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RESOURCE

A Monthly Publication of the Nebraska Environmental Trust

January 2020

Executive Director Corner

Well 2020 is here and the legislative session is under way. It looked as though it might be a difficult session when Senator Brewer introduced a Legislative Resolution (LR285CA) to take the Environmental Trust Lottery funds and use them in the prison overcrowding dilemma if approved on the ballot this fall. Fortunately Senator Brewer has filed a motion to withdraw this legislation. This is a short, 60-day session that began January 8th and is scheduled to end on April 23rd or before. Even though they are only on day eight, the session is more than 10% complete.

I want to pay tribute to two fine people. The first is Mary Kubert who passed away January 13, 2020. Mary was a docent for us at the Ferguson House (home of the Environmental Trust) and she was a relative of the Fergusons, the family that built and lived in the Ferguson House from 1911 to 1972. It was always a pleasure to talk to Mary about the Ferguson family and the house.

The second person is John Larry Hutchinson, better known as "Hutch". He passed away December 30, 2019. I had the pleasure of working with Hutch for the past 26 years. He was a career fisheries biologist at the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission spanning over 45



Pete Ricketts, Governor
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District III

Sherry Vinton - Whitman

years. Much of his career was spent on studies of Nebraska's rivers and obtaining instream flows and fighting the battles on the Platte, Missouri and Niobrara Rivers. Hutch was a quiet, behind the scenes guy, that had huge impacts on Nebraska's natural resources. Mary and Hutch will be missed.

The Grants Committee just wrapped up their final meeting last week and their Preliminary Rank Order List (2020 Recommendations for Funding Placed in Rank Order) will be released to the public later this week. The final rank order will be released at the April 2nd board meeting.

Husker football news continues with raises, new hires, a coach leaving, players leaving and new recruits. On the volleyball front it looked pretty stable because we had no seniors leaving, then four players decided to leave, we lost an assistant coach and then hired back a previous coach. I have no doubt the 2020 volleyball team will be great and hopefully good enough to make it to the Final Four, because that will be in Omaha this year and yours truly already has bought tickets. Coach Cook announced he is exploring ways to beat Wisconsin, since they handed us 3 of our five losses this season and were the ones to end our season one game before the Final Four.

The basketball season started with a lot of optimism for both teams. It was quickly learned that the men's program had a ways to go to be consistently competitive, now 7-11 (2-5 Big 10). The women started out on fire, but recently have had some setbacks, but they are still 14-4 (4-3 Big 10).

Travel safe,

Mark A. Brohman
Executive Director

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Quentin Bowen - Humboldt

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Jeff Kanger appointed to Nebraska Environmental Trust Board

A new member has been appointed to the Trust Board by Governor Pete Ricketts. Mr. Jeff Kanger replaced Mr. Ryan McIntosh representing District 1.

Mr. Kanger is currently the Executive Vice President at First State Bank Nebraska. He focuses on lending, bank development, marketing and human resources. Kanger works out of First State Bank Nebraska's location at 2701 Grainger Pkwy in Lincoln. Kanger, originally from Omaha, received a bachelor's degree from Northwest Missouri State, followed by his law degree from University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Mr. Kanger said, "I am honored and humbled to serve on the Nebraska Environmental Trust Board. My passion for conservation has been nurtured by many mentors, ag producers and outdoor enthusiasts that have selflessly shared the beauty of Nebraska with me. A collaborative and cooperative approach to conservation ensures the natural wonders of our state will see generations to come and I'm thrilled to be a part of that effort."

The Nebraska
Environmental Trust

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Jeff Kanger

Sherry Vinton Re-Appointed To The Trust Board

Sherry Vinton from Whitman was recently reappointed to the board by Governor Pete Ricketts. Ms Vinton will serve another term commencing March 11, 2019 to March 10, 2025. Sherry Vinton represents Congressional District III on the Nebraska Environmental Trust board.

After studying accounting at UNL, Sherry returned to the Sandhills ranch owned and operated by her husband's family for five generations. Sherry is an active partner in the current ranching enterprise along with her husband, Chris.

Two adult children and their families have now joined the operation to continue the ranching tradition. Currently, she

serves on the Grant County planning commission as president of Arthur County Farm Bureau and is a member of Nebraska Cattlemen. She is a past director for Nebraska Farm Bureau Federation and was appointed for two terms to the national Cattleman's Beef Board by Sec. of Agriculture Vilsak. Sherry is a member of St Mary's & Missions parish in Mullen. Combining environmental, agricultural and land use planning interests, Sherry is an advocate for private property rights information and education.



