

**Next Task Force Meeting:**

The next Task Force meeting is on **Thursday October 17th** at Brahamer's Restaurant in Thedford. The meeting begins at **10:00 a.m. central.**

**Agenda Items:**

- 10:00 Meeting called to order
  - Introductions
  - Approval of minutes
  - Financial report (Kelly)
  - Beef Sustainability Workshop Update (Mel-AB)
  - Sand County Foundation Symposium update (Ted, Mel and Homer)
  - Project Coordinator update (Van Winkle)
    - FRPP Sheridan County project status
    - RLine easement conflict status
    - Cody Lake Renovation (Jim & Kyle)
    - WEA updates
  - Gordon Creek Restoration (Kyle)
  
- Strategic Planning Committee Update (Committee)
  
- 12:00 Lunch
  - 1:00 Mark Vrtiska (Trumpeter Swan Study)
  - 1:30 Caroline Jezierski Ne. Wind and Wild
  - 2:00 Wind Energy in the Sandhills Symposium (AB, Homer, Mike and Jim L)
  - 2:30 Staffing Committee update (Exec Board plus Mel, Ted Jim L. and Ben)
  
- 3:30 Adjourn

**2013 NET grant status**

Jim has submitted the NET grant for matching funds to complete our Sheridan County easement project in the amount of \$240,813.30. Preliminary announcements will be in February. We have received our 2013 Gracie Creek award in the amount of \$125,000.

With projects in the development stages varying from water control and stream restoration to grazing system development it is expected that 2013 will result in significant NET expenditure of our 2013 Sandhills Native Ecosystem grant.

**Strategic Planning Committee**

With Ted LaGrange's willingness to make the remaining members of the Strategic Planning Committee look good it is time for the full board to make a last review and move towards printing. Ted's commitment to detail and inclusion has

resulted in a draft plan that should serve STF well. Mary Etinger and the Thedford Art Guild have produced a series of drawings for us to use in the plan. Byron will bring them to our Oct 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Bookkeeping Banking and Grant tracking.**

A second work day was recently held in Kearny with AB, Mike, Jim, Kyle, Kenny and Milt Willnard of Willnard & Associates of Lincoln. Progress was made on developing a QuickBooks accounting system and Kenny presented a format for tracking individual grants from various sources. Discussions also progressed on setting up a project specific tracking system that would be available to STF board members and partners online.

**Sand County Foundation.**

The Sand County Foundation held a July 24-26<sup>th</sup> Symposium in Nebraska entitled "Private Conservation for the Public Good" with guest speakers including Homer Buell. The Rainwater Basin and Spring Creek Prairie Preserve were featured sites to be included. Ted, Mel and Homer will fill us in on the details.

**Beef Sustainability Workshop**

Melody and AB have participated in the coordination of a Sept. 16-18 Nebraska tour of various aspects of the beef industry within the state. NCBA and the World Wildlife Fund were the hosts.

**NPPD offers to inform STF Board on RLine status.**

Projects coordinator Jim Van Winkle has had discussions with USFWS staff and met with NPPD staff in efforts to see that the two easements held by STF within the study corridor are not compromised by the future line. Both STF easements within the study area are no longer in the revised study area. NPPD staff continued to make themselves available to meet with the STF board as new information becomes available and have offered interested board members a tour of the Doniphan statewide distribution center as well as extended their conference room at the site for a future STF board meeting should the board be interested.

**VFD Award Program**

Mark Christen Chief of the Anselmo Fire Dept contacted Jim recently to inquire about the future of continued support to assist landowners with prescribed fire. Mark feels the training, equipment testing and experience with fire behavior have been a big benefit for his department. A packet from

Mark will be circulated to the STF board during the meeting.

### **Long Pine/Bone Creek Watershed Project.**

The STF supported a successful grant application to NET to kick off restoration planning for this severely degraded stream in Brown County. The first open house meeting was hosted in Ainsworth by the Middle Niobrara NRD. A standing room only crowd was enthusiastic about finding solutions. JEO was selected as the engineering firm and is collecting data and full on planning efforts are underway that should be completed within one year. Our multi organization recently completed Lidar project will provide a great boost to the efforts.

### **Federal Government Shutdown.**

As of this writing our federal partners within NRCS and US Fish and Wildlife are not able to participate in STF projects. Many of our cooperative efforts will be slowed until this issue is resolved.

### **Future Sandhill Lake Renovations.**

Kyle and Jim have continued to focus on various opportunities for major lake renovation projects across the Sandhills. NGPC staff recently completed a major rotenone application on Willow Lake in Brown County.

Jim and Kyle met with all three landowners and their families adjoining the Nebraska portion of Cody Lake. Each family was very supportive of seeing the lake restored. Cody Lake was historically a very important Sandhills attraction for a large variety of waterfowl as well as a great resource for outdoors enthusiasts. The renovation will require unusual cooperation between the public and private sectors as well as significant funding.

Jim Van Winkle