

Name of Community or Multi-Community: **Loup Basin RC&D Council**
Name of Project: **Loup Basin RC&D Waste Collections**
Project Contact Person: **Karen Wilson**
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Category: **Community Development**
Subcategory: **Environmental Projects & Awareness**
Annual/Ongoing: **Ongoing**
Date project begun: **2000** Date Completed: **August 31, 2003**
Volunteer hours: **900** Number of Volunteers: **150**

1. Give a brief description of the project.

For a number of years there have been recycling bins placed in area communities since the recycling centers in the large cities are not easily accessible. For items that cannot be taken to the community recycling bins, this past year Loup Basin RC&D continued special waste collections throughout the nine county area. Collections for used tires, household hazardous waste, and farmstead cleanups were held.

2. Identify the planning and implementation of the project.

Used Tires

Grant dollars were received to help make these collections possible. The disposal of used tires continues to be a problem. So an application for grant dollars was written and received in June 2002 to hold used tire collections in sites throughout the nine county area. The collections were held in Custer County, July 28, 2003; Valley County, July 31, 2003; Blaine County, October 9, 2003; and Sherman County June 18th, 2003. Several methods of publicizing these collections were used.

- ◆ Community talk shows on the Broken Bow and Ord radio stations
- ◆ PSAs on the Broken Bow and Ord radio stations
- ◆ News articles for the all the area newspapers and Loup Basin RC&D monthly newsletter
- ◆ Posted flyers in communities

Certified haulers of used tires were contacted and an agreement to haul to a certified disposal site was made with Butler County Landfill. A total of 16 volunteers were lined up help at the collection sites.

Household Hazardous Waste

A Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection was held May 10, 2003. This collection was made possible by grants received by Loup Basin RC&D Council and Clean Community System in Grand Island. There was a cash match for the collection that was based on the population in each county. Each of the nine county boards were contacted and eight on the nine counties agreed to take part in the HHW collection

The next step was to let the public know that a collection was taking place, where and when it would be held in their area, and what waste should be brought to the collection sites. The same advertising methods for this collection was used as the used tire collection. State Senator McDonald assisted by making a PSA for use on the local radio stations.

At least one collection site was planned in each participating county. Volunteers were needed to man each site. FFA students, Chamber of Commerce members, local recycling groups, Custer County Transfer & Recycling, Loup Central Landfill, and individuals helped at each of the collection sites. Waste was picked up in 10 out laying communities and brought to the Valley County Fairgrounds in Ord. At the fairgrounds, the waste was sorted, paint cans opened and drained, waste oil collected, and Safety Clean Corp prepared chemicals and acids for safe disposal.

Farmstead Cleanups

The Loup Basin RC&D partnered with the Ord FFA class in doing two farmstead cleanups. Farms for cleanup were selected from a list of farmers that signed up for the service. Two salvage yards in the Ord area were contacted to take the scrap iron and arrangements were made for pickups and trailers to haul the scrap iron. The cleanup was held on a hot and humid July day. By the end of the day the farms looked much neater and the volunteers were hot and tired but felt they had helped make the area a better and safer place to live.

Recycling and community betterment have always been goals of the Loup Basin RC&D Council. The used tire collection, the household hazardous waste collection, and the farmstead cleanup projects would fall under Strategy B, "To sustain and improve a healthy natural resource base". This goals states that the Council will promote recycling and solid and

hazardous waste collection systems in the area by developing local recycling programs and facilities for effective disposal and use of recyclable material.

3. Describe volunteer involvement in planning and implementing the project.

The volunteers selected the collection sites for the household hazardous waste collection, with the exception of Ord. The organizations and groups made sure that their sites had sufficient number of volunteers to man their site. The volunteers loaded and unloaded the waste, drained paint cans, and organized the collection sites. Two communities called and asked to have collection sites in their communities. They arranged for collection sites, volunteers, and transported the waste to the main collection site on May 10th. Burwell and Callaway also planned a citywide cleanup in conjunction the household hazardous waste collection.

The farmstead clean up was coordinated by the Ord FFA. They selected farms for cleanup from a list they had compiled. They also determined manpower and length of time to complete. The chapter members secured trailers and pickups for the farm site cleanups. The members who donated the use of their vehicles were reimbursed for mileage. The volunteers assisted the day of the cleanup with the loading and transferring of items from the farm to the trailer and off at the recycling centers and other sites. The Ord FFA continues to promote the project and took it on as one of their yearly projects.

The local FFAs manned the used tire collections. They unloaded the tires and kept the collection moving in an orderly fashion.

Volunteers are an important part of these collections. There were over 900 volunteer hours used to make these collections a success.

4. Identify Project Outcomes.

These three collections met and exceeded the goals set by the Council. The household hazardous waste collection was the largest ever held in the area. Following amount of household hazardous waste was collected:

- ◆ 7,340 pounds of paint, paint related materials, banned materials, pesticides, and acids.

- ◆ 77,00 pounds of lead acid batteries
- ◆ 6,000 pounds of used motor oil

Over 58 tons of used tires were brought in the collection sites. The farmstead cleanups yielded four big trailers of scrap iron, wire, etc. being taken in for recycling and reuse.

The increase of knowledge on recycling and the benefits of maintaining a home and farmstead free of hazard waste and items that are breeding ground for mosquitoes and pollution were tremendous. There were numerous radio and paper releases stating the successes and the amount of recyclable material collected. These collections also gained the Loup Basin RC&D council recognition within the communities. Numerous phone calls were received asking for information on various projects offered by the office. The amount of material that was collected far exceeded what was anticipated.

Because of Loup Basin RC&D use of volunteers to successfully complete their projects the Council received the following volunteer awards in July 2003.

- ◆ 2002 Northern Plains Regional RC&D/NRCS Earth Team Award
- ◆ 2002 RC&D/NRCS National Earth Team Award

5. Describe how resources were identified and used to successfully implement the project.

Community groups, counties, cities, and villages have an interest in improving the area they live in and are very willing to help make it a better place to live. The area FFA chapters' goals are a good fit with the Council's goals for community betterment and recycling projects. Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality has long supported litter reduction and recycling so they were selected to receive funding.

6. What aspects (if any) of the project were especially unique or creative? Please describe if applicable.

These collections gave communities the incentive to have citywide cleanups. One FFA chapter could not participate in the household hazardous waste collection and held an independent collection of car and truck batteries with a tremendous success. These collections were very

effective and needed, with communities and groups expanding on them and making them even better.



Unloading tires during the used tire collection.

Volunteers emptying paint cans during the household hazardous waste collection



Volunteers loading the trailer at the farmstead cleanup