

News Release



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PLANTNEBRASKA ANNOUNCES ARBORETUM REACCREDITATION FOR RIVERSIDE DISCOVERY CENTER

LINCOLN, Neb. (May 28, 2026) – PlantNebraska announced that Riverside Discovery Center in Scottsbluff has been reaccredited as an arboretum in its Nebraska Statewide Arboretum network. This accreditation reaffirms Riverside Discovery Center’s commitment to conservation, education and the preservation of plant diversity in western Nebraska.

Rather than operating from a single location, PlantNebraska’s program The Nebraska Statewide Arboretum supports a unique statewide network of arboreturns, botanical gardens and high-quality landscapes all connected to foster knowledge and appreciation of plants and excellence in landscape practice in Nebraska. Today, 48 years after its founding, the network has grown to more than 100 arboreturns and public gardens across the state.

“We are thrilled to welcome Riverside Discovery Center as our newest accredited arboretum in the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum network,” said PlantNebraska Executive Director Hanna Pinneo. “It offers a beautiful showcase of the diversity of tree and plant species unique to western Nebraska, and a perfect opportunity for residents and tourists alike to enjoy flora and wildlife together.”

Regaining this accreditation reflects Riverside Discovery Center’s ongoing efforts to enhance its grounds with regionally appropriate plantings, improve habitat value for wildlife and provide meaningful educational opportunities for visitors of all ages. The arboretum designation complements the zoo’s broader mission by integrating plant conservation with animal care and environmental stewardship.

“Visitors to Riverside Discovery Center can now experience an enriched landscape that not only supports native ecosystems but also serves as a living classroom, demonstrating sustainable landscaping practices and the importance of biodiversity in Nebraska’s unique environment,” said Riverside Discovery Center Executive Director Kei Hodgson. “We could not be prouder to be welcomed back into the fold as one of the newest arboreturns within the PlantNebraska family. This would not be possible without the support from our community, the North Platte NRD and the diligence and hard work of our staff here at RDC.”

PlantNebraska is a 501(c)3 nonprofit founded in 1978 that plants Nebraska for healthy people, vibrant communities and a resilient environment. More information is available at plantnebraska.org.

For more information about Riverside Discovery Center, visit riversidediscoverycenter.org.

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PlantNebraska is a 501(c)3 nonprofit founded in 1978 that plants Nebraska for healthy people, vibrant communities and a resilient environment. We do this through tree planting, garden making, education and community building. We value our partnerships with our more than 100 affiliate sites throughout the state, more than 1,200 members and with the Nebraska Forest Service and the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska. Over the last 30 years we've distributed more than \$10 million in grant funds to communities across the state to help make Nebraska a place where everyone wants to live, work, and play.