

## MINUTES OF THE STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

1. The State Conservation Commission meeting was called to order by Rod Vorhees, Chairman and Area V Commissioner, at 8:13 a.m., Monday, September 28, 2020, at the Kansas Department of Agriculture, 1320 Research Park Drive, Manhattan, KS and via Zoom.

2. **ATTENDANCE:**

**Elected Commissioners:**

Ted Nighswonger, Area I Commissioner  
Andy Larson, Area II Commissioner  
Brad Shogren, Area III Commissioner  
John Wunder, Area IV Commissioner  
Rod Vorhees, Area V Commissioner

**Ex-Officio & Appointed Members:**

Dan Devlin, Director, Kansas Center for Agricultural Resources and the Environment (KCARE), K-State Research and Extension  
Peter Tomlinson, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Extension Specialist for Environmental Quality  
Agronomy Department, Kansas State University  
Karen Woodrich, State Conservationist, Natural Resource Conservation Service  
Terry Medley, P.E., Water Structures Program Manager, Division of Water Resources, Kansas Department of Agriculture

**Division of Conservation, Kansas Department of Agriculture Staff:**

Andrew Lyon, Executive Director  
Scott Carlson, Assistant Director  
Steve Frost, Administrative Manager  
Dave Jones, Water Quality Program Manager  
Cindy Pulse, Conservation District Program Coordinator  
Cathy Thompson, Program Consultant  
Hakim Saadi, Watershed Program Manager  
Christy Koelzer, Administrative Specialist

**Guests:**

Mike Beam, Kansas Secretary of Agriculture (arrived at 10:06, left at 12:45)  
Kelsey Olson, Assistant Secretary Kansas Department of Agriculture  
Matt Meyerhoff, Acting Assistant State Conservationist for Partnerships, NRCS  
Dan Meyerhoff, Executive Director, KACD  
Amanda Scott, President, KACD-EO

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Herb Graves, Executive Director, State Association of Kansas Watersheds (SAKW)

Jason Hartman, State Forester, KFS

### **3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

**A motion was made by Brad Shogren to approve the agenda as mailed. The motion was seconded by Ted Nighswonger. Motion carried.**

### **4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:**

**A motion was made by Ted Nighswonger to approve the May 28, 2020, minutes as mailed. The motion was seconded by Brad Shogren. Motion carried.**

### **5. COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **a. KDA COVID-19 Operations**

- i. Scott Carlson said that DOC staff are in the Headquarters building several days a week and use Microsoft TEAMS for weekly staff meetings. Scott has started some travel for land reclamation visits and ag lime soil sampling. He is using a mask and disinfectant at hotels and taking precautions in trying to social distance.
- ii. Kelsey Olson said that four KDA staff that work remotely have tested positive for COVID-19, but there have been zero positive cases for staff that have been in the Headquarters building. KDA was asked to submit a full and a 10% reduced budget for FY2022. Unofficially, revenues look good so it is possible that the revenue shortfall will not be as bad as was projected earlier in the year. KDA is still trying to limit overnight travel to only what is necessary to help with budget and lower employee risk of exposure.

#### **b. Conservation District Employee Update – Pulse (Attachment A)**

- i. Cindy Pulse provided a handout and update for the third quarter, July 1, 2020 to September 30, 2020.

### **6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

#### **a. Conservation District Virtual Meeting Equipment Update – Carlson (Attachment B)**

- i. Scott Carlson shared that the CARES Act funding approved the DOC application for virtual training equipment for conservation districts. A meeting is scheduled for later today regarding receipt of funds and recording requirements. DOC will develop a plan for distribution. Scott provided a handout with the cost breakdown and photo of the cart. This equipment will increase capacity for training for district managers and supervisors and provide DOC the ability to virtually attend board meetings. Conservation districts will own the equipment and be responsible for the equipment maintenance.

#### **b. Conservation District Employee Training Initiative Update – Pulse (Attachment C)**

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- i. Cindy Pulse provided a handout and update on the Conservation District Employee Training Initiative. The goal is to improve training quality, quantity, effectiveness and consistency. A Training Protocol Development Team has been formed and their first task has been the development of a District Manager Transition Checklist for use with new managers coming in and managers that are exiting. This checklist will allow supervisors to know what is going on as well. The District Manager Transition Checklist will roll out at the KACD convention. Another goal is to review and update the supervisor training modules and create a video for each module with a goal that modules will be available on CSIMS and can be viewed at board meetings.
- c. Conservation District Records Legacy Project Update – Koelzer (Attachment D)
  - i. Christy Koelzer provided a handout and update on the Legacy Project. Ten districts have submitted their flash drives to DOC and records have been digitally stored in DocuWare.

The meeting took a break from 9:23 to 9:38 a.m.

### 7. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Cost-Share Cancellation/Reallocation Discussion – Jones
  - i. Dave Jones shared that there were no carry forward funds this year. There were many cancellations at the end of FY2020. In addition to a wet winter, COVID and the uncertainty of this time could have kept people from finishing projects. In FY2021 DOC will need to manage additional cancellations and reallocations. The first cancellation is in December. Dave would like to discuss in more detail in the meeting before December.
- b. Watershed Dam Construction Program funding recommendations for Dam Rehabilitation for FY 2021 – Saadi (Attachment E)
  - i. Hakim Saadi provided a handout and update on the recommendations for Dam Rehabilitation for FY2021. Twenty-three structures requested funding this year, of which nine watershed districts were approved. The total requested was \$1,899,095.32. The total funded was \$550,000. Herb Graves shared that 1700 watershed dams have yet to be built and commended Hakim on his efforts to get even a small percentage on the ground.

**A motion was made by John Wunder to approve the recommendations for Watershed Dam Rehabilitation as recommended. The motion was seconded by Ted Nighswonger. Motion carried.**

- c. Buffer Initiative Regulation Revision Discussion – Frost (Attachment F)
  - i. Steve Frost provided a handout and summary of the Buffer Program Recommendation, Proposed K.A.R. 11-9-5 Regulation Amendment. The amendment will authorize DOC to provide an early lump-sum payout to the 627 remaining contracts and drastically shorten KDA's future financial liability and commitment, as well as decrease the administrative cost to the agency.

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**A motion was made by John Wunder to approve the proposed amendments to KAR 11-9-5 any non-substantive changes required for approval by the Division of Budget, Department of Administration, and Attorney General's Office. The motion was seconded by Brad Shogren. Motion carried.**

d. State Water Plan Fund recommendation for FY 2022 – Carlson (Attachment G)

- i. Scott Carlson provided a handout and discussed the State Water Plan Fund recommendation for FY2022. The KWA would like to take state aid out of the water authority budget. State aid was cut 10%. Streambank stabilization had an enhancement.
- ii. A discussion followed regarding finding a dedicated source of funding to get state aid out of the water authority budget, legislative priorities and support, and continued communication with water authority members on programs.

