

CONSERVATION
ISSUE #9 APRIL 2017

Connections



A quarterly publication of the Dickinson County Conservation District

CONSERVATION *Connections*

A quarterly publication of the Dickinson County Conservation District



USDA Service Center
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Abilene, KS 67410

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Thursday, May 11—Regular Board of Supervisor’s Meeting

Monday, May 29—OFFICE CLOSED—Memorial Day Holiday

Monday, June 12—Regular Board of Supervisor’s Meeting

SPECIAL OFFER

We wish to thank USA Today for their gracious offer to share the Special Edition U.S. Department of Agriculture 2017 Edition free to land-owners. Click below or copy the link into your web browser:

<http://ee.usatoday.com/eMag/?href=USAM/2017/03/23>



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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, prescribed burning, well-drilling, fence building, and more!



Seeding Dates

Cool Season Grasses
(*brome, fescue*)
August 1 to October 1
December 1 to April 15

Warm Season Grasses
(*native mix*)
December 1 to May 15

Prescribed Burn Dates

CRP: Feb. 1 - April 15
Depending on soils, July 16
- Aug. 31 (contact FSA/
NRCS for more information)

Rangeland: April 1 - May 5

Board of Supervisor's Message

Contact your Legislators

Senators:

Jerry Moran
(202) 224-6521
(785) 628-6401

Pat Roberts
(202) 224-4774
(620) 227-2244

Representatives:

Tim Huelskamp, 1st District
(202) 225-2715
(785) 309-0572

Lynn Jenkins, 2nd District
(202) 225-6601
(785) 234-5966

Kevin Yoder, 3rd District
(202) 225-2865
(913) 621-0832

The Dickinson County Conservation District in Dickinson County Kansas is extremely disappointed that President Donald Trump's Fiscal Year 2018 budget request includes a 21 percent cut to the Department of Agriculture (USDA). USDA's conservation technical assistance is crucial to promoting the wise and responsible use of natural resources in this country.

"Many landowners in Dickinson County rely on the technical and financial assistance available through USDA partner organizations, Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency," says Dennis Marston, Board of Supervisors Chairman for Dickinson County Conservation District. "This assistance is vital, not only for better yields, reduction of sedimentation, improved water quality, and improved wildlife habitat, but also to ensure our country is never again faced with a monumental tragedy like the Dust Bowl era of the 1930s."

Today, our nation's conservation delivery system reaches into virtually every community with technical and financial assistance that is targeted to local resource concerns. Conservation expertise is provided by NRCS staff in partnership with a voluntary conservation network, including employees from conservation districts, throughout the nation. By utilizing conservation districts and other partners, NRCS is able to expand their ability to put conservation on the ground.

The public expects clean air and water, healthy soils, and abundant wildlife habitat. The federal government has a better chance at achieving these goals, not by adding additional requirements and regulations, but by encouraging landowners to implement good conservation practices on their land and providing conservation technical assistance (CTA).

"Without USDA conservation programs, America's farmers, ranchers, and communities won't have the resources or assistance they need to keep our soils healthy, our water clean, and our wildlife abundant," said NACD President Brent Van Dyke. "We look forward to continuing to work with Congress to ensure strong funding."



What is a Conservation District?

A Conservation District is the primary local unit of government responsible for the conservation of soil, water, and related natural resources within the county boundary. Kansas conservation districts are political subdivisions of state government charged with this vital role. Funding comes from county and State Water Plan allocations, with some districts generating funds by providing conservation goods and services or pursuing other grant opportunities.

The Conservation District's governing board is comprised of five elected local citizens known as supervisors. They establish local priorities, set policy, and administer non-regulatory conservation programs during monthly board meetings. The supervisors, although serving as public officials, do not draw a salary. Conservation District employees are hired by the supervisors to provide day to day coordination of Conservation District activities.

Why Conservation?

