

RESOURCE

A Monthly Publication of the Nebraska Environmental Trust

April 2020

Executive Director Corner

Everyone's lives have been impacted by the COVID-19, some in ways that will change them forever. The small businesses that may never recover and may not reopen, those that lost family members or friends, the seniors in high schools and colleges that missed out on so many things, the birthday and anniversary parties that were missed, and the list goes on.

I saw some sobering numbers this morning, comparing cases in three Nebraska counties with meat-packing plants in them over the past ten days. Dawson County (Lexington) had 3 cases April 10th and 172 cases April 20th, Dakota County (South Sioux City) had 0 cases and now 69, and Hall County (Grand Island) went from 84 to 531. Those are scary numbers and indicate rural Nebraska is shooting up the front side of the curve right now. My own hometown, Callaway, in Custer County, has had more than a dozen cases and two deaths. These are large numbers for a community of less than 600. Almost all of the cases have been directly associated with the nursing home. These are not just numbers or statistics, I know many of the people and families involved.



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Some of you may recall in the news last spring about a man in his 80's driving into a giant sink hole north of Gothenburg and being life flighted to the Kearney hospital. Well that gentleman was one of the two reported deaths in Custer County. Fritz Kleinknecht of rural Callaway survived spending more than a day in the sink hole last year, but lost his battle a week ago to COVID-19. He was a long-time friend of my father, and his son was a high school classmate and good friend of mine. It hurts when you know one of those numbers. He will forever be known as the 19th COVID-19 fatality in Nebraska, but to me he was a salt of the earth, hard-working man named Fritz.

I usually comment on Husker sports and as you might guess, there is not much going on, but I did tune into the virtual Red/White Spring football game on Saturday. Sure it was animated and made up by a lot of very talented folks at the University of Nebraska, but I found it entertaining. They are reporting that there were 24,320 live log-ins at the peak and that represented over 280,000 individual viewers. There were watch parties and family groups enjoying the broadcast with Matt Davison and Greg Sharpe doing play-by-play. Athletic Director, Bill Moos, was quoted as saying, "It's kind of the talk of the country right now."

The Trust's April 2nd board meeting was postponed to May 21st and we will be examining that date over the next few weeks to see if we need to postpone it again or stay with that date. Keep an eye on our website and we'll attempt to get the word out on any changes via news releases, e-mails, postings on our webpage and other methods.

We held our Grantee Seminars on April 6, 7 and 9. They were on-line meetings through GoToMeetings for those on the 2020 grant list. Attendees were able to ask questions and see presentations from Marilyn and

Rodney Christen - Steinauer

Quentin Bowen - Humboldt

Agency Directors

Jim Douglas, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission

Steve Wellman, Nebraska Department of Agriculture

Jim Macy, Nebraska Department of Environment & Energy

Jesse Bradley (Acting Director), Nebraska Department of Natural Resources

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Trust Staff

Mark A. Brohman
Executive Director

Marilyn Tabor
Grants Administrator

Sheila Johnson
Public Information Officer

Pam Deines
Administrative Secretary

Allison La Duke
Grants Assistant

Sheila. Most grantee paperwork will be available to download from our website and final contracts will be e-mailed out once the Trust board has met and made final approvals of 2020 grants.

As mentioned last month, the Trust's grant financial records are being transitioned to an on-line reporting process. Training and assistance was provided for 2020 grantees at the GoToMeeting Grantee Seminars noted above. Funding for existing grants will be available for reimbursements after April 30, 2020. Instructions and assistance to access the on-line reimbursement will be provided to existing grantees in mid-April. If you have any questions please contact Marilyn Tabor by phone or e-mail, 402-471-5541, marilyn.tabor@nebraska.gov

Try to get outside and breathe in some fresh air, watch a robin build a nest, a bunny chew some grass, the clouds pass overhead, kids swinging in their backyard, flowers blooming, or just close your eyes and listen to things around you. If you are farming, watch that red-tailed hawk for an extra minute catching those field mice as you are in the field. For the ranchers, pause for a few moments and watch that young calf run across the pasture. This pandemic will pass, maybe not next week or even next month, but someday we will talk about the 2020 event as if it were a dream or a nightmare.

I did see a cartoon that made me smile. A dog was pondering after the pandemic was over, "where has everyone gone" and a cat was thinking "it is about time I got my house back."

Stay safe, practice social distancing and wash your hands often.

