



Boone, Campbell, and Kenton County Conservation Districts

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Bruce Ferguson of Union is Boone Cooperator of the Year

Bruce Ferguson of Glencairn Farm in Union, Kentucky, has been named the 2005 Boone County Conservation District Cooperator of the Year. The award is part of a state and nation-wide program sponsored by the Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts and Tennessee Valley Authority. The program seeks to recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to the conservation of our natural resources. Bruce was nominated for the award by conservation district staff and supervisors, many of whom have had the pleasure of serving with him on the District board in the past.

Bruce's roots run deep in the soil – and history - of Boone County. The farm was established in the 1820's when his ancestors moved here from Virginia. The original family farm expanded to about 700 acres but after several generations, there is only about 275 acres of the original farm remaining. Bruce hopes to keep these remaining acres that he now farms in the family and in agricultural production for the future. The farm was originally called Elm Tree place, but after a huge elm tree at the homestead succumbed to Dutch Elm disease, he chose to honor his Scottish heritage and named the farm Glencairn, after that area in Scotland.

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Kenton County agriculture study reveals changes and challenges

The findings of a study on agriculture in Kenton County have recently been released by the Farmland Working Group, a collaborative task force led by the Kenton County Conservation District. The study, begun in 2003, addresses a question posed by Kenton County Fiscal Court officials: What is the future of farming and farmland in Kenton County?

Through a \$ 20,000 matching grant from the state PACE Corporation, the Farmland Working Group (FWG) developed three components to address the question – a survey mailed to owners of property classified as agricultural, a technical profile of agriculture, and a cost of community services study.

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Bruce Ferguson of Union, Kentucky, has been named the Boone County Conservation District Cooperator of the Year for 2005. Bruce received his award at the Conservation District's 6th Annual Farmer Appreciation Dinner in November.

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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
6028 Camp Ernst Road
Burlington, KY 41005
859-586-7903 (Phone) 859-586-7683 (Fax)
E-mail: sally.aaron@ky.nacdnet.net
<http://www.boonecountky.org/bccd/default.aspx>

Mike Keller, Chairman
Sarah Drew Griffith, Vice Chairman
James B. Walton, Secretary/Treasurer
Debra Waller Franks * Jan Garbett
Edward D. Moore * Billy Rehkamp Jr
Staff: Sally Aaron, Admin. Secretary
Kristin Scott, Agriculture Conservation Technician
Mary Kathryn Dickerson, District Coordinator
Mark Jacobs, Conservation Technician

CAMPBELL CO. CONSERVATION DISTRICT
8351 East Main Street, Suite 104
Alexandria, KY 41001
859-635-9587 or 859-635-5666 (Phone)
859-635-0496 (Fax)

E-mail: campbellcd@fuse.net
<http://home.fuse.net/campbellcd>
Ken McCormick, Chairman
Sanford Record, Vice Chairman
Larry Varney, Secretary/Treasurer
Alan Ahnman * Gene Dobbs
Ron McCormick * Dennis Walter
Staff: Linda Grizzell, Administrative Secretary
Kristin Scott, Agriculture Conservation Technician
Mary Kathryn Dickerson, District Coordinator

KENTON CO. CONSERVATION DISTRICT
6028 Camp Ernst Road
Burlington, KY 41005
859-586-7903 (Phone) 859-586-7683 (Fax)

E-mail: sally.aaron@ky.nacdnet.net
www.kentoncounty.org/conservation.html
Marc Hult, Chairman
Margaret "Peggy" Kelly, Vice Chairman
John "Jack" Heist, Secretary/Treasurer
Ed Bessler * Scott Kimberlin
Janet Scanlon * John Toebben
Staff: Sally Aaron, Admin. Secretary
Kristin Scott, Agriculture Conservation Technician
Mary Kathryn Dickerson, District Coordinator
Mark Jacobs, Conservation Technician

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

Kentucky Environmental and Public Protection Cabinet,
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, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or familial status.

Home Front

News from your Conservation District Office

Conservation District Board meetings are open to the public. Meetings are held at the conservation district offices and follow this schedule unless otherwise announced or the regular meeting date falls on a federally observed holiday:

Boone County –the third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

Campbell County –first Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

Kenton County –second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

Conservation Planning – These cold winter days are a perfect time to develop or update your Agriculture Water Quality Plan! If you own 10 or more acres of land in agriculture or forestry production, you are required to have a plan in place to protect water resources from pollution. Having a plan in place and on file at the district office can also help you earn extra points on applications for state cost share. Call your county conservation district office now to schedule an appointment!

Congratulations to Kenton County Recreation and Community Services for winning the 2005 Outstanding Program Award from the Kentucky Recreation and Park Society. The award was given for *Wild Wednesdays*, an educational program about nature and our natural world. Directed by Steve Trauger, the program had a total of 4,063 participants in 2005. Congratulations!

Don't put all your eggs in one basket...



Or your farm production, either. If you are a farmer in Kenton County and depend on tobacco to support your farming operation, this Agricultural Diversification program may be for you! Cost share funds are available to help farmers develop, expand and add value to agricultural products to increase net farm income and replace tobacco income. **Applications accepted through February 1, 2006.**

Types of programs funded include: Commercial Vegetable, Mushroom, Herb, Fruit, Sweet Sorghum, Ornamental Horticultural Products; Greenhouse Construction Or Conversion For Horticulture; Small Animal Production (Bees, Rabbits, Sheep); Poultry, Aquaculture and Equine Production; Direct-To-Consumer Livestock Production; Agri-tourism; and, Certified/Commercial Kitchen Construction or Renovation.

For more information, contact the Kenton County Conservation District, 6028 Camp Ernst Road, Burlington, KY 41005. Phone: 859-586-7903. Funded through the Agricultural Development Fund, Kentucky Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy in cooperation with the Kenton County Agriculture Development Council.