- Protect productive farmland
- Protect water supplies
- Protect infrastructure
- Foster environmental stewardship
- Preserve quality of life and economic growth
- Protect water quality

Statewide Conservation Projects from June 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015

(Over 80 practices funded by State Water Plan and implemented by Conservation Districts)

Tons of soil saved	133,200 tons
Acres protected (cropland)	27,298 acres
Pasture acres (alternative water supply)	66,299 acres
Average pasture size	127 acres

Dickinson County Conservation District Projects Jan. 1, 2016 through Dec. 31, 2016

(11 practices funded by State Water Plan and implemented by Dickinson County Conservation District)

Tons of soil saved	351.4
Acres Protected	106.61



2016 Poster & Limerick Contest Winners



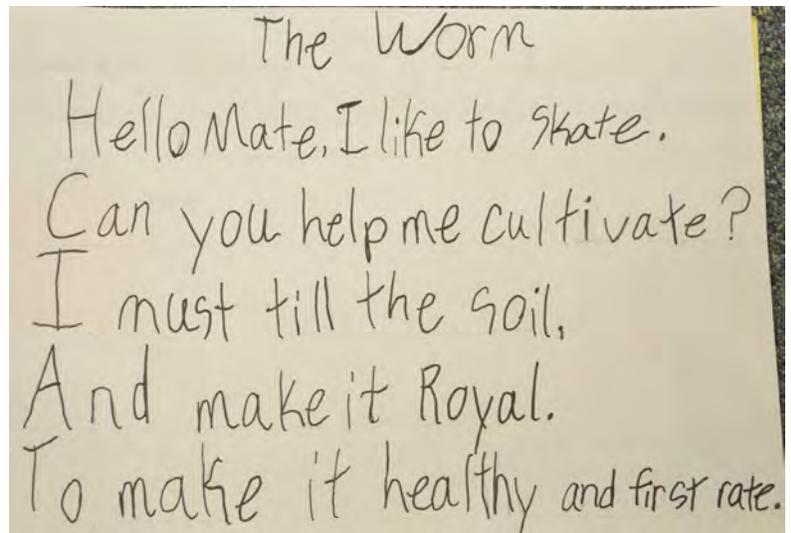
1st Place Kindergarten-1st Grade Poster
Marley Luke
Chapman Elementary School



1st Place 4th, 5th, and 6th Grade Poster
Samuel Whitehair
St. Andrews Elementary School



1st Place 2nd-3rd Grade Poster
Kaylee Livingston
Blue Ridge Elementary School



1st Place 3rd-8th Grade Limerick Poster
Clayton Carson
St. Andrews Elementary School

A big thank you to all 278 participants in the 2016 Poster and Limerick contest!



First Place winners in each category are automatically entered into the statewide contest!

Knowing Your Soils



By David J. Kohake, Resource Soil Scientist

Whether you are farming thousands of acres or simply have a small backyard garden, it is important to know some basic information about your soils. Most farmers and gardeners have a general idea of what type of soils they have due to planting, harvesting, and working the ground for many years. It doesn't take too long to figure out where those wet, rocky, or clayey areas are; or where the good high yielding soils are versus more marginal areas. But what if you want to know something more or you are thinking of buying some new land that you are not familiar with? Your soil survey is a great place to start!

Many people are fairly familiar with their published county soil survey. Throughout the latter half of the 20th century, soil scientists walked the land, digging holes, and mapping the different soil types that occurred across the state. The soil survey for the entire state of Kansas was completed when the Washington County soil survey was finished in 1993. These original soil surveys were good and provided great information for general planning purposes. Now, due to advances in computers and technology, your official soil survey information is provided via the Internet using the Web Soil Survey computer application.

Although some people feel more comfortable using the old hard copy county soil survey to look up their soils information, the Web Soil Survey is not difficult to use. Web Soil Survey provides the user with the most up-to-date soils information available and is free and downloadable.

So how do you get started with Web Soil Survey?

First, go to the Web Soil Survey homepage at <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/> and click on the large

green button that says "Start WSS" or simply search for it using your favorite web search engine. Next, you will need to navigate to the area you are interested in. There are numerous options for this, but the easiest, and most commonly used, is by address or by PLSS (Public Land Survey System), if the section, township, and range are known. Once you have navigated to the area you are interested in, you must define your area of interest (AOI). This is done simply by selecting an "AOI" button to draw a rectangle or irregular polygon that defines the AOI. After this is done, the rest is simply clicking on various tabs to find the soils information that is desired.

There is a "Soil Map" tab that will display the soils map with legend. Also, there is a "Soil Data Explorer" tab that allows the user to create different soil reports or create maps for various properties or interpretations. There is a lot of information available and the user will likely feel a little overwhelmed. The best thing to do is click around, explore, and see what is all there.

