

Activity Report of The Sandhills Task Force January 1 through December 31, 2001



This report is a summary of activities completed or ongoing by the Sandhills Task Force (STF). A total of 19 different projects are identified. The majority (13) are conservation projects directly affecting the natural resources of the Sandhills. Total acres enhanced by these 13 projects are 40,501 acres (32,971 acres of upland grasses, 4,260 acres of riparian habitat, 18.6 miles of streams and rivers, and 3,270 acres wetlands and wet meadows). Three projects are associated with research and monitoring; ranging from people's perception of the Sandhills resources, to the affect land management is having on grassland birds. The Task Force supported three projects associated with providing education and information to the public, primarily the ranching community.

The Task Force successes began with a 1996 grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust. Their contribution allowed the Task Force to provide leverage and financial assurance needed to ensure landuse practices benefitted both ranching and wildlife. Cooperative agreements with other agencies and organizations have brought funding for conservation. Appendixes A and B report the financial activity of the Sandhills Task Force in 2001.

Board of Directors

Board of Directors include:

A.B. Cox	Rancher	Mullen
Al Steuter	The Nature Conservancy, Rancher	Ainsworth
Barb Cooksley	Rancher	Anselmo
Byron Eatinger	Rancher	Theford
Craig Utter	Nebraska Cattlemen, Rancher	Lincoln
Dean Funk	Rancher, Holt County Commissioner	Atkinson
Gene D. Mack	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Kearney
Gene Lehnert	North Central R, C & D	Bassett
Kim Stine	Natural Resources Conservation Service	Lincoln
Mick Knott	Rancher	Hyannis
Mike Kelly	Rancher	Sutherland
Richard Lackaff	Rancher	Bassett
Rob Ravenscroft	Rancher	Valentine
Ron Dobbins	Rancher, Chairman Upper Loup NRD	Tryon
Ted LaGrange	Nebraska Game & Parks Commission	Lincoln

In November, Troy Bredekamp resigned from Nebraska Cattlemen and took a position with the Colorado Livestock Association. Troy's Board position is set by the bylaws—to be filled by an employee of the Nebraska Cattlemen. The position has to be recommended by Nebraska Cattlemen, but approved by the STF. The Cattlemen recommended Craig Utter as the replacement. He was approved by the Board at the November Board meeting. Kim Stine was recommended by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to fill a position vacated by Gus Hughbanks. She was approved at the August Board meeting. Prior to Kim filling the position, Kenneth Noonan represented NRCS's interests.

Barb Cooksley resigned her position on the National Invasive Species Committee (formed by the Secretary of Interior) shortly after she was hired by Congressman Tom Osborne as Agricultural Field Representative.

The Sandhills Task Force, through a grant (#00-126) from Nebraska Environmental Trust, joined in a cooperative agreement with Nebraska Cattlemen to hire a full time employee who would provide assistance to ranchers on various conservation practices. Jim Van Winkle was hired and began working in December, 2000. During 2001, Jim has been instrumental in building working partnerships with government agencies, as well as, providing a greater level of trust between ranchers and the Task Force.

Marcelle Franke, a Fish and Wildlife Service employee who provided technical assistance to landowners, resigned to pursue her master's degree. The Fish and Wildlife Service plans to fill the position in early 2002.

At the April Board meeting, the Board passed a motion to become a land trust. This decision was made after extensive research and discussion. The administrator of the Colorado Cattlemen's Land Trust met with the Board to explain the roles and responsibilities required of land trusts. The first easement to Board will acquire is the Jumbo and Pullman Valley easements.

Financial Activities

On April 26, 2000 the Board was notified by the Internal Revenue Service that they had been granted 501 (c) 3 tax-exempt status. Since that time, the Task Force has done its own banking and financial transaction. The Task Force has invested in short-term Certificates of Deposits at Purdum State Bank, Commercial Bank of Bassett, and Pinnacle Bank in O'Neill.

A checking account exists with Tri County Bank in Stuart, Nebraska. The Board chose to bank with locally-owned, Sandhills banks.

Projects

In 2001, the Sandhills Task Force was involved in the initiation or completion of 13 conservation projects in the Sandhills. These 13 represent only those which have signed wildlife agreements between the Task Force and the landowner. Each of the agreements outlines a conservation strategy that meets the needs of the landowner while providing conservation and wildlife habitat. The length of the agreements are for a period of 10 years. The amount cost-shared by the Task Force and its partners is based on the amount of benefit for wildlife. Projects that predominately benefit ranching with limited benefit for wildlife received a lesser amount of cost share. Likewise, projects that greatly benefitted wildlife with marginal benefit to the landowner were provided a larger amount of cost share. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service serves the role of assuring compliance with the agreements.