The meeting took a break from 11:00 to 11:10 a.m.

e. Phillips County/Smith County District Manager Update – Carlson

- i. The Phillips County district manager position is currently vacant. The Smith County district manager is helping Phillips County. DOC wants to ensure that customer service needs are met. DOC is planning to schedule a meeting with both boards in October.

f. Smart Vendor Purge – Carlson

- i. The State of Kansas SMART accounting system doesn't have unlimited storage space. They purged records prior to 2011, a purge of 170,000 suppliers. Records were purged in CSIMS, without DOC knowledge. The SMART managers didn't realize it would affect DOC as it did. 33,000 contracts/vendors/suppliers were affected. The Task order to fix is \$90,000. The CSIMS Programmer will fix the current issues and ensure that in the future the purge will happen automatically without issues.

g. Conservation District Annual Meetings and Elections – Carlson (Attachment H)

- i. Scott Carlson provided a handout and reviewed the guidance that was sent out to conservation districts in August. The guidance outlines how to conduct annual meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic and lists annual meeting requirements and safety considerations.

h. KACD Convention Update – Carlson/Meyerhoff (Attachment I and Attachment J)

- i. Dan Meyerhoff provided a handout (Attachment I) with the draft schedule for the KACD Virtual Convention. The convention will headquarter out of the Webster Conference Center in Salina. The conference will use Zoom. All breakout sessions and training sessions will be recorded. Registration opens this morning. \$100 fee will register a district, including supervisors and district employees. The fee is \$50 for all other individuals. Fees cover costs and operating expenses. Sponsors have been very supportive. There will be a virtual exhibit room. Rod will be the moderator for the Sustainability for the Future Through Innovative Conservation panel discussion 10:30-11:30 a.m. on Monday. Cindy will put together a slide

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show of pictures from the conservation districts to play during the lunch break. SCC needs to decide if they will meet on Sunday before the convention.

- ii. Scott Carlson provided a handout (Attachment J) and explained the proposed 2020 SCC Nomination and Voting Procedures. These procedures outline a plan for how to hold the SCC election with a virtual KACD Convention. DOC is also proposing an application form for those nominated for SCC board to provide new managers and new supervisors a little background information on nominees. Upon discussion it was suggested to re-word #4 to say, "Deadline for nominee applications to be submitted to KACD is November 30, 2020."

**A motion was made by Brad Shogren to adopt these election procedures with the change to #4 to say, nominee applications. The motion was seconded by Ted Nighswonger. Motion carried.**

### 8. UPDATES:

#### a. Comments from Guests

- i. Amanda Scott, President, (KACD-EO) provided a handout (Attachment K) and gave an update. The EO Executive Board will meet in Manhattan on September 29 and discuss the virtual convention.
- ii. Jason Hartman, State Forester, (KFS) shared that he looks forward to continuing to work with the partnership.
- iii. Kelsey Olsen, Assistant Secretary, (KDA) thanked Scott Carlson for his leadership during COVID-19 and welcomed Andrew Lyon, Executive Director, DOC. Kelsey thanked the SCC for their participation in the interview process. Kelsey asked that the quarantine on Old World Bluestem be added as an agenda item for the next meeting.

#### b. DOC Staff Updates

- i. Andrew Lyon provided a handout (Attachment L) and discussed the submittal of a request for grant funding, Farmer to Farmer Engagement in Increase Adoption of Soil Health Principles to Reduce Nutrient Loss. The grant request is \$1 million over three years.
- ii. Scott Carlson had no additional report.
- iii. Cindy Pulse referred to her handout (Attachment C) and added that she will be updating the supervisor handbook. Cindy is a director on the NASCA board, which will meet virtually next week. She is working on break out training sessions for the KACD convention and has been sharing a "Forums Friday" email each Friday to engage districts.
- iv. Christy Koelzer had no additional report.
- v. Dave Jones had no additional report.
- vi. Steve Frost had no additional report.

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vii. Hakim Saadi shared that DOC has been a third party for mitigation and returned \$10,000 to watershed.

viii. Cathy Thompson has been working on the CSIMS purge clean up.

c. Agency Updates:

i. Karen Woodrich (USDA, NRCS) shared that NRCS is still operating with COVID phases of opening as cases trend down, although no offices are open to the public right now. NRCS fiscal year ends on Wednesday. She is preparing for FY2021 and awaiting passing of the budget. NRCS is looking for feedback from agencies and private entities regarding where to invest in technology and gathering ideas to move forward. If you have ideas or concepts, please provide feedback by November 6. FY2021 priorities include customer service, soil health, source water protection, EQUIP, and cost share. The staffing cap increased to 266 and they have on-boarded 37 new positions. The HR processes is currently 138 days, which is down from 180 days from application to employee on board.

ii. Matt Meyerhoff (USDA, NRCS) shared that NRCS is working on correct legal requirements for agreements. Information will go out to District Conservationists next week for review at November and December board meetings. The new agreement includes an MOU and a cooperative working agreement to transfer value. NRCS is ensuring the paperwork is in place that allows the transfer of value from the federal government.

iii. Dan Devlin (KSU, KCARE) welcomed Andrew Lyon as DOC Executive Director and thanked Scott Carlson for his time as DOC Acting Director. There has been restructuring in the Research and Extension Centers. There have been internal hires for new Heads for the Western and Eastern Centers. There is a freeze on external hires. The first six years of soil health research on the agronomy farm is complete. There will be a refocus toward nutrient management. Peter started a new site in McPherson County. New sites are focused on getting numbers on the impact of cover crops. They will also work on cotton and water management, erosion and soil health.

iv. Peter Tomlinson (KSU Research & Extension) thanked Scott Carlson and welcomed Andrew Lyon. Peter shared that department head positions were filled in the College of Agriculture. There have been furloughs for county agents. Virtual programs have been offered based on county guidelines. There are two watersheds running in McPherson County.

v. Terry Medley (KDA, DWR) provided a handout (Attachment M) and update on the LiDAR contract, County Consultation Coordination (CCO) Officer's meetings, the congressional briefing on rural issues, Chief Engineer interviews, Risk MAP open houses, Western Kansas Hydrology meetings, the annual ASFPM conference, the annual ASDSO conference, and staffing update on Laura Gray's resignation.

d. Elected Commissioner Area Updates:

i. Ted Nighswonger (Area 1): All appeals are complete on the LEMA lawsuit.

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- ii. Andy Larson (Area II): Amanda Shaw is retiring. Andy's grandson had to be quarantined and Andy put him to work drilling wheat. Andy chose to attend the meeting virtually to prevent exposure to anyone else.
- iii. Brad Shogren (Area III): The first half of August was wet so not all the conservation work got done. Fall harvest has started.
- iv. John Wunder (Area IV): The crops should be good in NE Kansas. Last week there was still hay being put up and some hay fields weren't even cut. There has been some late summer burning. DOC guidance for new managers is critical.
- v. Rod Vorhees (Area V): There have been some growing season burns. Contractors have been able to complete some practices that had been delayed. Rod has heard gratitude from the districts for DOC.

### 9. ADJOURNMENT:

The next meeting date was not set. It may be during the KACD Virtual Convention.

