

Conservation Conversations

December 2007 - Issue No. Five

Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet
Department for Natural Resources
Division of Conservation

Letter From the Director

Welcome to the winter edition of Conservation Conversations. I would like to thank everyone who furnished articles and photos for use in this newsletter. We are always amazed to see the many interesting and worthy contributions conservation districts are making in their communities and across the Commonwealth. Such commendable contributions deserve an opportunity to be shared, so we are pleased to highlight as many of them as possible.

The year 2007 has come to an end. Looking back, it may easily have been one of the most challenging years that conservation districts have encountered in a long time. However, it has also been very rewarding to see how districts and the conservation partners have stepped up to meet these challenges. District supervisors, district employees, NRCS employees and Division of Conservation employees are to all be commended on a job well done. I would also like to recognize KACD and the Soil and Water Conservation Commission for their hard work and continued support of the conservation district program throughout the state. Without the commitment and hard work of all of you, the success of Kentucky's conservation program simply would not have been possible.

So as we bring closure to the past year, I encourage each of you to look forward to the new year and seek out the many opportunities that it will bring. I also encourage you to continue to work together and to help each other for the betterment of the conservation movement in Kentucky. Your hard work and dedication will greatly enhance and conserve our natural resources so they can be used and enjoyed by generations to come.

We at the Division of Conservation hope you had a very happy holiday season and would like to extend to each of you our heartfelt wishes that the New Year will be full of opportunities and good fortune.

In closing, feel free to contact me or any of the division staff if you have any questions or need any assistance.

Sincerely,

Stephen A. Coleman

Stephen A. Coleman, Director
Kentucky Division of Conservation



Stephen A. Coleman

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Conservation District Employee Training Workshop 2007 By Curtis M. Kirk

The Division of Conservation conducted an employee training workshop on October 3, at the Nolin RECC building in Elizabethtown. A good time was had by the 75 participants who attended. Steve Coleman, Division of Conservation, welcomed everyone and stated goals that had been identified for the workshop. They included increasing knowledge and understanding of conservation district employee's roles and responsibilities; developing a better understanding of conservation programs and operations; answering as many employee questions as possible.

A special thank-you went out to Breckinridge, Bullitt and Jefferson county conservation districts for sponsoring the coffee, pastries, fruit trays, soft drinks and cookies for the morning registration and breaks. Lunch was catered and served on-site.

The meeting kicked off with a computer security presentation by Lena Allen, USDA, that sparked several questions and discussion. Katrina Beckley, DOC reminded employees about required background checks. Amanda Gumbert, water quality liaison for UK CES/DOC, spoke about

water quality and the new emphasis on the Agriculture Water Quality Act. Amanda then assumed the role of Alex Trebek and the name of the game was "Water Quality Jeopardy." She introduced a computer version of Jeopardy that had been adapted to water quality. The district employees played a couple of rounds and it was evident that they were well versed when it came to water quality. Amanda told the employees the game was available to districts at their request. The tag team of Steve Coleman and Mike Hubbs, state conservationist for NRCS, addressed the issue of restructuring and district office space as well as cost share sign-ups. As a team ("team approach") they fielded a battery of questions and assured employees that there would be little in the way of change regarding their job duties and responsibilities. Funding mechanisms such as infrastructure loans, direct aid, increasing general fund dollars, getting on the millage tax, and other loans such as KACO were also discussed.



Photos by Debbie Hinton

Conservation District Employee Training Workshop 2007
- Continued -

The group then broke out into small discussion groups and were assigned topics for discussion and asked to report to the entire group later in the day. This gave employees an opportunity to interact with employees from other areas of the state and share ideas, ask questions and voice their concerns. It also gave them a chance to share successes with other members of the group and identify resources as well as possible solutions. The Division of Conservation field representatives and staff helped facilitate the group discussions and answered questions.

Due to the success of the workshop, the Division of Conservation has committed to conducting another conservation district employee workshop next year. Steve Coleman stated that "if all goes well we could possibly commit to two more workshops in 2008, one in the east and one in the west."

