

Historic Site Preserved through the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program

A nationally historic site in Nebraska referred to in the journals of Lewis and Clark over 200 years ago is now protected thanks to NRCS' Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program. NRCS worked with the Northern Prairies Land Trust to enter this historically significant piece of property into the first Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program easement agreement in Nebraska. This easement will conserve 524 acres, which includes an area known as "Old Baldy" where the Lewis and Clark expedition visited in September of 1804.

"This easement gives the Trust authority over the land to preserve it in its present rangeland state. The landowners retain ownership and can graze the land, but the land is protected from any other land uses," said John Davidson, Trust president.

"Old Baldy" lies within viewing distance of the Missouri River in Boyd County. A narrow strip of land between the river and Old Baldy has already been subdivided for development.

Steve Chick, Natural Resources Conservation Service State Conservationist said, "We are pleased to help with the preservation of this site. This program will protect special sites, like Old Baldy, from being subdivided and converted to other land uses."

NRCS will provide funding to the Northern Prairies Land Trust, which will be used with a contribution from the landowner to preserve this site that has been in their family for generations.

Another key partner in this effort is the Nebraska Environmental Trust, which provided a grant to Northern Prairie Land Trust as part of the required state-federal matching funds to complete the easement purchase.

The "Old Baldy" site is covered with unbroken mixed grass prairie and burr oak woodlands, which makes it attractive for many species of wildlife. The conservation easement ensures this significant piece of Nebraska and national history is protected forever. ♦



Anne Diffendal, UNL

"Old Baldy," a famous spot along the Lewis and Clark Trail, is now protected from development through a Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program easement.