

Annual Report for July 1, 2004 – June 30, 2005

## Boone County Conservation District

**Big Bone Lick State Park** - A grant through the Kentucky Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share grant project to address water quality issues associated with the Bison Management Area at Big Bone Lick State Park will assist the Park in moving the bison pasture to a more suitable location and improve the management techniques currently used. Grant funds will be used to help establish a 2.5 acre wildlife viewing area near the bison enclosure and a rotational grazing system to improve soil and water management. Education signage describing the project to park visitors will be developed. Mark Jacobs, Conservation Technician, is in charge of this project, which will have a positive effect on the water quality of Big Bone Creek. A native warm-season grass field day is being planned for 2005.

**Central Park Wildlife Viewing Area** - Central Park is a readily accessible, multi-use park available to the citizens of Boone County. Activities available at the park include active sports, walking trails, picnic areas and an Arboretum. A small wildlife viewing area is also available to visitors at the southern end of the park. Through this cooperative project, the Boone County Conservation District is providing the assistance of Conservation Technician Mark Jacobs to help establish a demonstration area of native shrubs, grasses and forbs to improve plant biodiversity, attract a variety of wildlife species and demonstrate the aesthetic and ecological value of a native grassland landscape. Educational signage has been developed for the project and work continues on several areas.

**Landslides Workshop** - The Greater Cincinnati area has one of the most expensive per-capita landslide loss rates in the nation. Over 80 people attended the Landslide Workshop in June to learn about ways to avoid and prevent landslide damage to public and private properties. The workshop was targeted to planners and public officials, but attracted a wide variety of disciplines including bankers and lawyers. Instructors **Dr. Barry Maynard**, Professor of Geology, University of Cincinnati; **Tim Agnello**, Consulting Engineering Geologist and Real Estate Broker; and **Dr. John Rockaway**, Professor of Geology, Northern Kentucky University, presented a morning indoor session followed by a field trip to visit landslide sites in Campbell and Kenton counties. The workshop was sponsored by the Boone, Campbell & Kenton County Conservation Districts; Kentucky Geological Survey; and Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission. Another workshop is planned for later this year. Contact your conservation district for more information. Staff Mark Jacobs, Kristin Anderson Scott, and Mary Kathryn Dickerson helped with local arrangements and attended the workshop.

### BOONE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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Burlington, KY 41005  
859-586-7903 • FAX: 859-586-7683  
[www.boonecountyky.org](http://www.boonecountyky.org)  
(Go to Regional Links)

The board meets at 7:00 p.m. on the third Monday of every month at the District office.

#### Mission

The mission of the Boone County Conservation District is to conserve and promote the best use of natural resources of Boone County by encouraging the use of Best Management Practices, district involvement with land use policy decisions, public awareness and education to maintain and improve the quality of life in Boone County. (1996)

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**Board:** Mike Keller, Chairman; Sarah Drew Griffith, Vice Chairman; James B. Walton, Secretary-Treasurer; Jan Garbett; Edward D. Moore; Billy Rehkamp Jr.; Debra Waller Franks.

**District Staff:** Sally Aaron, Administrative Secretary; Kristin Anderson Scott, Agriculture Conservation Technician; Mark Jacobs, Conservation Technician; and, Mary Kathryn Dickerson, District Coordinator.

**NATURAL RESOURCES  
CONSERVATION SERVICE:** Ed Thompson, District Conservationist

**KY. DIV. OF CONSERVATION:** Linda Hunter, Field Representative

*All programs and services of the Natural Resources Conservation Service and conservation districts are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or familial status.*

**Sediment and Erosion Control EXPO** - The District, in cooperation with the Kenton and Campbell Conservation Districts, Home Builders Association of Northern Kentucky – Land Development Council, and Sanitation District #1 held a **Sediment and Erosion Control EXPO** in September 2004 at Idlewild Park in Boone County. The EXPO attracted over 150 people who had the opportunity to visit exhibits sponsored by twenty vendors and service providers, and view product demonstrations for seeding, turf reinforcement mat installation, and other erosion control products.

**Conservation Field Days Grant** - The District, in cooperation with the Kenton and Campbell Conservation Districts, received a grant for a series of field days to address forestry practices, warm season grasses for forage, and the federal Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The grant was made available through the Kentucky Division of Conservation Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Fund.

The forestry field day was held in October 2004 at the Dinsmore Homestead in Boone County with over 50 people attending. The main topic was conservation planning for your forest resources. Featured topics included local forest types and biodiversity, shitake mushrooms as a non-timber forest product, managing your forest for wildlife, conservation planning and timber management strategies. A Farm Program Open House was held in January 2005 featuring programs available to help landowners apply conservation practices on their property. Two more field days are planned for 2005.

