



Boone, Campbell, and Kenton County Conservation Districts

Autumn 2003

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Grants available!

Put your land to work for wildlife!

If you are a landowner in Kenton County with five acres or less, you may be eligible to receive up to \$750 to implement a plan to improve your land for wildlife habitat. The Kenton County Conservation District Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Program is offered to landowners with limited land resources to enhance native biodiversity, improve wildlife habitat, and contribute to soil and water conservation. Projects eligible for funding include development of buffers along streams and ponds, establishing or improving native vegetation, improving woods, or developing a watering hole for wildlife.

The Kenton County Conservation District can provide some technical assistance and educational literature for your project. Applications will be ranked on a competitive countywide basis. Those projects determined by the Kenton County Conservation District Board of Supervisors to be of the highest conservation benefit will receive grants.

To participate in this program,

- ❖ the property must be in Kenton County;
- ❖ applicants must own no more than five acres;
- ❖ applicants must enroll at least one acre in the program;
- ❖ applicants must provide at least 25% of the cost of the project;
- ❖ projects will be expected to be maintained for 10 years; and,
- ❖ projects should be completed by June 2004.

Funds for this cost share grant program are available locally through the Kentucky Soil and Water Quality Cost Share Fund, administered through the Kentucky Division of Conservation. Application review started October 1, 2003. For an application, contact the Kenton County Conservation District, 6028 Camp Ernst Road, Burlington, KY 41005, 859-586-7903 or E-mail: mark.jacobs@ky.usda.gov

Area welcomes new forester

Gary Johnson, a native of Shepherdsville, Ky., has been appointed the new Service Forester for our area. Gary will serve the counties of Boone, Campbell, Kenton, Gallatin and Grant. He was graduated from the University of Kentucky School of Forestry and has been with the Kentucky Division of Forestry for 1-½ years.



Before joining the Division, Gary worked for a private company in New Mexico, conducting forest inventories in the Cibola National Forest. Gary also worked several summers in the national forests in South Carolina and Pennsylvania.

Gary has accepted the position that Ron Meyer held for a number of years. Ron has been appointed the Bluegrass District Forester and will be working in the district office in Frankfort. Ron, a native of Campbell County, has been with the Kentucky Division of Forestry for 16 years, and served in Northern Kentucky most of those years. Ron is replacing Jim Hurst who retired from the Division earlier this year.

We wish Ron the best in his new position and welcome Gary to our area. You may leave a message for Gary through the conservation district office or call the Bluegrass District office at 1-800-866-0876.

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Landscapes

Landscapes is a quarterly publication of the Boone, Campbell, and Kenton County Conservation Districts, Kentucky - members of the National Association of Conservation Districts and the Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts.

BOONE CO. CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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With Assistance From:

United States Department of Agriculture,
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Ed L. Thompson Jr., District Conservationist

Natural Resources & Environmental Protection
Cabinet, Kentucky Division of Conservation

Linda Hunter, Area 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, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or familial status.

Homefront

News from your Conservation District Office

Campbell Conservation grants helps Cold Spring put final phase of US 27 plan in place

Earlier this year, the City of Cold Spring Tree Commission was granted \$ 2,012.50 for completion of the final phase of the master tree plan for US 27. The City of Cold Spring and the tree commission are endeavoring to restore some of the uniqueness of Cold Spring, which has been lost due to the reconstruction of U. S. 27 and increased development in the area

This final phase will provide tree planting and landscaping in front of the Campbell County Public Library. Mark Rieckhoff and Roscoe Dorriere are in charge of the project. The plantings will consist of native species both to promote conservation of those species and education to the public about using indigenous species in their landscaping.

Katherine Ruehl, left, and Mark Rieckhoff accepted a grant for the Cold Spring Tree Commission during the Conservation District's awards dinner earlier this year. Sanford Record, right, Campbell County Conservation District Supervisor, presented the grant.



The Campbell County Conservation District has been giving matching grants for Urban Forestry and Community Beautification since 1993. Grant applications for 2004 will be available in November. Please call the office for more information.



"A land ethic...reflects the existence of an ecological conscience, and this in turn reflects a conviction of individual responsibility for the health of the land. Health is the capacity of the land for self-renewal. Conservation is our effort to understand and preserve this capacity."

Aldo Leopold in *A Sand County Almanac*

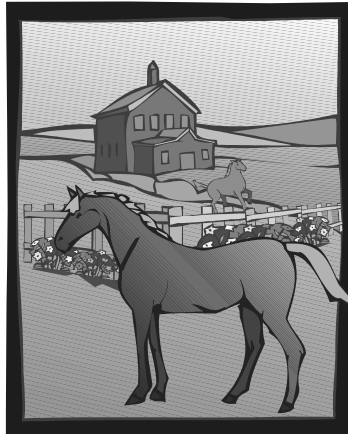
Horse Waste Management Cost Share Program

If you are a landowner who raises or boards horses in Boone, Campbell or Kenton counties, you may be eligible to receive financial assistance to improve natural resource management on your land. Cost Share grants are available to help landowners address **existing** resource problems on their land. Projects eligible for funding include:

- ✓ collection, storage, and disposal or use of horse muck;
- ✓ pasture rotation for vegetative cover improvement and management;
- ✓ riparian buffer development (area adjacent to a stream or pond);
- ✓ and, concentrated use area management.