Sherry Vinton of Whitman

**Rainwater Basin Joint Venture - 25th Annual
Informational Seminar**

You are invited to attend the 25th Annual Rainwater Basin Joint Venture Informational Seminar being held on

Thursday, February 6, 2020. This annual one-day seminar is an opportunity for landowners, agricultural producers, natural resource conservation professionals, and other interested individuals to learn about conservation issues, research, and habitat programs in the Rainwater Basin region.

Attached is a program detailing the schedule and topics that will be presented. Steve Moran, the first and former Coordinator of the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture (RWBJV), will kick off the morning taking us back to where it all began and renowned conservation photographer Mike Forsberg's multimedia presentation of Working Wild in Flyover Country will showcase the wild beauty and diversity that remains in the heart of Nebraska.

Throughout the day there will be presentations about the birds, plants, insects and other wildlife that inhabit the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture's Administrative Area along with a look at the past and present conservation programs developed to create win-win solutions for wildlife and people across the Rainwater Basin landscape. Andy Bishop, Coordinator of the RWBJV, will cap off the afternoon by taking us into the RWBJV's future by highlighting the unique opportunities for habitat conservation being forged through new collaborations to achieve bird population goals and objectives.

The seminar will be held at the Ramada Midtown Grand Island, 2503 S. Locust Street, Grand Island. To register online, please click this link [Registration for Informational Seminar](#) or go to our website, www.rwbjv.org, and complete the registration form.

A \$40 fee, payable by cash/check at the door or by filling out a credit card authorization form, covers all sessions, snacks, and a buffet lunch. **Pre-registration by January 24th is requested to ensure an adequate lunch count.** Landowners and agricultural producers are invited to

register free of charge and to enter a drawing to win a \$50 Cabela's gift card.

If you have registration or payment questions, please contact niki.messmer@rwbjv.org or call 308-382-8112.

Organizations that wish to host a booth or exhibit at the seminar may also contact me via email or phone.

Please feel free to forward this invitation to others who might be interested in attending. We look forward to seeing you at the 2020 Rainwater Basin Joint Venture Informational Seminar on Thursday, February 6th.



Rainwater Basin Joint Venture
2530 N Diers Ave, Suite G
Grand Island, NE 68803
(308) 382-8112
<https://rwbjv.org/>

In the wetlands of the Rainwater Basin and across Nebraska's mixed-grass prairies, Rainwater Basin Joint Venture partners achieve habitat conservation through cooperation and sound science.

Landowners, conservation organizations, and government agencies work together through Joint Venture projects and programs to provide habitat for millions of migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, and other wildlife in this highly productive agricultural landscape.

The Rainwater Basin Joint Venture thanks Grand Island Tourism for its assistance.

The Rainwater Basin Joint Venture thanks its funding partner for helping make this seminar possible.

Grand Island Tourism

The Nebraska Environmental Trust
Preserving wetlands, streams and riparian resources

RAINWATER BASIN JOINT VENTURE
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25TH ANNUAL INFORMATIONAL SEMINAR
FEBRUARY 6, 2020

