



601 S. 12th St. Suite 201

Lincoln, NE 68508

nard@nrdnet.org

(402) 471-7670

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For More Information Contact: Alyssa Smola, 402.471.7672 or E-mail asmola@nrdnet.org

STUDENTS COMPETE IN THE 2012 NEBRASKA STATE ENVIROTHON

(Halsey, NE) – The 2012 Nebraska Envirothon State Championship team hails from West Holt High School located in Atkinson. The competition was held May 5th at the Nebraska State 4-H Camp near Halsey, NE. Student teams, consisting of five members, first competed in regional contests around the state. The winners of each region and the next seven overall highest scoring wildcard teams had the opportunity to compete at the state competition. The state competition is one stop on the road to the Canon Envirothon which is a national program for 9th – 12th grade students. The Nebraska Association of Resources Districts (NARD) is the annual sponsor of the Nebraska Envirothon.

The five-member teams competed in seven areas of environmental studies: soils, aquatics, forestry, wildlife, range, policy and a current environmental issue pertaining to non-point source pollution and low impact development. Test questions included written answers, and required hands-on observations, measurements and calculations.

“The Envirothon is a great hands-on learning experience for high schools that serves to educate youth on the importance of protecting the future of our natural resources,” said Joe Anderjaska, Nebraska Association of Resources Districts (NARD) Board President. “The Envirothon also serves as an introduction to students for potential careers in natural resources management,” said Anderjaska.

West Holt’s team will be invited to represent Nebraska at the Canon Envirothon receives a \$1000 scholarship offered by the NARD-and each team member on the winning team was awarded a \$500 dollar scholarship by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to be used toward a major in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. Other sponsors for this year’s Envirothon included: Nebraska Forest Service, Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, Nebraska Natural Resources Conservation Service, Monsanto Water Utilization Learning Center, Platte River Recovery Implementation Program, Farm Credit Services of America, HDR Engineering, Inc., and Midwest Laboratories. This year the Canon Envirothon will be held at Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania with over 55 teams from across the United States and Canada expected to participate in the North American competition.

Members of the first place team from West Holt High School are Cole Gibbens, Dylan Liable, Marcus Marcellus, Abigael Olson, and Josh Coyle. Their coach/adviser is David Gibbens. The State Runner-up team was from Aurora High School, and a team from Bellevue West High School finished in third place. This year there were 11 schools and 13 teams competing in the state contest. Schools participating were: Aurora, two teams from Bellevue West, Burke, Chase County, two teams from Concordia, Milford, Norris, Ord, Sidney, Saint Edward, and West Holt. Station winners include: Aquatics and Special Topic Oral Presentation: Aurora; Wildlife: West Holt and Concordia Team 2 (tie); Range and Forestry: West Holt; Soil: West Holt and Aurora (tie); and, Policy: Bellevue West Team 1.

The NARD, the trade association for Nebraska's 23 natural resources districts, works with individual NRDs to protect lives, protect property and protect the future of Nebraska's natural resources. 2012 marks the 40th Anniversary of Nebraska's unique Natural Resources District system. NRDs are local government entities with broad responsibilities to protect our natural resources. Major Nebraska river basins form the boundaries of the 23 NRDs, enabling districts to respond best to local conservation and resource management needs.

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