We would like to thank everyone who participated in the workshop, and we look forward to the next one. If you have any questions or if you have ideas for future employee training workshops, contact your field representative and ask that they be considered in planning the next workshop.



Photo by Debbie Hinton



Grant Money awarded to Fund Watershed Based Plans (WBPs) for Fayette and Scott Counties By Angie Wingfield

On September 14, 2007 Kentucky Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet Secretary Teresa Hill presented two checks totaling \$1,110,940 to the Dean Scott Smith of the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture. This funding was allocated through two Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Pollution Control grant awards from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, administered by the Kentucky Division of Water and Kentucky Division of Conservation. Using this funding UK, in collaboration with nine partners, will develop and implement a watershed based plan (WBP) for Cane Run Creek and Royal Spring. Cane Run Creek and Royal Spring are located in northern Fayette and southern Scott counties. The WBP will identify sources of pollutants and recommend best management practices (BMPs) and management strategies in an effort to improve water quality in the Cane Run and Royal Spring watersheds. Current project partners include:

- University of Kentucky, KWRR1
- Kentucky River Properties LLC
- Kentucky Horse Park
- Lexmark International
- Royal Spring Water Supply Protection Committee
- Bluegrass Pride
- Lexington Fayette Urban County Government
- Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources
- Fayette County Conservation District
- Kentucky River Watershed Watch



EPPC Secretary Teresa Hill presents UK College of Agriculture Dean Scott Smith with checks at the Kentucky Horse Park September 14, 2007. Photo by Angie Wingfield





Watershed Based Plans (WBPs) for Fayette and Scott Counties - Continued -

The Cane Run Watershed is extremely important for the reason that it feeds into the Royal Spring Aquifer, which is the drinking source of water for the city of Georgetown. Segments of this watershed have been identified as having high levels of sedimentation/siltation, pathogens and nutrient/organic enrichment resulting in the stream being placed on Kentucky Division of Water's 303 (d) list of impaired streams. The Cane Run Watershed is approximately 29,000 acres in size and includes both agricultural and non-agricultural nonpoint sources of pollution. This project will focus on the upper Cane Run watershed includes about 15,000 acres which is the recharge zone for the Royal Spring Aquifer.

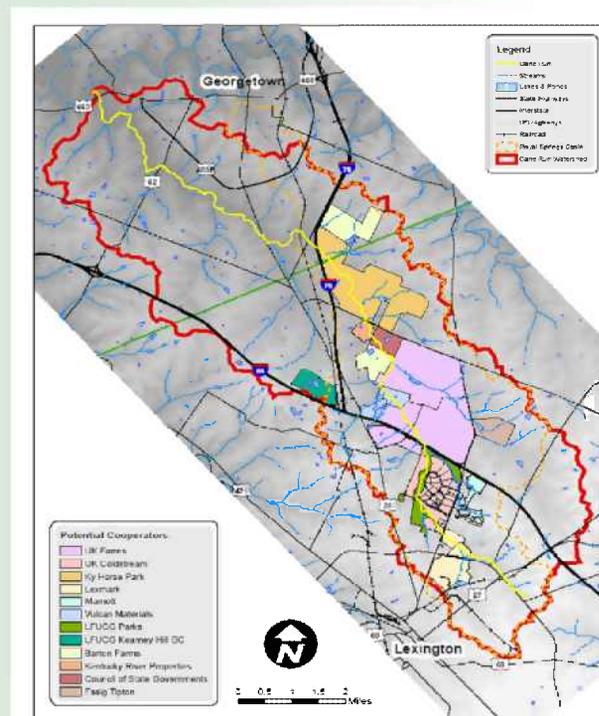
The Kentucky Horse Park along with the City of Lexington will host the 2010 World Equestrian Games which will include a portion of this watershed from the northern sections of Lexington to the Kentucky Horse Park. This presents a tremendous opportunity to showcase conservation activities within these watersheds and to present Kentucky favorably to the visiting public.

This project will take place in several stages. Phase I of the Cane Run Project is the development and approval of a watershed-based plan with some initial implementation. Phase II will be to continue the implementation, which includes cooperation of watershed stakeholders to install BMP's to restore portions of the stream and conduct educational outreach campaigns.