Ramada Midtown
2503 South Locust Street
Grand Island, NE

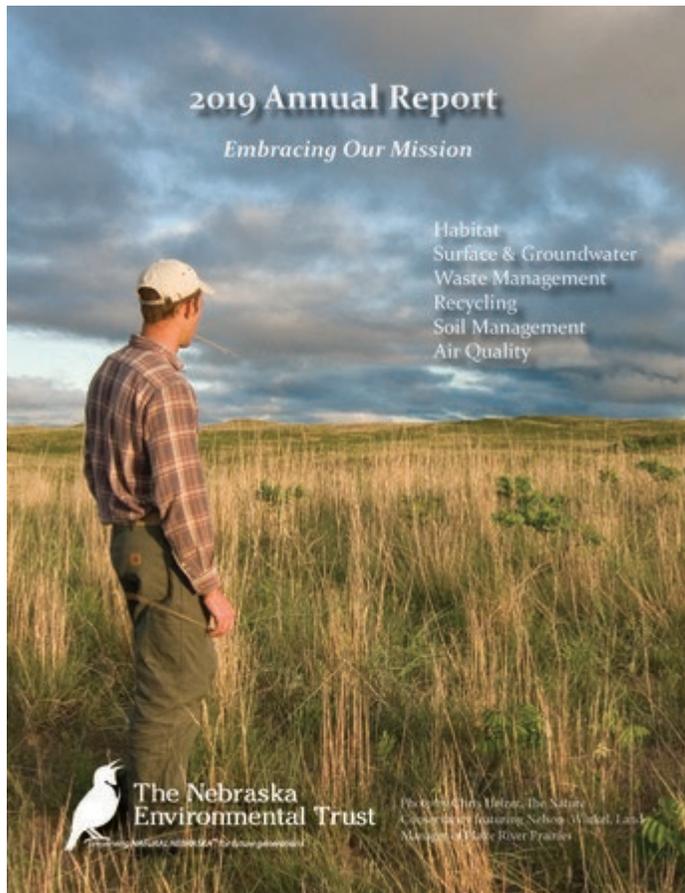
25th Annual
Informational
Seminar



- **8:30-9:30 a.m. Registration**
- **9:30 a.m. Welcome**
Jim Douglas, Director, Nebraska Game & Parks Commission
- **9:45 a.m. How the RWB IV Began**
Steve Moran, former RWB IV Coordinator
- **10:00 a.m. Working Wild in Flyover Country**
Mike Forberg, Conservation Photographer
Mike's multimedia presentation will showcase the wild beauty and diversity that remains in the heart of Nebraska, and make a case for why it matters.
- **10:45 a.m. Break**
- **11:00 a.m. Terrestrial and Aquatic Mammals of the Rainwater Basin**
Lynn Wilson, Fisheries/Conservation Program Manager, NGPC
Habitats in the Rainwater Basin support mammal species from least weasel to elk. This presentation will discuss a few examples of unique terrestrial and aquatic mammals that call this area home.
- **11:30 a.m. What Wading Bird Diet Can Tell Us About Habitat Values: Diverse Diets Across Diverse Landscapes**
Andy Casen, Director of Conservation Research, Crane Trust
We explore the diets of cranes, herons, egrets, and other wading birds, examine the various levels they occupy within the food chain, and highlight the need to protect and restore truly functionally ecosystems to sustain them.
- **12:00 p.m. Lunch and Awards**
- **1:00 p.m. Sandpipers, Mud Pipers, Range Pipers, April Pipers and More: Shorebirds of the RWB IV**
Neal Argenson, Nongame Bird Program Manager, NGPC
Shorebirds are diverse and highly mobile birds with nearly 40 species using the central and critically important habitats and resources of the RWB IV at some point during their annual cycle.
- **1:30 p.m. The Birds and the Beef**
T.J. Walker, Assistant Division Administrator, NGPC
Many grassland bird species have suffered long-term declines across the Great Plains. We'll look at some important species in the Rainwater Basin Administrative Area and how grazing management can impact them.
- **2:00 p.m. Priority Waterfowl Habitats in the Heart of the Central Flyway**
Celine Hansen, Science Coordinator, RWB IV
Nebraska's position in the middle of a major migration corridor means ducks, geese, and swans can winter, breed, or stopover here. We'll look at the most important habitats.
- **2:30 p.m. Dynamics of Amphibians, Turtles & Reptiles in the Rainwater Basin Landscape**
Prof. Dennis Fellers, UAL, Herpetologist & Conservation Biologist
Amphibians, Turtles and Reptiles are a fundamental component of Great Plains ecosystems. Learn how their food web dynamics are incorporated in the entire ecological process.
- **3:00 p.m. All the Little Things That Run the World - Invertebrates and Plants in the Rainwater Basin**
Chris Weber, Director Of Science, The Nature Conservancy
While ducks, deer, and other large animals get the recognition, plants and invertebrates do the real work that supports both wildlife and livestock production. Don't forget to foster diverse plant and insect communities.
- **3:40 p.m. A Look at the Past and Present RWB Programs**
Rich Nelson, State Wildlife Biologist, NRC, & Nancy Dixon, USFWS
A look at how private lands programs were developed over time based on research, lessons learned, and the needs of the agricultural community to create win-win solutions that integrate wildlife and people across the RWB landscape.
- **4:00 p.m. Building Off the Past, Looking to the Future**
Andy Bischoff, Coordinator, RWB IV
This presentation will highlight some unique opportunities for habitat conservation that build off past successes and are being forged through new collaborations to achieve bird population goals and objectives in the RWB IV.

Thank you for your attendance!

2019 Annual Report Available On Our Website



The Nebraska Environmental Trust Annual Report is currently available on the Trust website. Click [here](#) to view. Look for your copy in the mail in January, if you have a subscription with us.

Upcoming Events

- February 4, 2020 (Tuesday) - 1st Quarter Board Meeting, 1:30 pm
 - February 6, 2020 (Thursday) - 25th Anniversary of the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture Informational Seminar
 - April 2, 2020 (Thursday) - 2nd Quarter Board Meeting, 1:30pm
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