In all instances, projects were initiated by landowners who requested assistance from one or more members of the Sandhills Task Force. No agreements were entered into unless the landowner/cooperator shared the same resource concerns and agreed that the management plan developed for their specific landscape was best for their operation and the land. For this reason, compliance with the cooperative agreement has been 100 percent.

Funding by Sandhills Task Force, as shown in the following projects, came from grants (through cooperative agreements) with the Nebraska Environmental Trust, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Each year, the FWS grants between \$20,000 and \$30,000 to the STF for conservation projects within the Sandhills. This money is part of the Service's "Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program." The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission provided funding either directly to the landowner or through a \$25,000 cooperative agreement with the Task Force. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's contribution was \$15,000.

A Sandhills Fen and Grassland Partnership

Purpose: The project is to acquire property and restore the hydrology and vegetation (and associated wildlife) of two Sandhills fens located in western Cherry County to their more natural condition and to evaluate the cost/benefit for restoration as it relates to ranching. STF co-sponsored the project with The Nature Conservancy.

Funding:

NET past grant:	\$ 585,000	(land acquisition)
NET grant (1998):	\$ 315,000	(land acquisition)
TNC/STF:	\$ 198,000	(Surveys and land management)
TNC:	\$ 61,000	(In-kind administration)
STF: \$ 7,000		(In-kind administration)
USFWS:	\$ 17,000	(Fencing)
NRCS ^a :	\$ 12,000 ^a	(In-kind technical assistance)
NGPC:	\$ 18,000	(Control Structures)
Nebraska Cattlemen:	\$ 3,000	(In-kind administration)
Total	\$1,201,000	

^a NRCS contribution has far exceeded this amount.



Accomplishments: Four water control structures were constructed during the fall of 2001. Total cost was \$55,261.74. Natural Resources Conservation Service, under a Wetland Reserve Program, will pay 3/4 of the cost. Nebraska Game and Parks Commission has agreed to pay the other 25 percent.

One of the four was constructed in Jumbo Valley, in the north drainage ditch. The remaining three were constructed in Pullman Valley. The one in Jumbo and the two westernmost structures in Pullman are weir-tube structures which hold the water level in the channel within a few inches of the valley surface. The remaining, or easternmost structure

on Pullman is a straight culvert with no modified weir on the upstream end. Elevation surveys showed that only about two inches of water could be flooded onto the eastern portion of the Pullman fen before it would begin to impact neighboring lands. Two inches of water would promote the spread of reed canarygrass, rather than control it. A potential buyer of the property has expressed interest in selling an easement (including the right to restore) on a drained lake located near the fen. This is on condition that eastern Pullman fen is not flooded with two inches of water. If this transaction happens, it will benefit both the neighboring rancher as well as wildlife.

Two neighboring landowners are interested in purchasing portions of the fen property. A boundary was drawn up that meets the wishes of each potential buyer. An appraiser was contracted by The Nature Conservancy to appraise each portion and the property as a whole. The Task Force has agreed to sell the property at appraised value to either or both of these neighbors. If neither wishes to purchase at appraised value, the land will be offered on the open market.

The Task Force has drafted a conservation easement which will be considered in the appraisal. The easement allows current ranching operations but prevents drainage or development. The Nature Conservancy will transfer the easement to the Task Force at the time of the sale of the property.

Bobtail Creek Grazing Project

Purpose: This is a joint riparian/grassland enhancement project in which the cooperators agree to manage grazing on 4,267 acres along the Dismal River and Bobtail Creek for the benefit of ranching and native grassland. The landowner's primary objectives are to improve native vegetation and enhance wildlife habitat along the Dismal River and Bobtail Creek in Hooker County. Cross fencing and additional wells and tanks will be installed to enhance riparian vegetation and to increase wildlife production and use on the riparian area and associated uplands. A grazing plan (developed by NRCS) will be implemented to provide residual cover for wildlife and promote plant vigor. Habitat enhanced included 1,500 acres of riparian habitat along 3 miles of river, and 2,767 acres of upland grasses.



