

# CONSERVATION CONNECTIONS



Dickinson County Conservation District Newsletter Issue #4 January 2016

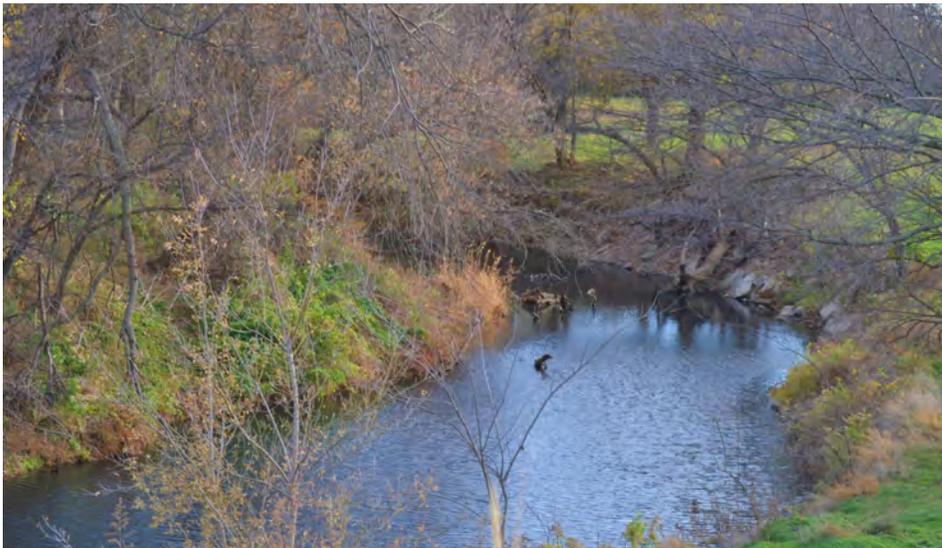
[www.dickinsoncountyconservationdistrict.com](http://www.dickinsoncountyconservationdistrict.com)

Receive our quarterly newsletter via email, US Mail, or on our website:  
[www.dickinsoncountyconservation.com](http://www.dickinsoncountyconservation.com). Call 785-263-2787 to change your preferences.

**TRUE OR FALSE:** During the Dust Bowl years, wind removed 1 to 2 inches of topsoil and dust dunes as tall as 5 feet formed in parts of Kansas, Texas, Oklahoma, and Colorado.

“The very earth of our country is gradually getting lost to us. One-third of the fertile top layer of our soil has already been washed away into rivers and the sea. This must be stopped, or some day our country will be barren to yield us a living. This is one national problem crying for solution, it affects you directly and decisively!” — Dwight D. Eisenhower

The Dickinson County Conservation District is hosting a photography contest for amateur photographers who are under 18 years old! The winning photograph in Dickinson County will be entered into the statewide contest, sponsored by Kansas Association of Conservation Districts Education and Youth Committee. Photographs must highlight conservation practices and must be taken within Dickinson County. Stop by the USDA Service Center in Abilene and ask Cindy for complete details.



## IMPORTANT DATES

- ◆ January 1 2016 New Year's Day  
OFFICE CLOSED
- ◆ January 14, 2016 CRP Workshop
- ◆ January 18, 2016 Martin Luther King Day  
OFFICE CLOSED
- ◆ February 11, 2016 Annual Meeting
- ◆ February 15, 2016—President's Day  
OFFICE CLOSED

DICKINSON COUNTY SERVICE CENTER  
328 NE 14TH STREET  
ABILENE, KS 67410



**The service center is open Monday through Friday 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM**  
(except the following holidays)

Monday, January 2—New Year's Day  
Monday, January 18—Martin Luther King Day  
Monday, February 15,—President's Day  
Monday, June 30—Memorial Day  
Monday, July 4—Independence Day  
Monday, September 5—Labor Day  
Monday, October 10—Columbus Day  
Friday, November 11—Veteran's Day  
Thursday, November 24—Thanksgiving Day

The Dickinson County Conservation District would like to welcome our newest partners. Cindy Dooley assumed the District Manager responsibilities in October. In December, the Board of Supervisors hired Brian Lang as the new Drill Manager to maintain and repair Conservation District equipment.

