

## KAREN KREIL AS NEW STAFF MEMBER

You may recall that in last fall's newsletter I wrote, somewhat wistfully, of the retirement of three of the Trust's long-term employees, Sharon Clancy, Merle Bennett, and Arnold Kruse. While both Merle and Arnie continue to provide some limited support on special projects, the need arose for additional Trust staff. Early in 2006, the North Dakota Game and Fish Department identified a need for part-time assistance to provide staff support for Director Terry Steinwand's work on the North American Wetlands Council. After a number of strategy sessions between agencies and nongovernmental groups, it was agreed that an ideal scenario would be for the Trust to hire an employee and develop a contractual relationship with the Department to provide the needed staff support for Director Steinwand. It was estimated that approximately half of the work time would be required to support the director's work, leaving about half of the time for Trust activities. Details were worked out in early summer and the process for filling the position was initiated. After the standard process of advertising, interviews, etc., the position was ultimately offered to and accepted by Karen Kreil in July.

Karen has both B.S. and M.S. degrees in fish and wildlife biology from the University of North Dakota and is a 20-year veteran of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, with prior service to the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department. During her tenure with the Service, Karen monitored development projects and recommended alternatives to reduce or eliminate adverse impacts, was a leading

member of the Service's North Dakota education team which, among other things, provided habitat trunks to 375 schools in North Dakota, and coordinated an annual "prairie day" to increase awareness and appreciation of prairies. Karen worked with the Endangered Species Act and did extensive interagency coordination on endangered species issues, most notably the least tern and piping plover, and in recent years, lead the Service's piping plover recovery efforts on the Missouri River and elsewhere in North Dakota. She has extensive knowledge and experience regarding wetlands and prairie habitat in North Dakota, and a broad knowledge of the plants and animals that rely on these unique habitats for their existence.

During her tenure at the University of North Dakota, Karen received the Glenn Allen Paur Award for outstanding promise in fisheries and wildlife biology. The Environmental Protection Agency recognized her with its Outstanding Achievement Award in wetlands education in 1995 and, in that same year, the North Dakota Wildlife Federation named her Conservation Educator of the Year. In 1996, she received an Outstanding Contribution Award from the North Dakota Action Group and Prairie Pothole Joint Venture for outstanding contributions to the North American Wetland Management Plan in development of the Missouri River Corridor Action Plan. She is past president of the North Dakota Chapter of The Wildlife Society.

*Continued on page 3*

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## RIPARIAN RESTORATION PROJECT 2006 by Terry Allbee

The North Dakota Natural Resources Trust (Trust) has partnered with landowners to enroll their property into the Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program (FRPP). The program restricts future building developments, but allows continued farming in traditional manner. These landowners have enrolled over 200 acres (bordering the Missouri River) into FRPP in three phases since 2001.

The landowners wanted to restore a 200-yard stretch of the land for tree and grass plantings for conservation purposes and preservation of the view shed from the Double Ditch Historical Site (Figure 1). With assistance from the Trust and the US Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), eight tree rows were planted with 50 trees in each row, grass seeding of cool season grama grass was planted between the rows, and a 50-foot buffer of native grass seeding



**Figure 1**

was planted on the east and north boundaries. The tree rows consisted of cottonwood, eastern red cedar, hackberry, burr oak, and green ash.

In addition to the 400 trees planted in single rows, 100 individual, hand-planted trees were placed on the grass strip between the tree rows and existing road. These trees consisted of maple, ash, oak, willow, and other varieties. These trees also had protective wire cages (Figure 2) to reduce the deer browse and potential beaver damage.

The Trust, along with the "Friends of the Missouri River," will be looking for volunteers to help with replacing lost trees in the spring of 2007. If interested in being part of the riparian restoration day, please contact Terry at 701-223-8501 or email at [nrtterry@btinet.net](mailto:nrtterry@btinet.net).



**Figure 2**

## Kreil *Continued from page 1*

Karen includes outdoor pursuits in her list of avocations as well. She and husband Randy and faithful lab Ally McTeal ply the wetlands and prairies with waders and shotguns during the fall, enjoying upland game and waterfowl hunting. Karen has a true love for the natural resources that have become her life's work. Nothing exemplifies that better than this reflection from her letter of application for the Trust position.