Projects may be funded up to \$2,500 each, and applicants are expected to provide at least 25% of the cost of the project. Funds for this cost share program are made available locally through the Kentucky Soil and Water Quality Cost Share Fund, administered through the Kentucky Division of Conservation and your county Conservation District.

To participate in this program, the property must be in Boone, Campbell or Kenton counties. The applicant must have an existing resource management problem that is adversely affecting soil and/or water resources. Projects are expected to be maintained for 10 years and the



applicant must sign and carry out a performance maintenance agreement. Projects may begin October 2003 and should be completed by June 2004.

Applications will be ranked on a competitive countywide basis. It is anticipated that one project will be funded in each county, however, if no qualified applications or projects are submitted in a county, the committee reserves the right to fund one or more projects in the same county. Those projects determined by the

Boone, Campbell and Kenton County Agriculture Water Quality Horse Management Committee to be of the highest conservation benefit will receive grants. The Agriculture Water Quality Horse Management Committee is a partnership of the Boone, Campbell and Kenton County offices of the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service, Kentucky Farm Bureau, Solid Waste Management agencies, Farm Service Agency, Conservation Districts, and private landowners.

Applications must be postmarked or hand-delivered by Friday, October 10, 2003, to the Boone and Kenton County Conservation District, 6028 Camp Ernst Road, Burlington, KY 41005. **Call for availability of funds after that date.** For an application or information, contact the conservation districts at 859-586-7903.

Dead Livestock Removal Assistance Program Renewed

Boone, Campbell, and Kenton County farmers are eligible to receive up to 75% reimbursement of the costs of dead livestock removal from the farm through grants from the Ky. Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Program. You will be reimbursed by your Conservation District, by check, for up to 75% of the cost of the removal fee with rates established by the conservation district. *Reimbursement is based on the total haul bill, not on the individual number of animals removed.*

Proper disposal of dead livestock is important not only to herd health, but to human health. Disposing of dead animals properly can also help control coyote and other predator problems. Water quality concerns, such as those addressed in the Ky. Agriculture Water Quality Act, can be met by using approved disposal methods.

The program ends June 30, 2004, or when all funds from the Kentucky Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share program are expended, whichever occurs first. Check for availability after that date.

The Conservation District and/or haulers reserve the right to terminate the program if at any time local, state, or federal regulations are enacted that would prohibit the hauler from dispensing with the animal in the accustomed manner (i.e., burial, composting, rendering, incineration, etc.) or would adversely affect the day-to-day operation of the hauler.

For more information, contact the Campbell County Conservation District at 859-635-5666 or the Boone and Kenton County Conservation Districts at 859-586-7903.

Steps to writing an agriculture water quality plan

1. An Agriculture Water Quality (AWQ) Plan is a set of Best Management Practices (BMPs) that pertain to the agriculture, forestry, farmstead or stream activity on the property. Past, present and future practices that maintain or improve water quality, both surface or ground water flow from the property, should be considered.
 2. An individual water quality plan is based on the Kentucky statewide AWQ Plan, which contains 58 BMPs. Individuals select BMPs for their AWQ Plan from this plan, so you will need a list of these BMPs to prepare your Plan.
 3. A typical land user *already applies* many BMPs on their farm or forest property. Your AWQ Plan should identify these current management practices and any additional ones that may be appropriate. An AWQ Plan can also include practices related to future activities, such as a potential timber harvest or new crop or livestock enterprise.
 4. Each BMP has four main parts -Title, Definition, Regulatory Requirements, and AWQ Act Minimum Requirement. You will list appropriate BMPs on your AWQ Plan by Title (i.e. Livestock 4, Farmstead 2, etc.). The BMP Title thus “references” the Kentucky AWQ Plan section that describes the agriculture, forestry, farmstead or stream management practices important to their situation.
 5. Once listed, each BMPs is “personalized” by noting where on the property and when (month, season, etc.) they apply, along with any special considerations such as past, present or future conditions or actions associated with the BMP. Some individuals attach optional photos, maps or drawings to their Plan for further clarification.
 6. An AWQ Plan is complete after all applicable BMPs, personal notes, and property and owner/user information are recorded. The property location(s), land owner(s), land manager or user(s) if separate from owner, USDA Farm ID # if property has one, should be recorded. Remember to date the Plan.
 7. There is no “required format” for recording BMPs and associated property information. An AWQ Plan Sheet is available and is used by most people statewide to record and track progress on their Plan. Some prefer a different format or use a computer spreadsheet for listing and personalizing their BMPs.
 8. KEEP the PLAN. AWQ Plans serve two purposes. First and foremost they promote and guide agriculture or forest management practices that sustain land and water resources and limit off-site surface and ground water contamination. And second, Kentucky law requires individuals to have their Plan available for regulatory review by the Ky. Division of Water, upon request.
 9. An AWQ Self Certification form is a signed statement that you have completed and will implement an AWQ Plan. The Self Certification form should be filed with the Conservation District in the county where the property is located. Be sure to keep a copy of your plan in a safe place where you can locate it readily.
 10. Individuals should periodically review their Plan for guidance, needed modifications and to document completed measures. Minor or major changes to the Plan should be made as often as needed.
 11. Landowners are the ultimate responsible party. Tenants or farm managers are often more involved with day-to-day property activities and share in the legal responsibility for AWQ Act compliance. Land users are encouraged to take the lead in developing and implementing AWQ Plans for properties with which they are involved, and non-active land owners should make all reasonable efforts to understand and support water quality compliance.
 12. Multiple properties can be included on one AWQ Plan. If properties are located in different counties, separate Self Certifications forms should be filed with each county.
 13. Although filing an AWQ Plan with “the government” is not required, there are competitive farm cost-share programs that allocate extra points to program applicants who file their Plan with the local Conservation District.
 14. Implementing the AWQ Plan is the most important challenge, and legal requirement, of the AWQ Act. In other words, the Plan can be meaningless - environmentally and legally - if not put into practice. Compliance deadline was October 23, 2001.
- Assistance is available, including personal visit or phone consultation, to develop and/or implement your AWQ Plan. Please contact your Conservation District Office if you have any questions.