Apply now for Grants and Scholarships

Conservation Education Grants

The Boone, Campbell and Kenton County Conservation Districts are offering grants to assist schools in fostering learning about conservation and our environment. District board members feel that educating people is the best way to conserve and protect our natural resources. The conservation districts offer technical assistance as well as financial help. Applications must be postmarked or delivered to your county conservation district office no later than **Fri., Jan. 20, 2006**.

Grant funds may be used for a variety of projects and materials including:

- materials to enhance an outdoor learning area;
- trees, perennial plants, and seeds when directly related to a program of conservation study (native plants preferred);
- developing trails and trail guidebooks;
- conservation-related library materials;
- reference books;
- water monitoring equipment;
- soils testing equipment.

Scholarships Available

Boone County

Applications for the Boone County Conservation District scholarship are now available through the district office. The *W. Robert Ellis Memorial Scholarship* was established in honor of the late W. Robert Ellis who spent his life promoting education and the conservation and wise use of our natural resources. Applicants must be Boone County residents currently attending a college or university located in Kentucky. One \$1000 scholarship will be awarded to a college student who is enrolled in one of the following fields of study: natural resource conservation, forestry, soil science, ecology, wildlife science or agriculture. Previous scholarship recipients are eligible to apply. Applications must be postmarked or returned to the district office by **January 20, 2006**. Recipients will be notified by March 1.

In Campbell County, for information or grant or scholarship forms, contact Linda Grizzell at the Campbell County Conservation District, 8351 East Main Street, Alexandria, KY 41001; 859-635-9587; E-mail: campbellcd@fuse.net or visit the district's web site <http://home.fuse.net/campbellcd>.

In Boone and Kenton counties, for information or grant forms, contact Sally Aaron at the Boone and Kenton County Conservation Districts, 6028 Camp Ernst Road, Burlington, KY 41005; Phone 859-586-7903; E-mail: sally.aaron@ky.nacdnet.net; or visit our web sites at www.kentoncounty.org/conservation.html or <http://www.boonecountyky.org/bccd/default.aspx>

Campbell County

Applications for the Campbell County Conservation District scholarship are now available through the district office. Two \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded to students who are enrolled in one of the following fields of study: natural resource conservation, forestry, soil science, ecology, wildlife science or agriculture. Applicants must be Campbell County residents. High school students planning to enter college in the fall of 2006, as well as students currently attending college, are eligible to apply. Previous scholarship recipients are eligible to apply. Applications must be postmarked or returned to the district office by **January 20, 2006**. Recipients will be notified by March 1.

Several other scholarship opportunities are available for students in Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties who are pursuing careers in agriculture and natural resources. Two \$1000 statewide scholarships are offered by the Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts Auxiliary. The Conservation of Natural Resources Scholarship is for students currently enrolled in college and the George Crafton Memorial Scholarship is for high school seniors entering college the next fall. The deadline for applications is March 1, 2006.

Campbell County grant for conservation of public lands

The Campbell County Conservation District invites cities and non-profit community organizations in Campbell County to apply for the Campbell County Conservation Grant for Tree Planting and Urban Forestry Enhancement. The district is offering this grant to help cities and communities establish programs or develop projects to protect and conserve our natural resources while enhancing the aesthetic value of the natural environment. You may apply for up to \$2,500 through this matching grant program. The deadline for applications is **Friday, January 20, 2006**.

Apply by January 31 for EQIP and WHIP

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is accepting applications for Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) at your local USDA Service Center or conservation district office.

Landusers may apply for EQIP and WHIP at any time. Applications received by **January 31, 2006**, will be considered for this (federal fiscal year 2006) program year. Applications received after January 31, 2006 will be held until the next evaluation period.

EQIP applications are evaluated and ranked using criteria set forth by local work groups to determine which applications provide the best environmental benefits and address the resource concerns of their local area. EQIP allows cost-share assistance to persons engaged in livestock or agricultural production on eligible land. Cost-share rates vary by practice and generally range from 30 to 75 percent. Cost-share rates for beginning farmers and limited resource producers are 75 percent and 90 percent respectively for all eligible practices. Practices eligible for cost-share include: livestock pipeline and watering facilities; fencing of streams and woodlands; warm and cool season grass plantings; animal waste facilities; critical area plantings; and grassed waterways and diversions. For those applications selected for funding, an EQIP plan of operations will be developed with the landuser to identify appropriate conservation practices. All conservation practices are subject to NRCS technical standards adapted for local conditions.

WHIP provides landusers an opportunity to improve wildlife habitat. WHIP applications are evaluated and ranked to determine which applications provide the most beneficial habitats. The program allows up to 75% cost-share assistance for eligible practices on land they own or control. The landuser must devote at least 10 acres to eligible wildlife practices. In Kentucky, the primary focus of WHIP is to restore and create early successional habitats. Planting native grasses for wildlife cover or for the dual purpose of grazing and wildlife cover are eligible practices under Kentucky's 2006 WHIP cost-share assistance. WHIP focuses on wildlife improvements to improve cover. Food plots are not eligible in this program. Eligible practices for cost-share assistance include old field regeneration; forest stand improvement; field borders; tree and shrub plantings; wildlife watering holes; shallow water areas; and fencing to exclude livestock from streams, woodland, wetlands, and wildlife lands.

Additional information may be found at <http://www.ky.nrcs.usda.gov/programs>. To apply for EQIP, or for more information, please contact your local NRCS or conservation district office. To apply for WHIP, please contact: Clay Smitson, Private Lands Biologist with the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources at 859-246-2818 or the NRCS or the Conservation District at 859-586-7903.



"Food from the Forest" was the theme for the Boone, Campbell and Kenton County Conservation District exhibit at the Big Bone Lick Salt Festival in October. The festival commemorated the 250th anniversary of the journey of Mary Ingles when she escaped Shawnee captors at Big Bone Lick and made her way back to her home in Virginia. The district exhibit featured native plant foods that Mary may have found to sustain her and focused on the need for conservation of our natural resources. At left is Peggy Kelly, Kenton County Conservation District supervisor, at the exhibit.