"My favorite experiences include setting up a decoy spread in a wetland before daybreak, hunting sharp-tailed grouse on the prairie, chasing roosters through waist high CRP, and camping in close proximity to favorite hunting spots. Camping adds another dimension to the hunting experience. There

is the thrill of going to sleep to the sound of waterfowl in a wetland over the hill, or the sounds of howling coyotes nearby, waking up in the middle of the night to see the northern lights, a wetland ringed by fireflies, or a brilliant harvest moon, and enjoying a campfire."

Karen has the passion and drive that exemplifies the true professional that she is. One of her former coworkers, upon learning she was leaving the Service, exclaimed that they would be losing the "spunk" in their office. Well, their loss of "spunk" is our gain. We are thrilled to have Karen as part of our small but accomplished group of Trust employees. Her experience and commitment is a perfect fit with the Trust's mission.



She brings an excitement to her job that positively influences all of us around her, and that makes our office and our organization even better.

Welcome aboard, Karen!! 😊

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**Keith Trego**, *executive director, ND Natural Resources Trust*

## CP37 now available!!

In August of 2006, the US Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency created a continuous conservation reserve program (CRP) practice entitled CP37. This CP37 practice is an excellent opportunity for landowners to enroll eligible property into CRP. The continuous CRP means you can enroll your property at any time, no sign-up period. Visit with your county Farm Service Agency to get enrolled now.

The practice is only available in the Midwestern states of Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota. North Dakota has been allocated 40,000 acres. Land eligibility requires cropped wetlands capable of being restored or enhanced and the associated buffer areas. The buffer to wetland ratio must be a minimum of 4:1 and a maximum of 10:1. Contract length can vary from 10 to 15 years. The majority of the land must also be in the CP37 eligibility zone. The program eligibility zone is area that supports greater than 25 breeding duck pairs per square mile, as established in coordination with the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Ducks Unlimited, the North Dakota Game and Fish Department, and the North Dakota Natural Resources Trust have pooled resources to provide a cost-share and incentive package to financially help landowners with restoration activities. (See page 5.)

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2007 MEETINGS SCHEDULE

Spring

Summer

Fall

May 3-4

July 11-12

December 13-14

Bismarck

To be announced

Bismarck

*North Dakota Natural Resources Trust*



# BOARD'S CORNER

## Reflections

The ND Natural Resources Trust (Trust) has been steadily evolving since its authorization in 1986. I was exposed to the Trust's work from early 1988 until 1994 while working on the Garrison Diversion Unit project as an employee of the US Fish and Wildlife Service and have represented the National Wildlife Federation on the Board since 1994.

The Trust's early emphasis was funding wetland conservation projects which others brought to the Board for consideration. This practice continues today but at a much reduced level of funding. The Board then actively undertook the purchase of several tracts of land to restore wetlands and demonstrate land conservation practices which private landowners could consider in their operations. These lands and/or management have now been transferred to the ND Game and Fish Department (NDGFD).

The Board moved on to partner with other groups and agencies to encourage landowners to restore wetlands, store flood water, and plant native grass on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) lands. Fencing materials for improved grazing practices were cost-shared when lands came out of CRP and on other private lands, especially to help young farmers get started in agriculture. Recognizing that major changes were needed on the landscape to reduce erosion of the uplands into wetland basins, the Board helped fund the purchase of 18 no-till drills which were rented to landowners interested in trying no-till on a trial basis without having to immediately buy their own equipment.

In the most recent phase of the Board's evolution, most funds and expertise of the staff have been used on projects which provide immediate/perpetual natural resource benefits to current and future generations. The Board partnered with others to purchase and permanently restore several major prairie pothole wetland complexes and plant prairie grass and forbs on the surrounding uplands. At the confluence of the Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers, one major riparian/wetland land tract was purchased and others are under negotiations. All these lands are transferred to NDGFD for future management and are open for public use.