By Mark Leopold
Campbell County Agriculture Water Quality Specialist

Go Native for Wildlife and Livestock

We are blessed in Kentucky with an amazing array of natural resources; an abundance of wildlife, fertile soils, streams and rivers, diverse forests, wetlands and even grasslands. In fact, it was these resources that attracted the first human inhabitants to this area. The activities of the Native Americans and eventually Europeans dramatically influenced the vegetation and forever altered the landscape of Kentucky. Although only scattered remnants of Kentucky's original landscape remains, we are only now starting to realize the potential benefits of these natural treasures.

Believe it or not, a significant portion of Kentucky before European settlement consisted of prairie and savannah or as it is sometimes called barren. These were ecosystems dominated by grasses. In heavily forested areas, grasses or early succession habitat also dominated openings created by natural disturbance. These diverse grasslands and open forest habitats supported great numbers of elk, bison, white-tailed deer and many other animals. Unfortunately, through intensive agricultural practices and other activities associated with European settlement, these diverse and productive grasslands and forestlands have been replaced by non-native species. Tall fescue, an import from Europe now dominates Kentucky's grasslands. In recent years, we have learned that fescue provides poor wildlife habitat and is not the best choice for livestock forage. These dense stands of fescue provide little food and cover for wildlife and the presence of a fungus, or endophyte, gives fescue toxic properties detrimental to wildlife and livestock production.

Livestock

One goal of a well-run and profitable livestock operation is to provide adequate grazing land with nutritious forage available to animals throughout the year. The producer should have in place or should consider establishing an efficient rotational grazing system that achieves maximum utilization from forage resources while remaining sustainable. One part of that system in Kentucky should include native warm season grasses (NWSG) for summer forage. The advantage to the livestock producer is fresh, nutritious forage throughout the summer when a lag in cool season forage exists. As summer temperatures climb, the cool season grasses such as orchard grass, fescue and timothy go dormant, providing little summer nutrition.

NWSG, depending on the species, begins to mature and ripen from June into September until the cool season forage is available again. This can provide excellent quality forage especially in droughty times when forage is needed most. The producer can lengthen the grazing season, reduce supplemental feeding and increase profits. NWSG can also be cut for hay yielding as much as 5 tons per acre with good nutritional results.

Initial expense and length of time to establish NWSG is a consideration for the landowner or livestock producer.

Seed can be expensive and will take 18 months to establish a stand. The positive side is that with good site preparation and maintenance a stand of NWSG can last indefinitely making it much more cost effective over time. Fortunately, several federal and state programs

recognize the value of native grasses to wildlife and livestock grazing and can provide technical and possibly financial assistance in establishment and maintenance.

Warm season grasses can also be cut for hay yielding as much as 5 tons per acre with good nutritional results.

Wildlife

Recently wildlife professionals and livestock producers have come to realize the benefits of reestablishing NWSG, which are extremely beneficial to many native animal species. These are the grass species that evolved in this area for thousands of years. They are very hardy in this climate and can adapt to a wide range of soil types and conditions. Numerous flowering plants, insects, birds and animals evolved with these grasses and made up a biologically diverse community.

As the name suggests, these NWSG thrive in the heat of summer and grow in thick hardy clumps providing animals travel lanes and cover from weather and predators. These species develop massive root systems that make them drought resistant and excellent for building, holding and protecting valuable soil. The flowering, seed-producing plants such as the sunflowers, coneflowers and countless others provide valuable nutrition to many species of insects, birds and mammals.

When the winter snows arrive these tall bunch grasses provide numerous pockets that act as shelter for a variety of animals.

(Continued on page 6)

Campbell County Conservation District awards scholarships

Jessica R. Gehner and Lauren Stephanie Runyan have been awarded the 2003 Campbell County Conservation District Scholarships.

Lauren is a senior at Highlands High School in Ft. Thomas. Lauren is the daughter of Cindy and Mark Runyan of Ft. Thomas. At school, she is active on the track and field and cross-country teams, science club, and National Honor Society. She also volunteers with the Carmel Manor Nursing Home and Kids and Cribbs Day Care. Lauren has been accepted to coastal Carolina University in Conway, South Carolina and will major in Marine Science with a focus in biology.



Lauren said in her essay “there has to be a better solution to disasters in our environment such as oil spills. After attaining a further knowledge of marine science through my education at coastal Carolina, I intend on being an important influence on issues relating to creating, ensuring and preserving a better environment for both marine wildlife and people alike.”

Jessica is a graduate of Campbell County High School where she was active in sports and was on the Academic team. She was on the honor roll all four years of her high school career. Jessica is the daughter of Joan and Doug Gehner of California.

As time allows, Jessica works on their family farm and in the family business, “Mr. Cowpie’s Party Animals.” They take a petting zoo, pony rides and musical entertainment to children’s birthday parties, festivals, and the Campbell County Libraries and teach people about the different farm animals and pets and how to care for them.



