

SUMMER

Volume 31, Issue 2

Inside This Issue:

Page 2: KGLC Range School

Page 2: Range School
Scholarship

Page 3: Cost Share Programs

Page 4: DUNS & SAM
Requirements for Farmers

Page 4: Another Wildflower
Tour in the Books

Page 5: Is Soil Health
Important on Range Sites?

Page 6: Livestock Pipeline
Maintenance

Page 7: Conservation Program
Funds Now Available

Page 4: Barber County Fair



BARBER COUNTY WELCOMES NEW RANGE SPECIALIST

Lody Black is the new Rangeland Management Specialist – Student Trainee in the Medicine Lodge Field Office. Lody started working at Medicine Lodge in May and is looking forward to learning from and working with the producers in the area. He is from Clay Center, KS,

Upon graduating high school, Lody attended Hutchinson Community College where he graduated with his Associate of Science Degree in Agriculture. Then he transferred to Fort Hays State where he got his Bachelor's Degree in Biology - Rangeland Management.

He first found an interest in Natural Resource Conservation Service in high school at the state FFA convention where he met up with the district conservationist from Clay Center. Lody took a work study course in 2014, his senior year of high school, where he volunteered nearly 260 hours with NRCS in Clay Center. He then became a student trainee for the agency in 2016. He worked in Hays for the first summer, and then in Great Bend the summer of 2017.

Lody enjoys hunting, fishing and being outdoors. He enjoys sports and gets involved when he can.

We're happy to welcome Lody to Barber County. If you haven't had a chance to meet him, stop by the office and say hello.



Board of Supervisors

Calvin Boyd—Chairman

Matt Cantrell—Vice Chair

John Cook—Treasurer

Ted Alexander—Member

Ann Cargill—Member

Dates to Remember:

July 4 Independence Day (Office Closed)

July 26-29 Barber County Fair

September 3 Labor Day (Office Closed)

Conservation Office Staff

Wyatt Sperry—Supervisory
District Conservationist

Carl Jarboe—Soil Conservation
Technician

Lody Black—Range Conserva-
tionist, Student Trainee

Cheryl Davis—District Mgr.



2018 Kansas Range Schools Announced

The 2018 KS Range School is 6 weeks away!

It is time to start thinking about attending this year and then register to attend. Learn more about range-land management in a friendly setting with other ranchers, land managers, range management students and natural resource professionals. You can register at KGLC.org for the schools which cost \$350 per student which covers room, board and tuition for the 2 ½ day schools. Scholarships of \$175 are available for most ranchers and eligible college students.

The West or Mid & Short Grass School is scheduled for August 7-9 at Ringneck Ranch near Tipton, KS (Google “Ringneck Ranch Pheasant Hunting” for directions). The East or Tallgrass School is scheduled for August 21-23 at Camp Wood YMCA near Elmdale, KS.

The theme for both schools this year is ***“Managing Challenges, Opportunities or Disasters for Successful Ranching”***. There will be rancher and expert panels that will talk about how to plan for droughts, disasters like wildfires, and how to care for your greatest ranching asset, your native grasslands.

Besides learning plant identification, how to figure stocking rates, how to monitor vegetation response, write a drought mitigation plan (and use it), and the rest of basics needed to manage your rangeland, there will be ranchers and natural resource professionals talking with you about how to plan ahead for whatever nature or market forces bring to your ranching enterprise and how to respond to keep your rangeland health high and your livestock productive.

Learn more at our website, KGLC.org or email barth.crouch@gmail.com or call 785-452-0780 **but please register before July 23rd.**

Do make this the year you attend the Kansas Range School near you! And bring your neighbor along!

CONSERVATION DISTRICT OFFERS SCHOLARSHIP TO ATTEND KANSAS RANGE SCHOOL

Barber County Conservation District is offering a scholarship for a Barber County rancher, land manager, or range management student to attend the 2018 West or Mid & Short Grass School, August 7-9 at Ringneck Ranch near Tipton, KS. Please contact the Conservation Office at 620-886-5311 for more information. Registration to attend must be made before July 23rd.

Cost Share Programs

By: Wyatt Sperry

Over the course of the year, there are many options available for help with the installation of conservation practices. These can range from the conservation district's state cost share programs to the NRCS's General EQIP.