Funding:

NRCS	\$12,140.75	Fencing, wells, tanks
STF	\$6,000.00	Fencing, wells, tanks, tower and pump
Landowner	\$3,563.25	Fencing, wells, tanks, tower and pump
NGPC	\$2,000.00	Fencing, wells, tower and pump
Total	\$23,704.00	

Accomplishments: Project was initiated in 2001. Completion is expected in 2002.

Dismal River Grassland Project

Purpose: 10,061 acres, containing wetlands, meadows, and the headwaters of the Dismal River will be managed for the benefit of ranching and native grassland. Cross fencing, pipeline, and additional wells and tanks will be installed. A grazing plan (developed by NRCS) will shift from longer duration to a shorter grazing duration. 446 acres containing the headwaters of the Dismal River will be managed to provide winter wildlife habitat. Habitat enhanced includes 2,450 acres of riparian, 4 miles of river, 209 acres of wetlands, and 7,402 acres of upland grasses.



Funding:

NRCS	\$24,732.21	Fencing, tanks, and wells
STF	\$16,000.00	Fencing, tanks, wells, tower and pump, pipeline
Landowners	\$14,365.65	Fencing, tanks, wells, tower and pump
NGPC	\$3,000.00	Tanks, fencing, wells, and pipeline
Total	\$58,097.86	

Accomplishments: Construction has begun, but has not reached completion.

Elliot Grazing Project

Project: The project will improve grassland management (through grazing) on 1,956 acres in Cherry County. The landowner's primary objectives are: to improve native vegetation; reduce over-utilization of wetland areas; encourage warm-season grasses; provide residual vegetation for spring nesting; and encourage wildlife production and use of the pastures. Cross fencing and additional wells and tanks were installed to better manage livestock grazing. A grazing plan was developed by NRCS to provide residual cover for wildlife and promote plant vigor. Habitat enhanced included 1,942 acres of grassland and 14 acres of wetland.

Funding:

NRCS	\$13,852.00	Tanks and pipeline
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Landowner	\$8,798.00	Fencing, tanks and pipeline
STF	\$7,597.00	Fencing and tank
NGPC	\$4,000.00	Fencing
Total	\$34,247.00	

Accomplishments: Project and payment were completed in 2001.

Grassland Bird Study

Purpose: The study was initiated in response to the Task Force's concern about what affect short duration grazing system vs. other grazing systems is having on wildlife. Grassland birds are recognized as a group of wildlife which is very mobile and can quickly move to preferred habitats. The study will measure the diversity and abundance of birds associated with three different grazing systems: short duration (less than 15 days), mid-duration (30 to 45 days), and season-long grazing.

Funding:

STF	\$45,000.00	Graduate student salary, travel, and lodging
NGPC	\$18,000.00	Graduate student salary, travel, and lodging
Sampson Range and Pasture Management Endowment	\$10,000.00	Graduate student salary, travel, and lodging
UNL & other grants	\$31,681.00	Graduate student salary, travel, and lodging
Total	\$104,681.00	

Accomplishment: The Task Force has signed a contract with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to fund \$45,000 of the cost over a period of three years. Dr. Larkin Powell has designed the study and hired a graduate student who will begin in January 2002.

Hazel Creek Project

Purpose: The project is designed is to reduce grazing, trailing, and erosion on springheads and tributaries to the Niobrara River; to encourage warm-season grasses; to increase wildlife production and use on the 1,140 acres; and to allow the riparian area to be managed independent of the surrounding uplands. The Hazel Creek portion of the Niobrara Preserve was divided into 3 pastures that were in a rotational grazing system. The area lacked proper fencing to keep cattle from concentrating around the springheads and creeks. A new fence and well allows TNC to manage the riparian pasture as a separate management unit. The Nature Conservancy plans to graze the riparian pasture for a short period, 2-3 weeks, every 2-3 years. The pasture will be grazed in the spring or fall to help encourage the warm season grasses. In addition, prescribed burning will be used to help control the spread of eastern red cedar. Habitat being enhanced include 1,140 acres of riparian and upland habitat, 2.37 miles of the Niobrara River, and 4.43 miles of tributary streams.

Funding:

The Nature Conservancy	\$11,594.00	Fencing, well and windmill
STF	\$5,000.00	Fencing
Total	\$16,594.00	

Accomplishments: The project and payment were completed in 2001.

