

PRAIRIE HILLS

RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT, INCORPORATED

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WINTER/SPRING 2011

Prairie Hills RC&D receives two grants!

Prairie Hills recently received two grants which will assist the READY Bus literacy program, the Prairie Land Conservancy group and a Community Garden in Macomb, Illinois.

The first grant received was from the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service's Circle Of Diamond (COD) members. Prairie Hills has been a member of the COD for 3 years now making us eligible to apply for a \$8,730 grant to be used for any new or on going projects the RC&D currently has. Those RC&Ds not a member of the COD were only eligible to apply for a grant for \$4,365.00. With

the COD grant, the monies will be divided between the READY Bus literacy program to assist with its operational costs, and the Prairie Land Conservancy group to assist with the purchase of seed for the 2 acre Show Prairie on the Stony Hills Nature Preserve.

The second grant Prairie Hills was awarded was from the National Association of RC&D Council's for a Community Garden in Macomb Illinois. Rob Porter, member of the PLC and professor at Western Illinois University, compiled information and presented it to Prairie Hills to try to achieve this grant for the community

garden in McDonough County. Prairie Hills was one of 5 recipients to receive the grant. Monies for this grant will be used to purchase a roto-tiller, various fruit and vegetable seeds and other items necessary to establish this Community Garden. This project will help the community produce locally grown products that are organically grown and healthy for individuals. This is a way to bring individuals together to help maintain and care for the garden and learn the basics of "locally grown" gardening. To learn how you can become involved please contact the office at (309)833-4747.

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Special points of interest:

- Contact your Legislator and ask them to restore funding for the RC&D budget! See page 3
- Mark your calendar for the upcoming council meeting April 14th, 2011 at 11:30 in Macomb.
- To Schedule the READY Bus call the office (309)833-4747

Mark your calendar and plan to attend the upcoming Council Meeting

The executive board set the next Council meeting for April 14th at 11:30 am. The place is to be determined and more information and the meeting agenda will be mailed at a later date.

One major agenda item will be the current proposed RC&D Budget and the importance of forming an outlook committee for Prairie Hills

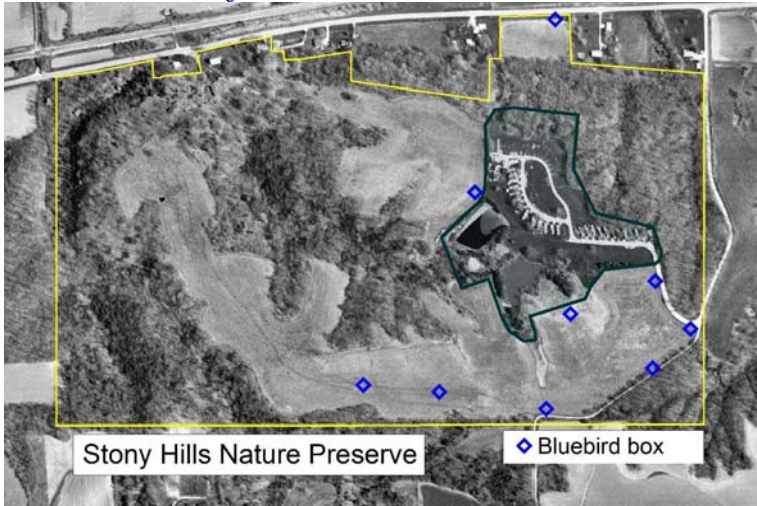
RC&D. The President has proposed that all RC&D's be eliminated from the 2012 budget and congress is proposing cutting the RC&D out of the remainder of the 2011 Fiscal Year budget. So far, the RC&D has made it through two continuing resolutions through April 8th, 2011. But, it is important for all council members to contact their legislators

and ask them to restore funding for the RC&D program. Legislative contact information can be found on page three of the newsletter. Prairie Hills also has letters for council members and their friends to sign and fax. If you would like to receive this letter, or want more information, please contact Tracy Meredith at the office at 309-833-4747.



PRAIRIE LAND CONSERVANCY RECEIVES BLUE BIRD BOXES FOR STONY HILLS

Article and photo's by Dan Moorehouse



Aerial photo of Stony Hills Nature Preserve with locations of the bluebird boxes.

The Western Prairie Audubon Society teamed up with Ms. Montalvo's Macomb Junior High School Science Club to build bluebird nesting boxes this winter. Looking for an opportunity to help attract more nesting bluebirds, the Society donated the boxes to the Prairie Land Conservancy to establish a bluebird trail at our 200 acre Stony Hills Nature Preserve.

birds are cavity nesters and many potential nesting holes are no longer available as old trees are cut down and old wooden fencepost are removed or replaced with a steel post. To help counter this problem, we have just finished installing nine new nesting boxes along the grassland trails and roads at Stony Hills. We plan to monitor the boxes cleaning them out and keeping out the starlings and House Sparrows throughout the summer. For more information about Stony Hills or the bluebird boxes contact the office at (309)833-4747.