Jessica is attending Northern Kentucky University this fall to study Biology. She sees many possibilities in the field of biology and knows she wants to be involved in biological research and, in her words, “work with the things most dear to me, our natural world...My dream is to put something back into a world that has given me so much.”

Warm Season Grasses

(Continued from page 5)

Tall fescue is a cool season grass, originating from Europe that grows in low dense clumps forming thick mats. It tends to be a monoculture lacking any diversity. Small animals and birds have difficulty moving through fescue and trouble finding a variety of nutritious foods needed to sustain them throughout the year. They grow actively in the spring and fall but tend to go dormant in the heat of summer.

Native plant species such as the grasses and forbs (herbaceous plant other than grass) cannot compete with this dense mat of fescue once it has become established.

In winter, ice and snow flatten fescue fields and provide little or no cover. In recent years, most of us have noticed a decline in rabbit and quail populations. This population decrease is due to the loss of habitat and the dominance of the introduced tall fescue leading to a general lack of food and cover.



Landowners interested in wildlife, be it for hunting, viewing or just an appreciation for natural landscapes should consider establishing NWSG and a variety of native forbs. These species will thrive in small backyard plots or large acreages. If properly established, NWSG and forbs will thrive indefinitely with little maintenance. Numerous wildlife species will be attracted to and thrive in these native grassland habitats greatly improving native biodiversity.

Programs through the Conservation District office are focused on natural resource conservation. To find out more about the establishment of NWSG or other conservation practices for wildlife and/or livestock production please call or visit your Conservation District office.

*Mark Jacobs,
Boone & Kenton County Conservation District Technician*

Partners in Conservation

Pond Construction and Water System Development Field Day - Over 200 people attended this field day in June at the farm of Greg and Millie Rawe in Campbell County. Co-hosted by the Boone, Campbell and Kenton County Conservation Districts, the field day was offered in response to the often overwhelming number of pond-related calls and requests for service received by our offices. The field day included segments on construction, permits, site selection and design, and maintenance.

Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Act - 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. Producers continue to file water quality plan certifications. The following plan certifications have been received: **Boone County** = 688; **Campbell County** = 520; **Kenton County** = 431.

Through the water quality planning process, the committee identified horse waste management as an issue in the three counties. The committee applied for a grant through the Kentucky Soil and Water Quality Cost Share program to fund one best management project in each county. The committee hosted a seminar in Feb. with 96 people attending.

Ky. Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Fund – Producers received assistance through the Ky. Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Fund to help them install Best Management Practices to meet requirements of the Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Act. Those practices included heavy use areas and rotational grazing implementation. **Boone County** = \$17,740.66; **Campbell County** = \$31,824.00; **Kenton County** = There were no applications funded during this fiscal year.

Agricultural Districts – Boone County = There are 13 agricultural districts, comprised of 7,000 acres of land owned by 97 families. **Campbell County** = There are 11 agricultural districts with a total of 9,062 acres and 168 landowners. One addition was made to an agricultural district this year. The board is pursuing solutions to issues regarding the consequences for agricultural districts located in areas considering incorporation. **Kenton County** = There are five (5) agricultural districts with a total of 3,116 acres and 40 landowners.

Technical Assistance - Ed Thompson, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) District Conservationist, provided assistance to landowners in Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties regarding storm water runoff, drainage, erosion and sediment control, seeding, wildlife habitat, forestry practices, animal waste control, nutrient management and other conservation considerations. Those served include: **Boone County** = 820; **Campbell County** = 500; **Kenton County** = 475.

Conservation District Technical Staff Added - Mark Jacobs was hired as Conservation Technician for the Boone and Kenton County Conservation Districts in January. Mark's main duties are to assist the NRCS staff with customer service on conservation programs and administer district programs and grants for conservation practices, including the Agriculture Water Quality Act.

Dead Livestock Disposal Program - The Districts received a matching grant from the Kentucky Department of Agriculture to assist county landowners with proper disposal of dead livestock. The county animal shelters were allowed to participate in the program this year, a new requirement of the program as determined by the state legislature.

Boone County = Since the program started in January 2000, 64 producers have benefited from the program. **Campbell County** = This fiscal year, 39 producers have benefited from the program. **Kenton County** = Since the program started in January 2001, 33 producers have benefited from the program.

Farm Refuse Grant - A \$7,500 grant through the Kentucky Soil and Water Quality Cost Share Fund enabled two Boone County farmers and three Kenton County farmers to receive assistance to clean up a dump on their farm. This program was offered to help farmers comply with the Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Act. Landowners provided at least 20% of the cost of cleaning up the dumps, which included restoring the land after clean up.

USDA NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) – Board member Bruce Ferguson from Boone County, Alan Ahrman and Gene Dobbs from Campbell County, and Marc Hult and Sherry Carran from Kenton County, represented the Districts on a regional work group to select local practices for this program.

Grants and Partnerships -

- The Districts are partners in a grant application for 319 funds for non-point source pollution abatement. The grant would establish a project coordinator within Boone, Campbell and Kenton County Conservation Districts to carry out initiatives to investigate water pollution from sewage. Partners include the No. Kentucky District Health Department, No. Kentucky Area Planning, No. Kentucky Area Development District, Banklick Watershed Council, Licking River Watershed Watch and Sanitation District #1.
- The Districts are partners in Sanitation District #1's Urban Forestry Grant, providing technical assistance and support.