"In the Midst of Growth"

Historic and natural treasures of Boone County were highlighted on a bus tour in September. The tour was organized by seven non-profit boards in Boone County who are committed to "growing to the future, while preserving the past." The Boone County Conservation District was a sponsor for the tour, which drew a capacity crowd for the day-long event. At right, Mark Jacobs introduces guests to Split Rock Conservation Park. The Conservation District made a brief presentation about their work with other groups to help conserve our natural resources.



Ferguson Cooperator of the Year

(Continued from page 1)

Trees have played a significant role in Bruce's farming operation. In the 1950's, his farm was the 33rd to be entered into the Certified Tree Farm program in Kentucky, and Bruce was honored one year as "Tree Farmer of the Year", receiving a chainsaw for a prize. "I don't believe in wasting anything," Bruce noted. When a tree is felled, it is either used for lumber or sold for firewood. Every major farm building and many of the fences were built from wood harvested on the farm. Bruce believes in replacing what is harvested and through the years, he has planted thousands of trees.

Although White Ash is the dominant species on the farm, about 100 maple trees in the 20-acre woodlot are tapped each year to make syrup. His sons have followed his lead in growing Christmas trees, and Bruce commented that these products are a nice supplement to help replace what tobacco used to bring in. He works with the Kentucky Division of Forestry on timber-stand improvement and while he manages his forest resource as a crop, he is careful to protect the forest for its many benefits, including wildlife and water quality.

"I believe in diversity," Bruce said. "It's a better use of your time to diversify your farming operation and you don't depend on one crop for your success." He outlined his farming year like this: around February – March it's time for making maple syrup, spring and summer are busy with the cattle and forage and hay, fall brings the time for wood harvest, then the agri-tourism operation gears up, and in December, time is devoted to Christmas trees.

About five years ago he and his family visited relatives in Lawrence, Kansas, who operate a corn maze as a part of their farming operation. Bruce teamed up with the YMCA for a few years, but when the YMCA left Union, he moved the operation to the old tobacco barn and added hayrides, campfires and a petting zoo. The agri-tourism operation has been successful and enjoyable as they have welcomed vans and buses of students, as well as families, to visit the farm. Bruce's son Stuart and his wife Sarah are the main partners for the agri-tourism operation, and the rest of the family pitches in to help when they can.

Bruce's family is an important part of the farming operation. He met his wife Beth 51 years ago when they were students at the University of Kentucky. They have five children -Patty, Carol, Miriam, Stuart and Phillip –

and 11 grandchildren. Bruce's career path changed from law school to agriculture, and he later completed an advanced degree at Thomas More College in history and political science. Farming and public service have been a way of life for Bruce. He was elected to the Boone County Conservation District board of supervisors in November 1956, and served from January 1957 through December 1964. More recently, he was appointed to fill a vacancy on the board from 2001 to 2004. Bruce served Boone County as Judge Executive for 22 years between 1964 to 1992, and left this post to serve as the Kentucky Commissioner of Local Government for several years.



Bruce Ferguson, left, received the Cooperator of the Year award and a plaque honoring his 12 years of service to the Boone County Conservation District board from board chair Mike Keller at the November Farmer Appreciation Dinner.

"Farmers are a diminishing breed," Bruce said. "They are fading fast." His concern about future generations is one of the reasons he pursued agri-tourism, seeing the

venture as a way to "allow young people to be exposed to the rewards and richness of family life on the farm."

"A distinctive feature of our place is that this is a working farm, not just a tourist attraction," Bruce noted. Cattle are still the major crop on the farm, with about 95 head of beef cattle in a cow/calf operation. They run three breeds: Limousine, Black Angus and Charolais. Recent improvements to the cattle operation include a spring watering development, fencing a pond to provide limited access for watering the cattle, and a concrete feeding area and manure stack pad. He used the services of the Conservation District and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and programs like state cost share and EQIP to help implement needed Best Management Practices.

Bruce said his 60-some years of practicing conservation have met with both success and failure. "Over the long-haul, if you follow scientific developments and sensible application, our record of keeping the land from washing away has been good."

And, over the long-haul, it's people like Bruce who make Boone County one of the most desirable places to work and live in Kentucky. And, it's people like Bruce who help the Boone County Conservation District fulfill its mission to conserve and promote the best use of the natural resources of Boone County to maintain and improve the quality of life for now and for the future.

Kenton County agriculture study - changes and challenges

(continued from page 1)

For the first component, the FWG mailed more than 900 surveys to owners of five acres or more in Kenton County and received 264 responses. The nearly 30 percent return rate was considered good compared to most mail surveys, which usually average less than 10 percent return. A majority of respondents believed that farmland protection should be considered for Kenton County. About 40 percent of those responding would like their land to continue in agriculture as long as they own it, while another 25 percent would like their land to continue in agriculture even after they no longer own it. Further survey findings showed that a majority of respondents would consider options to protect their land, if tax benefits were available. A series of small focus groups held to explore citizen perceptions in greater depth revealed concern that the high value of land for development in Kenton County will hinder efforts at farmland preservation.

The study's second component, a profile of agriculture in Kenton County, was conducted by the American Farmland Trust (AFT). AFT is a Washington, D.C.-based organization that works to protect America's best farmland and to promote conditions that sustain agriculture. As with profiles AFT has performed elsewhere, Kenton County's agricultural profile not only focused on the number and size of farms and age of farmers, but also looked at farm expenses and income, market value of farm products, and the overall economic impacts on Kenton County. Among the many findings of the profile were:

- Kenton County lost 20 percent of its farms from 1982 to 2002, but in the past few years the number of farms has stabilized.
- The average farm size in the county of 94 acres is less than the state average of 160 acres.
- Kenton County farmers are, on average, getting older. Since 1987, the number of farm operators under 45 has decreased by 51%.
- The total market value of the county's agricultural products decreased 6 percent from 1982 to 2002, from \$5.6 million to 5.3 million. This decrease is even greater since the 1982 value inflated over time would have been \$10.6 million in 2002. The decrease in market sales is primarily due to the decline of tobacco.
- Agricultural sales accounted for 3.4 percent of Kenton County's economic output in 2001.

