

# WATER WISDOM NEWSLETTER

## MIAMI COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

March 2006

### **What practices needs to be done on your farm?**

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 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. 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.

### **General CRP Signup**

Farm Service Agency announced that a general CRP sign-up will be held this spring. Farmers and ranchers will be able to make offers for CRP. General sign-up runs from March 27, 2006, through April 14, 2006, at your local FSA offices. Offers for general sign-up will be evaluated based on five environmental factors (wildlife, water, soil, air and enduring benefits) and cost.

CRP is a voluntary program that helps farmers, ranchers and other agricultural producers protect their environmentally sensitive land. Producers enrolling in CRP plant a long-term grass cover. FSA is responsible for payments, cost-share, and technical assistance. Stop by and talk to Adam Stuteville, Program Technician with FSA for more details and to sign up.

### **Important Dates:**

March 27 to April 14, General CRP sign up

### **Quail Habitat Field Border Program**

The CCRP program of planting native grass strips along the edges of fields has no available acres at this time. Kansas used the allotted 20,000 acres as of February 7. We have requested more acres but are waiting to see if we get them. At this time we are still taking applications, as we wait to see if we get the extra acres.

### **Miami County Buffer Facts**

- There are 32 Quail Habitat Field Borders contracts covering 361 acres.
- Nearly \$21,000 in filter strip payments is paid annually.
- There are 73 filter strip contracts containing 365 acres of land. Is one of them yours?
- There are 9 riparian forest contracts covering 40 acres.
- There are 7 waterway contracts that include 27.1 acres.

### **GRASS WATERWAYS**

Are you in need of some waterways? Consider building CCRP Waterways. Waterways are usually constructed where natural watercourses occur, that are shaped and planted with suitable vegetation to protect soil from erosion. Grass waterways can help heal gullies and washouts, and greatly reduce loss of topsoil and sedimentation of streams, ponds and lakes.

The minimum width of a waterway will vary from site to site. Per acre rental rates are based on the soil rental rate of the area enrolled plus an additional 20% incentive and maintenance payment. Up to 50% of the cost of installation will be reimbursed after the waterway has been installed. Plus you will get an additional 80% of the cost share payment for Practice Incentive Payment. For enrolling land in this program you will also receive a Signup Incentive Payment of \$100-\$150 per acre enrolled. This enrollment lasts for 10 or 15 years. The waterways can not be baled for hay or grazed.

## Weed Control for CCRP ground

Keeping noxious weed under control is a must in the CCRP filter strip, quail habitat program, and the riparian forest buffer programs. Please scout your fields for problem areas. Below is an article from Leanne Stevenson at the Miami County Extension Office explaining what chemicals can be used and the timing to use them to help control various noxious weeds.

Weed control can be a challenging task particularly if the weeds you are wanting to control are on the noxious weed list and in conservation buffers or conservation reserve program (CRP) acres. The weeds on the Kansas noxious weed list didn't get there because they are easy to control. These weeds are ones that are very invasive and tenacious. The Kansas Noxious Weed Law requires all persons and organizations to control the spread of and to eradicate these weeds on all lands owned or supervised by them.

There are two noxious weeds that are often a concern in conservation plantings with a third one on the increase. Musk thistle and Johnsongrass have been a problem our whole lives, but sericea lespedeza is a relatively new problem.

Early identification and implementation of control strategies before the weed is firmly established is vital. Once conservation acres are planted, they usually get very little attention. This is a prime opportunity for noxious weeds to invade. The first year or two after planting buffers or CRP acres is the most critical for noxious weed scouting.

If you do find noxious weeds in your conservation acres, the first thing you should do is make contact with the conservation office. Limitations for herbicide application vary depending on the type of conservation program you are enrolled.

The 2006 Chemical Weed Control for Field Crops, Pastures, Rangeland and Non-cropland publication includes a list of chemicals that can be used to control noxious weeds. Another handout is available that covers tree, shrub and noxious weed control. Remember, it is **YOUR** responsibility as a chemical applicator to read and follow all label precautions and instructions. Also, please be mindful to follow all the precautionary statements so that you, your family and the environment are protected.

Leanne have three recommendations for

controlling Johnsongrass chemically:

1) Patches can be controlled by spraying the foliage with 2% glyphosate during June when the plants are actively growing and about 18 inches tall. Care should be taken to avoid contacting nontarget plants, since glyphosate is a nonselective herbicide.

2) In some dense stands you may want to get a wick applicator and use the concentration recommended for wick application of a glyphosate herbicide. Make sure the wick is only applying chemical to the Johnsongrass plants.

3) Plateau may be used also. The rate will vary with the age of the grass stand in the conservation planting and the susceptibility of other plants in the planting. Refer to the label. Both chemicals work best with an adjuvant. Refer to the specific product label for rate and adjuvant recommendation. For both herbicides, treatment may need to be repeated for several years to ensure good control. Translocation to the nodes at the ends of the rhizomes is not consistent.

