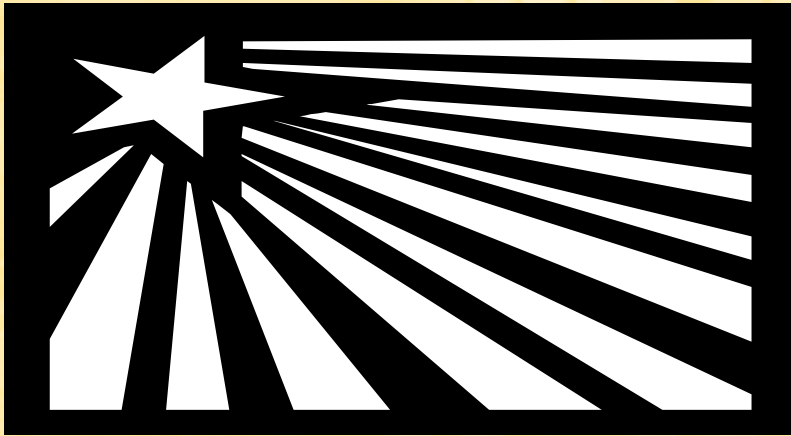


“To Sustain our Quality of Life and to Work Cooperatively to
Successfully Address Economic, Environmental and Social Issues”

S. O. A. R.— 2008

State of the Area Report



ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT OF THE LOUP BASIN RC&D COUNCIL

Loup Basin RC&D Council

801 "S" St Suite 2

Ord, NE 68862

(308) 728-3393

clayton.jons@ne.usda.gov

Sara.Neemeyer@rcdnet.net

Linda.Studnicka@rcdnet.net

www.loupbasinrcd.net

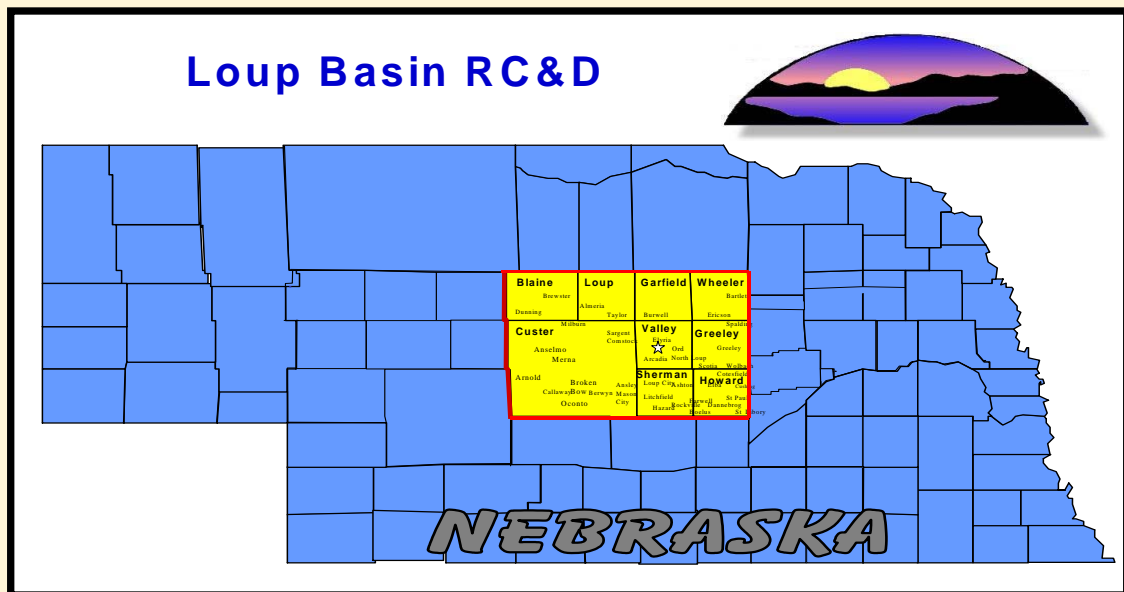
MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

IT HAS BEEN AN HONOR AND PRIVLEDGE TO SERVE THE LOUP BASIN RC&D COUNCIL FOR 2008. THE LOUP BASIN RC&D HAS CONTINUED TO CARRY ON IT'S HIGH STANDARD OF SUCCESS. A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS AND PARTNERS WHO HAVE ASSISTED IN CARRYING OUT OUR PROJECTS. THROUGH THE COUNCILS EFFORTS WE HAVE SERVED OUR COMMUNITIES IN AREAS OF: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT, RENEWABLE ENERGY, AG-DIVERSITY, TOURISM AND RECREATION. AS WE GO INTO 2009 LET US CONTINUE TO "TURN LOCAL PEOPLES IDEAS INTO REALITY."