Higgins Whole Ranch Grazing Project

Purpose: The project involves changing current native grassland management to improve the grassland's health, diversity, and wildlife benefits. Grazing management will more closely mimic the role bison played in grassland ecology; this includes intense grazing for a short period of time, followed by long periods of rest. Large, continuously grazed pastures will be fenced into 46 pastures or units. Wetland sites will be fenced separate from upland range sites in order to manage the wetlands in accordance with recommended wetland management practices. One large herd (approximately 700 cows with calves) will graze each unit for two to four days during each visit. Each unit will be then be rested for at least 90 days. About 2,200 acres will be left for winter habitat.



To accomplish these objectives, buried pipelines were installed to provide adequate amounts of water for the large herd during hot summer months. The majority of the project cost is associated with providing livestock water. Total area enhanced is 9,140 acres: 1,000 acres of sub-irrigated meadows, 200 acres of wetlands, and 7,940 acres of upland.

Funding:

Landowner	\$98,762.90	Pipeline, fences, wells, and tanks
STF	\$25,000.00	Pipeline, fences, wells, and tanks
NFWF	\$15,000.00	Pipeline, fences, wells, and tanks
NGPC	\$5,000.00	Pipeline, fences, wells, and tanks
Total	\$143,762.90	

Accomplishments: The wells, pipeline, and a portion of the tanks and fencing were completed in the fall of 2001. The remaining work is expected to be completed in the spring (2002). The grazing plan will be initiated in the spring of 2002.

Key/Klase Grazing Project

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to: develop a planned grazing system to improve distribution of grazing within a 2,880 acre pasture; reduce over-utilization of wetland areas; encourage warm-season grasses; provide residual vegetation for spring nesting; and increase wildlife production and use on the pasture. The pasture has been grazed as a single unit with no cross fencing. Livestock concentrated and over-grazed the low wetland areas and under utilized the higher uplands. Approximately 2.16 mile of cross-fencing, one livestock well (depth of 250 ft), one livestock tank (4700 gallons), and one windmill were installed. 221 acres of lakes and wetlands, and 2,659 acres of grassland habitat are affected or improved. It is hoped that additional fencing will be done in the future to further shorten grazing periods.

Funding:

Landowner	\$3,515.00	Fence, windmill, tank, and well
NGPC	\$3,480.00	Fence and windmill

STF	\$3,480.00	Fence and windmill
Upper Loup NRD	\$1,242.00	Well and tank
Total	\$11,717.00	

Accomplishments: Project was completed during the summer and payment was made.

Kime Grazing Project

Purpose: The project will enhance grassland/wetland habitat through a planned grazing system on 2,110 acres in Cherry County for the benefit of ranching and native grassland. Primary objectives are: to improve native vegetation; reduce over-utilization of wetland areas; encourage warm-season grasses; provide residual vegetation for spring nesting; and increase wildlife production and use on the pastures. Cross fencing and additional wells and tanks were installed. A grazing plan (developed by NRCS) will be implemented to provide residual cover for wildlife and promote plant vigor. Completion of this project resulted in 12 grazing units vs. the current 10. Longest grazing duration dropped from 44 to 17 days with an average of 10 to 12. To ensure adequate residual cover, the grazing will be generally limited to a once-through, with a second graze only on an as-needed basis to encourage warm season production. The second grazing will occur in units where the first rotation was completed prior to July 1. Habitat enhanced includes 546 acres of wetland and meadows and 1,564 acres of upland.

Funding:

STF	\$5,667.00	Fencing, tanks and well
Landowner	\$5,226.00	Fencing, tanks and well
NGPC	\$4,000.00	Tanks
Total	\$14,893.00	

Accomplishments: The project and payment was completed in 2001.

McMurtrey Gordon Creek Project

Purpose: The project will reduce stream erosion on a portion of Gordon Creek, flowing across a large subirrigated meadow. Currently, the channel has degraded 5 to 7 feet downward and 10 to 15 feet wide. The landowner's primary objectives are to improve the hydrology of the Gordon Creek subirrigated meadows, which will increase hay production and increase wildlife habitat adjacent to this free flowing Sandhill stream. Historically, the channel was shallower, with flood waters flowing across the meadow. Attempts to increase hay production decades earlier, caused owners to straighten bends in the stream. Water control structures will be constructed to allow the passage of about 80 percent of the peak spring flows. The balance will be allowed to flood across the meadow and flow through the old stream channel. During high flows, numerous shallow, temporary wetlands will be flooded. The project should enhance habitat for several species of native fish known to inhabit Gordon Creek. This is expected to be the first phase of a long term ranch improvement/wildlife enhancement plan envisioned by the landowners. Total enhanced area includes 380 acres of wetland and sub-irrigated meadow habitat, 960 acres of upland grassland, and 3 miles of stream.