## **USDA Service Center**

### **Conservation District**

#### *Board of Supervisors:*

Dennis Marston, Chairman  
Darren Haney, Vice Chairman  
Raymond Bielefeld, Treasurer  
Francis Anderson, Member  
Matt Gustin, Member  
Cindy Dooley, District Manager  
Brian Lang, Drill Manager

### **Pheasants Forever**

Allie Rath, Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

### **NRCS Staff**

Kenny Bowell, Supervisory District Conservationist  
Danny Carroll, Soil Technician

### **Farm Service (FSA)**

Braden Stueve, County Executive Director:  
Ellen Alvarez, Program Technician  
Tonya Askew, Program Technician  
Sandy Johnson, Program Technician  
Deb Marston, Program Technician  
Michele Snowball, Program Technician

## **Contact Us**

### **Dickinson County Conservation District**

Phone:

785-263-2787

Email:

[cindy.dooley@ks.nacdnet.net](mailto:cindy.dooley@ks.nacdnet.net)

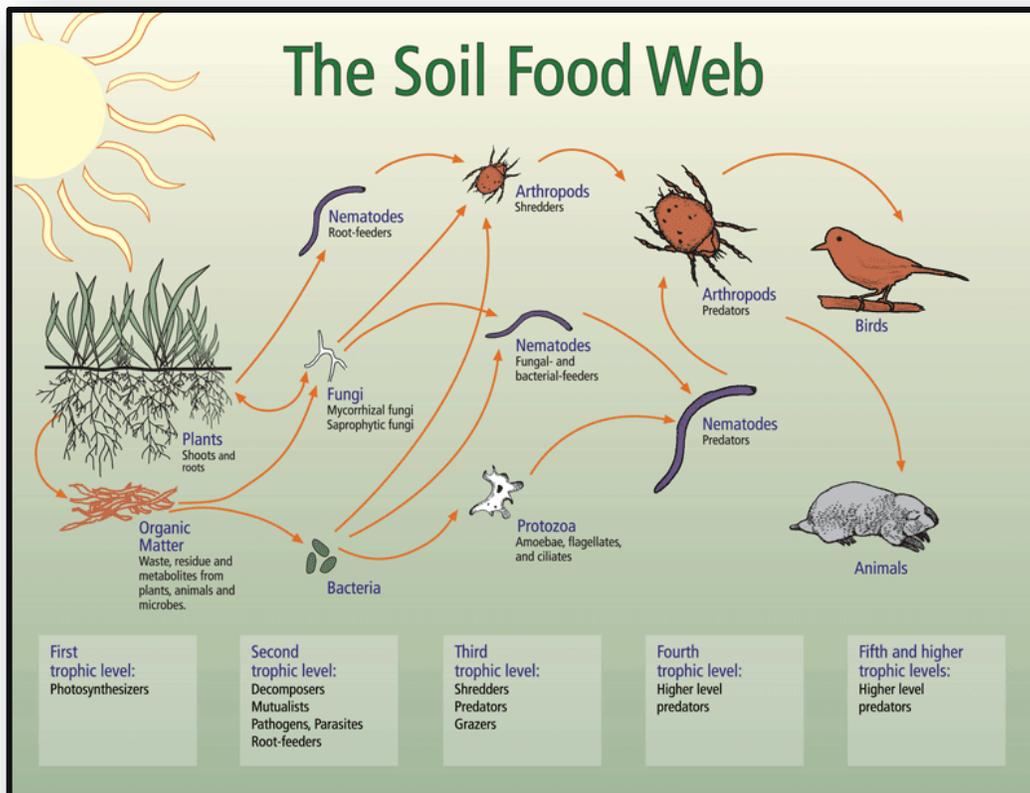
# NATIVE PLANTS

Leavenworth's eryngo is a prickly, 20-40 in. annual with a leafy stem, broadly branched in the upper portion. Almost the entire plant has some shade of purple. Flowers are minute, purple, and mingled with small, spiny bracts in an elongated, terminal, head-like cluster. These are subtended by conspicuous spiny-tipped bracts. The leaves are deeply lobed, each segment edged and tipped with stiff spines. A tuft of small, rigid, spiny leaves grows out of the top of the flower head. It is desirable to wear a thick pair of gloves if one cuts the flowers.