The purpose of the project's last major component, the Cost of Community Services study (COCS), was three-fold:

- To show current revenues and expenditures on a land use basis – measured by demand for services,

- To evaluate farms and open land equally with residential, commercial & industrial land uses, and
- To help public officials and citizens make informed land use and policy decisions.

In short, the COCS provides a clear way to see how much each different land use costs for each dollar of revenue that it generates for services in the county. The final land use ratios generated by the COCS showed that for each \$1 received from residential properties in FY 2003, Kenton County spent \$1.19 providing services to those lands. For each \$1 from commercial/industrial lands, 19 cents was spent providing services and for each \$1 received from farmlands, 51 cents was spent providing services.

The FWG found the answer to Kenton County's question to not be straightforward but complex, reflecting the many changes and challenges facing agriculture in Kenton County. Among the study's recommendations are that the county should:

- Pilot a farmland protection program, which may include purchase of conservation easements to keep farmland in production for perpetuity.
- Continue to educate the public about the values of farmland.
- Improve the economic viability of agriculture.
- Prioritize what farmland should be saved.

Some of these recommendations are being implemented by the FWG partners; others will require a creative mix of state and federal funding, as well as local political support.

Partners in the FWG effort included the Kenton County Fiscal Court, county parks and recreation department, Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission, Cooperative Extension Service, the Kenton Conservancy and the Conservation District. Funding was provided by the non-profit Kentucky Purchase of Agricultural Easements Corporation (PACE) and the Smart Growth Coalition of Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky (though a grant from the Greater Cincinnati Foundation). The American Farmland Trust provided skilled technical support and Kenton County farmers and other citizens voiced their concerns and offered valuable insights.

For more information on the study or to view a copy of the complete report, please contact the Kenton County Conservation District at 859-586-7903.

*Lorna Harrell, Chairman
Kenton County Farmland Working Group*

Partnerships promote conservation in Northern Kentucky

The first explorers to Kentucky were drawn by its spectacular and diverse landscape as well as the abundance of wildlife that occupied this rich land. Since that time the face of our great state has changed dramatically. Gone are the immense tracts of grasslands, wetlands, forests and pristine rivers and streams that attracted the first European settlers and harbored a diverse array of wildlife.

The Boone County Conservation District, The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources and The Northern Kentucky Chapter of Quail Unlimited have teamed up to help restore some of Kentucky's wildlife heritage and promote sound conservation practices to protect soil and water resources. Through the cooperation of these three organizations a no-till seed drill with a native grass box is now available to landowners in Northern Kentucky. This unique piece of equipment will enable landowners and managers to establish permanent, high quality wildlife habitat on their property. In the past, establishing native grassland species was difficult due to the fluffy nature of the seed and the need and availability of specialized equipment to plant it. This new seed drill will make the process much easier.

Why plant native grasses? The restoration or establishment of native grasslands is of clear conservation benefit to the land owner while providing food and cover requirements for wildlife. A permanent stand of native grasses and forbs (wildflowers) provides the type of habitat critical to species like quail, rabbits, ground nesting

song birds and many other species. The tall stiff native grasses also have deep root systems that hold soil in place, help water infiltrate the ground more easily and make the plant very drought resistant. There is great advantage for a livestock operation as well. Native grasses incorporated into a rotational grazing system will provide fresh, nutritious forage during the summer months when cool season grasses are of poor quality.

Regardless of your land use objectives there is always room on your property to improve wildlife habitat. Large block plantings, smaller patches, borders around crop fields or wood lots are all excellent options for improving habitat. So if you are interested in hunting, improving your livestock operation, or simply improving aesthetics and wildlife viewing opportunities on your property establishing native grasses is an excellent option to consider.

Native grasses and native grass mixtures that include forbs need to be planted between April 15th and June 30th. Several state and federal agencies are available to help private landowners improve wildlife habitat on private land and apply conservation practices to farming operations. Cost share assistance may also be available for these practices when needed. For more information on these programs and the use of the no-till seed drill for conservation practices please call (859)-586-7903.

Mark Jacobs, Conservation Technician

Conservation Field Days introduce alternative forages



The Boone, Campbell and Kenton County Conservation Districts sponsored two field days this summer to help farmers learn about the advantages of incorporating native warm season grasses into their forage mix. At left, Sid Brantley, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) grazing lands specialist, and Ed Thompson, NRCS District Conservationist discuss the field day at Big Bone Lick State Park.

At right, Mark Jacobs, Conservation District Technician, discusses the nutritional value of native warm season grasses.



Boone, Campbell and Kenton County Conservation Districts

Joint Programs for Resource Management

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 at 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.

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.

Technical Assistance – Technical assistance is provided to Boone County through Ed Thompson, District Conservationist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, our federal partner, and Campbell County Conservation District staff Mark Leopold, Boone and Kenton County Conservation District staff Mark Jacobs and Boone, Kenton and Campbell County Conservation District staff Kristin Scott. In 2004 – 2005, they provided assistance to over 700 Boone County landowners, 435 Campbell County landowners, and 265 Kenton 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.

Board members represent county interests on a regional Natural Resources Conservation Service **Environmental Quality Incentives Program** (EQIP) work group to select local practices for the program. Representatives were: Boone County - Bruce Ferguson; Campbell County - Alan Ahrman and Dennis Walter; and Kenton County - Marc Hult and Sherry Carran.