Nonpoint source pollution is caused by rainfall or snowmelt moving over and through the ground. As the runoff moves, it picks up and carries pollutants, finally depositing them into lakes, rivers or wetlands. Some examples of nonpoint source pollution would be:

- Bacteria and nutrients from livestock waste and failing septic systems.
- Fertilizers and pesticides from agricultural land and residential areas.
- Sediment from construction sites and logging operations.
- Acid mine drainage

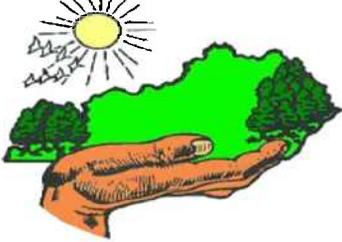
The map shows the scale of cooperators that have been assembled from federal, state, and local government and private landowners. Many partners have committed their resources to this project, which includes but is not limited to UK Cooperative Extension Service, Lexington Fayette Urban County Government, Division of Conservation, Kentucky River Watershed Watch, and many more. These partners have a vested interest in the watershed and, considering the influence, a high probability of succeeding in improving water quality in the watershed.



Kentucky Envirothon 2008

By Martin Bess

Kentucky Envirothon 2008



Envirothon is a competitive, problem-solving, natural resources experience for students in grades 9 through 12. The event is competitive, but education is the bottom line. With the support of natural resource professionals, students are trained in the ways that real life environmental problems are solved.

Teams of five students work to solve environmental problems. These teams are tested on their knowledge of

Kentucky's natural resources at five "in the field" test stations. Students travel between stations each addressing a different topic from soils, forestry, wildlife, aquatics and a current environmental issue. Through hands-on experiments, analysis and use of critical thinking skills, the teams answer a set of questions at each station.

- A non-refundable \$50 registration fee is required per team entry by February 29, 2008.
- A non-refundable \$75 registration fee will be accepted March 1 thru March 21, 2008.
- A registration fee is required for regional competition only.
- Please make checks payable to KACD.

West Regional: April 19, 2008 - Pennyrile State Forest.

East Regional: April 26, 2008 – Morehead State University Farm, Morehead, Rowan County.

The State Competition: May 20-21, 2008 - Kentucky Leadership Center, Jabez.

Advisors/ teachers/coaches need to bring a copy of a permission slip, medical information form, and photo release for each student signed by a legal guardian to the competition. Please check with your local conservation district or the Division of Conservation. Team roster (five members plus two alternates) will be turned in at the regional competitions. Teams will be allowed to compete with three to five members at regional competition and still qualify for state competition but must have five students to compete at the State Competition.

For more information:

<http://www.conservation.Kentucky.gov/educations/>

<http://www.forestry.Kentucky.gov/programs/education/Kentuckyenvirothon/>
Division of Forestry Envirothon website

<http://www.envirothon.org/>
Canon Envirothon



Breathitt County Conservation District Receives Soil Stewardship Award
By Anthony Mullins



Breathitt County Conservation District Board of Directors. Photo by Anthony Mullins

During the 2007 KACD Convention the Breathitt County conservation district received the Soil Stewardship Award. This award was presented in recognition of their hard work and dedication to their soil stewardship program in Breathitt County.

Each year during soil stewardship week the district plans and hosts an annual dinner for all 150 pastors, ministers, and lay leaders of the county. Each year attendance has grown and this past year 66 members of the church community attended this event. During the event materials were presented to everyone for use in their local churches. The materials related to the theme of stewardship week. Not only did those in attendance receive the materials but materials were sent to others who could not attend for various reasons. The event offers live gospel singing and even performances from the conservation district office personnel. Door prizes and small tokens of appreciation are presented to all that attend. Each year the district shows a video that is faith based with a conservation theme.

This program has given the conservation district the opportunity to share for many years what the district has to offer through programs and other conservation activities. Eldon Miller, a local pastor and Breathitt County Conservation District board member, has lead the efforts to make sure the Soil Stewardship Program goes off without a hitch. Making visits and phone calls to all the pastors and ministers asking for their attendance is what makes this event a success. There is not a pastor or minister around that doesn't know about soil stewardship week. Congratulations to the Breathitt County Conservation District for its successful Soil Stewardship Program.