Education and Outreach -

- The Districts were one of the sponsors for the **Reading the River** project conducted by Northern Kentucky University and Morehead State University. Nineteen teachers made a six-day journey in June from the headwaters of the Licking River in Magoffin County to its confluence with the Ohio River. District Coordinator Mary Kathryn Dickerson served as an instructor for segments of the project.
- The **Environmental Education in No. Ky. Resource Guide** was updated and is available through the districts.
- The district supports the **NKU Environmental Education Alliance**. District Coordinator Mary Kathryn Dickerson and Campbell County board member Helen Fehr are active with the Alliance, which reached over 120 educators through a reception in February, and a field trip to Griffin Industries and Rumpke landfill in October.

Awards – Each districts held an Awards Banquet in March to recognize local winners in the statewide Conservation Writing and Art Contests. Education grant recipients, scholarship winners and other individuals are also honored at the banquets. The theme this year was *Kentucky's Soil...it touches all of us!*

In **Boone County** there were 175 entries in the art contest from five schools and 127 entries in the writing contest from three schools. In **Campbell County**, there were 206 entries from seven schools in the art contest and 297 entries in the writing contest from five schools. Susan Rath, Lincoln Elementary School received the District's teacher incentive award. In **Kenton County**, there were 439 entries from eight schools in the art contest, and 602 entries from eight schools in the writing contest.

The districts reached over 3,700 individuals through a variety of **programs, workshops, and classes**. The Districts co-sponsored two soils workshops for teachers and other educators in Sept. 2002. They also participated in the Sanitation District #1's *Waterific* program, Boone Co. Extension Service Environmental Field Day for fourth graders at Camp Ernst and the overnight camp for fifth graders at North Central 4-H Camp; Earth Day at Goodridge Elementary School; Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service Day Camp; Highland Cemetery water and forest study with Beechwood High School; Little Red School in Taylor Mill, *What's for Breakfast* program; and other individual classroom programs.

Newsletters - The quarterly newsletter, *Landscapes*, reaches over 2161 Boone County households, 2188 in Campbell County, and 1256 in Kenton County. *Nature's Course*, a semi-annual conservation education newsletter was distributed to over 750 teachers and administrators in the three counties.

Web Sites

- ✓ The Boone County Conservation District web site is provided through the Boone County Fiscal Court at www.boonecountyky.org click on Regional Links.
- ✓ Board member Larry Varney maintains a web site for the Campbell County Conservation District, at <http://home.fuse.net/campbellcd>.
- ✓ The Kenton County Conservation District web site is provided through the Kenton County Fiscal Court at www.kentoncounty.org click on County Services.
- **County Fairs** – Board members and staff manned booths at

their county fairs,

- ✓ The theme for the district's booth at the **Boone County 4-H and Utopia Fair** was *Backyard Habitat*, and featured winners of the **Backyard Habitat Contest**.
- ✓ The Campbell County booth at the **Alexandria Fair & Horse Show** featured the topic, *How Environmentally Friendly Are You?*
- ✓ The **Kenton County District's booth** featured the theme *Conservation Begins at Home*.

Legislative Action - Edward Moore serves as the **Boone County District's** legislative liaison. In **Kenton County**, the board continues to work with the Kenton County Fiscal Court and their state Senators and Representatives. **Campbell County District's** legislative liaison Helen Fehr represented the board in expressing local conservation and budgeting concerns to the county Fiscal Court and Ky. State Representatives and Senators. Campbell County board members attended a Legislative Breakfast in Dec. sponsored by the Campbell Co. Cattle Association, Campbell Co. Farm Bureau, and the Campbell Co. Conservation District.

Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Conservation Council (OKI-RCC) - Kenton County board member Sherry Carran serves as the Chair of this regional council for Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Campbell County board chair Alan Ahrman assisted with planning the annual meeting held in Campbell County in March.

Boone County District Hosts OKI-RCC Conservation Tour

- The Boone County Conservation District hosted 35 guests on a conservation tour of the county in Sept. The group visited Central Park Arboretum, the Bruce and Stuart Ferguson farm, Big Bone Lick State Park, and Split Rock Conservation Park. Board members and staff assisting with the tour were: Bruce Ferguson, Jim Walton, Sarah Drew, Ed Moore, Mike Keller, Sally Aaron, and Mary Kathryn Dickerson.

Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts (KACD) –

The KACD state convention was held in Owensboro. with each district represented. Campbell County board members Helen Fehr and Ken McCormick gave a presentation on the district's role in administering Phase I tobacco settlement funds for forage practices.

Board Elections -

- ✓ Campbell County - The 2002 election resulted in incumbents Kenneth McCormick and Sanford Record being re-elected to the board. Dennis Walter was also elected. Barry Dalton chose not to seek re-election.
- ✓ Boone County - The 2002 election for the conservation district board resulted in incumbents Edward D. Moore and Mike Keller retaining their positions. Sarah Drew was also elected. Les Stephens chose not to seek re-election to the board.
- ✓ Kenton County - The 2002 election resulted in incumbents Michele Kline and John "Jack" Heist being re-elected to their positions. Marc Hult was elected to the board. Richard Lohre chose not to run for re-election.

The Executive Committees of the Boone, Campbell and

Kenton County Conservation Districts meet regularly to work on joint conservation programs and employee policy.

Board members and staff attended a Conservation District supervisor training session in January, planned by the Boone, Campbell and Kenton County Conservation Districts. The session is an orientation for new board members and a refresher for current board members.