Federal Farm Bill program	Boone County	Campbell County	Kenton County
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	43 acres enrolled under five-year contracts with two landowners. Another 37.6 acres were enrolled for 2005 under five-year contracts with two landowners	– 62.5 acres enrolled under five-year contracts with three landowners. Another 78.66 acres were enrolled for 2005 under five-year contracts with two landowners
EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program)	250 acres enrolled under five-year contracts with five landowners	1244.17 acres enrolled under five-year contracts with sixteen landowners. Another 246 acres were enrolled for 2005 under five-year contracts with four landowners.	one application approved but landowner withdrew from program
CSP (Conservation Security Program)	One contract issued for 2005 in the Lower Kentucky River Watershed	Program not available	Program not available
Continuous CRP (Conservation Reserve Program)	29.6 acres enrolled under 15-year contract with one landowner	24.3 acres enrolled under 15-year contract with two landowners	2 acres enrolled under 15-year contract with one landowner

Conservation Field Days Grant - The Boone, Campbell and Kenton County 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 later in 2005.

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.

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.

Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Act – The Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Act requires landowners of 10 or more acres with agricultural production to develop and implement a plan to prevent pollution to waters on their property. The Districts are responsible for helping landowners develop these plans. To date, the districts have received water quality plan certifications for the following: Boone County, 679 water quality plan certifications; in Campbell County, 529 certifications; and in Kenton County, 430 certifications

Kentucky Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Program– This program offers cost share funds to help farm producers install Best Management Practices for improvement of water quality on their farm. Funded this year were: Boone County - 25 applications were funded for a total of \$279,711.42 in a special funding allocation;

Kenton County – one application for \$20,000; Campbell County – one application for \$3,124.

Dead Animal Disposal Program – Again this year, each 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. The program also offers assistance to the county animal shelters for costs associated with proper disposal of pet carcasses.

County	Program started	Number of Participants
Boone	January 2000	148 landowners & county animal shelter
Campbell	November 1999	177 landowners & county animal shelter
Kenton	February 2001	58 landowners & county animal shelter

Agricultural Districts - This voluntary state program provides some protection for farmers who wish to keep their land in agricultural production. In Campbell County, the board is pursuing solutions to issues regarding the consequences for agricultural districts located in areas considering incorporation as new cities. The District hosted two Agricultural District workshops this year, one at the Campbell County Environmental Education Center in February and one at the East Campbell County Firehouse in March.

County	Number of Districts	Number of Landowners	Number of Acres
Boone	13	84	7,534
Campbell	12	210	10,929
Kenton	5	39	2,947

Joint Programs for Education and Outreach

- **Workshops and Programs** – The Districts reached over 250 students this year through the Sanitation District #1 *Waterific* program.
- Staff Linda Grizzell, Mark Jacobs and Kristin Scott manned a booth at the Northern Kentucky University **Earth Day** celebration.
- The District supports the **NKU Environmental Education Alliance** and helped with a reception in February at Summit View Middle School which reached over 100 teachers and other educators.
- The **Environmental Education in No. Ky. Resource Guide** was updated and is available through the districts' offices and on their web sites.
- **Big Bone Lick State Park Discovery Days** – The exhibit this year featured district programs and the natural history of the area. Board members and staff worked at the exhibit.

- **Newsletters** - The Boone, Campbell and Kenton County Conservation Districts' quarterly newsletter, *Landscapes*, reached 2,397 Boone County households; 1,773 Campbell County households; and 1,491 Kenton County households.
- District Coordinator Mary Kathryn Dickerson represents the boards on the **No. Ky. Area Solid Waste Technical Advisory Committee**.
- Kenton County board member Marc Hult, and staff Kristin 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.

Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Conservation Council (OKI-RCC) - Jack Heist, Kenton County board member, serves as the Secretary-Treasurer of this organization. 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 attending were: Boone County - Debra Waller Franks and Jimmy Walton; Campbell County - Larry Varney, Sanford Record, Ron McCormick, Ken McCormick, and Kenton County - Jack Heist, Marc Hult, Lorna Harrell, and Sherry Carran. Staff Linda Grizzell, Sally Aaron, Kristin Scott, Mark Jacobs and Mary Kathryn Dickerson also attended.

Campbell County Conservation District planned and was the host for the **annual conservation tour** in September. The tour included the LaFarge Plant in Silver Grove, Camp Springs Stone House Tour, a tour of Dennis Walter's vineyard and stone home, and the Campbell County Environmental Education Center.

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 members Bruce Ferguson of Boone County, Helen Fehr of Campbell County, and Lorna Harrell and Sherry Carran of Kenton County also addressed the group.

The Executive Committees of the Boone, Campbell and Kenton County Conservation Districts meet regularly to work together on conservation programs and shared-employee policy.

The **Ky. Association of Conservation District's (KACD)** annual conference was held in Lexington. Board members attending were: Boone County - Bruce Ferguson; Campbell County - Helen Fehr, Ken McCormick, Alan Ahrman, Dennis Walter, Larry Varney, and Gene Dobbs; Kenton County - Marc Hult and Lorna Harrell. Staff attending were: Kristin Scott, Mark Jacobs, Sally Aaron, Linda Grizzell and Mary Kathryn Dickerson. Staff Mary

Kathryn Dickerson was part of a panel presentation on education programs. Board members and staff also attended the Area 5 meeting in Harrison County in March. Board members serve on statewide KACD committees, which meet annually: Campbell County - Public Information, Sanford Record; Research and Natural Resources, Larry Varney; and Education, Ken McCormick; Kenton County - Water Resources - Marc Hult.

National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) - Campbell County board members Larry Varney and Sanford Record attended the annual conference in Atlanta in February.

Boone County Conservation District
Annual Report July 1, 2004 - June 30, 2005

BOONE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

6028 Camp Ernst Road - Burlington, KY 41005
859-586-7903 • FAX: 859-586-7683

<http://www.boonecountyky.org/bccd/default.aspx>

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)

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.

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.

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.

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 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.

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.