No-Traditional Students Rewarded By Linda Hunter

The Grant County Conservation District has awarded its first scholarships from a new fund for non-traditional students who are attending the Northern Kentucky University Grant County Center.

To be eligible for this scholarship the applicant must be a three-year resident of Grant County and pursuing a defined course of study.

The award will be based on financial need and the applicant's ability to complete the course work.

The scholarships may be divided among students if the school decides it would be more beneficial in promoting student enrollment.

The selection process will be handled by the grant personnel at Northern Kentucky University in collaboration with the Grant County Conservation District.

For more information about scholarship applications please call Rebecca Peddicord, Grant County Conservation District, at 606-823-2291.



Pictured left to right: Bill Courts, conservation district vice chairman; Debra Hancock, scholarship recipient; Kentwood Soper, conservation district chairman; John Dawalt, conservation district board member; Terri Barton, scholarship recipient; Bill Wilson, conservation district board member. Photo by Rebecca Petticord.

New Arena in Bullitt County By Kelly Shouse

George Henderman, Chairman of the Bullitt County Conservation District, saw a need for a community arena within his county and took the initiative to make it happen. Heading the construction, fund-raising and development of Bullitt County's first standard regulation arena, George started the project in May of 2007, and last month has seen over 2,000 hours logged.

The Bullitt County Conservation District received a grant from the Kentucky Agriculture Development Fund under the County Model Program that supplied a \$15,000 match, as long as the arena is available for farmers to have animal sales. From there, the supervisors hit the ground running, spreading the word of the new arena to local businesses, and asking if anyone would like to be involved. Donations poured in from businesses and groups including the Farm Bureau Agency and Insurance, Bullitt County Goat Producers, Bullitt County Cattleman Association, Bullitt County Extension, Hartland Equipment, County Attorney and Magistrates, and publishers.

With money in hand, construction began. Bullitt County Extension Service provided a 125 foot by 225 foot area that was graded and leveled to specifications. Standard corral panel was installed by Henderman along with trenches for water lines and electricity. Next to come were bleachers and poles for night lights. There was enough money raised to buy a tractor with a disk to fluff the ground before and after a show. The Bullitt County judge executive, Melanie Roberts, pitched in by widening the road leading from the highway to the arena.

The Bullitt County community pulled together to provide the children in their area, as well as seven surrounding counties, the chance to show off their livestock and equine skills. With the help and vision from the Bullitt County Conservation District, a need was filled and the future of our farming families was enhanced.



Photos by Darold Jay Akridge



**Lincoln County 319 Project
Peyton Creek Watershed
By Kimberly Bartley**

When the landowners in the Peyton Creek Watershed in Lincoln County were offered the chance to implement best management practices (BMP's) to improve water quality and improve their own agricultural operations, they took it. The Heritage Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) was able to obtain over \$1.3 million in federal and state cost share for the implementation of BMP's in the Peyton Creek Watershed. Titled the Peyton Creek Watershed 319 project is a seven-year project that includes the testing of the water and the implementation of practices to improve water quality. The farmers in this rural area were also eligible to receive 90 percent cost share for practices that they installed. They ended up with 11 landowners to participate; with most of these having large cattle operations.

After five years of this seven-year project seven covered feeding areas, 58,000 ft. of heavy use areas, 17,300 feet of pipeline with 15 water tanks, and over 4,200 feet of fence to keep livestock out of the streams have been completed. This project has also enabled many of the farmers to implement rotational grazing which improves their overall livestock operation.

The Peyton Creek Watershed is located in the Western part of Lincoln County and is characterized by rolling terrain and rapid surface runoff which has lead to this watershed being impaired by non-point source pollution. Peyton Creek is a sub-watershed of the Hanging fork that flows into Dix

River. This watershed was chosen because Hanging Fork has impaired water. Peyton Creek also has a heavy concentration of farming operations with over 80 percent of this area being used for agriculture.