Funding:

Landowner	\$5,500.00	Weir structures
NGPC	\$5,000.00	Weir structures
STF	\$5,000.00	Weir structures

Total \$15,500.00

Accomplishments: A wildlife extension agreement has been signed, and a bid has been received from the local contractor. Project is expected to be completed in 2002.

Monsour Grazing Project

Purpose: The project will: reduce overgrazing associated with large pastures; encourage warm-season grasses; provide residual vegetation for spring nesting for upland game birds; and enhance wildlife production and use on 1,186 acres. Historically, the area was grazed as a single unit with no cross fencing. Season long grazing has caused upland grasses, especially near windmills and riparian areas near the Dismal River, to be over-utilized by concentrated livestock. Approximately 2 miles of cross-fencing, one livestock well, and one tank were installed. An existing windmill was moved from a large blowout area to a new site. 1,094 acres of grassland habitat and 92 acres of riparian habitat along one half mile of river are expected to benefit.

Funding:

NRCS	\$6,339.00	Fencing, wells and tanks
Landowner	\$3,954.00	Fencing, wells and tanks
NGPC	\$1,443.00	Fencing, wells and tanks
STF	\$1,443.00	Fencing, wells and tanks
Total	\$13,179.00	

Accomplishment: The project was completed and final payment was made in 2001.

Ranch Practicum

Purpose: The Ranch Practicum is a series of day-long classes conducted by UNL Extension Service which provides participants with training in various aspects of ranching and range management. Each year approximately 30 participants enroll in the course. The Task Force provided \$3,000 in stipends to reduce the tuition costs to ranchers. Payment is only provided to those who successfully complete the course.

Sammons Stream Restoration

Purpose: An earthen plug was constructed in Dry Creek, a tributary to the Elkhorn River, to restore an abandoned oxbow created when the County straightened the steam channel. After the channel was straightened the stream began to severely erode as it adjusted to carry the same amount of water over a shorter distance. The down cutting has encouraged the lowering of the local water table, affecting adjacent shallow wetlands and subirrigated meadows. The plant community has begun to shift to a drier soil condition, reducing forage and wildlife habitat. An earthen plug was placed near the entrance to the abandoned channel to let water flood into it. Higher water levels will help restore the wet meadows and plant communities. The landowner constructed a fence to manage livestock in 26 acres surrounding the riparian area. NRCS will assist the landowner with planting a riparian buffer, consisting of native trees and shrubs. Habitat enhanced was approximately 0.5 miles of intermittent stream and 26 acres of riparian habitat.

Funding:

NRCS	\$2,485.00	Fencing and mulch
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Landowner	\$1,510.00	Fencing, earthwork, seeding, and mulch
STF	\$855.53	Earthwork, seed and mulch
Total	\$4,850.53	

Accomplishments: Project and payment was completed in 2001.

Sandhills Natural Resources Education Cooperative

The Task Force decided to join the newly formed Sandhills Natural Resources Education Cooperative. Its goal is to provide information and structured educational programs to increase public awareness of Sandhill resources. The Cooperative is organized through the Cooperative Extension Service and Halsey 4-H camp. Al Steuter is the STF's representative. In 2001, \$1,500 was provided toward student tuition for youth attending the Sandhills Academy. It is a week long camp that exposes youth to the numerous natural resources, as well as, socioeconomic and environmental concerns of the Sandhills.

Sandhills Perception Study

Purpose: The study is aimed at examining the concerns and values of those who live and depend on the Sandhills for a livelihood, and of those who use the Sandhills for recreational purposes. Information obtained from the study will be used by land planners including local, state, and federal government. The STF is funding the project through a cooperative agreement with FWS.

Funding:

STF	\$38,000.00	(Salary & expenses)
NGPC	\$11,600.00	(Salary & expenses)
UNL/other sources	\$10,000.00	(Salary & expenses)
Analytical Software	\$3,700.00	(Software & equipment)
Total	\$63,300.00	

Accomplishments: Dr. Amy Richert presented preliminary findings from her study to the Task Force in August. Some key points she brought out included: 61 ranchers, 38 recreationists, 24 commercial operators were interviewed. Family and heritage are extremely important to ranchers and commercial operators when defining the meaning of the Sandhills to them. Recreationists associated the Sandhills with low population, solitude and the environment. Ranchers expressed their strongest concerns with out-of-state buyers and fewer small ranch families. Most people interviewed were very supportive of local input being included in developing a balance between culture and the environment. A formal presentation was presented by Dr. Richert at the Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference in Iowa this fall. Final payment was made on this project.