With each of the available programs, producers are eligible to receive financial and technical assistance to implement structural and management conservation practices that optimize environmental benefits on working agricultural land. Applications are accepted year round, but do have cutoff deadlines to be considered for a particular year's funding.

After the wildfire that went through part of the county in March of 2016, the conservation district and NRCS worked closely in forming a program called the Anderson Creek Wildfire Initiative, with various practices, that targeted those affected by the fire to help clear out the many cedar trees that were burnt. NRCS committed two million dollars over four years to help address those resource concerns. We just went through the 2nd year of obligations, and had many people sign up. If your farm went through the fire and you have burnt trees that you would like to see about removing, there are two more years to take advantage of the potential funding. We will take application year round and work with you in putting something together that works for everyone.

We also still have a Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) between NRCS and The Nature Conservancy. This program promotes coordination between NRCS and its partners to deliver conservation assistance to producers and landowners, with the installation and maintenance of conservation practices in selected project areas. The program this year has a project area that includes some of the most intact grazing lands remaining in Kansas and Oklahoma, that provides a critical habitat for a number of rare and sensitive species. The project aims to help improve wildlife habitat and reduce the spread of invasive species.

Also available is the Conservation Stewardship Program. This program will help with the implementation of conservation activities that will help your entire operation. Most people are already implementing conservation practices, and this program will help with enhancements for those practices. You are required to maintain the stewardship level of the resource concerns you are already meeting, plus meet or exceed at least one additional resource concern in each land use by the end of the contract.

These are just a few of the programs available to producers and landowners. If you would like to find out more information, or would like to find out if there is a program that would work best for you, please call or stop in the office.

Following are cost-share funding dollars that have been allocated in Barber County this fiscal year.

Anderson Creek Wildfire Initiative (ACWI)

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 5 contracts obligated | \$295,967 |
| 3 contracts going through modification to add | \$372,484 |
| \$2 million available over 4 years, currently getting ready for 3 rd year sign up | |

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) with The Nature Conservancy (TNC)

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| 6 obligated applications | \$395,132 |
|--------------------------|-----------|

Funding leftover for future sign-up

General Environmental Quality Incentive Program – EQIP

26 applications received – funding available for:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| 1 grazing lands | \$47,493 |
| 1 soil health (crop) | \$50,862 |
| 1 monarch butterfly (monarch habitat) | \$1,604 |
| 2 water quality (crop) | \$24,299 |

12 will be deferred to FY19

State Cost Share Programs

| | |
|--|----------|
| Water Resources Cost Share Program (WRCSP) | \$15,066 |
| Non-Point Source Pollution Control Program (NPS) | \$9,690 |

2018 Omnibus Bill Nixes DUNS and SAM Requirements for Farmers

SALINA, Kansas—April 26, 2018— Effectively immediately, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) financial assistance program participants will no longer need Dun and Bradstreet's Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number, or to register in the System for Award Management (SAM). The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018 (2018 Omnibus Bill), signed by President Donald Trump on March 23, eliminated these requirements.

According to U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue, DUNS and SAM were designed for billion-dollar government contractors, not everyday farmers trying to support their families. These changes help streamline the customer experience of farmers, which is a top priority at USDA, he said.

For Kansas farmers and ranchers, the district conservationist at their local USDA service center is the key contact for more information," said Damarys Mortenson, Kansas NRCS Acting State Conservationist. "Also, for current conservation program participants, they will soon receive letters from their local NRCS office with more details."

The exemption does not apply to any current or future agreements or federal contracts with eligible entities, project sponsors, vendors, partners, or other nonexempt landowners or producers.

DUNS/SAM registration is still required for:

- Partnership agreements entered through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP).
- All agreements with eligible entities under the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP)
- Agreements under the Agricultural Land Easement (ALE) component of ACEP.
- Partnership agreements under the Wetland Reserve Enhancement Program (WREP) component of ACEP-Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE).
- Watershed operations agreements with project sponsors.
- Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program agreements with project sponsors, including Recovery and Floodplain Easements.
- All cooperative, contribution, interagency, or partnership agreements of Federal contracts used by NRCS to procure goods or services.