- DAN HRUZA, COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Loup Basin RC&D continues with its efforts to benefit our communities in the areas of economic development, tourism, conservation, and environmental education. We provide valuable technical resources and serve our communities with a local office to help them make things happen. The outcome of Strategic Planning meetings held in 1989 led to the formation of an eight county formal regional organization, under the official name of Central Nebraska Great Lakes Association (CNGLA). The group began holding monthly meetings. In 1992, the CNGLA prepared and submitted an application to become a Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) area. In 1993, the CNGLA was authorized as the Loup Basin RC&D Area. This funding provided technical staff and office with a vehicle and equipment. The Loup Basin RC&D Council has adopted a mission statement of "To Sustain our Quality of Life and to Work Cooperatively to Successfully Address Economic, Environmental and Social Issues" and a vision statement of "To Be A Vibrant, Dynamic Progressive Region By Helping Local People Turn Ideas Into Reality."



"10 Years of Making Things Happen in the Central Nebraska Loup Basin"

“TO SUSTAIN OUR QUALITY OF LIFE AND TO PAGE 3

The Loup Basin RC&D Council was 70 members strong in 2007/2008. The council actively uses committees to address issues and carry out the goals that the council establishes in the annual plan of work.

1)The Loup Basin RC&D Tourism Committee— The tourism committee has been promoting tourism throughout the area since 1998. They have developed an interactive tourism CD that promotes area businesses and attractions. The committee has included copies of the CD in Junk Jaunt books for the past three years. Individuals from throughout the US receive the book and the CD provides an opportunity to “get the word out” and get people to return to the area. The Tourism and Byway committees have representatives attend workshops and brochure swaps to help spread the tourism word for the RC&D area.

2)Loup Rivers Scenic Byway Committee—The Loup Rivers Scenic Byway Committee goals is to focus on Promotion of the Highway 11/91 corridor. The committee’s primary project has been the organization of a 220 mile Nebraska’s Junk Jaunt. In 2007, over 300 vendors in 31 towns participated. Over 800 vendor guides were requested by mail prior to the event. This year the pre Junk Jaunt pre-order numbers will exceed 1000 which is a excellent for the five year event. The number of paid vendors is holding steady for the 2008 event. Indications it should be **another banner year for one of Nebraska’s premier tourist events.** The committee has also submitted the paperwork to the IRS for their 501 (c)(3) designation. The committee has developed a paid part time position to help with the Junk Jaunt and other projects.

3)The Loup Basin RC&D Economic Development Committee – meets monthly to address economic development issues in the area. The committee developed a series of grant writing and administration workshops. Over the past 5 years close to 170 people have taken the courses with requests for new sessions. The committee is continuing to working to develop a searchable business directory of the area.

4) The Loup Basin Water Association – brings together area irrigation districts and NRCS and NRD personnel to discuss and share similar concerns and resources. The Water Association meets at the Lower Loup NRD and the NRD coordinates and facilitates the meetings and tours held by the committee.

5) The Cedar River Stabilization Project Committee –completed ten landowners erosion sites along the Cedar-River this past year. The committee and participating landowners submitted and secured US Army Corps of Engineer Permits. Additional funding to assist 22 more landowners has been secured from Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund and Nebraska Dept. of Environmental Quality. Committee/Landowner meetings are used to discuss proposed practices and answer questions. The NE Game and Parks biologist has reviewed the sites for the new round of installations and three landowners have completed their practices. Three work sessions have been held with land owners and schools. Youth activities such as site monitoring teams, willow plantings and river cleanups have been held this year. A stream workshop and tour of completed sites have been used to educate landowners. The Cedar river project received the NE and Western RC&D youth award and has been sent to the National RC&D Association for consideration.

6) Loup Basin RC&D Ag-Diversity Networking Group - brings together ag-diversity producers to share ideas, concerns, and cooperate on projects. The group holds periodic tours of area producers currently in ag-diversity. The most recent tour/training session was held Sept 17th. The group sponsored two workshops this pasts year, Nebraska Food Cooperative along with a very successful Orangic Farming Workshop in June.