**Horse Management Grant** - The Agriculture Water Quality Committee identified **horse waste and pasture management** as an issue in the three counties. The committee received a grant through the Kentucky Soil and Water Quality Cost Share program to fund best management projects. Two projects were completed under the grant to install rotational grazing systems with the proper fencing and water systems, pasture improvement, native warm season grasses for forage, and composting bins for horse muck. A field day held in June 2004 attracted over 75 people to see the best management practices and learn more about better horse keeping practices. Past board member

Sherry Carran serves on the horse waste committee, along with staff members Mark Jacobs, Kristin Anderson Scott, and Mary Kathryn Dickerson.

**Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Program**– Twenty-five applications were funded by the state in 2004 for a total of \$279,711.42 to help county producers install Best Management Practices for improvement of water quality on their farms.

**Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Act** - A total of 679 water quality plan certifications have been received by the conservation district. **An Agriculture Water Quality Committee** formed by the Boone, Campbell, and Kenton County Conservation Districts meets regularly to help local producers comply with this law enacted in 1994. The committee includes representatives from over ten agencies and organizations involved in agriculture and water quality.

**Farmer Appreciation Dinner** - The district held their fifth Farmer Appreciation Dinner in October 2004, *Conservation Benefits Us All* with 138 present. The speaker for the event was The Honorable Bruce Ferguson, former Boone County Judge-Executive. Retired board member Leslie Stephens received an award for his service from January 1995 to December 2003. The program included a presentation from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Land of Life. Entertainment was provided by the Rabbit Hash String Band.

**Dead Livestock Disposal Program** - The District received a matching grant from the Kentucky Soil and Water Quality Cost Share program to assist county landowners with proper disposal of dead livestock. Since the program started in January 2000, 142 producers have benefited from the program. The grant also assists the county animal shelter with proper disposal of companion pet carcasses.

**Agricultural Districts** - There are 13 agricultural districts in Boone County, comprised of 7,534.41 acres of land owned by 84 families. This voluntary state program provides some protection for farmers who wish to keep their land in agricultural production.

**Technical Assistance** – Technical assistance is provided to Boone County through Ed Thompson, District Conservationist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, our federal partner, and Boone County Conservation District Staff Mark Jacobs and Kristin Anderson Scott. In 2004 – 2005, they provided assistance to over 700 Boone County landowners concerning conservation planning, rotational grazing systems, wildlife habitat improvement, forestry practices, animal waste control, nutrient management, storm water runoff, drainage, erosion and sediment control, and other conservation considerations.

**Farm Bill programs:**

**WHIP** (Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program) – 150.9 acres enrolled under five-year contracts with three landowners. Another 83.6 acres were enrolled for 2005 under five-year contracts with four landowners.

**EQIP** (Environmental Quality Incentives Program) – 250 acres enrolled under five-year contracts with five landowners.

**CSP** (Conservation Security Program) – One contract issued for 2005 in the Lower Kentucky River Watershed.

**Continuous CRP** (Conservation Reserve Program) – 29.6 acres enrolled under 15-year contract with one landowner.

**Water Quality** - Board members continue to develop their program to gather water quality data to improve water quality in the county. Board members Jimmy Walton, Ed Moore, Debra Waller Franks, and Mike Keller, along with staff Kristin Anderson Scott, Mark Jacobs and Mary Kathryn Dickerson participate in the Licking River Watershed Watch monitoring program. As of June 2005, they have adopted 14 sites around the county to monitor at least three times each year. The program also includes several community volunteers who are working with Conservation District board members and staff.

Staff Kristin Anderson Scott, Mark Jacobs and Mary Kathryn Dickerson attended the **Kentucky Watershed Roundtable** in Lexington which included sessions and a workshop on Community Planning and Floodplains.

**Other projects and assistance:**

- Board members Ed Moore and Jimmy Walton represent the Conservation District on the **County Agriculture Development Board**, which administers Phase I Tobacco Settlement Funds in the county.
- Bruce Ferguson represented the board at a regional meeting of the Natural Resources Conservation Service **Environmental Quality Incentives Program** work group to select local practices.
- The District board developed comments concerning the Goals and Objectives of the **Boone County Comprehensive Plan** and presented these to the Boone County Planning Commission Committee during a public hearing. The board also made recommendations for the county comprehensive plan that will enhance stewardship of the county's natural resources.
- District Coordinator Mary Kathryn Dickerson represents the board on the **No. Ky. Area Solid Waste Technical Advisory Committee**.