Boone County Conservation District
6028 Camp Ernst Road *Burlington, KY 41005
859-586-7903 * FAX: 859-586-7683
www.boonecountyky.org (Go to Regional Links)

Board meets the third Monday of each month at the district office, 7:00 p.m.

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)

Board: Edward D. Moore, Chairman; Mike Keller, Vice Chairman; Sarah Drew, Secretary/Treasurer; Bruce Ferguson, David Kuchle, Bernard Kunkel, James B. Walton.

Land Use Committee: David Kuchle, Bernard Kunkel, and Bruce Ferguson.

Education Committee: Edward D. Moore, Mike Keller, James B. Walton, and Sarah Drew.

District Staff: Sally Aaron, Administrative Secretary.; Mark Jacobs, Conservation Technician; and, Mary Kathryn Dickerson, District Coordinator

Natural Resources Conservation Service: Ed Thompson, District Conservationist

Ky. Division of Conservation: Linda Hunter, Field Representative

Water Quality - Board members continue to develop their new program to gather water quality data and conduct needed testing to better coordinate programs to improve water quality in the county. Four board members and two staff members participated in the Licking River Watershed Watch monitoring training program. As of June 2003, they have adopted 16 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.

Student Assists With Water Quality Program - Brian King, a senior at Thomas More College, conducted a service-learning project for the Districts and was assigned to a water quality project. He gathered information about land use, water quality data, selected monitoring points and conducted site surveys.

Farmer Appreciation Dinner - The district held the third Farmer Appreciation Dinner in October 2002, *Moo-ving to the Future*, with 160 present. The speaker for the event was Stephen Coleman, Director of the Kentucky Division of Conservation. Gibson Dairy Farm near Walton, owned and operated by Bill and Sue Gibson and their son Eddie Gibson

and was selected as the **Boone County Conservation District Cooperators of the Year**. The Gibsons run one of the few dairy operations left in Boone County. They were chosen for the award for their pro-active approach to conservation, protection of natural resources, and dedication to promoting stewardship of the land.

Other projects and assistance:

- Board members Ed Moore and Jimmy Walton represent the Conservation District on the County Agriculture Development Board, which is responsible for administering county Phase I Tobacco Settlement Funds.
- Staff provided reviews for a number of highway and other transportation projects, furnishing soils, prime farmland and watershed information.
- District Coordinator Mary Kathryn Dickerson represents the board on the No. Ky. Area Solid Waste Technical Advisory Committee.

Education Grants - The District funded six projects.

- **Gray Middle School** – Courtyard Study Area was awarded \$600 to improve a courtyard for outdoor studies.
- **Florence Elem. School** – Courtyard Committee, coordinated by teacher Linda Sorrell, will establish a courtyard science habitat area.
- **Walton-Verona Elementary School** – Outdoor Classroom project, led by Jim Dykes to establish an outdoor classroom in a courtyard of the newly renovated school.
- *AM Yealey – Nature Trail and Outdoor Classroom will be repaired by Cub Scout Pack 890 with this \$300 grant.*
- *Mary Queen of Heaven – The Alphabet Goes Outdoors is a continuation of a program started in 1996 and this \$500 grant will help students plant herbs beginning with the letters of the alphabet and establish vegetation in eroding areas around the building.*
- **Split Rock Conservation Park** – a \$600 grant will help purchase supplies for a new program, Geology, Soil and Water of Split Rock.

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.



Boone County Conservation District board member Jimmy Walton at his water monitoring site on Garrison Creek.

Kenton County Conservation District
6028 Camp Ernst Road
Burlington, KY 41005
859-586-7903 * FAX 859-586-7683
www.kentoncounty.org
Go to County Services

Board meets the second Tues. of each month at the district office, 7:00 p.m.

Mission

The Kenton County Conservation District will encourage the protection and management of our county's natural resources, emphasizing the importance of our watersheds, natural environment and agricultural lands. In accordance with state statute, we will actively promote sound land use policies and practices through education and community involvement. (*Revised March 2002*)

District Board of Supervisors: Lorna P. Harrell, Chair; John "Jack" Heist, Vice Chair; Sherry Carran, Secretary – Treasurer; Margaret "Peggy" Kelly; Michele Kline; Marc Hult; Thomas J. Stiens

District Staff: Sally Aaron, Administrative Secretary; Mark Jacobs, Conservation Technician; and, Mary Kathryn Dickerson, District Coordinator

Land Use Committee: Sherry Carran, Marc Hult, Jack Heist, Peggy Kelly
Agriculture Water Quality Contact: Sherry Carran.

Education Committee: Thomas Stiens, Michele Kline, Lorna Harrell
Natural Resources Conservation Service: Ed Thompson, District Conservationist

Kentucky Division of Conservation: Linda Hunter, Field Representative

Farmland Protection Initiative - The Kenton County Conservation District was asked by Judge Executive Murgatroyd to convene this working group to discuss farmland preservation in Kenton County. The work group met throughout the year and submitted a grant proposal to the Kentucky Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE) Corporation to explore farmland preservation options for Kenton County. Group representatives include the Kenton County Conservancy, No. Ky. Area Planning and Zoning, Kenton County Cooperative Extension Service, Kenton County Farmer's Market, and Kenton County Parks Department.