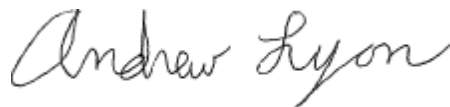
**A motion was made by Ted Nighswonger to adjourn the meeting. A brief discussion was held on having an executive session. Ted Nighswonger withdrew his motion to adjourn the meeting.**

**A motion was made by John Wunder to take a five-minute break and reconvene at 1:35 for Executive Session for 30 minutes to discuss personnel issues. The motion was seconded by Ted Nighswonger. Motion carried.**

**A motion was made by John Wunder to go into Executive Session from 2:05 to 2:15 to discuss personnel issues. The motion was seconded by Ted Nighswonger. Motion carried.**

**A motion was made by Ted Nighswonger to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Andy Larson. Motion carried.**

**The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.**



Andrew Lyon  
Executive Director

# District Manager Updates

(as of 9-25-20)

## 3rd Quarter (July 1, 2020, to September 30, 2020)

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### New District Managers

<u>Area</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Start Date</u>
1	Rooks	Janel Odle	7/6/2020
2	Grant	Amber Arellano	9/8/2020
2	Stanton	Kinsey Knox	8/17/2020
3	Rice	Holly Mead	7/29/2020
4	Atchison	Tiffany Hoffman	6/22/2020
4	Jefferson/Leavenworth	Megan Green	7/31/2020
5	Chase / Lyon	Mallory Burton	7/22/2020
5	Marion	Lori Siebert	7/1/2020

### Resigned / Retired District Managers

<u>Area</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>End Date</u>
1	Rooks	Kathy Stice	8/1/2020
3	Barton	Sara Martinz	8/24/2020
3	Jewell	Brittany Melton	8/19/2020
3	Rice	Rena Billington	8/14/2020

### Upcoming Vacancies

<u>Area</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>End Date</u>
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### Current Vacancies

<u>Area</u>	<u>County</u>
1	Phillips
3	Barton
3	Jewell



# District Employee Updates

(as of 9-25-20)

## 3rd Quarter (July 1, 2020, to September 30, 2020)

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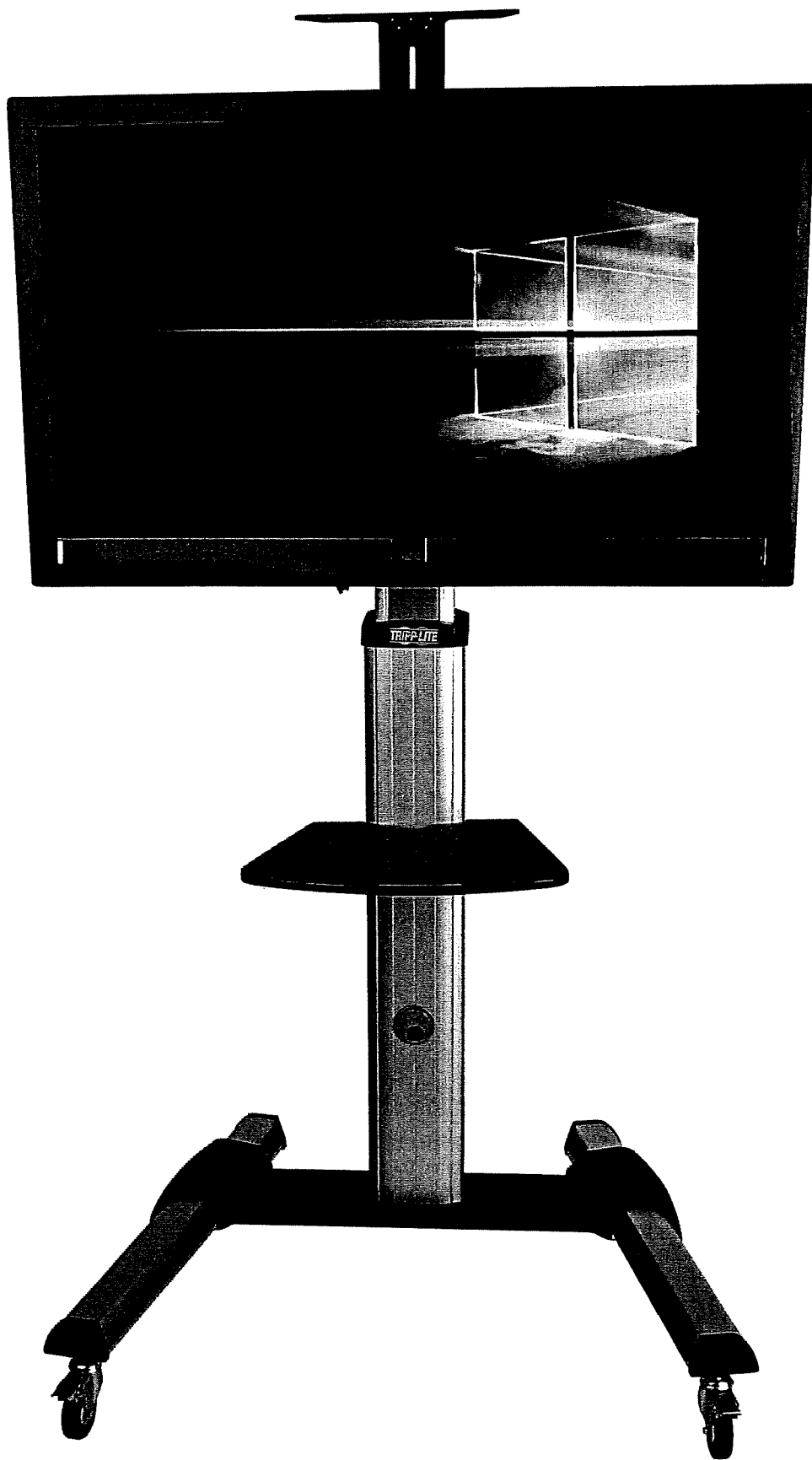
### New District Employees

<u>Area</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Start Date</u>
1	Logan	Patrick Ahrens	District Technician	8/1/2020
1	Rawlins	Garrett Scott	District Technician	9/3/2020
1	Smith	Karinda Hofman	District Technician	8/20/2020
2	Wichita	Kinzie Bangerter	District Technician	9/15/2020
3	Cloud	Shane Wallace	District Technician	9/15/2020
3	Mitchell	Rian Reeder	District Technician	8/6/2020
4	Jefferson	David Campbell	District Technician	9/28/2020
4	Shawnee	Dennis Brinkman	District Technician	9/2/2020

### Resigned District Employees

<u>Area</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>End Date</u>
3	Greenwood	Morgan Shorter	District Technician	9/16/2020

Item	Product Name	Source	KDA Unit Price
Cart	Tripp Lite Mobile TV Floor Stand Cart	CDW-G	\$424.87
TV	Samsung BER 49" LED TV	CDW-G	\$292.21
HDMI Cable	Tripp Lite 25ft High Speed HDMI Cable	CDW-G	\$23.73
Webcam	Logitech C920 HD Pro Web Camera	CDW-G	\$71.97
USB Extension	Tripp Lite Active USB 2.0 Extension Cable 25'	CDW-G	\$23.73
Microphone	Blue Microphones Snowball Microphone	CDW-G	\$71.42
USB Cable	Tripp Lite 25' USB 2.0 Cable M/M 25'	CDW-G	\$22.04
Surge Protector	Tripp Lite Surge Protector Strip 120V 7 Outlet 12' Cord	CDW-G	\$21.78
			\$951.75
			x 102 complete packages
		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$97,078.50</b>



# **CONSERVATION DISTRICT PROGRAM COORDINATOR UPDATE**

**As prepared by Cindy Pulse**

**State Conservation Commission Meeting**

**September 28, 2020**

## **1. New District Manager Training**

- Creating new process of welcoming & training
- Continuing virtual training in segments
- Updating and improving trainings
- District Managers trained to date:
  - Area 1
    - Rawlins County – Lori Poore
    - Rooks County – Janel Odle
  - Area 2
    - Stanton County – Samantha Haugen
    - Grant County – Amber Arellano
    - Stanton County – Kinsey Knox (returned)
  - Area 3
    - Mitchell County – Linda Deneke
    - Saline County – Diana Harden
    - Rice County – Holly Mead
  - Area 4
    - Atchison County – Tiffany Hoffman (returned)
    - Jefferson / Leavenworth – Megan Green
  - Area 5
    - Chase / Lyon – Mallory Burton
    - Marion County – Lori Siebert (transferred from Chase / Lyon)