7) Keep Loup Basin Beautiful - The committee’s mission is “To engage individuals to take greater responsibility for improving their community environments. Keep Loup Basin Beautiful is an affiliate of Keep America Beautiful which focuses on litter prevention, waste reduction, beautification, education, individual responsibility, public-private partnerships, and volunteer action. The Keep Loup Basin Beautiful effort has also won state and national awards for the work that has been accomplished. Under the NDEQ Grant the committee works with adults, area schools and teachers to promote litter reduction and promote environmental education. This committee also coordinates projects such as scrap tire collections, hazardous waste collections and other environmental activities such as kids fairs.

8) Bio business friendly region—Hosted a successful grow your own fuel workshop and a woodland workshop in August with approximately 100 people in attendance. The group has also hosted three carbon sequestration and C-BED wind workshops with a follow up smaller scale wind/solar workshop. The group has also had discussions with companies in Colorado, Texas, Wyoming, and South Dakota about potential projects. The group is also working with North Central RC&D and partners on a grant that will hope focus on the area strengths. The group is working with South Dakota and others with the intent of promoting renewable energy for this area.

The Council also assisted area committees such as, the Taylor Area Builders. The group is working to increase economic development in their community. There have been several sub-committees that were also active this past year including the Nebraska's Junk Jaunt Sub committee, Alternative Energy, Bio-Energy Friendly Region, Loup Basin Information and Technology committee, marketing invasive species task force which is part of a state NRCS effort, and Sandhills Weed Management Area.

The Loup Basin Technology Center opened on July 13th with Governor Heineman in attendance. The center provides opportunity for businesses, groups and individuals to learn and advance their careers and education. The center has had the opportunity to host a variety of workshops and meetings in 2007/2008.

Notes from the Coordinator – 2008

2008 proved to be another successful year for the Loup Basin RC&D council. The Ord FFA won the State and Western RC&D youth award for their work with the conservation effort and assistance to the council on many projects over the past few years.

The Loup Basin Technology Center was a highlight and is something the area can be proud of. It is the work of good group of volunteers that did not give up on a dream of having something better for the area and it continues to see expanded use.

The Loup Basin RC&D is respected as a leader in the state which is a tribute to everyone's hard work. I would like to thank the staff Sara, Linda, and Adeline for their hard work and friendship. I would also like to thank our program manager Ken Noonan, Dough Christensen, and Steve Chick and others in the agency in Nebraska for the support that is provided the RC&D program, having worked in other states we are fortunate to have the support we have. Thanks folks!

Most of all I would like to thank the outstanding volunteers that make things happen, I am fortunate to have such a great bunch of folks that take time to work on projects that they care about. **THANKS.** LeRoy Jons, RC&D Coordinator, Loup Basin RC&D



Loup Basin RC&D Council adopts and completes projects on an ongoing basis and also has many ongoing projects, which may last from two to over ten years. The RC&D Council members have the great benefit of being able to decide and prioritize projects and project requests within the 9-county area. The Council meets monthly to adopt projects, review progress on projects, and approve the completion or cancellation of projects.

Loup Basin RC&D Council Adopted 26
Projects in FY 2008
(Partial listing)

- Grant Writers 101 -III
- Alternative Energy Forum—Grow your own Fuel
- Used Tire Collection '08
- Nebraska's Junk Jaunt '07
- Cedar River phase II
- Affiliated charity phone collection
- Organic Farming Workshop
- Nebraska Food Cooperative
- Woodland Workshop
- Valley/Garfield/Sherman County Edge Class
- Three wind/carbon sequestration workshops



LOUP BASIN RC&D COUNCIL
HAS 41 ONGOING PROJECTS:
PARTIAL LISTING

1. *Loup Basin Water Association*
2. *Greater Loup Valleys Activities*
3. *Cedar River Stabilization Project*
4. *Taylor Area Builders*
5. *Loup River Scenic Byway Identifier*
6. *Ag-Diversity Presentation*
7. *Affiliated Charity for Cell Phones*
8. *Meth. Education Project*
9. *Interactive Tourism Promo CD*
10. *Media Conference Center*
11. *Searchable Business Directory*
12. *Ag Diversity Networking Group*
13. *Junk Jaunt*
14. *Junk Jaunt rack card*
15. *Interactive CD project*
16. *Taylor Area Builders*
17. *Bio business friendly region*
18. *Marketing invasive species*
19. *Searchable business directory*
20. *Sandhills weed management area*
21. *Loup Basin Technology center*