Education and Outreach

- Board members 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. 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 which is a team experiment in raising a small crop of tomatoes and flower baskets to duplicate on a small scale what commercial farmers 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 for contest winners, grant recipients, and other awards.
- **Web Site** - The Conservation District web site is provided through the Boone County Fiscal Court at <http://www.boonecountyky.org/bccd/default.htm>

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.

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.



Campbell County Conservation District
Annual Report July 1, 2004 - June 30, 2005

**Campbell District Named Kentucky
Association of Conservation Districts East
Kentucky Conservation District of the Year!**

The district received this award during the July 2004 Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts Convention in Lexington for work accomplished during the 2002 – 2003 fiscal year. The District received its award, which is sponsored by the KACD and the Tennessee Valley Authority, during the KACD Convention in Lexington in July 2004. The awards are based on the Conservation District's Annual Plan of Work and the activities and programs it conducts throughout the year. Their specific achievements this past year include a farm oil recycling day, workshops on water quality, a scholarship program, conservation education and urban forestry enhancement grants programs, and administration of the Kentucky Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share program. Helen Fehr, Ken McCormick, Alan Ahrman, Dennis Walter, Larry Varney, Gene Dobbs, Linda Grizzell, Kristin Scott and Mary Kathryn Dickerson attended the convention.

Farmland Work Group and PACE grant - Work continues on a \$20,000 matching grant through the Kentucky Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE) Corporation, Kentucky Department of Agriculture, to explore farmland preservation options for Campbell County. The Campbell County Conservation District convened a work group in July 2003 for this project. The matching funds will be provided by cash and in-kind support through the Conservation District and their partners, the Campbell Conservancy, Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission; Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service; Campbell County Cattle Association; and Campbell County Farm Bureau. Board members Alan Ahrman, Dennis Walter, and Ron McCormick, along with past board member Helen Fehr and staff Mary Kathryn Dickerson and Linda Grizzell are working on the project. Through the grant, the committee has:

- prepared an agricultural lands and services inventory to give us a better picture of the status of agriculture in Campbell County, and identify classes of farmlands in the most need of protection;
- continued to develop an educational program for both farmers and the urban/suburban community regarding farmland preservation; and,
- started to investigate techniques to finance a local PACE or Purchase of Development Rights program.

Campbell County Conservation District

8351 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

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.

Farmland in Campbell County has steadily decreased over the past 60 years. Of the total 96,640 acres in Campbell County, there were 78,749 acres in farmland in 1940 held in 1,292 farms. By 1997, there were 45,108 acres in farmland, with 503 farms. Local concerns have been mounting about how to preserve the rural character of the county while maintaining an economically viable land base for those who wish to continue to farm.

Forage Improvement - The conservation district administers the fund to distribute forage improvement cost share money within the county. This is a program of the County Agriculture Development Board set up to administer funds from the Phase I tobacco settlement. Board member Kenneth McCormick and Alan Pfefferman serve as the district's representatives 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.

- Dennis Walter is a board member of the Campbell Conservancy.
- Larry Varney attended the Northern Kentucky Urban & Community Forestry Council's Annual Fall Dinner.
- Larry Varney and Helen Fehr represented the district at the City of Cold Spring's Planning and Zoning meeting and provided input to their 2005 Comprehensive Plan.
- Dennis Walter attended the Campbell County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting and updated members on our farmland protection initiative.
- Larry Varney, Sanford Record, Dennis Walter, and Ron McCormick attended a "Where Do We Grow From Here?" session at the Campbell County Extension Service.
- Larry Varney attended a farewell dinner for Jim Callahan and presented him with a certification of appreciation from the district.

Education and Outreach

- **Urban Forestry Grants** - The Campbell County Conservation District has been giving matching grants for Urban Forestry and Community Beautification since 1993 to help cities and communities establish programs or develop projects to protect and conserve our natural resources. The project must be done on lands located in Campbell County that are owned, leased, or otherwise controlled by city, county, state, or federal government and must include funding or in-kind contributions in an amount equal to the grant request. This year four grants were awarded.
 - **Cold Spring Tree Commission** – The City of Cold Spring is receiving a \$1,000 grant to help with their project to beautify the entrances to its city limits. **City of Melbourne** – A city beautification program was started in 1999 with a general city clean-up and repaving of Latonia Avenue. This \$1,000 grant will help the city to replace and add trees on these avenues, starting with the area from Lincoln to Kenton along Latonia Avenue.
 - **City of Newport** – This \$1,000 grant will help the city plant trees in the center islands of Saratoga Street from Third Street to Eleventh Street.
 - **City of Alexandria** – Tribute Park in Alexandria is a new park that will honor the men and women who protect our freedom and keep us safe in our community and throughout the world. This \$1,000 grant will help offset the costs of planting trees and shrubs for the initial phase of the park.
- **Education Grants** - The Campbell County Conservation District has offered education grants since 1991 to assist schools in fostering learning about conservation and our environment. Grant applications are accepted from October through January each year. This year, St. Therese School in Southgate is receiving a grant for two projects. Rita Strohm, teaches science for grades 6, 7 & 8 and is coordinating these projects. “A Little of This and A Little of That” will be funded for \$1,505.79 to re-supply tools and equipment currently used as a part of the school’s environmental science lessons. The Environmental Day Camp program will receive \$490.80 to purchase field guides, hand lenses and bug boxes for students participating in the program.
- **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 their importance, and ways that all citizens can help protect, restore and conserve them. In the Art Contest there were 334 entries from nine (9) schools. This year in the Writing Contest, there were 277 entries written in seven (7) schools. The District sponsors an awards banquet each year for contest winners, grant recipients, and other awards.
 - Ms. Jackie Kriege of St. Thomas School was the recipient of the District’s **teacher incentive award**.
 - The Campbell County Conservation District supports the **Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts Auxiliary Scholarship** program through a donation of money. Items for the annual auction are donated by board members.
 - **Jessie R. Gehner** and **Joshua A. Vogel** have been awarded the 2004 Campbell County Conservation District Scholarships. **Jessie**, a graduate of Campbell County High School, is a student at Northern Kentucky University, majoring in Biology. **Jessie** is the daughter of Joan and Doug Gehner of California. **Joshua** is a senior at Silver Grove School and plans to attend Thomas More College to study aquatic biology. He is the son of Ramel and Greg Vogel of Silver Grove.
 - The district sponsored the **Land Judging Award for the Campbell County Future Farmers of America** and board member Dennis Walter attended the annual dinner to make the award presentation.
 - Randy Haas, and his parents James and Dorothy, of Flagg Spring Ranch, were named the **Campbell County Conservation District 2005 Outstanding Cooperator of the Year**. This district award is a part of the National Association of Conservation District’s recognition program. Randy farms about 530 acres near California, off Shababerle Hill Road. Most of the land lies in the Twelve Mile Creek watershed. Randy was selected due to his sincere interest in stewardship of the land and active participation in conservation programs and the example he sets for others.
 - Board member Larry Varney maintains a web site for the District, at <http://home.fuse.net/campbellcd> .
 - Board members manned a booth at the **Alexandria Fair & Horse Show** . The booth and fair book advertisement theme was, *Healthy Habits for Clean Water*, focusing on stormwater runoff.
- **Legislative Action** - The District Board expressed local conservation and budgeting concerns to the county Fiscal Court, and Kentucky State Senators and Representatives. Helen Fehr serves as the district’s legislative liaison. She contacted state legislators and county officials on behalf of the board to encourage their support for continued funding for the Kentucky Division of Conservation. Letters were written to encourage support of the policies of the Kentucky and National Associations of Conservation Districts. Alan Ahrman, Dennis Walter, Larry Varney, Sanford Record, Helen Fehr and staff Linda Grizzell, Kristin Scott, and Mary Kathryn Dickerson attended a **Legislative Breakfast** in November sponsored by the Campbell Co. Cattle Association, Campbell Co. Farm Bureau, and the Campbell Co. Conservation District. Dennis Walter served as moderator for the event, which included a presentation about the Conservation District.