## **2. District Manager Training Initiative**

- Introduced at KACD Fall meetings
- Improving communication (NRCS, KACD-EO)
- Training Protocol Development Team
- Created “District Manager Transition Checklist” (multi-purpose)
- Roll-out at KACD convention
- Future: additional trainings, workshops, and videos
- Goal: improve training quality, quantity, effectiveness & consistency

### **3. Supervisor Training Modules**

- Reviewing & updating modules into different format
- Will create video for each module
- Goal: module videos can be viewed at monthly meetings & individually

### **4. Supervisor Handbook**

- Will be updated in the very near future

### **5. National Association of State Conservation Agencies (NASCA) Board**

- NASCA Annual Meeting to be held October 5-7 virtually
- Presenting “District Manager Training as a Partnership Effort” during field staff session
- Serve as Northern Plains Director on the NASCA Board of Directors

### **6. KACD Convention**

- Conduct breakout sessions
- Vespers Program

### **7. Forums in CSIMS**

- “Forums Friday”
- Forums traffic has increased

### **8. Agriland**

- All virtual this year

## Preserving a Legacy

The KACD passed a resolution at the annual meeting last November supporting the Preserving a Legacy Initiative. The DOC worked with the Kansas Historical Society (KHS) and a committee of conservation district managers to identify all records produced by a conservation district since their founding charter. The DOC and KHS then identified which records should be stored permanently to preserve the legacy of conservation districts.

The amount of records to be scanned and stored for most districts is quite large. Thus, the DOC does not have a deadline for districts to complete this initiative.

In March each district received a flash drive that contained:

- Memorandum of Understanding between the conservation district and the DOC
- Folders for categorizing legacy documents for eventual storage in DocuWare
- A DOC and KHS approved Records Retention Schedule
- Instructions for scanning, saving and submitting district legacy documents to the DOC
- Questions and Answers informational sheet
- Personalized spreadsheet of legacy documents previously submitted to DOC

### Documents by Category

**ADMINISTRATIVE:** Organizational Records: **Charter**, Hearings, & Petition to Organize

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT:** Audit Reports with Notification of Audit Report attached

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT:** Budgets with County & District Certifications attached

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT:** Financial Management Checklist

**MANAGEMENT:** Annual Meeting Minutes with Financials

**MANAGEMENT:** Annual Report

**MANAGEMENT:** Annual Work Plan

**MANAGEMENT:** Board Meeting Minutes with Treasurer's Reports

**MANAGEMENT:** Special Board Meeting Minutes

Going forward, all documents that districts are required to submit to KDA-DOC will be regularly uploaded into CSIMS. Uploading documents into CSIMS went into effect 1-1-19.

Each county was provided with a spreadsheet detailing the records DOC currently has stored in DocuWare and those records that need to be submitted for storage.

DOC is tracking receipt of the flash drives on a spreadsheet, along with the following:

- Email confirmation that the flash drive has been received
- Ensuring a hard copy of the MOU is received and/or the MOU is included on the flash drive
- Submit the MOU for Secretary Beam's signature
- Send a signed copy of the MOU to the county for their records
- Store the MOU in DocuWare
- Store the flash drive records in DocuWare
- Upon completion of digital storage, notify the district they may dispose of the digitally stored documents

To date, 10 counties have submitted their flash drives and their records are stored in DocuWare.

# KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



## DIVISION OF CONSERVATION

### WATERSHED DAM CONSTRUCTION: REHABILITATION

28-Sep-20

**FY 2021**

	Watershed District	Site	RAC	Hazard	WSI	Cost-share		
						Requested	Approved	Cumulative
1	Long-Scott WD 93 (*)	5-8	NO	L	DCF-0082	\$25,905.40	\$25,905.40	\$25,905.40
2	Doyle Creek WJD 86	7	EW	L	DHV-0032	\$120,000.00	\$120,000.00	\$145,905.40
3	Pony Creek WJD 78	9	KS	L	DBR-0312	\$60,917.12	\$60,917.12	\$206,822.52
4	Pottawatomie C WJD 90	G-3	MC	L	DAN-0035	\$88,104.00	\$88,104.00	\$294,926.52
5	Salt Creek WJD 104	117	MC	S	DOS-0163	\$24,000.00	\$24,000.00	\$318,926.52
6	Salt Creek WJD 104	123	MC	L	DOS-0192	\$61,200.00	\$61,200.00	\$380,126.52
7	Walnut-West WD 72	DD 3	EW	H	DGW 0204	\$64,000.00	\$64,000.00	\$444,126.52
8	Whitewater WJD 22	SP-8	EW	L	DBU-0298	\$88,480.00	\$88,480.00	\$532,606.52
9	Wet Walnut WJD 58(**)	153	GB	L	DRH-0047	\$64,800.00	\$17,393.48	\$550,000.00

**FY 2020 Funding Available: \$550,000.00**

**Total Requested = \$1,899,095.32**

**Total Funded = \$550,000.00**

**% Funded: 29%**

**(\*) Partially Funded in 2020: \$15,130.60**

**(\*\*) To be Supplemented in 2022: \$47,406.52**

## MEMORANDUM

**TO: SCC Commissioners**

**DATE: September 28, 2020**

**RE: Buffer Program Recommendation Summary;  
Proposed K.A.R. 11-9-5 Regulation Amendment**

**FROM: Steven K. Frost, Administrative Manager**

Starting in 1998, state financial incentives have been provided to encourage establishment of riparian forest buffers and vegetative filter strips under the Kansas Water Quality Buffer Initiative. As a state companion contract to CRP enrollments, these 10 – 15 year practices protect waterways from excessive erosion and reduce the amount of nutrients, pesticides and other contaminants from entering streams, and also increase wildlife habitat. In 2018, all enrollment in this program was terminated in favor of the new Sediment and Nutrient Reduction Initiative, which has similar features but with increased CRP practice opportunities and a one-time, up-front state financial incentive.

However, the State of Kansas has already committed to the long-term costs of these state incentives under the former buffer program, and the last of the current 627 contracts will not expire until September 30, 3031. Some of the associated annual payments are for ridiculously small amounts like \$2.95 per year. Many of them also have multiple shareholding landowners who reside out of state. Keeping up with the constant changes in ownerships and W-9's due to land sales, deaths, trusts, partnerships, etc. – plus address changes and other updates are very labor intensive for KDA and as well for our federal and local partners.

A draft regulation amendment is presented to K.A.R. 11-9-5 which will authorize DOC to provide an early payout to these remaining contracts and drastically shorten KDA's future financial liability and commitment, and decrease the administrative cost to the agency by reducing staff time involved with constantly updating changes in ownership information and processing of updates which are associated with the federal CRP contracts. Mailing costs will also be drastically decreased because one final check will be mailed to the recipients instead of repeated mailings over the remaining life of the contracts.

In FY2021, the annual payment for the currently enrolled 627 remaining state incentive contracts will be \$82,320. The total remaining liability for these remaining 627 state incentive contracts is approximately \$657,000. The current FY2020 carryover funds in the amount of \$329,452.60 are needed to help complete this early payout and provide substantial savings.