Sandhills Task Force Website

Purpose: One of the goals of the Task Force is to increase people's awareness of the Sandhills resources and of the Task Force itself. In 2001, a website was established. It contains information about the organization, its goals, principles, new briefs, and information about various projects the Task Force has funded. The address is <http://sandhillstaskforce.org>.



Schaeffer Grazing Project

Purpose: This project will help create the infrastructure necessary to implement a rotational grazing program on the project area; to encourage warm-season grasses; to provide residual vegetation for spring nesting; and to enhance wildlife production and use of the 3,311 acres. Currently the landowner is trying to implement a rotational grazing system, but the lack of a sufficient and dependable water supply prevents him from doing so. Cross-fencing and the placement of alternative watering sources are necessary for the landowner to reduce grazing pressure on the pastures and apply a high-density, short duration grazing plan for all pastures. NRCS is working with the landowner to create a grazing system that will benefit both ranching and wildlife.

Funding:

Landowner	\$14,041.00	Well, pipeline, pump, fencing and tanks
NRCS	\$25,315.00	Well, pipeline, and tanks
STF	\$8,000.00	Well, pipeline, and tanks
NGPC	\$8,000.00	Well, pipeline, and tanks
Upper Loup NRD	\$2,649.00	Fencing
Total	\$58,005.00	

Accomplishments: Project construction and partial payment were completed in 2001. The remaining portion is expected to be completed in the spring of 2002.

Thedford Fire Monitoring

Purpose: The effect of different grazing systems or management practices on grasslands affected by the large Thedford burn is being documented and evaluated by NRCS. Many ranchers were affected by the March 1999 fire. Ranchers and land managers' responses varied greatly. Some believed recovery would take at least three years. Others believed grazing would not be possible for at least a year, while others believed that grazing would only have to be delayed until June. The Task Force saw this as an opportunity to evaluate how different grazing systems affect grasses after a March wildfire.

Funding:

NRCS	\$25,000.00	Salary and expenses
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STF	\$25,000.00	Salary and expenses
Total	\$50,000.00	

Accomplishments: Two years of field data were analyzed at the end of this year's growing season. Preliminary reports suggests that the fire had no significant impact on the following years' forage production. The data did suggest that past grazing practices had a strong influence on how the grasses responded to a March fire. Those areas that were season-long grazed appeared to recover at a slower rate. The only significant fire impact was a reduction in litter covering the sandy soil. A final report is expected in the spring of 2002.

Young Grazing Project

Purpose: The project was designed to improve 384 acres along the Niobrara River for the benefit of ranching and native grassland. The landowner's primary objectives are fire control, improving native vegetation, and enhancing wildlife habitat along the Niobrara River in Cherry County. Cross fencing and additional tanks were installed to enhance riparian vegetation and wildlife production and use on the riparian area and associated uplands. A grazing plan was developed to provide residual cover for wildlife and promote plant vigor. The project will benefit 192 acres of riparian area along 1.4 miles of river and 192 acres of adjacent upland.

Funding:

Landowner	\$1,178.00	Fences and tanks
STF	\$1,100.00	Fence and tanks
NGPC	\$1,000.00	Fence and tank
Total	\$3,278.00	

Accomplishments: Project and payments were completed in 2001.

Purchase of Equipment

In 2001, the Sandhills Task Force purchased two Garmin Global Positioning System (GPS) units for use by the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Valentine. The equipment will be used to mark and record property and fence line boundaries needed in developing grazing systems. Information collected on the GPS units will be downloaded into Geographic Information System software.

