

# WATER WISDOM NEWSLETTER

## MIAMI COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

June 2006

### **Cost Share Sign-up Underway**

The Miami County Conservation District administers two cost-share programs designed to conserve soil and protect water quality. The initial sign-up for these cost share funds is during the months of June and July. It is important landowners make application during the initial sign-up period for all practices they plan to construct during the period of July 1, 2006 – June 30, 2007. Funds are limited. The applications will be ranked as to their benefits to water quality beginning at the July board meeting and each monthly meeting thereafter. To be eligible for cost-share assistance, landowners must receive approval prior to starting construction.

In addition to funding for erosion control projects on cropland, the funds from these programs can be used for livestock waste projects, plugging abandoned wells, upgrading failed septic systems, clean up of abandoned dumpsites, pasture management, and riparian protection.

Funds for the Nonpoint Cost-Share and Water Resources Cost Share programs are provided by the State Conservation Commission through a grant from the State Water Plan Fund.

The watershed you live in can make a difference on the cost-share funding available to you. Special funds have been allocated to manage certain pollutants in the high priority areas of the county. Using your legal description we can quickly identify what cost-share funds are available to you.

### **Program Requirements**

There are specific requirements to be eligible for cost-share.

- ***You must have a signed and approved contract before construction begins.***
- All practices must be completed to required specifications
- Practices for water supply or cross fencing for pasture management must be on pastures of at least 40 acres with a grazing management plan developed.
- Cost share for septic upgrades is only available if the failed system is within 500 feet of a stream or near a well used for household water supply.

## **\$200,000 Grant Coming to the Marais des Cygnes Basin**

Herschel George, Watershed Specialist for the MdC Basin and Keri Harris, District Manager for the Franklin County Conservation District began working together in the spring of 2005 on a grant proposal to obtain \$200,000 in EPA section 319 grant funds through KDHE for use as Watershed Restoration And Protection Strategy (WRAPS) implementation funding to address water quality issues in the Marais des Cygnes Basin.

Herschel and Keri have taken on this project which has been labeled "MdC WRAPS Grant: Livestock Projects" and they will continue to act as the project coordinators as the grant is implemented across the basin during the next year.

Grant dollars will be available to producers within the MdC Basin, which spans 13 counties in eastern Kansas. The funds will be used as cost share assistance dollars for various water quality improvement projects directly related to livestock production. Projects with best management practices that include relocation of feeding sites; waste collection, treatment and application; alternative water supplies; sediment basins; grass buffer areas; riparian fencing; spring development; along with others that will create a water quality benefit may be considered for funding.

Producers who are interested in applying for funds through the MdC WRAPS Grant: Livestock Projects may contact their local conservation district or county extension agent to complete a project proposal that will be submitted to the MdC WRAPS Grant: Livestock Projects ranking committee for review and possible approval.

Herschel has indication there are enough producers throughout the basin that will be interested in utilizing these grant funds that the \$200,000 will be allocated quickly; for that reason Herschel and Keri have already submitted a proposal to KDHE for a second year allocation of an additional \$200,000 that they hope to receive approval on next spring. For more information on this project contact Herschel at 913-294-6021 or Keri at 785-242-1109 ext 31



## **CRP Notes and Reminders:**

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is a voluntary program that helps farmers, ranchers and other agricultural producers protect their environmentally sensitive land. Producers enrolling in CRP plant long-term grasses, with Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) providing rental payments, cost-share and technical assistance.

### **Continous Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP)**

The CCRP program allows producers to enroll certain areas of land at anytime throughout the year. Filter strips along steams, field borders for quail habitat, and waterways have been the most popular practices installed in Miami County. As of the date of the last quarterly report, Miami County landowners had installed 365 acres of filter strips and 40 acres of riparian (tree) buffers along streams, 361 acres of quail habitat field borders and 27 acres of waterways. These landowners are helping protect our water supply sources. Will you do your part? These environmentally sensitive areas are often the least productive acres of a field but planted to cover provide excellent filtering benefits to protect water quality. Our Buffer Coordinator, Becky Hendrickson, is always willing to help answer your questions and help you plan your buffer and filter areas to improve your farming operation.



Above are examples of grass and riparian filter strips

### **Re-enrollment and Extension Options**

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) has notified certain CRP participants with contracts expiring in 2008-2010 if they are eligible for re-enrollment extensions. Re-enrollment to be completed by June 30.

Before approving a re-enrollment contract or an extended contract, FSA will review the contract to ensure that the required cover is maintained and there is compliance with other contract provisions.