Mark A. Brohman
Executive Director

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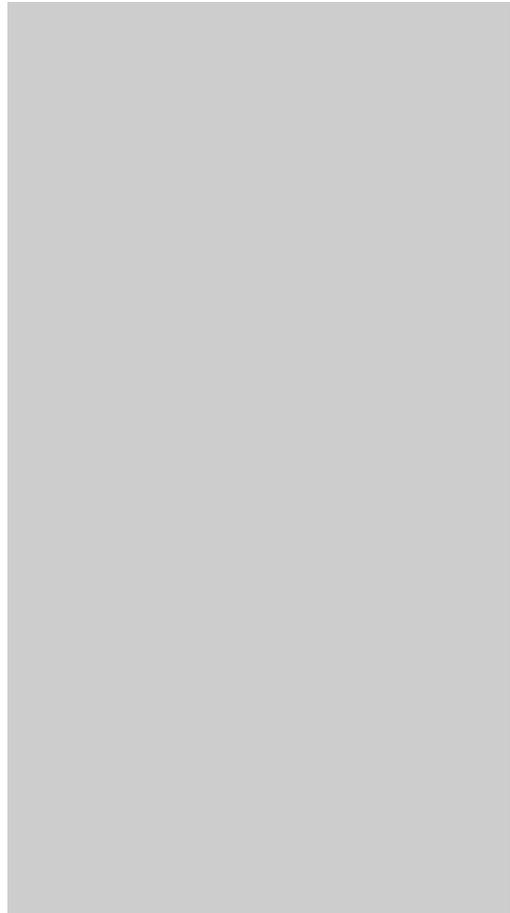
web site:

<https://environmentaltrust.nebraska.gov/>

Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever 2020 Habitat Tours

For those who are interested, please see the flyer below and links for registration:

- This is the registration link—the one I recommend using:
<https://nebraskapf.com/product-category/events/tours/>
- This is the overall calendar:
https://nebraskapf.com/calendar-2/action~agenda/request_format~json/cat_ids~255/



Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever 2020 Habitat Tours		
Date & Time	Event Name & Description	Location
June 10 1:00 to 3:30 pm CST	The Best CRP of 2020: See and understand the many different CRP practices that are available to benefit soil, water, and wildlife. Learn the best option based on your objective to make CRP work for you. Event will include both indoor and field training with plant identification, wildlife habitat techniques, and wildlife biology.	Red Willow Farmgrounds 4th Building 1411 West 7th Street McCook, NE 68901
June 11 1:00 to 3:30 pm CST	The Best CRP of 2020: See and understand the many different CRP practices that are available to benefit soil, water, and wildlife. Learn the best option based on your objective to make CRP work for you. Event will include both indoor and field training with plant identification, wildlife habitat techniques, and wildlife biology.	Duncan Building Main Street Omaha, NE 68104
June 20 5:00 to 8:00 pm CST	Family Nature Night: On the first day of summer, Ducks Unlimited and Pheasants Forever will partner to provide a fun family nature night at the Vienna Complex! Bird song identification, pollinator netting programs, natural ecology and habitat tours, large grass management, and more will be provided for your enjoyment. (Come see the birds, bees, and butterflies that could be in your own backyard!) Education events for families and landowners of all ages. A meal will be provided for those who attend, please RSVP.	Vienna Complex, Fallon Hansen Memorial Park Off-Axis County Road 313 & R Road, Northwest of Clay Center, NE 68933
June 24 3:00 to 5:30 pm MST	Wildflowers, Wines & Whiskey Wednesday: It's National Pollinator Week. Come celebrate with us at our habitat tour. We will make stops at habitat areas and learn to identify blooming wildflowers. And the best part? We will learn about the importance of pollinators to our food and beverages while sampling some of them! A meal will be provided for those who attend, please RSVP.	Imperial K Hall East 3th Street, South end of the Chase County Farmgrounds, Imperial, NE 68933
June 27 11:00 am to 2:00 pm CST	Pollinator Palooza: Join Conservation Nebraska and Pheasants Forever at our celebratory bees and birds in your area! Participants will have the opportunity to learn from local conservationists about important native pollinators and birds while building bee hotels and bluebird boxes. We'll also highlight conservation programs for wildlife and visit a local wildflower habitat and nearby native blue bird nest boxes. Light snacks will be provided. A conservation stand is available on site for those looking to purchase a lunch.	Cody Park 1821 North Jeffers Street North Platte, NE 68901
July 23 5:00 to 8:00 pm CST	Working Lands for Wildlife: It's for Birds and Bees! Join us for an informational evening showcasing the impact Eastern Red Cedar has on grazing systems, wildlife habitat, and a rancher's bottom line. The Working Lands for Wildlife program will be highlighted. Questions will be answered on financial and technical assistance through this program and partnerships. A meal will be provided for those who attend, please RSVP.	Carl Iron Bar & Grille 804 US-20 Sioux, NE 68780
July 24 11:00 to 3:00 pm CST	The Best CRP of 2020: See and understand the many different CRP practices that are available to benefit soil, water, and wildlife. Learn the best option based on your objective to make CRP work for you. Event will include both indoor and field training with plant identification, wildlife habitat techniques, and wildlife biology. A meal will be provided for those who attend, please RSVP.	Perma 1904 Service Center 210 East Main Street Perma, NE 68767
July 25 7:00 to 10:00 pm MST	Bonding with Bees: Join Pheasants Forever, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, and Forest Service staff for a rare opportunity to get up close and personal with a highly misunderstood, flying mammal. Chadron State Park will host the opportunity to learn about bats and what they need to survive in Nebraska's Parklands. This workshop will start with a presentation on bat ecology before taking a short night hike to observe mist netting and acoustic monitoring techniques. Available for all ages! Nebraska State Park Permit Required.	Chadron State Park Lagoon Shelter 12461 Highway 323 Chadron, NE 69317 Shelter is located north of main entrance
August 8 10:00 to 11:30 am CST	Walk on the Wild Side: Walk on the wild side as Nebraska Game and Parks naturalists, biologists, and Pheasants Forever join for a habitat stroll to remember. Participants will walk the Ft. Kearny Hike & Bike path to portions of the Bessway Strip Wildlife Management Area searching for native wildflowers, identifying plants and their uses, bird watching and more! Don't miss your chance to walk on the wild side. Bike and pet restrictions: Nebraska State Park Permit required. Turn right off the Brown Road and follow around to 2nd parking lot.	Fort Kearny State Recreation Area Hike & Bike Trail 1222 V Road Kearney, NE 68848
September 13 1:00 to 3:00 pm CST	Monarch Tagging at Lake Washburn: Join us for a Monarch Butterfly Tagging event at Lake Washburn where you will have the chance to catch, tag, and release Monarch butterflies. See if the ones you tag make it to Mexico this fall migration!	Ben Larson Day Use Area 1631 County Road 16 Wahoo, NE 68886



