

April 26, 2019

## NEWS RELEASE

### Board Approves College Scholarship Applications

(GRAND ISLAND, NE) – Five students were selected to receive \$1,000 through the Ron Bishop-CPNRD College Scholarship Program for the 2019-2020 academic year at the Central Platte Natural Resources District’s board of director’s meeting on Thursday. Students awarded scholarships: Klint Gill, Cozad; McKinley Harm, Gothenburg; Sage Williams, Eddyville; Juan Arellanes Gallorzo, Grand Island; and Jason Line, Miller. Applications are ranked on natural resources major, essay, and applicants must be a junior, senior, or 5th-year college student.

Other discussion and action items:

**-TAPS Program** Chuck Burr, UNL, presented the Testing Agriculture Performance Solutions (TAPS) program which facilitates farm management and education through real-life farm management competitions. Participants test a large variety of strategies and technologies and are provided access to a large dataset from the competitions at the end of the year. This program is supported by University of Nebraska extension, natural resources districts, non-profit organizations, industry leaders, and financial industries.

**-Nitrogen Management Reports** Six producers who have not submitted their 2018 Crop Report forms and/or Nitrogen management tests will receive a letter reminding them that irrigated acres under a cease and desist order cannot be irrigated until they are in compliance with the District’s Groundwater Management Program. CPNRD legal counsel will be contacting the individuals who have been issued cease and desist orders about potential penalties.

Potential penalties for violation are: possibility of a fine not less than \$1,000 and up to \$5,000 per violation and/or a loss of irrigated acres, ineligibility for NRD cost-share, and restriction from transferring any irrigated acres.

Crop report forms are due March 31<sup>st</sup> each year. Producers who have not submitted their 2019 Crop Report forms are also encouraged to submit their forms right away.

**-Wetland Easement** The board approved an initial agreement to hold a wetland conservation easement in Hall County.

**-Variance Request** The Variance/Appeals Committee denied a variance request from Hall County.

**-Nebraska Habitat Conservation Coalition (NHCC)** Mark Czaplewski, biologist, requested a change of representation on the NHCC. The board approved Lyndon Vogt, CPNRD general manager, as vice-chairman to replace Czaplewski. John Shadle, Nebraska Public Power District was elected chairman by the Coalition.

**-Natural Resources Conservation Service** Joe Krolikowski, district liaison, reported on the following programs available for flood repairs.

- **Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)** Funds are available to plant severe weather damaged acres to cover crops this year if time doesn't allow for repairs and the planting of this year's cash crop. Cover crops work extremely well to help stabilize newly repaired areas in cropland and help address many different resource concerns. Applications are due May 17<sup>th</sup> for the first cutoff date or June 21<sup>st</sup> for the second cutoff date at their local NRCS Field Offices.
- **Livestock Mortality Program (EQIP)** for producers who have suffered livestock losses due to the extreme weather events this spring. This program helps properly dispose of dead livestock carcasses in a safe manner. Proper disposal will help prevent impacts to water quality and other natural resources. The cutoff date is May 1<sup>st</sup>. Producers who have not already disposed of their deceased livestock can apply at their local NRCS Field Office.
- **Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)** The Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides emergency funding and technical assistance to repair damaged farmland and ranchland by natural disasters. Emergency conservation practices available are debris removal, grading, shaping, or leveling land, restoring fences, and restoring conservation structures. Producers should call or stop by their local FSA county office to check on eligibility and the enrollment periods.
- **Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP)** NRCS and EWP can provide technical and financial assistance for property threatened by excessive erosion and flooding. Each EWP project requires a local sponsor to apply for assistance, examples would be legal subdivisions of state or local government, including local officials of city, county, and NRDs. Sponsors are needed to provide legal authority to do repair work, obtain necessary permits, contribute funds or in-kind services, and maintain the completed emergency measures.

**-Managers Report** Lyndon Vogt reported that the Healthy Soils Task Force approved by the Legislature this year is requesting applicants to serve on a committee. Information was also provided on the *Time in the River* event to be held April 27, 2019.

**-Vehicle Bids** The board approved the purchase of two vehicles from Platte Valley Auto including a 2019 4-wheel drive, crew cab pickup with a trade-in for \$21,353; and a 1-ton, 4-wheel drive, ¾ ton regular cab for \$37,581.

**-Cost-Share** The board approved applications in the amount of \$14,418.40 for the center pivot incentive, tree planting, capacitance probe, and well decommissioning cost-share programs.

**-Preliminary Budgets** The Eastern Projects, Western Projects, Water Quality, and Water Quantity committees forwarded their Fiscal 2020 budgets to the Budget Committee.

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