NRCS advises participants in its programs to ignore any emails, phone calls, or other communications from third-party vendors offering assistance for registering in SAMS or applying for a DUNS number. To find a service center near you, check on the Internet at offices.usda.gov.

ANOTHER SPRING WILDFLOWER TOUR IN THE BOOKS...

The District held its 33rd Spring Wildflower Tour on May 12 with 51 guests enjoying the day.

So many volunteers help to make the tour a success—tour guides, food servers, cleaner-uppers, and registration table girls. Many area newspapers help promote the tour at no cost, as well as KREJ radio. We appreciate the cooperation of "Yur Place", USD 254, and the generous support of Gyp Hills Guest Ranch. Special thanks this year to our funding sponsors:

The Nature Conservancy
Comanche Pool Prairie Resources Foundation
Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, & Tourism
Kansas Grazing Lands Coalition
Sharp Brothers Seed Company



Guides identified a wildflower we had not seen on our past tours—Steven's Nama

Is Soil Health Important On Range Sites?

By Carl Jarboe, Soil Conservation Technician

You bet it is. Last newsletter we I talked about the meaning of soil health and we included a picture showing the root system difference of closely grazed grass and taller grasses that were managed better. If you remember, it is amazing how the closely grazed grass loses root system while grasses grazed moderately have many more roots. How important is this to soil health?

To review “Soil Health” as defined it is the capacity of a soil to maintain its function and flow of ecosystems services given a specific set of physical, chemical, and environmental boundaries. That’s a mouth full but very important to understand. There are four basic principles to maintain and improve soil health.

Plant diversity increases soil diversity.

Your pastures and range sites have a plant community made up of many different grasses and forbs. They grow where conditions are right for each species. Deeper soils usually have deeper rooted plants while thinner soils are often covered with plants that can tolerate thin soils. You can’t expect to grow big bluestem for example in shallow soils, at least not to any quantity. The forbs, wildflowers or weeds, depending on how you see things, are a very important part of plant diversity. They are what your cattle are eating along with the grasses to meet their nutritional needs. This diversity is what holds the soil in those poor sites. Resist the urge to spray “Weeds” in your pastures. Of course there are certain weeds that need some control. We will talk about those in another article.

Manage soils by disturbing them less.

Disturbance happens in many ways. Compaction by high traffic of livestock and equipment will reduce the soils ability to take up water and usually change the diversity to a few species often with a few bad ones included such as Horsenettle, which is prominent this year. The disturbance can lead to erosion as well. Maybe your ranch would have less erosion by adding some water bars to divert water from trails to help slow soil loss and avoid deep cuts.

Keep plants growing throughout the year.

Actively growing plants support the soil biology like mycorrhizal activity. Keeping the ground covered and having growing plants for as much of the season as you can will improve soil health. There may be some things you can do to help the soil biology and gain more forage through interseeding. This is becoming a more common practice east of Barber County, in wetter climates. I will try to write about interseeding pastures to improve grazing opportunities in the next newsletter.

Keep the soil covered as much as possible.

This is so important to help prevent soil loss. Some of your disturbed sites with little cover might be helped by unrolling a round bale on it this winter when you are feeding. This will help prevent erosion and provide a good method to get the biology working for you. Cow manure and old hay are a great start to improving soil health and makes a pretty good seed bed for some over seeding. Litter also keeps soil temps down and helps reduce evaporation loss of water.

LIVESTOCK PIPELINE MAINTENANCE

By Martin W. Gugelman
NRCS Civil Engineering Technician

A properly designed and installed livestock pipeline can become out of sight and out of mind. When operated as designed, the tanks at the end just magically sit full of water, ready for your livestock to drink. With some periodic maintenance, this can be the scenario for many years to come.

A good maintenance plan should include inspection of the trench for settlement or erosion—each spring and fall, and after any significant rainfall event. If settlement or erosion occurs in the trench and is not backfilled, the pipe could settle and break, or freeze and break in the winter. Either of these things will prove far more costly to repair than backfilling the trench as needed. Backfill the trench to a level slightly above the natural ground as this will allow for settlement of the fresh soil. Make sure to not create water flow issues that could cause erosion. Reseed all disturbed areas. Other important items to inspect include air vents, pressure regulators, pumps, switches, and other appurtenances. These should be inspected to insure that they are not damaged or leaking and there are no obstructions that could inhibit their proper operation.