Elections: Those elected to the board of supervisors in November were: Gene Dobbs, Ron McCormick, Larry Varney, and Alan Ahrman. They assumed their four-year terms of office in January 2005. Helen Fehr chose not to seek re-election.

Office Relocation and Staffing - The Campbell County Conservation District received a Direct Aid and Personnel Grant from the Division of Conservation for fiscal year 2004 – 2005 for \$ 7,488.00 and \$ 4,200 for office support. This money was used to fund an Agriculture Water Quality position and supplement paying rent and maintaining office communication services for the office, which was closed several years ago as a sub-office of the Natural

Resources Conservation Service. The grant funds enabled the District to rent a larger office located on the street-side of the building, giving the District more exposure to the public. The increased space has also enabled the board to hold board and other meetings at the office.

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.

Kenton County Conservation District Annual Report

July 1, 2004 - June 30, 2005

Riparian Buffer Grant - A grant through the Kentucky Division of Conservation Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Fund funded the installation of a demonstration project for stream buffers. The buffer area was established at Middleton-Mills Road Park along a small lake. With help from about twenty volunteers from the community about 450 native trees and shrubs were planted at the site in April 2005. The Kenton County Fiscal Court signed a 10-year maintenance agreement for the area, and Steve Trauger from the Kenton County Parks and Recreation Department provided invaluable assistance in coordinating the project. Labor to prepare the site was provided by Kenton County Parks and Recreation Department. Some materials were provided by Cincinnati Wholesale Supply to repair a badly eroding drainage area adjacent to the lake. Technical assistance was provided by Gary Johnson with the Kentucky Division of Forestry, and Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources Private Lands Biologist Clay Smitson. Kenton County Conservation District staff Mark Jacobs is in charge of the project. More work is planned at the site in fall 2005.

Grant helps landowners put land to work for wildlife!

- Landowners in Kenton County with five acres or less were eligible to receive up to \$750 to implement a plan to improve their land for wildlife habitat. The Kenton County Conservation District Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Program was offered to landowners with limited land resources to enhance native biodiversity, improve wildlife habitat, and contribute to soil and water conservation. Fourteen applications were received and eight projects were approved and completed. Projects eligible for funding included development of buffers along streams and ponds, establishing or improving native vegetation, improving woods for wildlife, or development of a watering hole for wildlife. Funds for this program were provided by the Kentucky Soil and

Kenton County Conservation District
6028 Camp Ernst Road - Burlington, KY 41005
PHONE: 859-586-7903 FAX 859-586-7683

www.kentoncounty.org/conservation.html

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)*

Water Quality Cost Share Fund, administered through the Kentucky Division of Conservation. The Kenton County Conservation District provided technical assistance through project manager Mark Jacobs, Conservation Technician. Mark's idea for the grant project came from working with landowners who did not have enough acreage to qualify for traditional Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) or other agency wildlife habitat enhancement programs. Mark is continuing to work with landowners as they implement their projects and a field day is planned for next spring.

County Agricultural Development Board – The District is represented on this council by farmers Jeremy Wolfe and Joe Bergman. This council is responsible for administering funds for the Phase I Tobacco Settlement. The District agreed to administer a program for the County Agricultural Development Board, the Agricultural Diversification Program. That program was awarded approximately \$38,000 and began accepting applications in May. The applications will be accepted on a continuous basis until February 2006 or until all funds are expended, whichever occurs first. The program is intended to assist landowners to diversify their farming operations, rather than rely on tobacco as a main cash

crop. Board member Janet Scanlon and staff Mary Kathryn Dickerson attended the statewide Agricultural Development Conference in Lexington this winter to learn more about the program.

Banklick Creek Watershed Council - Marc Hult works with the Banklick Creek Watershed Council as it tries to identify and solve water problems in the watershed.

