

PRESS RELEASE

The Nebraska State Resource Conservation & Development Association Announces its Annual Awards

McCook, Nebraska, October 7, 2011: At its annual conference, held this year on October 4,5 and 6, in McCook, Nebraska, the Nebraska State RC&D Association showcased the positive impact its twelve regional Councils have contributed to the State of Nebraska in the areas of Natural Resources, Recreation & Tourism, Economic & Community Development, and Education. Awards were announced for outstanding performance in the following eight categories:

Outstanding Performance by a Council Coordinator – Ron Moore, Panhandle RC&D in Scottsbluff, Nebraska: Ron balanced the RC&D program while taking his own time in helping the Council through our TRANSITION. Ron showed his dedication to the program by retiring early and worked overtime to serve the eleven counties in the Panhandle in support of various worthwhile projects.

Outstanding Performance by a Council – Five Rivers RC&D Council, Tecumseh, Nebraska: The Five Rivers RC&D Council is proud of its achievements over the past 19 years, including the honor of becoming the first RC&D in the nation to achieve the Circle of Diamonds Enhanced Level. Additionally, in 2010 the Five Rivers Weed Management Area won the Outstanding Sponsor Achievement Award. In addition, based upon their volunteer work in 2010, Five Rivers was awarded the National RC&D/NRCS Earth Team Award with over 5,452 hours of volunteer contributed from 157 volunteers.

Outstanding Sponsor Achievement – Southeast Nebraska Grassland Association, Five Rivers RC&D, Tecumseh, Nebraska: Both the RC&D Council and the Southeast Nebraska Grassland Association were created to serve the citizens of rural Southeast Nebraska With the goal to support a healthier, safer and productive environment, outreach to small farms and businesses, and value human and economic resources.

Outstanding Performance by a Council Member – Dennis Wacker of Northeast Nebraska RC&D, Plainview, Nebraska: Dennis is currently serving in his 4th year as a representative from Pierce County on the Board of Directors and has served as President since January 2009. He understands Council business, is truly interested in its operation, and wants people to appreciate what the organization has to offer. Dennis is a thoughtful leader, his comments are appropriate, he lets the board of directors make their decisions and he respects not only the board, but staff as well.

Outstanding Performance by a Program Assistant – Carol Peters, Northeast RC&D, Plainview, Nebraska: Carol knows how important it is for the RC&D information to be “out there” so she and a Council member are working with the Webmaster on the Northeast RC&D site. She enjoys helping with projects and activities to move the RC&D Council ahead. Carol is always taking the high road and keeping things positive.

Outstanding Youth Involvement Award – Hitchcock County High School & Save Our Swanson, Southwest Nebraska RC&D, McCook, Nebraska: Local citizens in Hitchcock County decided they didn't like their local lake being changed to low maintenance. SOS decided to host a cleanup day in Mat at Swanson Reservoir. They reached out to their local high school for help. Hitchcock County High School let the kids have a day off to spend taking care of the lake. This was a winning opportunity for both sides. SOS received much needed man power cleaning up the lake. And the students learned a lesson about preserving their local resources.

Spirit of Nebraska Award – Jim Knopik, PrairieLand RC&D, Madison, Nebraska: Jim is the first one to acknowledge the participation of others in the efforts to create a better environment for his family, community and livestock. He sits on the board of many rural development, civic and environmental organizations. Jim has traveled to Washington DC to represent Nebraska RC&Ds, environmental organizations and the family farmer.

Top Project Award – Keep Loup Basin Beautiful, Loup Basin RC&D, Ord, Nebraska: Keep Loup Basin Beautiful is a project dedicated to promotion of environmental education and projects that lead to litter prevention and reduction, recycling and beautification within nine counties. To accomplish these goals, we use education and special projects. We presented to 970 students in 30 different school or youth groups, and to 13 adult groups with 268 present. 214 volunteers worked 433 hours for these presentations. This project will be showcased at the Western RC&D Conference and submitted to the National RC&D Association.