The eryngos are not true thistles and are often confused with thistles, due to similarity in both appearance and habitat preference. Splashing fields a brilliant purple, it provides an excellent source for late summer and early fall color.

Source: <http://www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org>





# Save the Date

Dickinson County Conservation District  
Annual Meeting & Dinner

Thursday, February 11, 2016 6:30 PM

Sterl Hall 619 N Rogers, Abilene, KS

Please RSVP by Friday, January 29, 2016

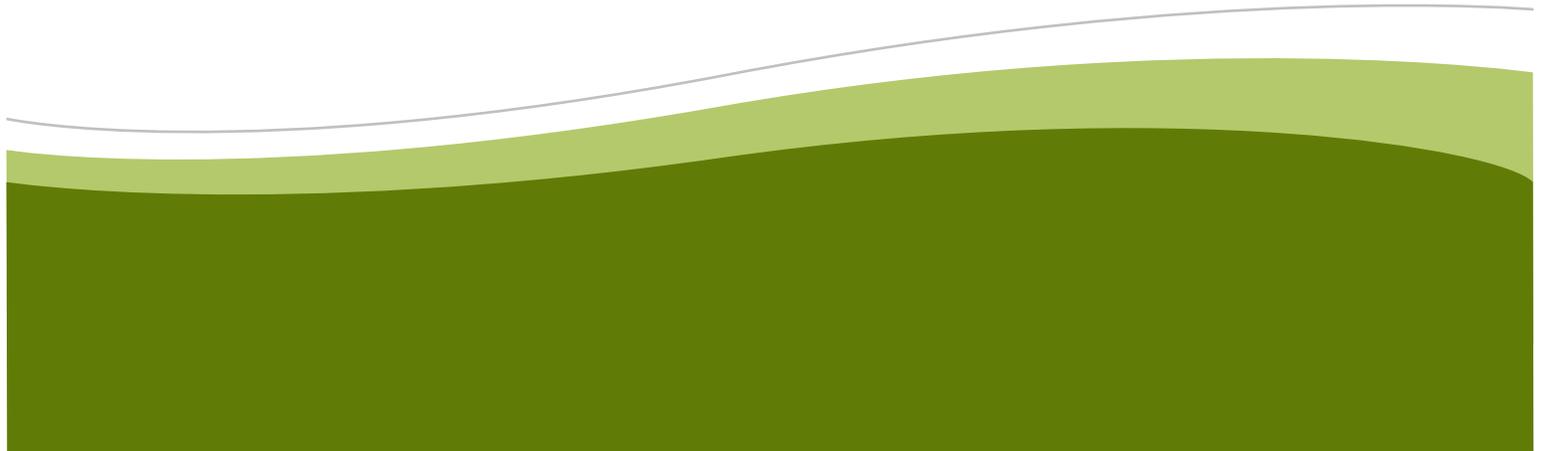
[cindy.dooley@ks.nacdnet.net](mailto:cindy.dooley@ks.nacdnet.net)

785-263-2787 or

Stop by the USDA Service Center

**Complimentary meal catered by Ricky's Café & Marcon Pies**

Conservation award winners and student award winners will be honored.



# What CRP Can Do for You

The #1 limiting factor for pheasant, quail, and greater prairie-chicken populations is habitat. More so, nesting and brood-rearing cover are the limiting types of quality habitat. With conservation programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) landowners and operators can receive incentives to create and maintain quality habitat.

A general sign-up of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is open from Dec. 1, 2015 – Feb. 26, 2016 at Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices. Whether you have existing crop ground, expiring CRP, or expired CRP that is still in grass, you may be eligible to make an offer. Offers are ranked on several different categories and will compete with others around the nation. Some ranking categories are completely dependent on the choices you make when sitting at the FSA office the day you make your offer. If offers are accepted contracts will be between 10 and 15 years in length and will start October 1, 2016.