APPENDIX A
Sandhills Task Force Checking Account
Tri County Bank, Stuart, Nebraska
 January 1, 2001 through December 31, 2001

Beginning Balance				\$54,809.32
Transaction	Date	Expense	Deposit	Balance
Jim VanWinkle (Office equipment)	04-Jan-01	\$2,502.15		\$52,307.17
Howard Monsour (Project)	11-Jan-01	\$318.50		\$51,988.67
Nebraska Cattlemen (Staff and overhead)	25-Jan-01	\$2,533.06		\$49,455.61
Mary Key (Project)	29-Jan-01	\$773.00		\$48,682.61
The Tri County Bank (Interest)	31-Jan-01		\$112.35	\$48,794.96
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	15-Feb-01		\$1,091.50	\$49,886.46
Commercial Bank - Bassett (Interest)	16-Feb-01		\$1,802.19	\$51,688.65
Purdum State Bank (Interest)	16-Feb-01		\$1,814.79	\$53,503.44
Nebraska Environmental Trust	19-Feb-01		\$5,882.84	\$59,386.28
Pinnacle Bank - O'Neill (Interest)	20-Feb-01		\$1,731.62	\$61,117.90
Nebraska Cattlemen (Staff and overhead)	26-Feb-01	\$4,029.42		\$57,088.48
The Tri County Bank (Interest)	28-Feb-01		\$91.21	\$57,179.69
Colorado Cattlemen's Agric. Land Trust	05-Mar-01	\$536.09		\$56,643.60
Secretary of State	06-Mar-01	\$20.00		\$56,623.60
Nebraska Cattlemen (Staff and overhead)	28-Mar-01	\$4,215.43		\$52,408.17
The Tri County Bank (Interest)	30-Mar-01		\$108.61	\$52,516.78
UNL-Sponsored Programs (Project)	06-Apr-01	\$9,845.28		\$42,671.50
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	20-Apr-01		\$9,845.28	\$52,516.78
Mary Key (Project)	23-Apr-01	\$2,706.53		\$49,810.25
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	23-Apr-01		\$21,715.69	\$71,525.94
Nebraska Cattlemen (Staff and overhead)	25-Apr-01	\$4,066.09		\$67,459.85
The Tri County Bank (Interest)	30-Apr-01		\$99.95	\$67,559.80
Bobs Super Store (Equip. - digital camera)	07-May-01	\$511.70		\$67,048.10
The Tri County Bank (Interest)	13-May-01		\$117.13	\$67,165.23
Nebraska Cattlemen (Staff and overhead)	14-May-01	\$4,021.38		\$63,143.85
Purdum State Bank (Interest)	16-May-01		\$1,755.62	\$64,899.47
Commercial Bank - Bassett (Interest)	16-May-01		\$1,743.42	\$66,642.89
Pinnacle Bank - O'Neill (Interest)	17-May-01		\$1,675.15	\$68,318.04
Miller Signs, Inc (Education)	26-Jun-01	\$50.00		\$68,268.04
Nebraska Cattlemen (Staff and overhead)	26-Jun-01	\$3,946.98		\$64,321.06
Mike Young (Project)	27-Jun-01	\$1,100.00		\$63,221.06
The Tri County Bank (Interest)	29-Jun-01		\$112.80	\$63,333.86
Nebraska Environmental Trust	17-Jul-01		\$32,154.59	\$95,488.45
Nebraska Cattlemen (Staff and overhead)	18-Jul-01	\$4,680.96		\$90,807.49
4-H Youth Development (Project)	25-Jul-01	\$1,500.00		\$89,307.49
The Tri County Bank (Interest)	31-Jul-01		\$128.04	\$89,435.53
Nebraska Cattlemen (Staff and overhead)	10-Aug-01	\$4,072.88		\$85,362.65

Commercial Bank - Bassett (Interest)	16-Aug-01		\$1,802.19	\$87,164.84
Pinnacle Bank - O'Neill (Interest)	17-Aug-01		\$1,731.62	\$88,896.46

Appendix A (continued)

