

October 19, 2009

Big Indian Lake Improvement Project **Community-Based Planning Process**

In 2007, the Lower Big Blue NRD partnered with several local, state and federal agencies to initiate the Big Indian Community-Based Planning Process to reduce sediment and phosphorus loading to Big Indian Lake. A locally-led group comprised of Big Indian landowners and stakeholders developed a watershed management plan. The plan centers on the installation of land treatment practices in the watershed in conjunction with in-lake improvements to meet water quality goals adopted by the council.

The NRD and Big Indian Advisory Council hired EA/JEO Engineering to complete final design of the lake improvement project. In-lake work is expected to include the construction of main stream sediment ponds and wetlands, reshaping of shorelines to improve depth and access to the lake, in-lake grading, shoreline stabilization, improvements to the swimming cove and facilities, boat ramp improvements, installation of rural water, construction of a helipad, and installation of handicap facilities. The goal of the overall project is the protection and enhancement of the Big Indian Watershed and Recreation Area. After the lake improvement project is completed the NRD plans to apply for a grant to install a walking trail around the recreation area. The trail would connect to the existing walking trail.

The Big Indian Advisory Council approved the proposed in-lake improvements and the NRD board will review the design at their October 29, 2009, board meeting. If you have any questions, comments or would like more information about the planned lake improvement project, please contact the Lower Big Blue NRD at 402-228-3402. A map of the proposed lake improvements can be viewed at www.lbbnrd.org.

Vision Statement – “A locally led group focused on working together to enhance the agricultural and environmental values of the watershed, and to provide for long term water quality and diverse recreational uses of the lake. Big Indian Lake will be managed to support a healthy ecosystem for fish and wildlife, while maintaining the benefits of flood control. Watershed conservation practices will be identified and promoted to bring about reduced runoff, benefits to agriculture, and improved water quality that meets or exceeds the water quality standards for Big Indian Lake. This watershed project will serve as a lasting example of our dedication to the local community and to the environment,”

Project Partners: Big Indian Advisory Council, Lower Big Blue NRD, Gage County Extension, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Nebraska Natural Legacy Program, Gage County, USDA/NRCS, NDEQ/EPA, and the Nebraska Environmental Trust