



The Nebraska Environmental Trust

preserving NATURAL NEBRASKA™ for future generations

Dave Heineman, Governor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Middle Niobrara NRD Receives Grant from Nebraska Environmental Trust

Lincoln, NE – April 5, 2013 – Middle Niobrara NRD announced today that it will receive \$150,000 from the Nebraska Environmental Trust for the “” project. The Trust Board announced funding for the project at its meeting on April 4, 2013 in Lincoln. The project is one of the 134 projects receiving \$24,247,260 in grant awards from the Nebraska Environmental Trust this year. Of these, 87 were new applications and 47 are carry-over projects.

The Long Pine Creek Watershed is located primarily in Brown County and encompasses 332,300± acres. The watershed includes the communities of Ainsworth and Long Pine and various Nebraska Game and Park properties, including the Long Pine State Recreation Area. Long Pine Creek is longest self-sustaining trout stream in state and a popular destination for anglers. Five named tributaries flow into Long Pine Creek: Sand Draw Creek, Bone Creek, Willow Creek, Spring Branch Creek, and Short Pine Creek. Over the years, the Long Pine Creek and its tributaries have experienced significant stream bank erosion problems, threatening structures and further impairing hydrological and biological functions of the stream. Stream bank and gully erosion contribute large sediment loads to the Niobrara River that ultimately deposited into Lewis and Clark Reservoir. In addition, Long Pine Creek is listed in the 303 (d) impaired waters list for E. Coli. High nitrate concentrations are found in ground water in the irrigated portion of the watershed.

A detailed Watershed Management Plan will be developed for the Long Pine Creek Watershed. It will include a stream assessment/evaluation for the entire watershed and a stream restoration plan for the Sand Draw Creek subwatershed. The watershed management plan will identify and



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prioritize management actions to improve water quality and aquatic habitat throughout the area. The watershed management plan will also frame the work needed to address water quality and aquatic habitat impairments in the entire Long Pine Creek Watershed with a goal of removing it from 303 (d) list.

The restoration plan will focus on hydrologic, biological ecological and aquatic life restoration through various in-stream engineering practices in lower reach of the Sand Draw Creek. The in-stream measures may be based around raising the stream bed through series of grade control structures. Raising the stream bed would allow reconnecting the stream to a floodplain and restoring the hydrology of the stream to allow fish passage upstream of the Highway 7 Bridge.

The Nebraska Legislature created the Nebraska Environmental Trust in 1992. Using revenue from the Nebraska Lottery, the Trust has provided over \$195 million in grants to over 1,500 projects across the state. Anyone – citizens, organizations, communities, farmers and businesses – can apply for funding to protect habitat, improve water quality and establish recycling programs in Nebraska. The Nebraska Environmental Trust works to preserve, protect and restore our natural resources for future generations.

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