The Board's latest efforts entail partnering with others to protect some of the riparian lands along the Missouri River north of Bismarck from eventual development. These lands remain in private ownership but must be perpetually maintained as open space.

The Board welcomes public input about where the Trust should put its future natural resource emphasis for the perpetual protection and restoration of wetland, grassland, and riparian habitat in North Dakota.

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**Richard (Dick) Kroger** is chairman of the ND Natural Resources Trust Board of Directors.

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North Dakota Game &  
Fish Department



**CONSERVATION PARTNERS  
OFFER COST-SHARE ASSISTANCE AND INCENTIVES  
FOR CP37 CRP SIGN-UP**

Grass Planting

North Dakota Game and Fish Department:

- Cost-sharing - NDGFD will provide up to 50 % cost-sharing on grass seed and required management practices (light disking, burning, interseeding, clipping, and removal) if landowner allows public access to the CRP for the life of the contract.
- Incentive payment - NDGFD will provide an additional one-time upfront incentive payment of \$1-\$4/acre/CRP contract year, depending upon location within the state, if landowner allows public access to the CRP for the life of the contract.

Wetland Restoration

Ducks Unlimited Cost-Share:

- DU will pay up to 25 % of the actual wetland restoration costs (includes hydrology restoration and sediment removal as deemed necessary by USDA). In nearly all instances, this 25 % cost-share will cover the landowner cost for the restoration work.

ND Natural Resources Trust One-Time Incentive Payments:

- NDNRT will provide incentive payments in addition to conservation partner's cost-share on all wetland restorations at the following rate:  
\$30 per restored wetland acre or \$150 per restored basin (whichever is highest).

DU and NDNRT will make the incentive payments directly to landowners/producers when confirmed by FSA/NRCS field offices that the wetland restorations are completed. Wetland restoration consists of the physical restoration of wetland hydrology.

**Contact Information:**

ND Game & Fish Dept.  
100 N. Bismarck Expressway  
Bismarck, ND 58501  
701-328-6371

Ducks Unlimited, Inc.  
2525 River Road  
Bismarck, ND 58501  
701-355-3500

ND Natural Resources Trust  
1605 E. Capitol Ave., Ste. 101  
Bismarck, ND 58501-2102  
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# TRUST DEEDS LAND HOLDINGS TO NORTH DAKOTA GAME AND FISH by Merle Bennett

The North Dakota Natural Resources Trust (Trust) has officially transferred several of its land holdings to the North Dakota Game and Fish Department (Department). The Walhalla project in Pembina County and the R.L. Morgan project in Wells County were deeded to the Department in September and are now state wildlife management areas under Department management guidelines.

The Walhalla project was purchased by the Trust in 2003 and consisted of a 212-acre drained wetland and 200 acres of crop land. The lands were enrolled in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP). The WRP easement requires that all drained or altered wetlands be restored and all crop lands and other disturbed areas

seeded to native plant species. From the date of purchase to deed transfer, the Trust completed the restoration work, while the Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) engineering staff in Devils Lake completed the surveys and design work for water control structures, dikes, plugs, and ditches. All NRCS program requirements were fulfilled.

The Walhalla WMA is located about 4.5 miles east of the town of Walhalla. It will be open to hunting, trapping, hiking, bird-watching, and other compatible uses.

The R.L. Morgan project, located about four miles northwest of Sykeston, ND, was purchased by the Trust in 2002 and totals 1,476 acres. All of the lands in the project were enrolled in WRP, so wetlands

restoration and native grassland restoration of former crop lands were required. All small prairie pothole-type wetlands have been restored through silt removal or ditch plugs. As part of the complete restoration package, all old fences, rock piles, old machinery, building foundations, wells, and other debris were buried. Deteriorating tree rows were also removed, burned, or buried.

The project, originally called Cook Slough, was renamed the R.L. Morgan WMA to honor Robert L. (Bob) Morgan, retired former ND Game and Fish Department wildlife division chief. The entire area is open to public use including hunting, trapping, hiking, bird-watching, camping, etc.



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