With the spring and recent rains you probably can think of where the “mud holes” in some of your crop fields are located. Think about all the time and money you have spent trying to resolve problems with that wet ground, having to replant, or not having a harvestable crop in those areas. This is where CRP could help you out. You can get an annual payment and cost-share to establish and manage a perennial stand of cover on those acres. Think about whole fields or parts of fields where areas are unproductive or hard-to-farm and; instead of fighting it, consider instead getting paid for putting it into native cover while creating wildlife habitat, reducing erosion, and improving air and water quality at the same time.



In order to provide details and information for the current sign-up we are hosting a CRP Sign-up Workshop at the Abilene Recreation Center (1020 NW 8th St.) on January 14th, 2016 at 11:00 am. Lunch will be provided and the workshop is free of charge. We will go over how to get the best ranking score for your offer, how to increase your wildlife, voluntary public hunting access payments, and CRP rules and eligibility. Please RSVP by January 11th, 2016 to Dickinson County USDA Service Center at 785-263-1351.

If you've already made an appointment to make an offer with FSA you're still invited to come hear about your options. Practices can be changed up until Feb. 26, if necessary.

Other workshop locations are the Ellsworth Golf Course on January 12th at noon and McPherson K-State Extension Office on January 13th at 1pm or 6pm. Contact Allie Rath at 785-263-1351 x 1335 to RSVP for other locations.

**USDA and Pheasants Forever, Inc are Equal Opportunity Providers and Employers.**

**PRESS RELEASE:** Kansas City, Mo. – Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever is taking its annual celebration of upland hunting, National Pheasant Fest & Quail Classic, to Kansas City on February 19, 20 & 21, 2016. The event will be hosted at the Kansas City Convention Center with Federal Premium® Ammunition as the presenting sponsor.

“Kansas City converges two states which have a rich upland history rooted in the traditions of pheasant and quail hunting. Quail Forever is poised to take a more prominent role at our 2016 convention, and we invite upland hunters from Missouri and Kansas to join us for a celebration of wildlife habitat conservation,” said Howard Vincent, president and CEO of Pheasants Forever, Inc. and Quail Forever. “National Pheasant Fest & Quail Classic brought together over 22,000 passionate upland hunters in Kansas City during 2012, including 282 landowners who were provided conservation guidance on nearly 124,000 acres of land. ‘The Habitat Organization’ is excited to be back in Kansas City for 2016.”

National Pheasant Fest & Quail Classic 2016, presented by Federal Premium® Ammunition, will be the nation’s largest tradeshow and convention for upland hunters, landowners, sport dog trainers, and wildlife habitat conservationists. Additionally, the event will cater to quail-specific themes with a Quail Summit hosted on February 20, as well as more seminars, vendors, and hunting gear designed with quail hunters in mind.

Adding to the excitement of the 2016 National Pheasant Fest & Quail Classic will be country music artist, Gary West, as he performs “For the Love of Cash,” an authentic Johnny Cash tribute show. This high-energy performance will include songs from country music icons such as Waylon Jennings, Willie Nelson, and others. West has worked with great entertainers over the years such as Little Jimmy Dickens and Del Reeves, and has also toured with Tommy Cash, Jett Williams, and “The Drifting Cowboys,” the original band of Hank Williams Sr.

“Visit KC is proud to welcome the National Pheasant Fest & Quail Classic back to Kansas City for the second time in history. We look forward to showcasing our vibrant, revitalized downtown to the event’s 25,000 outdoor enthusiasts,” said Ronnie Burt, president & CEO of Visit KC, the city’s hospitality and tourism organization. “In addition to the impressive trade show at the KC Convention Center, our guests will encounter a unique cultural destination—one that both leaves a lasting impression and begs for a return visit in the very near future.”

Missouri and Kansas represent a stronghold for Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever supporters nationwide. Since the inception of “The Habitat Organization” in 1982, a combined total of 71 chapters of Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever have contributed \$6.3 million for wildlife habitat conservation efforts in Missouri and Kansas. These dollars equate to over 15,000 projects impacting nearly 310,000 acres of wildlife habitat. For vendors interested in exhibiting at National Pheasant Fest & Quail Classic 2016, contact Gerry Cliff, Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever’s corporate sales representative, at (763) 350-7362 or [gcliff@pheasantsforever.org](mailto:gcliff@pheasantsforever.org). For media inquiries, please contact Jared Wiklund, Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever's public relations specialist, at (651) 209-4953 or [jwiklund@pheasantsforever.org](mailto:jwiklund@pheasantsforever.org).