Projects and Partners

- Sherry Carran represents the Kenton Co. Conservation District on the Sanitation District Task Force on Storm Water.
- The District is a partner with Northern Kentucky Area Planning and the City of Fort Wright in a grant project that deals with landscaping for managing storm water quality and quantity, and green Best Management Practices. Peggy Kelly and Sherry Carran are advisors for the project.
- District supervisors Lorna Harrell and Sherry Carran represented the District at the Doe Run Lake Clean-up Day and assisted with a district information booth and the trash clean up.
- Michele Kline and Sherry Carran continue to serve on the Kenton County Parks and Recreation Commission.
- Peggy Kelly is a member of the Kenton County Conservancy Board. Peggy and Sherry Carran have been

attending meetings and are on the Planning Committee.

- Marc Hult and Sherry Carran will continue their efforts with the Smart Growth Coalition for Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky as a way to promote protection of our natural resources.
- Support and assist the Northern Kentucky Urban and Urban Community Forestry Council. Sherry Carran serves on this Council
- Support and assist the effort to establish a Northern Kentucky Regional Farmers' Market. Peggy Kelly and Sherry Carran serve on the Northern Kentucky Regional Farmers' Market Committee.
- Board members Lorna Harrell and Sherry Carran serve on the Kenton County Transportation Task Force that will help guide transportation design in Kenton County for the next decade.
- Board members Sherry Carran and Marc Hult are working with the newly formed Banklick Creek Watershed Council. The group will identify and work to solve water problems in the watershed.

Water Quality Monitoring - The district has been collecting water quality data on Doe Run Lake since 1991, and Highland Cemetery since 1993. Testing continues at each site.

Conservationist of the Year Award - Each year the Conservation District chooses a Conservationist of the Year. The recipient this year asked to remain anonymous and requested that, in place of the award the conservationist would normally receive, a donation be made to a teacher for educational materials and supplies. Ms. Rita Wessling of St. Augustine School was chosen for this award.

Education Grants - The District funded one grant proposal this year. Arnett Elementary School was awarded \$352.26 for their Garden Replenishment Project. The gardens suffered from last year's drought and plants will be replaced. Bird feeders and mulch will be added to the gardens.

Community Education - The Conservation District sponsored a hike through Ft. Wright's Nature Center in September through the Kenton Co. Board of Education Community Education Program. Board member Peggy Kelly led this hike for about 20 participants.

Financial Report - The District received a direct aid grant from the Kentucky Division of Conservation to help fund a part-time Conservation Technician position. Other revenue is provided to the district through the Kenton County Fiscal Court. A complete financial report is available at the conservation district office.

Campbell County Conservation District
22 E. Main Street, Suite 104 * Alexandria, KY 41001-1214
859-635-9587 or 859-635-5666
FAX: 859-635-0496

Office hours: Mon., Wed., Fri., 8 a.m. - Noon
E-mail: campbellcd@fuse.net Web Site: <http://home.fuse.net/campbellcd>

Mission

The mission of the Campbell County Conservation District, in accordance with state statute, is to promote the best use of the land, water, and other natural resources within the district by encouraging the use of Best Management Practices. To further these efforts, the district provides assistance, information, and education throughout the county.

District Board Supervisors: Alan Ahrman, Chairman; Sanford Record, Vice Chairman; Helen Fehr, Sec./Treas.; Ken McCormick, Gene Dobbs, Larry Varney, and Dennis Walter.

District Staff: Linda Grizzell, Admin. Sec.; Mary Kathryn Dickerson, District Coordinator; Mark Leopold, Agriculture Water Quality Specialist.

Land Use Committee: Sanford Record, Gene Dobbs, and Dennis Walter.

Advisory Board: Don Sorrell, David Koester, and DJ. Scully - Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service, Mark Leopold, and Ed Thompson.

Education Committee: Alan Ahrman, Helen Fehr, Ken McCormick and Larry Varney. **Advisory Board:** Wendy Faulkner, Ky. Dept. of Fish and Wildlife Resources; DJ. Scully, Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service; and, Dave Bezanson, Bishop Brossart High School.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service:
Ed Thompson, District Conservationist

Ky. Division of Conservation: Linda Hunter, Field Representative

Forage Improvement - The conservation district administers the county fund to distribute forage improvement cost share money from the Phase I tobacco settlement. This is a program of the County Agriculture Development Board and board member Kenneth McCormick serves as the district's representative to this board, and board member Gene Dobbs is the fund administrator.

Projects and Partners

The District supported many individuals, organizations, agencies, and projects throughout the year, including:

- Helen Fehr attended an OKI public forum on area growth "Where do We Grow From Here?" in September.
- Dennis Walter attended a meeting in southern Campbell County sponsored by the Smart Growth Coalition.
- Ken McCormick, Larry Varney, Helen Fehr and Mark Leopold represented the district at an Agriculture Field Day sponsored by the Campbell Co. Cooperative Extension Service at the farm of Alan Seiter. NRCS District Conservationist Ed Thompson spoke about the Farm Bill.
- Sanford Record presented Soil Stewardship material to St. Joseph – Camp Springs Parish where over 250 families used the material in their Sunday School programs.
- Dennis Walter represented the district at the Campbell County Future Farmers of America banquet in May.
- Alan Ahrman worked with DJ. Scully of the Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service and Campbell County Solid Waste Coordinator Reno Deaton to investigate a used oil collection program for farmers.
- Helen Fehr represented the board to the Campbell County

Planning and Zoning Commission regarding a subdivision development. She presented a letter, prepared by NRCS District Conservationist Ed Thompson, outlining district and NRCS concerns about storm water control and other resource issues.