Once you find the information you want, you can add it to the shopping cart. Unlike most shopping carts online, this one is free. Keep adding any other reports, interpretations, or maps that you want. Once done, you are able to create a customized report of all the soils information in the shopping cart. Instead of having a large county wide soil survey that has lots of information that may not pertain to your farm, you have a soil survey of only the soils information you want for just your farm or your area of interest all in one document.

For more information on using Web Soil Survey, visit the Web Soil Survey Web site at <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/> or visit your local NRCS office.

For more information, visit the Kansas NRCS Web site www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov/programs or your local U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Service Center. To find a service center near you, check on the Internet at offices.usda.gov. Follow us on Twitter @NRCS Kansas. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Kansas Range Youth Camp

The Kansas Section of the Society for Range Management will once again be sponsoring the Kansas Range Youth Camp in 2017. This camp has been held for over 55 years, and the purpose of the camp is to educate youth about what rangelands are, why they are important, and how best to manage these lands sustainably.

The camp is held at Camp Mennoedah in Kingman County, and high school students that are currently freshmen, sophomores, or juniors are eligible to attend. Any student that is interested in livestock, wildlife management, soils, native plants, or natural resources is sure to learn something interesting and have a fun time doing it. There is a lot of time spent outdoors doing 'hands-on' activities, and several field trips will allow students to see first hand some local operations. The Kansas Range Youth Camp offers participants a learning opportunity in range plant identification, plant growth, stocking rate determinations, livestock nutrition, rangeland wildlife management, and more. Other activities include swimming, canoeing, fishing, hiking, and a steak dinner.

Tuition for the camp is \$250. The Dickinson County Conservation District will offer a sponsorship for one or more Dickinson County students to attend the Kansas Range Youth Camp. To be eligible for the sponsorship, participants must reside within Dickinson County, be an upcoming sophomore, junior, or senior (2017-2018 school year), and be available to attend the camp from June 20th through June 23rd, 2017.

If you are interested in attending the Kansas Range Youth Camp and would like to be considered for sponsorship, please contact Cindy at the Dickinson County Conservation District by May 5, 2017. The Youth Registration form and additional information is available for download on the Resources, Forms, and Publications page of www.dkcoconservation.com



2016 Range Youth Camp Participant, Jacob Darsow

Kansas Range Youth Camp



2016 Conservation Award Recipients



(Left to Right)

Joe Miller
Windbreak Award

Phil Hoffman
Young Farmer Award

Steve Lang
No-Till Farming Award



Brian and Carrie Shippy
Bankers Conservation Award



Nominate a Dickinson County producer
for 2017 Conservation Awards now! Call
785-263-2787 extension 332 or
send us an email to
information@dkcoconservation.com



(Left to Right)

Dennis Avery
Buffer Award

Bob and Janet Meyer
Grasslands Award



Cost-Share Sign Up Begins

Dickinson County Conservation District is conducting a state cost-share sign-up April 15, 2017 through May 15, 2017 to accept requests for state financial assistance to install enduring conservation practices. The conservation district administers state cost-share programs locally to improve water quality and reduce soil erosion. Funding is provided by the Division of Conservation, Kansas Department of Agriculture (DOC) through appropriation from the Kansas Water Plan Fund.

Landowners with natural resource concerns on their property are encouraged to visit the Dickinson County Conservation District to apply for state cost-share assistance. Funding is provided through cost-share payments to landowners for eligible practices such as terraces, grassed waterways, field windbreaks, grass plantings, livestock water supplies, cross fencing, on-site waste systems, and abandoned well plugging. Application does not guarantee approval of cost-share financial assistance. Projects started or completed prior to being approved for funding are not eligible for these funds.

Following the sign-up deadline, each request is carefully reviewed to ensure eligibility. The proposed project is ranked according to a system developed by the DOC and Dickinson County Conservation District. The ranking system ensures fairness to landowners and ensures cost-share funds are used to meet local conservation priorities. Landowners approved for the program are notified of the practice(s) approved and the estimated amount of cost-share that will be provided. Before implementation begins, the contract must be approved

by the DOC and must be signed by the landowners.

The Conservation District works closely with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to protect and conserve natural resources, primarily soil and water. Conservation practices funded with state cost-share funds must be installed and maintained according to NRCS and DOC specifications. Landowners must work closely with NRCS in the planning stage to ensure practices are applied correctly. Technical assistance for these practices is provided free of charge by NRCS.