Water Quality Monitoring - The District has been collecting water quality data on Doe Run Lake since 1991, and the streams in Highland Cemetery since 1993. Testing continues at each site. The District also participated in the Great American Secchi Dip-In through Kent State University. This project measures the clarity of lakes across North America. Board member Marc Hult works with the Licking River Watershed Watch.

Farmland Protection Initiative -The Kenton County Conservation District continued work on the grant they received through the Kentucky Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE) Corporation to explore farmland preservation options for Kenton County. The District was asked in April 2002 by then Judge Executive Murgatroyd to convene this working group. Group representatives include the Kenton Conservancy, No. Ky. Area Planning Commission, Kenton County Cooperative Extension Service, and Kenton County Parks Department. Board members working on the grant are Peggy Kelly, and staff Mary Kathryn Dickerson. Former board members Lorna Harrell and Sherry Carran continue to serve on the committee to see the project to completion.

The grant provided:

- ❑ an Agricultural Industry Profile, Cost of Community Services Study, and agricultural lands inventory to give us a better picture of the status of agriculture in Kenton County and identify classes of farmlands in the most need of protection;
- ❑ an educational program for both farmers and the urban/suburban community regarding farmland protection and agriculture's role in the overall economy;
- ❑ and, identification of techniques to finance a local farmland protection program.

Three focus groups were held around the community, a survey of farmland owners was conducted, and work finalized on the Cost of Community Services Study and Agricultural Industry Profile. The District presented the report findings to the PACE Corporation in May.

Projects and Partners

- District Coordinator Mary Kathryn Dickerson is a member of the Community Advisory Task Force for Sanitation District #1.
- Board members Peggy Kelly and Janet Scanlon serve on the Kenton Conservancy Board.
- Scott Kimberlin was appointed by the District to serve as a member of the county Extension Committee.
- The District board supports and assists the Northern Kentucky Urban and Community Forestry Council.

Education and Outreach

- **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 508 entries from eight schools in the art contest and 417 entries from eight schools in the writing contest. The District sponsors an awards banquet each year for contest winners, grant recipients, and other awards. Retiring board members Lorna Harrell and Sherry Carran were honored for their service during the dinner, held at the Erlanger Lions Club.
- **Education Grants** - The District received no grant applications this year.
- The district conducted a water and forestry study program for students at Beechwood High School at the **Highland Cemetery** nature trails.
- **Community Education** - The Conservation District sponsored a hike at Doe Run Lake in April which was rescheduled for October due to inclement weather. Peggy Kelly will lead this activity.
- **Web Site** - The Conservation District web site is provided through the Kenton County Fiscal Court at www.kentoncounty.org/conservation.html

Board Elections: Janet Scanlon was appointed in October to fill the unexpired term of Michele Kline who resigned for personal reasons. John Toeppen, Ed Bessler, and Scott Kimberlin were elected to the board in November and began their four-year terms of office in January 2005. Former board members Lorna Harrell and Sherry Carran chose not to seek re-election, and board member Tom Stiens resigned earlier in the year.

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 District office.

Conservation Calendar

Wed. - Fri., Jan. 4-6, 2006, Facilitator Training, Ky. Leadership Center, Jabez, KY. Become a certified facilitator for Project WET (Water Education for Teachers), WILD (Wildlife in Learning Designs) and PLT (Project Learning Tree), internationally recognized environmental education programs. Cost \$150, which includes two nights lodging and meals and all supplies and project materials. Contact Jennifer Turner at the Ky. Div of Forestry, at 1-800-866-0555 or JenniferL.Turner@ky.gov by Dec. 23 to register.

Wed. - Sat., Jan. 11-14, 2006, National No-Tillage Conference, St. Louis, MO. Features over 80 sessions led by 40 no-till farmers and educators. Contact No-Till Farmer at 262-782-4480 or www.no-tillfarmer.com.

Fri., Jan. 20, 2006, applications due for Conservation Education Grants, Campbell Forestry Grant, and Conservation Scholarships. (See page 3.)

Fri., Jan. 27, 2006 deadline for application for *Trees in Our Communities Grant Program* offered by Northern Kentucky Urban & Community Forestry Council. Grant funds awarded on 50/50 matching basis to local government, neighborhood associations, educational institutions, non-profit groups, civic groups and community tree volunteer groups. Contact DJ Scully at 859-572-2600 for details.

Tues., Jan. 31, 2006, applications due for WHIP and EQIP. (See page 4.)

Beginning Wed., Feb. 1, 2006, Kentucky Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share applications accepted by your county conservation district. (Contact info. on page 2)

Fri. & Sat., Feb. 3-4, 2006, Clean Water Summit for Hunters and Anglers. Fri., 6 p.m. - Sat., 5:30 p.m. Louisville Marriott Downtown, Louisville, KY. Explore proven approaches to conserving and protecting watersheds so future generations may experience America's hunting and fishing heritage. Sessions include a water quality workshop on board ORSANCO's floating River Education Center classroom. Cost \$10, which includes meals. Contact Tim Guilfoile at 1513-232-8330 or tim.guilfoile@sierraclub.org to register.

Sat., Feb. 11, Licking River Watershed Protection Conference, Blue Licks Battlefield State Resort Park. Program includes dams and their effects on the Licking River ecosystem. Friday Watershed Steering Committee meeting is open to all. Sunday features Watershed Watch and Quality Assurance training. Contact Marc Hult at 859-261-3992 or visit www.lickingriver.org

Wed., March 1, 2006, Outdoor Classroom Workshop, Campbell Co. Environmental Education Center. 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Learn to use the environment to teach Core Content in any subject and engage students with diverse learning styles. Includes choice of Project Flying WILD or WILD Aquatic. Sponsored by Kentucky Association for Environmental Education (KAEE). Cost \$30, which includes annual membership in KAEE. To register, contact Dr. Yvonne Meichtry at 859-572-6380 or meichtry@nku.edu by Feb. 10.

**Boone, Campbell & Kenton County
Conservation Districts
6028 Camp Ernst Road
Burlington, KY 41005**