

RESOURCE

A Monthly Publication of the Nebraska Environmental Trust

February 2018

Executive Director Corner

The NET Board approved the Grant Committee's Recommendations for Funding Placed in Rank Order. That funding list will now be set for final approval at the next board meeting. You can find those recommendations on our web site. A public hearing will be held on April 5, 2018, and the final funding list will be announced at that time.

The Legislature is more than half over for this second session of the 105th Legislature. There were 468 bills introduced. This is a 60-day session and it will end on April 18th. Last year was a 90-day session and there were 667 bills introduced. February 20th was the deadline to designate Senator and Committee's 82 priority bills and an additional 25 can be prioritized by the Speaker. Proposed Constitutional Amendment (LR294CA) is still in the General Affairs Committee. It would allow the Legislature to "authorize any game of chance, any lottery, or any gift enterprise." This would allow the Legislature to establish casino gambling and other forms of gambling with 98% of the revenue going to the Property Tax Credit Cash Fund and 2% to the Compulsive Gamblers Assistance Fund.

One of our newest board members, Ryan McIntosh, was confirmed by the full Legislature this week. Another member, Steve Wellman, was recently confirmed by the full Legislature as Nebraska's Agriculture Director,



Pete Ricketts, Governor Board of Trustees

District I

Ryan K. McIntosh - Syracuse

James Hellbusch - Columbus

John Orr - Blair

District II

Gerry Lauritzen - Omaha

Paul Dunn - Omaha

Robert Krohn - Omaha

District III

Sherry Vinton - Whitman

Rodney Christen - Steinauer

Quentin Bowen - Humboldt

automatically placing him on the Nebraska Environmental Trust board. John Orr's confirmation is coming.

I was able to experience something new recently. I "drove" a self-driving car from Lincoln to Grand Island and back. It is hard to say I was driving, maybe I should say I sat in the driver's seat. It was a bit unnerving at times as the car would pass vehicles and pull back into the right lane after passing. After a few miles I started thinking I could get used to this. I now know what people felt the first time they experienced cruise control to some degree. The car even recognized the posted speed limit signs and posted that speed on the dash and warned me if I was more than a few miles over that speed. The car automatically centers itself in the driving lane which is interesting as you pass a semi that maybe crowding the center line. My natural tendency is to pull to the left a little in the lane, but the car keeps you centered in the lane unless you override the system and steer a little to the left. The car senses as you approach a vehicle in front of you and keeps a certain distance that you program in (three car lengths or more). When the passing lane is clear, the car will pass the vehicle and then return to the right lane. It was a unique experience.

The Husker men's basketball team has been showing some flashes lately and might make the Big Dance, if not; they should be headed for the NIT. The Husker women's basketball team has shown some moxie as well and we'll have to see how they end up. Scott Frost continues to grab headlines and recruits. The Spring Game sold out in about an hour. Fortunately I was able to grab a few tickets to invite my best friend and his family up from Columbia, Missouri and another friend from Chicago to join me at a "football practice". This will be the largest Spring Game ever at Nebraska and only Ohio State has a chance of having a larger spring game attendance this year. Ohio State has a much larger stadium and they had over 100,000 in attendance back in 2016, but only had 80,134 in

Agency Directors

Jim Douglas, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

Steve Wellman, Nebraska Department of Agriculture

Jim Macy, Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality

Jeff Fassett, P.E., Nebraska Department of Natural Resources

Dr. Tom Williams, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

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The Nebraska
Environmental Trust
700 S 16th Street

2017. Last year Nebraska was number two in attendance, followed by Alabama, Penn State, Georgia, Clemson, Michigan, Florida, Auburn and Oklahoma rounded out the top ten. So we could beat them this year and hold the number one position for 2018.

I bought tickets for \$25 to a couple football games last fall, but you can bet we won't be seeing those prices for a long time if ever. Let's send some love out to the number one ranked Husker women's bowling team. They just always seem to be at or near the top. Both the baseball and softball teams are both off to good starts, so they may provide us with a fun season.

Have you been watching the Olympics? The US has worked its way into fourth place in the medal count. I found myself late Wednesday night watching the US Women's hockey team taking on Canada for the gold. Canada has gotten the gold the last 20 years (last four Olympics), but the US finally snapped the streak. It was tied 2 – 2 at the end of regulation play, they played through overtime without either side scoring, and then it went to a sixth shooter in the shootout. In hockey, it doesn't get much better than that.

Have a great 2018!

Mark A. Brohman
Executive Director

**Nebraska Environmental Trust Invites Comments on
2018 Board Recommendations for Funding Placed In
Rank Order**

At its meeting in Lincoln on February 6, 2018, the Board of the Nebraska Environmental Trust received the Grant

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web site:
environmentaltrust.org

Committee's proposed funding of 106 projects for a total of \$18,626,819 in grant awards. Of these, 67 are new applications and 39 are carry-over projects. This is the 25th year of grants from the Trust, which has provided over 280 million dollars in lottery revenue to preserve and protect the air, water and land in Nebraska.