Workshops are FREE! Visit www.NebraskaPF.com or contact Ashley at asnelson@pheasantsforever.org for more information or to RSVP.



Nebraska Bumble Bee Atlas: Help Conserve Our Bees!

The Nebraska Bumble Bee Atlas is a community science project organized by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the Xerces Society. The Atlas aims to track and conserve Nebraska's native bumble bees, and the key to success relies upon the project's volunteers spreading out to collectively survey our state. In 2019, during the first year of the Atlas, educational workshops and hands-on field days were held for communities in eastern Nebraska. These events focus on providing a deep understanding of bumble bee ecology, conservation, the threats they face, and how to identify the ~20 species found in

Nebraska. Upon completion, volunteers are equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills and confidence to independently carry out bumble bee surveys. The first sampling season went phenomenally; 70% of the 100 workshop attendants signed up to formally participate and 670 bumble bee observations were submitted! Visit our website for further [highlights and photographs](#) of the 2019 season.

This information is essential for increasing our understanding of bumble bees, and improves the ability of researchers to provide evidence-based recommendations to land managers, conservation practitioners and policy makers. Ultimately, the collected data will allow us to improve habitat throughout Nebraska that supports the state's pollinators and other wildlife. In addition, Nebraska's valuable network of pollinator conservation advocates is growing immensely as volunteers learn how to support bumble bees. We intend to move forward with our 2020 season, albeit in a slightly new fashion, and we hope you join our effort. This May and June we plan to host training [workshops](#) through Zoom, and will only encourage volunteers to survey if it is still safe to practice physical distancing outdoors. We have also made all of our materials available through our [Online Training Portal](#), including the participant handbook, bumble bee identification guide, and a series of videos modules that will help you prepare remotely and at your own pace.

For more information, visit:

www.nebraskabumblebeeatlas.org



Atlas volunteers gather around a chilled bumble bee for up-close examination. Chilling live bumble bees on ice allows volunteers to capture high-quality photographs of their surveyed bees, which experts will then use to identify the species online. The Atlas is all catch-and-release, and chilling does not harm the bee.

Upcoming Events

- April 25, 2020 (Saturday) - Lincoln Earth Day (Virtual Earth Day Celebration)
 - May 21, 2020 (Thursday) - 2nd Quarter Board Meeting, 1:30pm
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