Transaction	Date	Expense	Deposit	Balance
Purdum State Bank (Interest)	18-Aug-01		\$1,260.27	\$90,156.73
UNL Advisory Board (Project)	30-Aug-01			\$90,156.73
UNL-Coop. Extension 4-H Camp (Project)	30-Aug-01			\$90,156.73
The Tri County Bank (Interest)	31-Aug-01		\$143.46	\$90,300.19
NRCS - Lincoln (Project)	04-Sep-01	\$9,689.43		\$80,610.76
Bill Elliott (Project)	18-Sep-01	\$3,131.00		\$77,479.76
Philomene Kime (Project)	18-Sep-01	\$5,304.66		\$72,175.10
Nebraska Game & Parks Commission	27-Sep-01		\$25,000.00	\$97,175.10
The Tri County Bank (Interest)	28-Sep-01		\$126.55	\$97,301.65
Nebraska Cattlemen (Staff and overhead)	01-Oct-01	\$4,563.39		\$92,738.26
Bill Elliot (Project)	01-Oct-01	\$50.00		\$92,688.26
Junk Man (Project)	01-Oct-01	\$84.80		\$92,603.46
William Sammons (Project)	03-Oct-01	\$853.55		\$91,749.91
Nebraska Community Foundation	04-Oct-01		\$6,263.85	\$98,013.76
Ron Pinney (Project)	04-Oct-01	\$2,731.39		\$95,282.37
Nebraska Sec. Soc. Range Manage. (Project)	12-Oct-01	\$572.21		\$94,710.16
The Nature Conservancy - Omaha (Project)	19-Oct-01	\$5,000.00		\$89,710.16
Schaeffer Farms (Project)	26-Oct-01	\$6,820.00		\$82,890.16
The Tri County Bank (Interest)	31-Oct-01		\$125.33	\$83,015.49
Planet GPS (Equipment)	05-Nov-01	\$917.66		\$82,097.83
Michael Paul Vinton (Project)	11-Nov-01	\$6,000.00		\$76,097.83
Nebraska Cattlemen (Staff and overhead)	16-Nov-01	\$4,290.44		\$71,807.39
Nebraska Cattlemen (Staff and overhead)	16-Nov-01	\$4,003.61		\$67,803.78
Commercial Bank - Bassett (Interest)	16-Nov-01		\$1,802.20	\$69,605.98
Purdum State Bank (Interest)	17-Nov-01		\$1,260.27	\$70,866.25
Pinnacle Bank - O'Neill (Interest)	19-Nov-01		\$1,731.62	\$72,597.87
Nebraska Environmental Trust	20-Nov-01		\$23,890.25	\$96,488.12
Higgins Brothers Ranch (Project)	21-Nov-01	\$45,000.00		\$51,488.12
Howard Monsour (Project)	26-Nov-01	\$761.00		\$50,727.12
The Tri County Bank (Interest)	30-Nov-01		\$100.96	\$50,828.08
Nebraska Cattlemen (Staff and overhead)	20-Dec-01	\$4,581.54		\$46,246.54
GD Media Group (Education)	20-Dec-01	\$454.45		\$45,792.09
Totals		\$156,238.58	\$147,221.35	

Appendix B

SANDHILLS TASK FORCE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

December 31, 2001

ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents \$421,862.34

NET ASSETS

Unrestricted \$421,862.34

Permanently restricted \$0.00

TOTAL NET ASSETS \$421,862.34

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Period of December 01, 2000 to December 31, 2001

UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS

Income

Interest from Tri County Bank Checking Account \$1,369.85

Interest from CD (Commercial Bank - Bassett) \$7,150.00

Interest from CD (Pinnacle Bank - O'Neill) \$6,870.01

Interest from CD (Purdum State Bank - Purdum) \$6,090.95

Transfer from Nebraska Community Foundation \$6,417.60

INCREASE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS \$27,898.41

Expenses

Secretary of State recertification of organization \$20.00

Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust \$536.09

Nebraska Community Foundation 153.75

Bob's Super Store (equipment) \$511.70

DECREASE IN UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS -\$1,221.54

PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

US Fish and Wildlife Service \$38,052.47

Nebraska Environment Trust \$61,927.68

Nebraska Game & Parks Commission \$25,000.00

US Fish and Wildlife Service (reimbursement pending) \$7,926.73

Nebraska Environment Trust (reimbursement pending) \$49,424.81

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (reimbursement pending) \$15,000.00

Restrictions satisfied by NET agreement:

Nebraska Cattlemen (Salary and operating expenses) -\$49,005.18

4-H Youth Development -\$1,500.00

Jim Van Winkle (Office supplies) -\$3,349.78

Natural Resources Conservation Service - Lincoln -\$9,689.43

Materials and equipment	\$1,456.91
Conservation projects	-\$30,437.92
Restrictions satisfied by FWS agreement:	
Conservation projects	-\$35,561.71
Nebraska Section of Society of Range Management	-\$572.21
UNL - Sponsored Programs (Research)	-\$9,845.28
Restrictions satisfied by NGPC agreement:	
Conservation projects	-\$5,000.00
Restrictions satisfied by NFWF agreement:	
Conservation projects	-\$15,000.00
 INCREASE IN PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS	 <u>\$38,827.09</u>
 INCREASE IN ASSETS	 \$65,503.96
 NET ASSETS AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	 <u>\$356,358.38</u>
 NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR	 <u>\$421,862.34</u>