During this inspection, it would also be a good time to inspect the well and tank sites. The well should be checked for leaks or other damage to ensure that it is operating at the appropriate pressure. The tank sites should be inspected to assure that the tanks or escape ramps have not been damaged and that the float or overflow is operating as planned.

The area surrounding the tank should be maintained according to the original design to prevent ponding or erosion due to livestock traffic and rain events. The fencing around the well and/or tanks should also be inspected to ensure that it will prevent animal damage as planned. Any rodent damage in or around these areas should also be corrected.

These few maintenance items should take a small amount of time each year and could save a lot of time and money, as well as extend the life of your livestock pipeline system.

Please contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office or conservation district office located at your local county U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Service Center (listed in the telephone book under United States Government or on the internet at offices.usda.gov) for assistance. More information is also available on the Kansas Web site at www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov. Follow us on Twitter @NRCS_Kansas. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Conservation Program Funds Now Available

By Jess Crockford

SW Regional Coordinator—Kansas Prescribed Fire Council



“There’s A New Sheriff in Town!” No, maybe not, but there is a new source of conservation program funding available for area producers. The Comanche Pool Prairie Resource Foundation (CPPRF) in partnership with the Kansas Wildlife Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) are pooling funds from a private conservation donation with other funding sources to provide conservation work in parts of Meade, Clark, Kiowa, Comanche and Barber Counties. Funds will also be available soon for work in parts of Oklahoma. The partnership has managed to put together approximately \$2,000,000 in funding to provide conservation work in the focal area. The land treatment is targeted towards those practices that benefit lesser prairie chicken habitat. The practices currently available are brush management (both mechanical and chemical), rangeland planting, livestock deferment, prescribed fire, upland wildlife management, and woody residue treatment.

KDWPT, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and Kansas Prescribed Fire Council (KPFC) staff will assist interested landowners in determining the best possible practices to accomplish the goals of the landowner and the program. Staff will assist landowners to put together land treatment plan that helps to reduce the fragmentation of native rangeland and improves the vegetative composition and structure for wildlife and livestock. If you have an interest in learning more about this program, please, contact: Zac Eddy with KDWPT (620)672-0788, Aron Flanders with USFWS (620)794-1036 or Jess Crockford with KPFC (620)664-4882.

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.

The Conservation District will have a booth at the Barber County Fair again this year. There will be a display featuring the 2018 Conservation Poster Contest theme—“Watersheds—Our Water, Our Home”. We will have handouts, old fashioned duck races, and cotton candy. Be sure to come out to the Barber County Fair to support your community and encourage those hard working 4-H kids!

Hardtner, KS July 26-29, 2018



BARBER COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
800 W THIRD AVE
MEDICINE LODGE, KS 67104

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

PRSRST STD
U.S. Postage Paid
USDA Service Center
Permit No. 1
Medicine Lodge, KS 67104

THIS SPACE IS AVAILABLE FOR ADVERTISING

RANCHLAND
Development, Inc.

Roland Spencer
Owner

- Cedar Tree Clearing
- Land and Pasture Clearing
- Farm and Ranch Excavation
- Prescribed Burning
- Spraying
- Fencing

(785) 483-0329 Cell PO Box 613 Winfield, Ks. 67156 (580) 328-5411 Taloga, OK. (620) 221-2200 Winfield, KS.

www.ranchlanddevelopment.com stewards@ranchlanddevelopment.com



RANCHLAND
Development, Inc.

(800) 324-0042
www.ranchlanddevelopment.com

DOZERS • SCRAPERS • EXCAVATORS • LOADERS

Simpson Dirt Construction

Roger L. Simpson
Medicine Lodge, KS
620-886-0300

M. Bryan Simpson
Pratt, KS
620-672-1633

BITTER CREEK RANGE MANAGEMENT

- Cedar Tree Removal
- Control Burn Fire Guards



OWNER – Robert Larson
(620) 886-9822
cell: (620) 886-0776

Stump Spray Equipped - Controlled Burn Fire Guard
Prep work - All Types of Skid Steer Work Available

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex (including gender identity and expression), marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD)."