



Conservation Conversation

Barber County Conservation District

Volume 27, Issue 1

COST-SHARE APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED THROUGH APRIL 30, 2014

We've had a long winter to think of conservation issues needing to be addressed this spring and summer. If you need technical assistance, the Conservation District and NRCS field office staff welcome you to come in and bounce some of those ideas and plans off us.

Carrying those plans a step forward, and if you're interested in cost-share assistance for your project, call or stop by the conservation office during the month of April to make your application for funds which will become available July 1.

Practices associated with livestock water developments such as water wells, tanks, pipelines, and solar pumps, as well as erosion control practices such as terraces and waterways are some of the practices covered in the WRCSP. The NPS Program funds are primarily designated for plugging abandoned water wells and repairing failed septic systems.

All applications will be ranked according to priority of resource concern, then funded until all allocations have been depleted. As with all cost-share programs, funding approval must be given prior to beginning the project.

The Barber County Conservation District Board meets the first Tuesday of each month.

Calvin Boyd, Chairman

Matt Cantrell, Vice Chairman

Ted Alexander, Treasurer

Sam Baier, Supervisor

Georgi Dawson, Supervisor



Concrete block structure installed to correct erosion issue

The Conservation District administers two cost-share programs: the Water Resources Cost-Share Program (WRCSP) and the Non-Point Source Pollution Control Program (NPS), both of which are funded through the Division of Conservation, Kansas Department of Agriculture through appropriation from the Kansas Water Plan Fund.

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SPRING WILDFLOWER TOUR, MAY 10

If spring fever is making you restless, plan now to attend the annual spring wildflower tour sponsored by the Barber County Conservation District on Saturday, May 10. Practically in your own backyard, the beautiful gyp hills of Barber County are home to more species of native wildflowers than you can count on your fingers and toes, or even on your family's fingers and toes. So gather up the family, your club, group, or a good friend and join us for the most fun you've had all spring. \$15 covers the cost of breakfast, transportation, two identification stops, lunch, door prizes, snacks, and the most spectacular showing of wildflowers in the county. Paid reservations are accepted through May 5, kids 10 and under FREE! Contact the conservation office at (620) 886-5311, ext 3 for more information.

EARTH DAY IS

APRIL 22, 2014

- Watch for our Recycle display at the Citizens Bank on April 22.
- We have a large inventory of HDPE pipe for all your drainage needs.
- Wildflower Tour is May 10: call for reservations

YOUTH RANGE CAMP SCHOLARSHIP OFFERED

“Range Youth Camp is the most accepted and enduring activity of the Kansas Section of the Society for Range Management. The camp was first held in 1960 and is continuing to educate youth about the importance of Kansas rangelands to this day. The camp is designed to give students a basic understanding of the principles of rangeland ecology, including plant physiology, plant identification, ecological sites, range condition, and trend. Additional topics discussed at camp are animal behavior, animal nutrition, wildlife use of rangelands, and calculating stocking rates.”

Upcoming High School Sophomore, Junior, and Senior students who have a serious interest in rangeland management, rangeland ecology, or grazing animals are eligible for a scholarship through the Barber County Conservation District to attend the camp June 24-27 at Camp Mennosciah in Murdock, KS.

Stop by the Conservation Office at 800 W 3rd Avenue in Medicine Lodge to pick up an application, health form, and other information about the camp.



CONSERVATIONISTS HONORED AT BCCD ANNUAL MEETING

The 64th Annual Meeting of the Barber County Conservation District was held on the evening of January 18, 2014, fulfilling the requirements of District law to provide full disclosure of District activities and finances on an annual basis.

Election of two supervisors was held with the re-election of Matt Cantrell and Ted Alexander, each serving three year terms.

Young conservationists were recognized as all conservation posters submitted by students K-12 were on display. Among the top three winners of each category in attendance were Gracie Burenheide, Cade Lonker, Madison Pilkington, Carson Cargill, Jasmine Ricke, and Alexa Ethridge.

Dale Lonker served as Key Banker to present the 2013 Bankers Awards to Wamsley Brothers (Jerry Wamsley and Roger Wamsley) for soil conservation on their cropland. Noteworthy improvements were a terracing system and waterways installed in a field, and pond restoration in the pastureland.