**Education and Outreach**

- **Workshops and Programs** – The District reached over 250 students this year through the Sanitation District #1 *Waterific* program.
- Staff Mark Jacobs and Kristin Anderson Scott manned a booth at the Northern Kentucky University **Earth Day** celebration, in cooperation with the Campbell and Kenton County Conservation Districts.
- The District supports the **NKU Environmental Education Alliance** and staff Mary Kathryn Dickerson is active with the Alliance. The Alliance reached over 100 teachers and other educators through a reception in February.
- The **Environmental Education in No. Ky. Resource Guide** was updated and is available through the district office.
- **Big Bone Lick State Park Discovery Days** – The exhibit this year featured district programs and the natural history of the area. Board members from the Boone, Campbell and Kenton Districts helped man the exhibit. Those from Boone County were: Bruce Ferguson, Sarah Drew Griffith, and Ed Moore, along with staff Mark Jacobs, Kristin Anderson Scott and Mary Kathryn Dickerson.

- Board members and staff manned the booth at the **Boone County 4-H and Utopia Fair**. The booth featured native warm season grasses and other pasture improvement methods.

**Education Grants** - The Boone County Conservation District has been awarding grants to county educational institutions since 1994. Grant applications are accepted from October through January each year. This year, Conner Middle School received \$1,000 for their “Field Productivity: Ecology & Economics” project. Julie Hansel, 8th grade science teacher, is in charge of the project. The project is a team experiment in raising a small crop of tomatoes and flower baskets to perform on a smaller scale what commercial farmers must do.

Miguel Carlin was awarded the **2005 Boone County Conservation District Robert W. Ellis Scholarship**. Miguel is a sophomore at the University Of Kentucky College Of Agriculture, majoring in Public Service and Leadership in Agriculture. He is a graduate of Larry A. Ryle High School, and is the son of Robert and Freda Carlin of Union.

**Writing and Art Contests** – *Forest Health – Prescription for our Future* was the topic for this school year’s Conservation Contests. The theme focused on Kentucky’s forest resources – their variety and importance, and ways that all citizens can help protect, restore and conserve them. This year there were 128 entries from three schools in the art contest and 158 entries from four schools in the writing contest. The District sponsors an awards banquet each year for contest winners, grant recipients, and other awards.

**Newsletters** - The quarterly newsletter, *Landscapes*, reaches 2397 Boone County households.

**Web Site** - The Conservation District web site is provided through the Boone County Fiscal Court at [www.boonecountky.org](http://www.boonecountky.org). Click on Regional Links.

**Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Conservation Council (OKI-RCC)** The annual meeting was held at Sanitation District #1 in March with about 80 people attending. Storm water regulations and

control were the featured topics. Board members Debra Waller Franks and Jimmy Walton attended, along with staff Sally Aaron, Kristin Anderson Scott, Mark Jacobs and Mary Kathryn Dickerson. Board members Debra Waller Franks and staff Sally Aaron, Kristin Anderson Scott, Mark Jacobs and Mary Kathryn Dickerson attended the conservation tour in September 2004 sponsored by the Campbell County Conservation District.

The **Ky. Association of Conservation District's (KACD)** annual conference was held in Lexington with board member Bruce Ferguson and staff Kristin Anderson Scott, Mark Jacobs, Sally Aaron, and Mary Kathryn Dickerson attending. Staff Mary Kathryn Dickerson was part of a panel presentation on education programs. Mark Jacobs, Kristin Anderson Scott, and Sally Aaron attended the KACD Area 5 meeting in Harrison County.

**Legislative Action** - Edward Moore serves as the district’s legislative liaison.

**Elections** – Debra Waller Franks, Jan Garbett, and Billy Rehkamp Jr. were elected to the board in November and began their four-year terms of office in January 2005. Retiring board members Bruce Ferguson, David Kuchle, and Bernie Kunkle chose not to seek re-election.

The Executive Committee of the Boone County Conservation District meets regularly with those of the Campbell and Kenton County Conservation Districts. The boards work together on conservation programs and employee policy.

**Board Supervisor Training** – A special training session was held in January for board supervisors, conducted by staff of the conservation districts and Kentucky Division of Conservation. Past board member Bruce Ferguson also addressed the group. Those attending were: Mike Keller, Debra Waller Franks, Jan Garbett, Jimmy Walton, Ed Moore, and Billy Rehkamp Jr.

**District Funding** - The District received a grant from the Ky. Division of Conservation that included funding for the Conservation Technician position. Other revenue is provided to the District through the Boone County Fiscal Court and the Kentucky Division of Conservation. A complete financial report is available at the District office.