## KANSAS WATER QUALITY BUFFER INITIATIVE

**K.A.R. 11-9-1. Definitions.** (a) "Buffer" is a strip or area of land maintained in permanent vegetation to help reduce potential pollution problems and achieve other conservation objectives. Buffers are appropriately installed along streams to enhance water quality. (b) "Commission" means the state conservation commission (SCC). (c) "Commissioners" means the commissioners of the state conservation commission. (d) "Continuous sign-up" means that persons eligible for CRP may request to enroll certain acreage in the program at any time. The CRP practices available during continuous sign-up provide environmental benefits complementary to the initiative. (e) "CRP" means the conservation reserve program administered by the USDA farm service agency (FSA) with technical responsibility assigned to the USDA natural resources conservation service (NRCS). The CRP may provide cost share assistance to establish vegetation on eligible land and provides annual rental payments on a per acre basis to maintain enrolled acres for a period up to 15 years. (f) "Director" means the executive director of the state conservation commission. (g) "District" means a conservation district. (h) "Filter strip" means a strip or area of grass for removing sediment, organic matter, and other pollutants from runoff and wastewater. (i) "FSA" means the farm service agency. (j) "Initiative" means the Kansas water quality buffer initiative. (k) "NRCS" means the natural resources conservation service. (l) "Practices" means cultural or structural measures that are installed or constructed on land for the purpose of improving or maintaining water quality. (m) "Program" means the Kansas water quality buffer initiative, which shall be implemented in a manner to enhance participation under the continuous sign-up provision of the conservation reserve program by providing state incentives to supplement federal payments for riparian forest buffers and filter strips. (n) "Riparian forest buffer" means a strip or area of vegetation containing trees and grass for removing sediment, organic matter, and other pollutants from runoff and wastewater. (o) "Unfarmable field" means the remaining portion of a field in which 51% or more of the total acreage has been enrolled in the continuous sign-up. (p) "USDA" means the United States department of agriculture. (Authorized by and implementing K.S.A. 2- 68 1915, as amended by L. 1998, Ch. 143, Sec. 46; effective Feb. 5, 1999.)

**K.A.R. 11-9-2. Eligible areas.** All land within a TMDL high priority area or a designated priority area within the state of Kansas as determined by the commission shall be eligible for the initiative. (Authorized by and implementing K.S.A. 2000 Supp. 2-1915, as amended by L. 2001, Ch. 64, Sec. 1; effective Feb. 5, 1999; amended Aug. 23, 2002.)

**K.A.R. 11-9-3. Eligible applicants.** Any individual, owner, or operator, excluding state units of government, who is eligible for CRP and owns land within the eligible area shall be eligible for the initiative. Applicants who are ineligible for CRP may be eligible under the initiative if all selection criteria are met. (Authorized by and implementing K.S.A. 2-1915, as amended by L. 1998, Ch. 143, Sec. 46; effective Feb. 5, 1999.)

**K.A.R. 11-9-4. Eligible practices.** Practices that shall be eligible for incentive payments are filter strips and riparian forest buffers. Payments made through the buffer initiative shall be in addition to any CRP payments received by each applicant. (Authorized by and implementing K.S.A. 2-1915, as amended by L. 1998, Ch. 143, Sec. 46; effective Feb. 5, 1999.)

**K.A.R. 11-9-5. Annual payments.** (a) Payments shall be made on an annual basis coinciding with federal payments for the purpose of providing an incentive to enroll in the CRP for 10 to 15 years. (b) Incentive payments shall not exceed the following: (1) 30% of the total federal payment, excluding the maintenance fee for the establishment of filter strips; or (2) 50% of the total federal payment, excluding

the maintenance fee for the establishment of riparian forest buffers. (c) All acres determined to be in an unfarmable field shall be eligible for the state incentive if the applicant agrees to establish and maintain permanent vegetative cover for the duration of the continuous CRP contract. (d) The total state and federal payment shall not exceed \$150.00 per acre unless an exception is granted by the commission. (Authorized by and implementing K.S.A. 2000 Supp. 2-1915, as amended by L. 2001, Ch. 64, Sec. 1; effective Feb. 5, 1999; amended Aug. 23, 2002.)

**K.A.R. 11-9-6. Contracts.** Each contract shall be for no fewer than 10 years and no more than 15 years. Funding for contracts shall be subject to annual appropriations from the state legislature and may be canceled if the funding is not renewed after the first year. (Authorized by and implementing K.S.A. 2-1915, as amended by L. 1998, Ch. 143, Sec. 46; effective Feb. 5, 1999.)

**K.A.R. 11-9-7. Selection.** Eligible applicants shall be approved for funding by the SCC and according to criteria developed by the director. These criteria may include the following: (a) The amount of existing vegetation; (b) the size of the area offered; (c) the type of vegetation offered; (d) the type of practice or practices offered; and (e) the proximity either to an intermittent or perennial stream or to other areas conducive to overland flow and length of contract. (Authorized by and implementing K.S.A. 2-1915, as amended by L. 1998, Ch. 143, Sec. 46; effective Feb. 5, 1999.)

**K.A.R. 11-9-8. Haying and grazing.** If authorized by the CRP, haying, grazing, or both may occur without penalty under the state contract. A non-CRP participant shall be allowed to hay or graze a filter strip without penalty after development of a grazing management plan developed in cooperation with the USDA-NRCS. No grazing shall be allowed on a riparian forest buffer. (Authorized by and implementing K.S.A. 2-1915, as amended by L. 1998, Ch. 143, Sec. 46; effective Feb. 5, 1999.)

**K.A.R. 11-9-9. Termination.** If the federal CRP is terminated by the FSA for any contract violation or for any other reason, the state contract may also be canceled. A refund of incentive payments earned may be required at the commission's discretion. A refund of incentive payments may be required by the commission if there is a failure to follow and maintain the program objective. (Authorized by and implementing K.S.A. 2-1915, as amended by L. 1998, Ch. 143, Sec. 46; effective Feb. 5, 1999.)

**K.A.R. 11-9-10. Petition for reconsideration.** (a) A landowner who has been denied cost-share funding may request a reconsideration of a district decision by filing a petition for reconsideration. (b) The petition for reconsideration shall be submitted in writing to the commission within 30 days of the decision and shall state why the decision of the district should be reviewed and why the decision should be modified or reversed. (c) The petition shall be reviewed by the commission during the next scheduled commission meeting. Whether the decision should be affirmed, modified, or reversed shall be determined by the commission. The final decision shall state the reason or reasons for this determination. (Authorized by and implementing K.S.A. 2-1915; effective Feb. 5, 1999; amended Aug. 23, 2002.)

**11-9-5 Annual payments.** (a) Payments shall be made on an annual basis coinciding with federal payments for the purpose of providing an incentive to enroll in the CRP for 10 to 15 years, *except as provided for in (e)*.

(b) Incentive payments shall not exceed the following:

(1) 30% of the total federal payment, excluding the maintenance fee for the establishment of filter strips; or

(2) 50% of the total federal payment, excluding the maintenance fee for the establishment of riparian forest buffers.

(c) All acres determined to be in an unfarmable field shall be eligible for the state incentive if the applicant agrees to establish and maintain permanent vegetative cover for the duration of the continuous CRP contract.

(d) The total state and federal payment shall not exceed \$150.00 per acre unless an exception is granted by the commission.