Receiving the Bankers Award for soil conservation on rangeland was Binning Partnership (owners Tom Daxon, Benita Granger, and Anthony Binning; operator Terry Ricke). Improvements on their ranch include cedar tree removal, cross fencing, and livestock water developments, along with the implementation of rotational grazing.



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2013 BANKERS AWARD WINNERS

*Left; Dale Lonker, Key Banker;
Roger Wamsley, Jerry Wamsley*

*Right; Dale Lonker, Terry
Ricke, Anthony Binning,
Tom Daxon*



STEWARDSHIP WEEK IS APRIL 27—MAY 4

“DIG DEEPER—THE MYSTERIES OF SOIL”

Soil is a dirty topic, but everyone needs to learn more about it! Each community has a variety of soil types. Just like your family members, each soil has a different personality and name. These differences in soil are very important when deciding what you would like to do with the land. Soil maps and related soil data can provide information for a variety of land users including homeowners, gardeners, farmers, developers, home builders, engineers, community planners and others. Visit your local conservation district (Contact Information) or Visit <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/> for the Web Soil Survey that can provide assistance when making importance decisions about your property. You can find the app for your smart devices called “SoilWeb” to learn what type of soil you are standing on and impress your family and friends.

The Conservation District is celebrating Stewardship Week by providing outreach and educational materials to schools and churches in Barber County. Stewardship Week helps to remind us of our personal responsibility to conserve natural resources and improve our environment.

PRESCRIPTION FOR GOOD RANGE HEALTH BY JESS CROCKFORD

"The spring burn season is upon us and the Gyp Hill Prescribed Burn Association has swung into action" according to Tommy Carr, chairman of the Association. The Association is a group of neighbors helping neighbors to apply prescribed fire to native grassland. They recently gathered on the Bear Creek Ranch and later on the Carr ranch to carry out prescribed burns. The Association has several more burns planned for this spring.

The Gyp Hills Prescribed Burn Association was started several years ago by local ranchers that shared an interest in improving their native grass resources. The membership is made up of ranches in Barber County and parts of adjoining Counties. These producers came together because of their common interest in ecological stewardship and concerns over safety, Carr said. The burn association provides a structure through which members assist each other to provide the manpower, equipment and experience necessary to conduct safe prescribed burns. He emphasized that this group is truly the embodiment of the "neighbor helping neighbor" concept.

Prescribed fire provides many benefits to native grassland resources including improving grass health, reducing woody plant encroachment, invasive species management, improving wildlife habitat, thatch removal, stimulating grasses and forbs, increasing nutrient cycling, improving livestock performance, reducing wildfire risk and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contract compliance.

Kansas currently has ten prescribed burn associations in the western half of the state. These associations help local producers overcome many of the obstacles and concerns about using prescribed fire such as manpower, equipment, training and experience. Their primary goal is the safe and proper use of prescribed fire as a management tool on rangelands and CRP. Associations strive to educate their members as well as the public and public officials on the value of prescribed burning and the need to maintain a landowner's right to burn if done in a safe and well-planned manner.

This effort is just one example of the work being completed by the KS PFC. The Council organized in 2008 and is an educational non-profit that promotes the safe and effective use of prescribed fire. If you are interested in learning more about prescribe fire or burn associations, contact your local Conservation District or Natural Resources Conservation Service office at 620-886-5311, or the Kansas Prescribed Fire Council at 785-532-3316.

FY 2014 COST-SHARE PROJECTS

July 1—June 30 is considered the fiscal year for state cost-share funds administered by the Conservation District. Below is how FY 2014 funds were used in Barber County.

WRCSP ALLOCATION

\$23,987.00

Due to the on-going drought in Barber County the Board of Supervisors set applications for livestock water developments as priority for FY 2014. The entire appropriation was used for producers to enhance grazing distribution through these practices.

NPS ALLOCATION

\$14,812.00

Two on-site waste repair applications were received and funded for \$6,650.48. The balance of this appropriation was used for livestock water developments, \$8,161.52.

USED OIL TRAILER TO MAKE COLLECTIONS

David Ring, Solid Waste Director for Barber County, will be making the rounds to pick up used oil in the near future. If you have barrels of used oil stored around your farm and would like to dispose of them, contact David (620-825-4910) or the Conservation Office (620-886-5311) to schedule collection.