All programs of the Dickinson County Conservation District are available without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status.

For more information concerning state cost-share programs and other available services, please contact Cindy Dooley, District Manager, Dickinson County Conservation Service, 785.263.2787 extension 332.



Agriculture Trivia

How well do you know agriculture trivia? Take this quiz to find out! (Answer key will be posted on our Facebook page.)

1. In the 4th millennium B.C., the invention that marked the beginning of agricultural civilization was a device drawn by oxen. Name this device.
2. Which agricultural commodity must be imported to the continental United States?
A. rice
B. wheat
C. sugar
D. coffee
E. lettuce
3. This description from the year 1612 concerns what crop? "The money rolled in. Before long, Virginia settler were growing the stink weed on every patch of ground they could find, including the streets of Jamestown itself."



4. The greatest percentage of what state is occupied by farmland?
A. Iowa
B. Idaho
C. Arizona
D. Washington
E. New Jersey



5. Which is not a forage crop?
A. corn
B. clover
C. potato
D. alfalfa
E. bluegrass
6. What three letters are the chemical symbols of the primary nutritional elements in a complete fertilizer?
7. What famous orator said this during his 1896 presidential campaign?
"Burn down your cities and leave our farms and your cities will spring up again as if by magic. But destroy our farms, and the grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country."

8. Which state is in the Corn Belt?
A. Utah
B. Kansas
C. Oregon
D. Vermont
E. Louisiana



Conservation Word Search

D X L Z B G Y Q A A M Z L R A C E T D V F O G O B S F Y O B	ALTERNATIVE
Y B E O W L R R G G R A G K O G V S N M B J G L Q L O U U E	ASSISTANCE
B U R N I N G X E S H X U N B F I X S E K C O T S E V I L N	BENEFIT
Y Y Z E V O I D L V X A S B V D T P Y V M E M W P N S P L E	BURNING
E U B O V O S S E G O E B S V N A H R R A E H A R V E S T F	COMPOST
F Z U J H H F E G S R C Z I T Z N E A O N I V W H A F A M I	CONSERVATION
S H Q M Y N C N U V E E E S T U R B A N D I G O X M K E A T	DECADE
U U F E B U I J A O Z Y M R O A E L V I O U W N R R W H N M	DETERMINATION
J B S B J D G T B D I L I K W N T V Y K Q Q C A P P Y H A Y	EASEMENT
Y E F T O E I O Y N L T X F C G L S K C S C Y T E D M R G G	ECOSYSTEM
O N G O A O Z W F E I P H Z H S A A D E M Y X E I J L I E N	FLOODING
K Q L W N I Z A Z R T V O L U N T E E R L Y O J K O T F M O	FORAGE
E F W Y F E N L R T U J R S B I Q N E T V C O X P T N C E I	GRAZE
N W G D X C F A Q G P U Z H F M O T E V X R Y T W T A F N T	GUIDANCE
N F U O N N E G B N F R A O E K A M T I G D F C S S R Q T U	HABITAT
G G E B K A T Z Y I D L I D A W J U M A R E F L E S Q K E L	HARVEST
U T I M Z D Y W I E L F S V S R W K N D Z T R K I R B M W L	IMPROVEMENT
N B D I E I E S L O A I I R E J U I V V A E U P I V U G P O	IRRIGATE
I K C N C U E F L V X Z T F M U C K W V E R I N Q Q N S J P	JOY
Z W U I F G E A G S L Z D Y E W W H T C I M T K N Z K I Y K	KEY
E W I M C S N C O Q K I C Y N D L H N R H I M L M H Y W N Y	KNOWLEDGE
Z O A A H D X K O L B T B U T M D A R K O N Z G J Y J O R F	LAND
Y T I L A U Q C A S Q U A R A N T I N E U A T B K Q W A O R	LIVESTOCK
D V M W N Y Q R O F Y F B E L S G N M B F T A T A L T R H X	MANAGEMENT
V E G E V C U B N M Y S G A I A H Q O K O I U D E N A O T R	MINIMAL
L W E P Q T V A C B P D T S T T K D I G Z O K D U G N S O Y	NATURAL
N O I T A Z I N A G R O S E L Q C V Q V H N G L E Z B C F J	NUTRIENTS
T T D N D Z R J K M M A S U M N B E X S A E O Z J W A N L B	ORGANIC
S D N A L T E W R E W T C T X A Q R Y E S V W A B Q O W U Y	ORGANIZATION
N R U C X B F K L F O G O H E D A C E D K Q T A P Z I S L B	POLLUTION
	PRODUCTION
	QUALITY
	QUARANTINE
	RECOVERY
	RECYCLE
	SOIL
	SUSTAINABILITY
	TREND
	URBAN
	UTILIZE
	VOLUNTARY
	VOLUNTEER
	WATER
	WETLANDS
	ZONE