As part of the grant making process, the Trust is seeking public input on the proposed grants before announcing final awards on April 5, 2018. A list of all recommended grants and project information is available on the Trust website at: www.environmentaltrust.org. Written public comments will be accepted until April 4, 2018 at the Nebraska Environmental Trust, P.O. Box 94913, Lincoln NE 68509-4913 or via email at:

marilyn.tabor@nebraska.gov. Please include your name, address and organizations (if applicable) and be sure to reference the project name and number in your correspondence. Comments can also be presented in person during a public hearing on April 5, 2018. The meeting begins at 1:30 pm at the Ferguson House, 700 South 16th Street, Lincoln NE.

A copy of the 2018 Grant Committee Recommendations For Funding Placed in Rank Order can be found below. These recommendations will only be finalized at the board meeting in April.

[2018 Board Recommendations For Funding Placed In Rank Order](#)



Steve Wellman appointed to Trust Board

Steve Wellman became the 27th Director of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture in December 2017, after being appointed by Governor Pete Ricketts. As such, he will also serve on the Trust Board by way of his appointment.

Wellman brings a broad range of experience to the position having farmed in Nebraska for more than 30 years and also serving on various agricultural organizations and advisory committees at the federal, state and local level.

Wellman owns and operates a fourth generation family farm near Syracuse, Nebraska. His diversified family farm produces soybeans, corn, wheat, alfalfa and cattle. As Director, Wellman oversees all programs of the Nebraska Department of Agriculture. His efforts include work on agriculture policy issues at both the state and national levels.

Wellman has been a leader in the Nebraska Soybean Association (NSA) and the American Soybean Association

(ASA). He served on the ASA Board of Directors from 2006-2015 and was elected ASA President in 2012 and Chairman in 2013. He served on the NSA Board of Directors from 1998-2006 and was elected NSA president 2002-2003 and NSA chairman 2004-2005.

Wellman has also served on the USDA/USTR Agricultural Technical Advisory Committee for Grains, Feeds, Oilseeds and Planting Seeds from 2011-2015, the Commodities Futures Trading Commission Agricultural Advisory Committee from 2013-2015 and the CME Group Agricultural Markets Advisory Council from 2013-2015. He has been involved with agriculture advisory committees for Gov. Ricketts and President Donald Trump.

Wellman has been active in promoting Nebraska agriculture products domestically and internationally, accompanying the Governor on a trade mission to Europe in 2015. Trade missions have been a key component of the governor's efforts to expand markets for and grow Nebraska agriculture.

An alumnus of the University of Nebraska's College of Technical Agriculture, Wellman received a degree in production agriculture in 1981. He is a member of the American Farm Bureau, Nebraska Farm Bureau, Nebraska Cattlemen, Nebraska Corn Growers Association, Ag Builders of Nebraska and Outstanding Farmers of America. Wellman and his wife, Susan, have two adult children.



John Orr of Blair, NE appointed to Trust Board

John Orr has spent almost his entire life in Nebraska, attending grade school and high school in Lincoln. He graduated from Hasting College in 1982 and started working in Omaha later that same year. He has worked in the grain merchandising and commodity business for over 34 years in Nebraska.

John grew up loving the outdoors, spending his free time hunting, fishing, camping and boating. He has been blessed to see much of Nebraska's countryside from riding BRAN, canoeing rivers, camping in state parks, working for the NDOT (Nebraska Department of Transportation) during college summers and riding horse trails.

His wife Brenda is from Omaha and they have two adult children who grew up on their acreage near Blair. He is a hobby farmer on their 15 acres, baling hay and caring for horses. He also built and restored about a 3-acre pond on his property, stocking it with native fish and plant life. He is also on the board of the Nebraska Horse Trails Committee and a volunteer for the Great Omaha Area Trail Runners (GOATz), helping them clear and maintain trails around Nebraska parks and lakes. He is also a member of

Friends of Lake Cunningham Trails and has worked alongside THOR (Trails Have Our Respect) doing volunteer trail maintenance.

It is his hope that his love of Nebraska's outdoors and business background can help serve the Nebraska Environmental Trust Board with their mission to conserve, enhance and restore the natural environments of Nebraska.

Upcoming Events

- 25 Years of Preservation Work - The Nebraska Environmental Trust, March 19-24, 2018, Rotunda, State Capitol Building, Lincoln NE
 - Audubon's Nebraska Crane Festival, March 22-25, 2018, Kearney NE
 - 2nd Quarter Board Meeting, Thursday, April 5th, 2018, Ferguson House, Lincoln NE
 - Earth Day Omaha, Saturday, April 21st, 2018, Elmwood Park, Omaha NE.
 - Lincoln Earth Day, Saturday, April 28th, 2018, Union Plaza Park, Lincoln NE
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