*(e) In lieu of the annual payments described in (a), the Director may make a single lump-sum payment for the remaining amount of any contract. Upon receipt of a lump-sum payment, participant shall still be responsible for all other terms and practices contained in the contract and failure to fulfill such requirements may result in termination of the agreement and repayment of all or part of any incentive payments.*

Approved Aug 24 by KWA

KWA Approved Rec

KWA Approved Rec

State Water Plan Fund: Kansas Water Authority FY 2022 Budget Recommendations

EXPENDITURES	FY 2020 Appropriated	FY 2020 Carryforward	FY 2021 Appropriation	KWA Base Budget Recs	KWA Enhanc. Recs	Full Restoration SGF/EDIF
<b>Department of Health and Environment</b>						
Contamination Remediation	\$ 1,093,131	\$ 2,038	\$ 1,088,301	\$ 1,088,301	\$ -	\$ 1,088,301
Nonpoint Source Program	\$ 307,059	\$ 102,948	\$ 303,208	\$ 303,208	\$ -	\$ 303,208
TMDL Initiatives	\$ 280,738	\$ 59,330	\$ 280,738	\$ 280,738	\$ -	\$ 280,738
Harmful Algae Bloom Pilot	\$ 450,000	\$ 698,760	\$ 450,000	\$ 150,000	\$ -	\$ 150,000
Watershed Restoration/Protection (WRAPS)	\$ 730,884	\$ 21,243	\$ 730,884	\$ 730,884	\$ 269,116	\$ 1,000,000
Drinking Water Protection Program	\$ 350,000	\$ -	\$ 350,000	\$ 650,000	\$ 150,000	\$ 800,000
<b>SUBTOTAL-KDHE</b>	<b>\$ 3,211,812</b>	<b>\$ 884,319</b>	<b>\$ 3,203,131</b>	<b>\$ 3,203,131</b>	<b>\$ 419,116</b>	<b>\$ 3,622,247</b>
<b>Department of Agriculture</b>						
Interstate Water Issues	\$ 499,281	\$ 211,776	\$ 490,007	\$ 490,007	\$ -	\$ 490,007
Subbasin Water Resources Management	\$ 621,651	\$ 256,544	\$ 608,949	\$ 608,949	\$ -	\$ 608,949
Water Use	\$ 72,600	\$ 64,239	\$ 72,600	\$ 72,600	\$ -	\$ 72,600
Water Resources Cost Share	\$ 2,448,289	\$ 182,954	\$ 2,698,289	\$ 2,248,289	\$ -	\$ 2,248,289
Nonpoint Source Pollution Asst.	\$ 1,860,104	\$ 274,056	\$ 1,857,836	\$ 1,857,836	\$ -	\$ 1,857,836
Aid to Conservation Districts	\$ 2,192,637	\$ -	\$ 2,342,637	\$ 1,973,373	\$ -	\$ 1,973,373
Watershed Dam Construction	\$ 550,000	\$ -	\$ 750,000	\$ 550,000	\$ 450,000	\$ 1,000,000
Water Quality Buffer Initiative	\$ 200,000	\$ 329,454	\$ 200,000	\$ 100,000	\$ -	\$ 100,000
Riparian and Wetland Program	\$ 154,024	\$ 428,271	\$ 154,024	\$ 54,024	\$ -	\$ 54,024
Water Transition Assistance Program/CREP	\$ 302,046	\$ 158,289	\$ 699,745	\$ 402,046	\$ 225,000	\$ 627,046
Irrigation Technology	\$ 100,000	\$ 51,224	\$ 100,000	\$ 200,000	\$ -	\$ 200,000
Crop and Livestock Research	\$ 350,000	\$ -	\$ 350,000	\$ 250,000	\$ -	\$ 250,000
Streambank Stabilization	\$ 500,000	\$ 820,700	\$ 750,000	\$ 794,264	\$ 250,000	\$ 1,044,264
Real-Time Water Mgmt - Telemetry - SWRM	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Water Supply Restoration Program	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>SUBTOTAL-KDA</b>	<b>\$ 9,850,632</b>	<b>\$ 2,777,505</b>	<b>\$ 11,074,087</b>	<b>\$ 9,601,388</b>	<b>\$ 925,000</b>	<b>\$ 10,526,388</b>
<b>Kansas Water Office</b>						
Assessment and Evaluation	\$ 600,000	\$ 6,139	\$ 829,900	\$ 658,919	\$ 200,000	\$ 858,919
MOU - Storage Operations & Maintenance	\$ 410,000	\$ -	\$ 480,100	\$ 526,081	\$ -	\$ 526,081
Stream Gaging	\$ 423,130	\$ 9,550	\$ 423,130	\$ 423,130	\$ -	\$ 423,130
Technical Assistance to Water Users	\$ 325,000	\$ 16,391	\$ 325,000	\$ 325,000	\$ -	\$ 325,000
Vision Education Strategy	\$ 100,000	\$ -	\$ 100,000	\$ 125,000	\$ -	\$ 125,000
Reservoir and Water Quality Research	\$ 350,000	\$ 102,304	\$ 350,000	\$ 350,000	\$ -	\$ 350,000
Water Technology Farms	\$ 75,000	\$ 4,125	\$ 75,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ 200,000
Watershed Conservation Practice Imp (KRP)	\$ 700,000	\$ 220,177	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 1,000,000
Equus Beds Chloride Plume Project	\$ 50,000	\$ 9,140	\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Milford Lake Watershed RCPP	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	\$ -	\$ 200,000
Water Injection Dredging (WID)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 660,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 1,200,000	\$ 1,500,000
Arbuckle Study	\$ 68,000	\$ 68,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000
Flood Response Study	\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>SUBTOTAL-KWO</b>	<b>\$ 3,401,130</b>	<b>\$ 735,826</b>	<b>\$ 4,493,130</b>	<b>\$ 3,508,130</b>	<b>\$ 2,150,000</b>	<b>\$ 5,658,130</b>
<b>Kansas Dept. of Wildlife, Parks &amp; Tourism</b>						
Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Program	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ -
<b>University of Kansas--Geological Survey</b>	<b>\$ 26,841</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 26,841</b>	<b>\$ 26,841</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 26,841</b>
<b>Total State Water Plan Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 16,490,415</b>	<b>\$ 4,397,650</b>	<b>\$ 18,797,189</b>	<b>\$ 16,389,490</b>	<b>\$ 3,494,116</b>	<b>\$ 19,833,606</b>
<b>Demand Transfers</b>						
State General Fund Transfer	\$ 4,005,632		\$ 6,000,000			\$ 6,000,000
Economic Development Fund Transfer	\$ 500,000		\$ 913,325			\$ 2,000,000
	<b>\$ 4,505,632</b>		<b>\$ 6,913,325</b>			<b>\$ 8,000,000</b>

# Decision-Making Considerations for Conducting Conservation District Annual Meetings During COVID-19 Pandemic

(As of August 2020)

## Annual Meetings are Required

Under the provisions of Conservation District Law, K.S.A. 2-1907, each conservation district is required to have an annual meeting to provide full disclosure of district activities/accomplishments and financial affairs, as well as hold an election of supervisors whose terms have expired. The meeting is open to the public in accordance with the Kansas Open Meetings Act (KOMA).

