

McIntosh Winner Of Knockout At 'Hoops In The Hills' Basketball Tournament

The Mullen 'Hoops in the Hills' youth basketball tournament was held Saturday morning, January 25 in Mullen.

Hope McIntosh of Thedford was named the champion in the fifth and sixth grade competition. She beat out Jaci Corfield of Arthur County.

Hope is the daughter of Chad and Michelle McIntosh of Thedford and a fifth grader at Thedford Elementary School.



KATIE DENT

ULNRD Poster Winners Announced

The Upper Loup NRD board of directors selected five posters that were submitted to the state competition. Among the five finalists were: Piper Hanson, Piper Sikes, Cole Sikes, Harper Zutavern, and Rylyn Moody. We would like to thank the Sandhills Public Schools for participating in the contest and encourage other schools in our district to participate in the 2025 NACD poster contest.

Five students took state in the conservation poster contest, students winning the state competition include:

- K-1: Charlotte Radon, Norfolk, Nebraska (Lower Elkhorn NRD)
- 2-3: Elise Ekberg, Norfolk, Nebraska (Lower Elkhorn NRD)
- 4-6: Connor Pojar, Scribner, Nebraska (Lower Elkhorn NRD)
- 7-9: Kiersten Hans, Wynot, Nebraska (Lewis & Clark NRD)
- 10-12: Rylyn Moody, Purdum, Nebraska (Upper Loup NRD)



COURTESY

Rylyn Moody with her winning entry.

Purdum, Nebraska (Upper Loup NRD)

The state winners received a \$25 prize and have been sent on to compete in the National Association of Conservation Districts

(NACD) poster contest for the chance to win \$200. The national winners will be selected at the NACD annual conference in February.

LWCF, RTP grantees approved by commissioners

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission approved grantees for the Land and Water Conservation Fund Stateside Assistance Program and the Recreational Trails Program at its meeting Jan. 24 in Lincoln.

Commissioners approved the following grant awards, totaling more than \$1.9 million, for the Land and Water Conservation Fund Stateside Assistance Program:

- Columbus, \$215,606 for the Sertomaland inclusive playground replacement in East Pawnee Park;
- Lincoln, \$600,000 for an inclusive playground replacement in Antelope Park;
- Norfolk, \$511,500 for development of an additional softball complex at Ta-Ha-Zouka Park; and
- Sidney, \$600,000 for the revitalization of Northside Park.

Funding from the LWCF comes from the U.S. Department of the Interior using revenues from federal oil and gas leases on the Outer Continental Shelf.

Commissioners also approved the following

recreational trail projects for federal funding through the Recreational Trails Program:

- Imperial, \$250,000 to build the Prairie Sage Trail, a 2,400-foot-long concrete trail around the Chase County Community Hospital for the public, patients and staff. It will be the first recreational trail in Imperial;
- Lower Loup Natural Resources District, \$250,000 to build a 3,100-foot-long concrete trail at Pibel Lake Recreation Area;
- Nebraska Game and Parks Fort Kearney State Recreation Area, \$250,000 to redeck the 1,000-foot-long rail-to-trail bridge over the Platte River for park visitors, trail users and Sandhill crane watchers; and
- U.S. Forest Service Bessey Ranger District, \$400,000 to refurbish 1.7 miles of deteriorated Forest Road 224, which provides access to Whitetail Campground and many off-highway vehicle trails from the campground; it also would improve emergency services access to the area.

Funding from the RTP

comes from the Federal Highway Administration and is made possible by a portion of the federal motor fuel excise tax paid by users of off-road recreational vehicles.

At the meeting, the commissioners also approved staff recommendations to:

- Approve Nebraska's Third Aquatic Habitat Plan: 2025-2040; the plan identifies and outlines 71 anticipated aquatic habitat restoration and angler access projects on water bodies across the state. It also provides the flexibility to add projects that align with the goals of the Aquatic Habitat Program;
- Approve the Nebraska Game and Parks Employee Recognition Program;
- For Commission designation of 593 acres of Bureau of Education Land and Funds property, located at Section 36, Township 20N, Range 54W, Banner County, as an addition to the Williams Gap Wildlife Management Area; and
- Approve to relinquish

Bench in Honor of Mark Mulligan



COURTESY

Pictured above, l-r: Mike and Janice Hodges with Judy Mulligan and the bench they placed at Crossroads Auto Repair Specialists in memory of Mark.

The family of Mark Mulligan is honored to have received the help from Mike and Janice Hodges of Crossroads Auto Repair Specialists to place a bench in memory of Mark Mulligan.

Mark worked for the Hodgeses when they owned and operated the Cenex station and became good friends. The plaque on the bench reads: "IN LOVING MEMORY OF MARK MULLIGAN:

Always in our thoughts
Forever in our hearts
This bench is dedicated to the most hardworking man that never sat
From his family and friends 1965 - 2021.



COURTESY

The plaque on the memorial bench for Mark Mulligan in front of C.A.R.S. located east of Thedford.

Ag land management webinar to offer updates on cash rents, leasing for 2025



COURTESY

The Center for Agricultural Profitability at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln will cover the latest trends in Nebraska cash rental rates, new leasing considerations and more during its next Land Management Quarterly webinar at noon Central on Feb. 17. (Photo credit: Hailey Walmsley/Real Ag Stock)

Land Management Quarterly webinar at noon Central on Feb. 17

The Center for Agricultural Profitability at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln will cover the latest trends in Nebraska cash rental rates, new leasing considerations and more during its next Land Management Quarterly webinar at noon Central on Feb. 17.

Each quarter, the webinars address common management issues for Nebraska landowners, agricultural operators and related stakeholders interested in the latest insight on trends in real estate, managing agricultural land and solutions for addressing challenges in the upcoming

growing season.

The February webinar will examine methods for setting cash rents, flex lease alternatives and considerations for updating agricultural rental arrangements for 2025. It will include an "Ask the Experts" session, allowing participants to get answers to their land or lease questions.

The webinar will be led by Jim Jansen and Anastasia Meyer, both in the Department of Agricultural Economics. Jansen focuses on agricultural finance, land economics and the direction of the annual Nebraska Farm Real Estate Market Sur-

vey and Report. Meyer is an agricultural economist focusing on rental negotiations and leasing arrangements.

"This webinar will help anyone with a vested interest in land to better understand the financial and human forces reshaping the rural agricultural landscape," Jansen said.

The webinar is free and will be recorded. Past recordings can be viewed the day after each session, along with recordings from the entire series.

Registration is free at <https://cap.unl.edu/land-management>.