Over the years, bluebird numbers have declined due to habitat loss and development. Blue-



One of nine bluebird boxes placed at Stony Hills.



Dan Moorehouse with son Zed placing a bluebird box at Stony Hills.



Angella Moorehouse and Chuck Gilbert discuss placement of the bluebird boxes.



Chuck Gilbert, Dan Moorehouse and his son Zed, both PLC members hook a bluebird box to a metal post.

READY Bus Tentative Schedule for 2011



The READY Bus is getting geared up and already started its 2011 season. The first event attended was at VIT school in Table Grove. The school was celebrating Dr. Seuss's birthday and had the bus attend for their pre-k through 6th grade classes. Cathy Olsen from USDA NRCS used the bus in Monmouth at Lincoln Elementary on March 3, and the next event will be March 24 at VIT for their third grade classes. The following events have been tentatively scheduled for the bus:

- April 6th, West Prairie North
- April 13th, Industry Elementary

- April 16th, Monmouth YMCA
- April 19th, Avon Elementary
- April 20th, West Prairie South
- April 26th, Lincoln Elementary
- April 28th, Roseville Ag Day
- May 4th, Touch a Truck- Galesburg
- May 6th, Conservation Days-Hancock
- May 13th, Roseville Ag

Events are being schedule now and will fill up quickly, so if you or your organization would like to schedule the READY Bus, please feel free to contact the office at (309)833-4747.

Building Addition Update

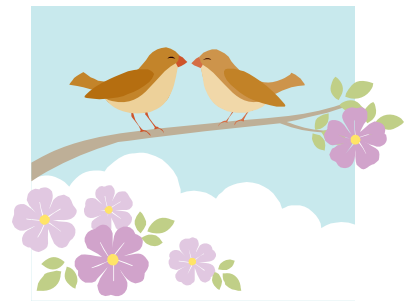
Prairie Hills RC&D new building addition is completed and Dave and Tracy moved into the new space December 28th. There are still some minor items on the exterior that are being worked on and should be finished up once the weather cooperates. The executive board also voted on new office furniture for the conference room, Tracy's office and the reception area. These pieces include a conference table, 10 conference chairs, a new

office desk for Tracy, and 4 new reception chairs.

Prairie Hills is working on getting new bids for landscaping around the building. Current bids received were in accordance to the architects landscape de-

sign which was not well suited for the office. Once new bids are received, the buildings and grounds committee will seek a variance from the city from the current landscape design for the new design.

Prairie Hills is still working on finding a new tenant for the existing building and is waiting on word from a possible occupant. Once the building is rented, new carpet and paint will need done to freshen up the building.



Legislative Update and Contact Information

The RC&D Program is slated to be cut for the remainder of the 2011 FY budget and for the 2012 FY Budget. Please see the following to see what you can do.

Use the Congressional Recess to Tell Your Legislators about RC&D

- * Congress will be in recess from March 21 -27.
 - * The Senate reconvenes on Monday, March 28.
 - * The House reconvenes on Tuesday, March 29.
- This recess is an excellent oppor-

tunity to try and meet with legislators when they are in their States and Congressional Districts.

Call their offices to schedule a meeting or plan to attend a town hall meeting or other event where they will be in attendance.

* Use the opportunity to tell them what RC&Ds have done and are doing.

* Just as important, tell them what will NOT happen if the RC&D Program is eliminated.

Reference the RC&D's FY 2010 accomplishments nationwide, avail-

able on the NARC&DC's website at rcdnet.org

* Let the National Association know what steps you have taken and what you have learned. For general assistance, feel free to contact the NARC&DC at (202) 434-4780.

Bobby Schilling, (Republican, District 17)

202-225-5905 P, 202-225-5396 F

Senator Dick Durbin

202-224-2152 P, 202-228-0400 F

Senator Mark Kirk

202-224-2854 P. 202-228-4611 F





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OFFICE SPACE FOR LEASE



Is your business looking to expand or looking for a better location and space? Are you looking to start a new business and need a professional office building? Prairie Hills has the solution! For lease is a 2,400 square foot professional building located at 321 1/2 West University Drive, Macomb, Illinois that has a conference room, break room, two bathrooms, four offices with space for up to four

+ more, ADA compliant, newer HVAC, additional storage and ample parking. To make an appointment to view this office, please contact Prairie Hills at (309)833-4747.