## Annual Meeting Requirements (K.S.A. 2-1907)

The following are the conservation district annual meeting requirements:

- Have an annual meeting for all qualified electors (U.S. citizen and 18 years of age or older) of the conservation district.
- Meeting shall be held in January or February.
- Notice of the time and place shall be given by the supervisors by publishing a notice.
- The notice is published in the official county newspaper once each week for two consecutive weeks prior to the week in which the meeting is to be held.
- Supervisors shall make a full and due report of district activities and financial affairs since the last annual meeting.
- Supervisors shall conduct an election by secret ballot of those qualified electors of the district present for the election of supervisors whose terms have expired.
- Annual meeting minutes are uploaded into CSIMS within 10 days after the meeting.

## Annual Meeting Format

As long as statutory requirements (K.S.A. 2-1907) are met (elections, annual report, financial statement), you may choose a meeting format of your choice. Accommodate the best you can, but safety is the most important.

## Safety Considerations

- Avoid close contact lines for voting, meals, etc.
- Masks
- Hand sanitizer
- Social distancing
- Temperature checks
- Follow local current CDC guidelines
- High-risk attendees

Please refer to the *Kansas Conservation District Handbook*, Administrative Section, Chapter 4 “Conservation District Annual Meetings.”

**Due to the current pandemic, mail in ballots are allowed.**

As always, feel free to contact DOC with questions.

KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS  
76<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION  
NOVEMBER 22-24, 2020  
A VIRTUAL EVENT

Sunday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>

6:00 pm – 7 pm

**Vespers Service**

Monday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>

8:30 am – 10:00 am

**KACD Opening Session**

Presiding: Allen Roth, KACD President

Presidents Report

NRCS Update, Karen Woodrich, NRCS State Conservationist

NACD Update, Jeremy Peters, NACD Chief Executive Officer

10:00 am – 10:30 am

Break – Please visit the Virtual Exhibit page and view our sponsors virtual exhibits

10:30 am – 11:30 am

**Sustainability For the Future through Innovative Conservation**

Panel Discussion with Andrew Lyon, KDA-DOC Executive Director, Dean Krehbiel, NRCS State Resource Conservationist, Steve Swaffar, No Till on the Plains Executive Director

11:30 am- 1:00 pm

Lunch Break – Please take time to visit the Virtual Exhibit page and view our sponsors virtual exhibits

Breakout Sessions

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

**Enhancing Conservation Delivery through Innovative Public-Private**

**Partnerships** – Jason Weller, VP, Truterra LLC, Keri Harris, District manager and Kaitlin Gibbons, Agronomist with the Franklin County Conservation District and Lindsey Sylvester, Ottawa COOP discuss the value of public agencies and private sector businesses partnering to achieve conservation goals.

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

**General Mills/Cheney Watershed pilot project**

Lisa French, Cheney Watershed coordinator and ??? with General Mills showcase their efforts

2:00 – 2:30 pm

Break – Please visit the Virtual Exhibit page and view our sponsors virtual exhibits

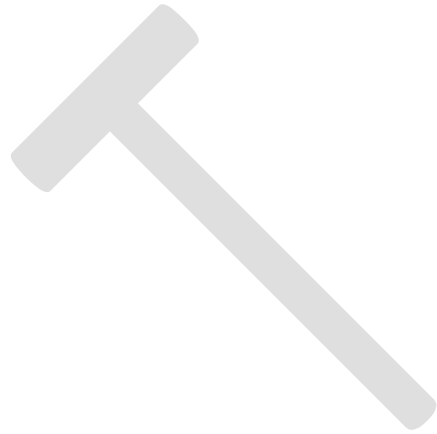
- 2:30 pm – 3:00 pm      **Kansas Soil Health Alliance** – The new coordinator for the Alliance will introduce the Alliance, share their mission and objectives for this new group
- 2:30 pm – 3:00 pm      **Kansas Foundation For Ag in the Classroom** – Nancy Zenger-Benada, KFAC Executive Director will share her vision for the future of KFAC and talk about a new web page containing educational tools for educators.
- 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm      **KACD/KDHE WRAPS Partnership** - KDHE staff will share their objective and goals for this partnership and highlight the successes of the first two years.
- 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm      **Peer Coaching For Producers** – Michael Thompson and Brice Custer share their vision for a new peer to peer coaching effort to help farmers adopting soil health practices
- 3:30 pm – 4:00 pm      Break – Please visit the [Virtual Exhibit](#) page and view our sponsors virtual exhibits
- 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm      Area meetings
- 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm      **Awards Ceremony** (a live event by invitation only) This event will be recorded and posted on the website
- Tuesday, November 24<sup>th</sup>
- 9:00 am – 11:00 am      **KACD Business Meeting**
- 9:00 am – 11:00 am      **KDA-DOC training for District Employees**
- 11:00 am – 1:00 pm      Break – Please visit the [Virtual Exhibit](#) page and view our sponsors virtual exhibits
- 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm      **KACD Employee Organization Meeting**

# 2020 SCC Nomination and Voting Procedures

*Areas II and IV are up for election*

1. DOC will send a request for nominations and a cover letter to include the State Conservation Commissioner Application for the SCC board to Area II and IV districts.
2. Interested district supervisors will submit their State Conservation Commissioner Application to KACD by November 20, 2020.
3. KACD will announce the nominations received and ask for additional nominations at the KACD Area Meetings at the Annual Convention.
4. Deadline for nominee applications to be submitted to KACD is November 30, 2020.
5. KACD will send the additional nominations to DOC by December 1, 2020.
6. DOC will email a certified elector form, printable ballots, and the State Conservation Commissioner Applications received to Area II and IV districts on December 1, 2020.
7. At the December board meeting, district supervisors will sign a certified elector form before completing a ballot.
8. District Manager will provide printed ballots to the supervisors along with a list of applicants.
9. The District Manager and Chairperson shall certify the votes.
10. District Manager will scan the ballots and email to KACD no later than December 22, 2020.
11. KACD tallies the votes and sends the results to DOC and Areas II and IV by December 31, 2020.
12. KACD will forward the ballots to DOC.







**State Conservation  
Commissioner Application  
December 2020**



*(to be completed by the applicant, not the person nominating)*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Resident of the County of: \_\_\_\_\_

How many years have you served as a Supervisor? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you been on the SCC board before? Y N How many years? \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you wish to serve on the SCC board? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What skills and qualifications make you an ideal candidate for the position? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

For Board Members seeking re-election, what are your greatest accomplishments achieved during your tenure? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What contributions do you propose to make during your term should you be elected/re-elected?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# Kansas Association of Conservation Districts Employees' Organization

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AMANDA SCOTT, President



September 2020

- The KACD-EO Executive Board met in Salina, June 18, 2020 at the NRCS State Office.
- I am working with Cindy Pulse at the Division of Conservation on the District Manager Training Initiative.
- Each area representative gave an EO report at the KACD Virtual Fall Workshops in August.
- The EO Executive Board will meet in Manhattan, September 29, 2020 @ 9 AM. The main topics of discussion will be preparations for the upcoming virtual annual meeting and the Conservation District Professional Award.

As always, if anyone has any questions or concerns, please contact myself or any of the Area KACD-EO Representatives for assistance.

AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

TITLE: Gulf of Mexico Division Farmer to Farmer Request for Applications - 2020

ACTION: Request for Applications (RFA)

RFA NUMBER: EPA-GM-2020-FARMER

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NO: 66.475

<https://www.epa.gov/gulfofmexico/farmer-farmer-rfa-and-supporting-documents>

Kansas Department of Agriculture - Division of Conservation

Farmer to Farmer Engagement to Increase Adoption of Soil Health Principles to Reduce Nutrient Loss

### Abstract

Cover Crops and other Soil Health Principles have shown to reduce nutrient loss from agricultural working lands in the midwestern United States (Tank 2016). While cover crop adoption by farmers has grown in Kansas during the last 5 years the total acreage utilizing cover crops each year is small relative to the total agricultural working lands in Kansas. Much higher percentages of the total agricultural land utilizing Soil Health Principles is needed to make a difference in reducing nutrient loading at the watershed scale to have an effect on the Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Zone. Several recent reviews of the factors that lead to adoption of Soil Health Management Systems show that farmer decision making around adoption is complex and driven by multiple factors (Prokopy et al., 2019; Ranjan, 2019; Carlisle, 2016). Economic, Technical/Agronomic, and Social/Cultural factors all influence adoption. While federal, state, and local programs exist to provide technical assistance and financial incentive to adopt practices, very little assistance has been provided to overcome social and cultural barriers to adopting Soil Health Management Systems. Farmer to Farmer engagement is crucial to overcoming social and cultural barriers as local knowledge and trust that local producers provide cannot be replicated by a government program. In Kansas the organized unit of local farmer engagement is the Conservation District. Each of the 105 counties in Kansas has a Conservation District governed by 5 local Supervisors who are primarily farmers and ranchers. This makes Conservation Districts the optimal entity to provide social and cultural engagement in a farmer to farmer focused model to increase adoption of cover crops and full Soil Health Management Systems. This grant will provide funding to all 105 Conservation Districts in Kansas to facilitate a local “conservation coffee” group where farmers are invited to openly discuss Soil Health Management Systems in a culturally important location such as a coffee shop. The group will meet regularly around the county with little formal structure or direction other than free coffee and open minds. Once the group is established the Conservation District will ask for their input on hosting a soil health workshop in the county that will feature local producers and topics important to the agricultural production systems most prevalent in the county. Through the combination of informal coffee shop talk and more formal learning during a soil health workshop we expect the adoption of soil health management systems to increase due to making it more socially acceptable within the local agricultural community to plant cover crops and have “trashy” fields. Success for this project will be measured in 3 ways. Data on producer participation in the coffee shop discussions and attendance at workshops will be collected and compared to previous efforts. Acres utilizing Soil Health Management Systems will be evaluated over time using remote sensing technologies developed by OptIS at the Conservation Technology Information Center. Water Quality monitoring data will continue to be collected in Kansas using the existing ambient water quality monitoring program, but one nutrient related TMDL in each county will be evaluated over the 3 year grant period and results will be presented

and discussed with the Conservation District Supervisors and the participants of the “conservation coffee” group. These methods ensure evaluation on 3 different scales, producer attitude and participation, land use and method adoption rate, and water quality monitoring data. Coordination will also occur with the Kansas Soil Health Alliance to ensure all Kansas farmers and ranchers have access to formal and informal learning opportunities about soil health within 75 miles of their farms.

Farmer to Farmer Engagement Grant						
	Coffee Shop Group Facilitation	Soil Health Workshops	Grant Administration			
County Conservation District x 105	\$420,000	\$525,000				
Kansas Department of Agriculture			\$55,000			
Total	\$420,000	\$525,000	\$55,000		Grant Total	\$1,000,000

Tank, J. L.; Hanrahan, B.; Christopher, S. F.; Trentman, M. T.; Royer, T. V.; Prior, K. (2016). Watershed-Scale Cover Crops Reduce Nutrient Export From Agricultural Landscapes. American Geophysical Union, Fall Meeting 2016, abstract #H13D-1397. 2016AGUFM.H13D1397T.

<https://ui.adsabs.harvard.edu/abs/2016AGUFM.H13D1397T/abstract>

Carlisle, L. (2016): Factors Influencing Farmer Adoption of Soil Health Practices in the United States: a Narrative Review, Agroecology and Sustainable Food Systems, DOI: 10.1080/21683565.2016.1156596

Ranjan, P., Church, S. P., Floress, K., & Prokopy, L. S. (2019). Synthesizing Conservation Motivations and Barriers: What Have We Learned from Qualitative Studies of Farmers’ Behaviors in the United States? Society & Natural Resources, 32(11), 1171–1199. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08941920.2019.1648710>

Prokopy, L. S., Floress, K., Arbuckle, J. G., Church, S. P., Eanes, F. R., Gao, Y., Gramig, B. M., Ranjan, P., & Singh, A. S. (2019). Adoption of agricultural conservation practices in the United States: Evidence from 35 years of quantitative literature. Journal of Soil and Water Conservation, 74(5), 520–534.

<https://doi.org/10.2489/jswc.74.5.520>

**LiDAR:** The LiDAR contract with Atlantic continues to be an issue. The request for NRCS extension for hydroenforcement was only granted for 1 year (Feb 2021) and was not authorized until Oct 2021 as requested. Discussions with contractors are on-going on how to meet the deliverables due to continued delays by Atlantic. We are slowly receiving blocks of data, however USGS is not accepting the blocks due to errors in the data.

**County Consultation Coordination Officer's (CCO) meetings:** The Chase County CCO meeting was held on June 15, Anderson County CCO meeting was held June 16, Douglas County CCO meeting was held July 7, Lyon County CCO meeting was held July 8, Franklin County CCO meeting was held July 29 and Ellis County on August 18. The meetings are to explain the post-preliminary and due diligence portions of the mapping projects. The DWR explained the appeal period, public notification, the Letter of Final Determination (LFD), community adoption of the new map and other community responsibilities. At the CCO Meetings, DWR explained the administrative steps that are now required to make the map official. The goal of the meetings is to ensure that communities understand the process and what they will be responsible for over the next year and a half.

**Congressional Briefing on Rural Issues:** Terry Medley and Steve Samuelson participated in the Environmental and Energy Study Institute (EESI) congressional briefing on June 18. EESI held congressional briefings on rural issues on June 16, 17 and 18. The first day was about utilities, the second day was about biofuels and the third day was on flooding resiliency. The flooding resiliency briefing was the briefing that DWR participated in and discussed working with rural communities on flooding issues.

**Chief Engineer:** David Barfield retired on February 28, 2020. Chris Beightel has been named acting Chief Engineer. Interviews to fill the position are scheduled for Friday.

**Risk MAP Open Houses:** Risk Mapping, Assessment and Planning (Risk MAP) open house for Brown County was held June 4 and for Morris County on June 18. The open house is to share information with the public regarding the proposed Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM). The open house is formatted so citizens can virtually sit with KDA, Wood I&E and FEMA and ask specific questions regarding their property or property of concern. National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) specialists from FEMA also attended the event to answer questions regarding insurance.

**Western Kansas Hydrology:** DWR continues to host meetings on Western Kansas Hydrology. Various contractors and state agencies participate in the meetings. The goal of the meetings is to determine how to handle stream flows in Western Kansas. The big question is if it is appropriate to use the entire data set to calibrate models or post 1978 data.

**Association of State Floodplain Managers:** The annual ASFPM conference was held virtually June 8 – 11. Six staff members participated in the conference.

**Association of State Dam Safety Officials:** The annual ASDSO conference was held virtually September 18 – 25. Four staff members participated in the conference.

**Staffing:** Laura Gray, dam safety engineer, has resigned effective September 25. We still have a vacant engineering associate on the stream permitting team.