### **CRP Maintenance Reminder**

All CRP and CRP fields, should be checked for noxious weeds such as Musk Thistles, Johnsongrass, Field Bindweed, and Sericea Lespedeza. Noxious weeds must be controlled on all CRP fields to stay in compliance and be eligible for USDA program benefits. Timing of mowing can vary in accordance to the type and establishment of the grass. Refer to your CRP plan or contact the local NRCS office for further information.

## Winter feeding sites impact water quality and provide stable fly habitat

Joel DeRouchey, livestock specialist and Herschel George, watershed specialist

The use of temporary feeding sites during winter and early-spring months is a common practice among beef producers to supply supplemental forage and offer protection from harsh weather. While these sites are commonly used, often producers do not recognize how these sites, although small in size, can impact the surrounding environment, specifically surface water quality and stable fly production. To reduce those impacts feeding sites must be cleaned in a timely manner.

Researchers at KSU have trapped flies emerging from winter feeding sites and estimate more than 1 million stable flies can emerge from a single hay ring feeding site.

Why is this important? The economic threshold for a reduction in weight gain for cattle is five stable flies per leg. Obviously, if winter feedings sites are not properly managed and cleaned in the spring, flies may be a nuisance for the summer grazing period resulting in reduced profitability.

First, producers should prevent large accumulations of residue and moisture at the feeding site. Although research data is lacking practical recommendations may include the following:

- Periodic movement of feeder location.
- Rolling hay out in different locations throughout the pasture.
- Grinding hay helps prevent sorting by the animal, which decreases waste.
- Avoid overfeeding regardless of feeding method to prevent trampling of hay, which becomes stable fly habitat once mixed with manure.
- Avoid rolling out poor quality or rotted hay that will not be eaten.
- Feeding locations should have adequate drainage to prevent moisture accumulation surrounding the feeder. However, runoff from these sites should not enter open surface water.

Secondly, if residue levels can not be minimized, thorough cleanup and removal of residue is necessary. Fecal bacteria can live in the wasted hay and manure mixture for the remainder of the summer. Since the majority of runoff and fly production occurs in April, May and early June, the site must be cleaned and waste disposed of before or during this time.

Dispose of the waste by:

- **Spreading.** By cleaning and spreading the material over a larger land area, the material will dry and be exposed to sunlight, thus killing the fecal bacteria.
- **Piling and composting.** Composting generates heat and kills fecal bacteria and prevents their use as a larvae food source. This may be a practical alternative to complete removal of material. The pile must be turned after a couple weeks of initial composting to incorporate the outside material.
- **Burning.** As the majority of the residue can be from wasted hay, producers may be able to dispose of the material by burning. However, moisture content of the residue may limit the effectiveness of this option in certain years. Dry environmental conditions also may limit burning opportunities.

The most economical way to decrease environmental impacts is simply to place the temporary sites at least 100 ft away from surface water. In most situations, this allows a vegetative buffer to be maintained between the feeding location and the water source. Vegetative buffers are extremely effective in reducing the nutrient and bacteria levels in runoff before entering surface water. Producers should evaluate their traditional feeding sites and determine how to reduce negative environmental impacts.

For additional information, contact Leanne Stevenson at the Miami County Research and Extension Office at 913-294-4306 or Herschel George, K-State Research and Extension Watershed specialist, [HGeorge@ksu.edu](mailto:HGeorge@ksu.edu) or 913-294-6021.

The following non discrimination provision is being complied with and has been included in revisions of basic memorandums of understanding between the District and the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service. "The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

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**Conservation E-Mail**

If you would like to receive our newsletters by email, please send us your email address. E-mail your request to: *linda.prothe@ks.nacdnet.net*

Eventually the district would like to do most of the newsletters this way, to save on postage costs, as well as reduce the use of paper products.

**Miami County Conservation District**

The Miami County Conservation District is a local entity of state government, operated by a locally elected board of supervisors. Our agency is housed in the same USDA building as the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and the Farm Services Agency (FSA) at 100 N. Angela, Paola. Board meetings are held the fourth Monday of each month and are open to the public. Call 913-294-3751 Extension 3 for other information.

**Board of Supervisors:**

Harrison McCallop	Chairman
John Vickers	Vice Chairman
Kenny Nelson	Treasurer
Jim Meinig	Member
Rick Shay	Member

Auxiliary/Advisors: Annalee Nelson, Dolly McCallop, Nettie Vickers, Suzie Shay, Linda Meinig

**District Personnel:**

Jenny Jasper	District Manager
Linda Prothe	NPS Coordinator
Becky Hendrickson	Project Coordinator
Jim Bracken	Drill Technician

**Natural Resource Conservation Service:**

Gary Bruner	District Conservationist
Raegan Ball	Soil Conservationist
Bob Allen	Conservation Technician

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**Miami County Conservation District**  
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