



MIDDLE NIOBRARA NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT

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March 13th, 2024

WSF 2021 #3 Annual Report #5323

Bone and Long Pine Creeks Watershed Improvement, Tier 1 Projects

- **Project Progress**

This is the third annual report. Work over the last year included Long Pine Creek Watershed (LPCW) planning efforts and development of the LPCW WFPO Draft Plan-EA. Currently, a Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Plan-EA, Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is out for agency and public review. The NOA is attached with this Annual Report. You may view the draft Plan-EA or FONSI at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/5b5bwx8w> This should be the last review period for the planning effort. Comments from the Agency and Public review will be directed to NE NRCS State Office and are due March 22nd, 2024. The LPCW WFPO Watershed Agreement was officially signed by the MNNRD Board Chairman on February 12th, 2024, and General Manager on February 13th, 2024.

- **Project Related Activities for 2024**

- Final Signature/Approval of the NE NRCS State Conservationist and NRCS HQ.
- Setting the Final Design budget with NE NRCS State Office.
- Final design phase with Houston Engineering and Hazard Engineering of the LPCW WFPO Plan-EA Tier 1 Projects and permitting with USACE.
- NET LPCW Phase 3 Project Implementation – Sand Draw Creek
 - o NET, NDEE, NRCS, and MNNRD
- NET LPCW Phase 4 Project Implementation – Sand Draw Creek
 - o NET, NRCS, and MNNRD
- Project Administration

- **Forecast or projected cash flow for remainder of the project**

2024 Projected Costs (Final design will be reassessed once the Plan-EA is completed.)

LPCW WFPO	
- Final design phase of LPCW WFPO Tier 1 Projects	\$961,124.00
- Permitting of LPCW WFPO Tier 1 Projects	\$241,900.00
- Project Administration of LPCW WFPO Tier 1 Projects	\$146,000.00

Reassessment of the likelihood that benefits projected in the application will be realized and, for the final report, a description of benefits realized or reasonably expected to be realized as compared to those stated in their application

The projected benefits of reducing threats to wildlife habitat, conservation and preservation of water resources, recreation, and reducing threats to property damage are all expected to be realized as indicated in the application.

Nebraska State Office

1121 Lincoln Mall
Room 360
Lincoln, NE 68508

February 21, 2024

Notice of Availability

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), a program within the U.S. Department of Agriculture, has prepared a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) titled "Watershed Plan-Environmental Assessment, Bone and Long Pine Creeks Watershed Improvement Project, Brown, Cherry, and Rock Counties, NE" in partnership with the Middle Niobrara Natural Resources District. The environmental assessment of this federally assisted action indicates that the project will not cause significant local, regional, or national impacts on the environment. As a result of these findings, I have determined that the preparation and review of an environmental impact statement is not needed for this project.

The proposed action includes the following improvements: grade control stabilization structures, a stream crossing, a pond, a sediment control basin, streambank protection, critical area planting, aquatic organism passage, fish and wildlife habitat restoration, oxbow restorations, and stream rehabilitation along eleven (11) stream reaches within the Bone and Long Pine Creek Watershed, and weather stations and automated gates on irrigation canals.

No administrative action on implementation of the proposal will be taken until after March 22nd, 2024.

You may view a copy of the FONSI and associated Environmental Assessment at the following website: <https://tinyurl.com/5b5bwx8w>.

For more information, please contact Melissa Baier, ASTC-Water Resources and Easements, NRCS, 1121 Lincoln Mall, Room 360, Lincoln, NE 68508; or by phone at 402.437.4065; or by email at melissa.baier@usda.gov.

Sincerely,


Robert D. Lawson

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ROBERT D. LAWSON
State Conservationist