

Southwest Nebraska Weed Management Area (SWWMA) will receive \$300,000 from the Nebraska Environmental Trust for the Republican River Riparian Improvement Project.

The Trust Board announced funding for the project at its meeting on April 2, in Lincoln. The project is one of the 82 receiving \$15,065,944 in grant awards from the Nebraska Environmental Trust this year.

The area project will extend SWWMA's efforts and accomplish invasive riparian species control in the Nebraska Republican River corridor.

The control efforts will be done in a holistic manner using the most appropriate and cost-effective options, whether that is mechanical, biological or chemical. Stream management will improve stream flow and function while protecting and improving wildlife habitat and water quality.

A second and equal goal is to increase public awareness of the impact of invasive plants on the river system and of best management practices to protect river function, wildlife and grazing uses of the associated lands.

This project has been partially funded by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, but needed additional funding to clear the properties of all landowners previously signed up.

Southwest Weed Management Area was formed in 2006 and includes as members: county weed superintendents, Southwest Nebraska RC&D Inc., the Upper and Middle Republican NRDs, NRCS field office personnel, and other agencies and private land owners.

The group coordinates and assists efforts to identify and control noxious weeds and invasive plants.

The primary targets of this project are saltcedar and phragmites within the channel and red cedar and Russian olive within the 100 foot corridor of the stream banks.

Field days will be held in each affected county to educate the public and encourage land owners to maintain the control efforts.

For more information on the funding available for this grant cycle, Jennifer ten Bensel, Executive Administrator, can be contacted at 308/697-3477 or [Jennifer.tenbensel@rcdnet.net](mailto:Jennifer.tenbensel@rcdnet.net).

The Nebraska Legislature created the Nebraska Environmental Trust in 1992. Using revenue from the Nebraska Lottery, the Trust has provided over \$142 million in grants to 1,134 projects across the state.

Anyone—citizens, organizations, communities, farmers and businesses—can apply for funding to protect habitat, improve water quality and establish recycling programs in Nebraska.