### **About Pheasants Forever**

Pheasants Forever, including its quail conservation division, Quail Forever, is the nation's largest nonprofit organization dedicated to upland habitat conservation. Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever have more than 140,000 members and 700 local chapters across the United States and Canada. Chapters are empowered to determine how 100 percent of their locally raised conservation funds are spent; the only national conservation organization that operates through this truly grass-roots structure. Since creation in 1982, Pheasants Forever has spent \$577 million on 489,000 habitat projects benefiting over 12 million acres nationwide.





## ABANDONED WATER WELLS IN DICKINSON COUNTY

Abandoned wells are potential sources of direct contamination of valuable groundwater. Wells larger than a few inches in diameter are a safety hazard for animals and people, particularly children. Landowners are liable for contamination or injury from unplugged wells. The hazard of abandoned wells concerns everyone.

Kansas law defines an abandoned well as one that has not been used during the last two years, as a well that is in such disrepair that it is unusable, or as one that poses a groundwater contamination hazard. Kansas law requires that abandoned wells be properly plugged to restore a protective barrier to minimize groundwater contamination, removes physical hazards by removing tempting openings for curious children and animals, restores stability to the land surfaces, eliminates or reduces liability exposure, and protects and improves property values.

Cost share funding will be available again this year to assist with the costs associated of abandoned well plugging. Watch the Abilene Reflector-Chronicle Conservation Edition, our website, or visit our office to find out about sign-up for abandoned well-plugging cost share funds.



	<b>SEEDING DATES</b>
	Cool Season Grasses (brome, fescue) August 1 to October 1 December 1 to April 15
	<b>WARM SEASON GRASSES (NATIVE MIX)</b> December 1 to May 15 March 15 to May 15
	<b>PRESCRIBED BURN DATES</b>
	CRP—February 1 to April 15 Rangeland—April 1 to May 5

### ANSWERS TO TRIVIA QUESTION ON PAGE 1

FALSE! During the Dust Bowl years, wind removed as much as four inches of topsoil and dust dunes over 20 feet high formed in parts of Kansas, Texas, Oklahoma, and Colorado.

## POLLINATORS Put food ON the table!

Honeybees are responsible for 80 percent of pollination of the food eaten by people in the United States that come from plants and trees pollinated by insects.



Plants provide food, shelter and oxygen for other living things. Reproduction in plants is crucial to all other life on this planet. Pollination is vital to agriculture and food production. Some foods we eat like wheat, corn, oats and rice are pollinated by the wind but insects are the most important pollinators of food-producing plants. It is estimated that about 1/3 of the food we eat comes from plants and trees pollinated by insects.

### Foods that insects pollinate include:

- Trees:
  - Apples, pears, peaches, apricots, nectarines, cherries, plums, persimmons, English walnuts
- Shrubs:
  - Blueberries, red raspberries, black raspberries, blackberries, gooseberries
- Perennials: - Strawberries
- Annual fruits and vegetables:
  - Beans, cantaloupe, cucumbers, peas, peppers, pumpkins, soybeans, squash, tomatoes, watermelon, zucchini
- Seeds:
  - Sunflower, pumpkin, mustard, dill