The Lincoln County Conservation District held a field day on September 20 on the Lowell Atwood Farm to showcase some of the practices that have been implemented as part of this project. Approximately 100 people attended.

This projects success is due largely to the RC&D Oversight Committee: John Overing, RC&D coordinator Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) United States Department of Agriculture (USDA); Paul Jefferies, RC&D project coordinator (NRCS, USDA); Bo Renfro, district conservationist (NRCS, USDA); and Jon Benson, technician (NRCS, USDA). Other partners include Kentucky Division of Water, Lincoln County Conservation District, Kentucky Division of Conservation, and the Cumberland Environmental Group.

These partners will continue to implement more practices and work to make a difference for the remaining two years of the project. The Lincoln County Conservation District hopes better water quality for their county will be the result of all this hard work.





OWEN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT HELPS SUPPORT
WALTERS WILDLIFE RESCUE
By Linda Hunter



Photo by Linda Hunter.

Mrs. Mayme Walters of Warsaw received a \$250 check from the Owen County Conservation District to help support her wildlife rescue operation.

For the last 38 years Mrs. Walters has cared for injured, abandoned and orphaned wildlife of all descriptions. Wildlife officials, concerned citizens and police officials have brought animals from as far away as Pendleton, Grant, Boone, Carroll Henry counties as well as Gallatin and Owen counties.

Owen County Conservation District has a strong wildlife support program and recognized the importance of what Mrs. Walters does and wanted to help her carry on her program. The district realizes that Owen County residents, landowners and their guests benefit from the many wildlife conservation efforts made by people like Mrs. Walters.

For your information:



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service
Kentucky Field Office
Cooperating with Kentucky Department of Agriculture



December 5, 2007

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DIVISION OF
STATISTICS

Greetings:

The 2007 Census of Agriculture is right around the corner and we need your help to ensure that it's the most complete and accurate count yet.

The information provided by the Census of Agriculture is an invaluable tool for all of us in agriculture. But in order for the Census to be successful, we need to make sure that *every* farmer in Kentucky is counted. That's a big job, and we can't do it alone. Therefore, your partnership in reaching these producers is especially critical.

You can serve as an important link in our public outreach program. We are asking for your help to publicize and promote the Census of Agriculture by using the contact information listed below. We hope you will promote the Census of Agriculture and encourage response in all your contacts with agricultural producers and rural audiences.

In turn, census results will provide valuable information you need to know about the structure of agriculture, production of hundreds of commodities including very specialized crops and livestock, and operator characteristics for every county in Kentucky. Also, conducting the agricultural census is the only way to get information about how successful many of the new state initiatives and marketing assistance programs have been. The success of these new programs and how fast and how much they have grown will be shown by what producers report on the 2007 Census of Agriculture.

If you would like any additional materials or if you have any questions or comments concerning the 2007 Census of Agriculture, please contact me at (800) 928-5277 or send an e-mail to nass-kv@nass.usda.gov.

Thank you for your service to Kentucky's farmers. The Census is their voice, their future and their responsibility, and I personally look forward to working with you to produce for them the most complete and accurate count yet.

Sincerely,

LELAND E. BROWN
Director, Kentucky Field Office
U.S. Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service

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www.conservation.Kentucky.gov



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2008 Conservation District Quarterly Calendar

January

- State Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Sign Ups – 1st to 25th
- KACD Legislative "Wild Game Dinner" – 10th
- KACD Board of Directors Meeting – 11th at 9 a.m.
- Soil and Water Conservation Commission Meeting – 11th at 9 a.m.
- Young Farmers Conservation Contest Judging

February

- Deadline for State Cost Share Applications to Frankfort Office – 1st
- State Level Judging of Writing and Art Contest
- NACD National Convention – Feb. 10th – 13th – Reno, NV
- Spring Area Conservation Meetings
- KACD Congressional Breakfast - Washington, D.C.

March

- Spring Area Conservation Meetings
- KACD Congressional Breakfast - Washington, D.C.
- KACD Board of Directors Meeting – 11th at 9:30 a.m.
- Soil and Water Conservation Commission Meeting – 17th at 9 a.m.