- Dennis Walter is a board member of the Campbell County Conservancy. District Coordinator Mary Kathryn Dickerson serves as an advisor to the Conservancy.

Urban Forestry Grants - The Campbell County Conservation District has been giving matching grants for Urban Forestry and Community Beautification since 1993. One grant was funded this year. **The City of Cold Spring Tree Commission** received \$2,012.50 for completion of the final phase of the master tree plan for US 27. This final phase will provide tree planting and landscaping in front of the Campbell County Public Library. The District Land Use Committee revised the grant guidelines and the name of the program was changed better reflect the intent of the grant.

Education Grants - The District awards grants for conservation education projects through a process formalized in 1993. Two grants were awarded this year.

- ✓ **St. Thomas School, Ft. Thomas - "Education Trail"** - This grant for \$300 will help improve an existing half-mile trail that serves about 282 students, pre-school through grade eight. The trail improvement project addresses safety, access, and enhanced signage.
- ✓ **St. Therese School, Southgate - "Earth Tubs"** This project, funded for \$917.23 will equip teachers in K-4 with lessons, activities, and equipment to teach about soils, trees and plants, water, animals, energy, and conservation.

Jessica R. Gehner and **Stephanie L. Runyan** each received a \$500 scholarship from the District. **Jessica**, a graduate of Campbell County High School, is attending Northern Kentucky University to study Biology. **Stephanie**, a graduate of Highlands High School in Ft. Thomas, is a student at the Coastal Carolina University in Conway, South Carolina majoring in Marine Science. Supervisor Helen Fehr attended the Highlands High School Awards Program to make this scholarship presentation.

The Campbell County Conservation District supports the Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts Auxiliary Scholarship program through a donation of money and items for the annual auction.

Don Girton, Alexandria, was the recipient of this year's **Cooperator of the Year Award**. Mr. Girton and his wife Mary Martha raise Christmas trees on their Tug Fork Tree Farm. Mr. Girton is active in a number of organizations locally and across the state to promote sound land use management.

District Funding - The District received two Direct Aid grants from the Ky. Division of Conservation that included funding for the Agriculture Water Quality Specialist position, and to assist with office rent and communications equipment. Other revenue is provided to the district through a county tax on real property and funding from the Kentucky Division of Conservation. A complete financial report is available at the district office.

Conservation Calendar

The **Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Society** offers three **college scholarships**. For information, contact Tom Karsner at 502-695-5203, ext. 3. Applications are due **Nov. 25, 2003**.

"Kentucky's Wildlife – Rediscovering its Value" is the topic for this year's Conservation Writing and Art Contests. The theme is fish & wildlife habitat, focusing on the Lewis & Clark expedition. Materials, including a student brochure with teaching guide, will be available in early September. Student entries are due **Dec. 1, 2003**. Prizes are awarded on county, area, and state levels. For more information about the contests, visit, www.courier-journal.com/education/wildlife2003

Sediment and Erosion Control workshops: Help reduce erosion and sediment losses from construction sites and meet part of the regulatory requirements for the Phase II Stormwater Permit Program. The workshops are targeted at excavation contractors, developers, equipment operators, public works employees, staff involved in the stormwater program, code enforcement officers, and anyone else involved in construction projects that include earthwork or excavation. Private citizens are also invited to attend. The workshops are sponsored in part by the Kentucky Division of Water and Kentucky Division of Conservation and local conservation districts. Training will be conducted by staff from Tetra-Tech.

- ✓ **Wed., Dec. 17, 2003, 8:15 a.m. – noon.**
Florence Government Center. For information, contact Robert Hall at 859-647-4624.
- ✓ **Wed., Feb. 25, 2004, 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**
Boone County Extension Center (tentative location). For information, contact the conservation district at 859-586-7903. \$10 fee will cover lunch, breaks and all materials.

Source Water Protection: Best management practices and other measures for protecting

drinking water supplies. Tues., Jan. 13, 2004, 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., Boone County Extension Center (tentative location). Geared for a broad audience – technical, state and local government, academia, and local citizen groups. Training conducted by staff from the Environmental Protection Agency. Sponsored locally by the conservation districts. For information, call 859-586-7903. \$10 fee will cover lunch, breaks and all materials.

Education Grants - The conservation districts offer technical assistance as well as financial help. Grants are available to assist with developing conservation education programs including water quality testing, and developing and enhancing outdoor study areas. A variety of projects and materials are eligible for funding. Applications for the next funding cycle will be accepted through **Jan. 23, 2004**.

College Scholarships: The Boone & Campbell County Conservation Districts offer scholarships for county students who plan to or are currently enrolled in these fields of study: natural resource conservation, forestry, soil science, ecology, wildlife science or agriculture. Applications are due **Jan. 23, 2004**. The Ky. Association of Conservation Districts offers a statewide scholarship program with applications due to the district offices by **March 1, 2004**.

Natural Resource Management in the Urban Environment is the special issue for the *2004 Envirothon*. The other topics are soils, forestry, water, and wildlife. Sponsored nationally by Cannon, this competitive, problem-solving, natural resources experience is for students in grades 9 - 12. Teams of five students are formed in a school. State winners progress to national competition. Prizes, including the national prize of \$25,000 in scholarships, are awarded at all levels of competition. School teams must be registered with their conservation district by **Jan. 31, 2004**. For specific information on the *Envirothon*, visit www.envirothon.org.