# Conservation Word Search

CONSERVATION	T	F	B	I	G	W	E	E	G	N	I	Z	A	R	G	H	V	P	S	S
FARM	P	A	Y	R	J	O	F	X	R	Q	V	Z	T	C	E	R	O	F	E	R
GRAZING	K	R	T	W	U	I	J	F	A	S	E	O	U	R	X	L	E	S	E	E
LIVESTOCK	U	C	E	I	L	S	M	C	S	Q	S	N	O	R	L	F	E	P	D	T
PASTURES	T	Y	O	D	B	G	H	O	S	P	A	S	T	U	R	E	S	K	I	A
PREDATORS	X	H	L	T	A	A	W	V	L	H	I	A	T	B	R	R	F	G	N	W
SOIL	O	I	I	W	S	T	H	E	A	O	R	I	V	T	Z	W	L	U	G	M
TREES	W	S	H	C	O	E	O	R	N	P	O	D	E	H	S	R	E	T	A	W
BRUSH	T	Y	L	E	K	F	V	R	D	N	I	Q	U	A	I	L	M	S	M	O
WATERWAYS	E	A	Z	X	A	E	S	I	S	M	U	H	P	R	S	A	O	F	B	B
WINDBREAKS	R	W	R	N	L	G	T	M	L	F	I	X	S	Q	L	I	M	R	A	F
WATERSHED	U	R	V	E	Y	Q	F	L	C	M	Y	K	S	D	L	H	G	V	U	B
THICKET	T	E	F	N	C	F	O	E	M	L	A	F	K	G	R	Q	H	P	U	V
SEEDING	L	T	L	F	B	G	U	M	L	E	P	H	E	A	S	A	N	T	S	R
POLLUTION	U	A	N	O	I	T	A	V	R	E	S	N	O	C	V	N	W	B	A	T
GRASSLAND	C	W	K	Y	B	V	Q	B	V	R	K	Y	A	A	T	B	N	E	F	I
EROSION	I	B	K	C	K	V	D	K	J	T	Q	A	X	P	E	I	F	A	T	V
WILDLIFE	R	R	N	L	Z	N	D	N	I	V	N	A	F	G	J	I	Z	D	M	S
WATER	G	C	L	Q	I	O	M	Z	C	X	K	S	X	U	B	Q	P	V	A	C
STEWARDSHIP	A	M	J	W	Y	V	G	S	E	O	Y	B	F	R	D	W	N	N	M	S
QUAIL																				
PHEASANTS																				
HABITAT																				
FOWL																				
COVER																				



# Conservation District Services

## Equipment Rental

The Dickinson County Conservation District provides conservation equipment rental service to area landowners. Contact Cindy Dooley at 785-263-2787 to schedule your rental.

### **Great Plains No Till Drill**

Delivered: \$50 Delivery Fee + \$15/Acre ● First 1/2 Acre Free

Customer Pickup: \$15/Acre ● \$80 Minimum

### **Truax Drill**

Delivered: \$40 Delivery Fee + \$11/Acre ● First 1 Acre Free

Customer Pickup: \$11/Acre ● \$40 Minimum

### **Drip Torch**

\$100 Deposit ● \$5/Day 1st 3 Days ● \$25/Day After 3 Days



The Dickinson County Conservation District prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status.

Funding to produce this newsletter is provided in part by the Division of conservation through appropriation from the Kansas Water Plan.

# Sponsors

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## Looking for a contractor?

Contact us for a list of contractors that will help achieve all your conservation goals: earthwork, brush cleaning, burning, well-drilling, fence building, and more!



We would like to offer thanks to the businesses and organizations who graciously supported this newsletter and our conservation education efforts in 2015.

Businesses: contact Cindy at 785-263-2787 if you would like to advertise in future quarterly newsletters.

**Dickinson County Farm Bureau**  
  
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# CRP Sign-up Workshop

**11:00 am – 12:30 pm Thursday, January 14<sup>th</sup>**

**Abilene Recreation Center (1020 NW 8<sup>th</sup>) meeting room**

**Know the information & options before you sign-up!**

## Learn more about...

- practice options when offering new ground, expiring, or expired CRP
- how to get the highest ranking score possible for your ground – the best chance of getting accepted
- the role that native wildflowers and pollinator insects have in raising pheasants, quail, and prairie-chickens
- eligibility and rules of CRP
- additional \$\$ payments for allowing public hunting on your CRP
- LUNCH & WORKSHOP PROVIDED FREE OF CHARGE

**PLEASE RSVP BY JAN. 11:** Call Dickinson County USDA Service Center 785-263-1351 to RSVP



Equal Opportunity Providers and Employers

## Dickinson County Conservation District

328 NE 14th Street  
Abilene, KS 67410