Everyday Water Conservation

- Whenever you wash your hands, don't leave the water running. Wet your hands and turn the water off. Use soap and lather your hands well, then turn the water on to rinse. Turn off the water and make sure it is off completely. Then dry your hands.
- Do you have plants in your house? When meals are prepared and vegetables or other fresh produce are washed, collect that water and use it to water the plants.
- Since baths use a lot of water (about 37 gallons on average), take short showers instead and use only about 20 gallons of water, instead.

Real World Concerns with Old World Bluestems

James L. Ungerer, Rangeland Management Specialist

Rapid expansion of Old World Bluestems (OWB) is an ever-growing concern and a very real threat to native prairies. As more land managers discover the presence of OWB on their prairies, the need to address this challenging resource concern is long overdue.

Caucasian and yellow bluestems were introduced into the United States in the early 1900s for use as forage and erosion control. It is now realized these invasive species have created extreme problems on the landscape. OWB appear to accelerate erosion on rangelands because they can cause an altered carbon-to-nitrogen ratio that inhibits the growth of native plants. These grasses are also less palatable to livestock, in comparison to native bluestem species, and can tolerate extreme grazing pressure. Invasive species, like OWB, harm the natural ecological systems of native prairies. If left uncontrolled, OWB will damage ranching economies to the point of **threatening cattle producers' livelihoods due to the extreme costs and profit loss**. As OWB invades and takes over rangelands, native wildlife is also negatively impacted.

OWB grasses spread by root and by seed. They are prolific seed producers and the length of seed viability in the soil is unknown. Spread may be attributed to machine, animal, or wind. OWB often invades or occupies difficult to control areas in pastures or rangeland.

Early detection is key to addressing and controlling of OWB before it can completely take over a landscape. However, identification of these grasses can be difficult to the untrained eye looking out across the native prairie. Fall season is a good time to view it on the landscape because it will appear in dense, shiny blond patches, in comparison to the reds and maroons of native plants.

During the growing season, it will exhibit a much lighter green color than many native grasses. Many land managers first realize the presence of OWB when they observe dense stands that cattle graze right up to and stop.

At this time, strategies to deal with OWB require an ever changing approach to treatment, management, and control. If seeding new grass stands, be sure that mix is not contaminated with OWB seed.

When feeding hay on rangeland, be certain that it does not contain OWB. Producers need to realize other ways it spreads and take necessary precautions and preventions against OWB expansion.

Chemical treatment of OWB includes spot application following Kansas State University recommendations and appropriate product labels.

Prior to any herbicide treatment, mowing, or prescribed burning of patches during the dormant season, early spring, is recommended to remove standing dead plant material to maximize chemical contact with live-plant material. Post-application monitoring of treatment and follow-up treatments should be repeated as needed. Others have used livestock to heavily graze areas with OWB to control seed production of the grasses.

Educating others to the potential risks of OWB spread, detection, treatment options, and ultimate negative impacts is key to addressing this rapid concern. For questions regarding identification or treatment options of OWB, contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office.

For more information, visit the Kansas NRCS Web site www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov/programs or your local U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Service Center. To find a service center near you, check on the Internet at offices.usda.gov. Follow us on Twitter @NRCS_Kansas. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

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Conservation District Services

Equipment Rental and Sales

The Dickinson County Conservation District provides conservation equipment rental service to area land-owners. Contact Cindy Dooley at 785-263-2787 extension 332 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 Grass Seed 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

30" Wire Stem Marking Flags—Fluorescent Pink
100 for \$10.00 or 1000 for \$100.00 (\$10 minimum)

NOTARY PUBLIC SERVICE AVAILABLE

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

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.

Dickinson County Conservation District
328 NE 14th Street
Abilene, KS 67410