For controlling musk thistle in this situation, the best treatment would be to manually cut the thistle just below the ground to kill the plant. Optionally, I would recommend late fall chemical treatment with 2,4-D LVE at 2 lb/Acre. Treat in the spring before the perennial forbs begin growth with 2,4-D at 1.5 lb AE/Acre.

For control of sericea lespedeza spot spray when the plants are growing actively in the vegetative stage in June with 1 to 2 pt Remedy per acre. In September after bud/bloom stage until first frost use 0.5 to 1 oz Escort XP.

For control methods to be effective with noxious weeds, growers must be diligent and apply control techniques as often as necessary. This will not be a one-time treatment. The main thing to remember is to keep the noxious weeds from producing more seed.

With all the chemicals that you may apply, there will still be some plants that are missed that will produce seed. Cut and remove all Johnsongrass panicles, musk thistle heads and cut off sericea plants from August till the frost to keep seed from spreading.

To receive a copy of the publications mentioned or any additional information call Leanne Stevenson at the Miami County Extension Office at 913-294-4306, or call Becky Hendrickson Buffer Coordinator at 913-294-3751 ext. 106.

## **Managing Cattle Areas in Spring Eases Odor, Insect Problems**

With the days growing longer and spring just around the corner, cattle producers can take steps now to mitigate some of the odor and insect problems that warmer weather brings, a Kansas State University scientist said.

"Producers can clean feedlots or areas of manure accumulation during the next couple of months before spring planting and grass green-up begin," said Joel DeRouchey, livestock production specialist with K-State Research and Extension.

Confined feeding pens and temporary wintertime feeding sites are prime contributors to odor emissions if not properly cleaned and maintained, he explained.

Also, fly production from such sites is much greater when manure and wasted feed are present. For livestock, this can create a nuisance and a potential reduction in animal performance for the remainder of the summer.

## **Test First to Avoid Wasting Fertilizer**

Many otherwise-good farmers are ignoring a major reason for periodic soil testing: To find out when they do not need to apply certain kinds of fertilizer.

"Nitrogen normally gets used up every year. But, most of the Kansas crop land samples that go through our testing lab at K-State show more than adequate levels of both phosphorus and potassium. Those nutrients are the P and K in traditional N-P-K fertilizers," said Ward Upham, horticulturist with Kansas State University Research and Extension.

In crop land with adequate P and K, applying a fertilizer that contains phosphorus and potassium would be a waste of money, Upham said. It also could be a source of groundwater pollution.

"In extreme cases, excess phosphorus can interfere with plants' uptake of micronutrients," he said. Upham recommends that farmers submit soil samples for testing every three to five years.

"You begin by taking a representative sample about 6 to 8 inches deep from several locations in the field. Then mix the samples together in a clean container. Take about 1 cup of soil from that mix and put it in a sealable plastic bag. After that, send the bag to a testing lab. Or, if you live in Kansas, take it to a local Extension office to have the tests done at K-State for a small fee," Upham

## **Forestry Tour to Highlight Landowners Tree Planting Practices**

The Marais des Cygnes Watershed Riparian Initiative's May 9th Tree Planting and Weed Control Tour in Linn County highlights best management practices along streams to improve water quality at landowners' Robert Fry and Roger Hood tree planting site.

The tour runs from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., kicking off at the property Southwest of LaCygne. The tour is free and includes refreshments for registered participants. Brochures with maps and tour agenda are available at your local Conservation District or Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) office.

Ryan Neises, Kansas Forest Service watershed forester, said the event will be beneficial for all landowners interested in planting trees and controlling the competing vegetation in their established forested sites along streams, also known as riparian areas.

The Marais des Cygnes Basin Riparian Initiative grant has cost-share funding opportunities for tree plantings, best management practices and timber stand improvement projects along stream banks to improve water quality and provide an economic and wildlife improvement outlet for eligible basin landowners.

To register, contact the Lake Region Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Office, 107 East 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, Suite 4, Ottawa, KS 66067 at 785-242-2073. Persons with special accommodations are asked to state these at time of registration. Participants are reminded to dress according to the weather, as the tour will take place rain or shine.

The Marais des Cygnes Riparian Initiative is made possible through an Environmental Protection Agency Section 319 Clean Water Act Nonpoint Source Pollution grant administered through the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

The grant sponsor is Lake Region RC&D Council. Initiative joint partners with Lake Region RC&D are Kansas Forest Service and Hillsdale Water Quality Project.

For more information, call Ryan Neises, watershed forester, at (785) 242-2073 or via e-mail at [rneises@ksu.edu](mailto:rneises@ksu.edu).

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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## IT'S Your District!

The Miami County Conservation District is a tax supported sub-division of State Government. The service it provides is governed by the board of supervisors elected by you, the voting public.

### **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:**

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

### **Natural Resource Conservation Service:**

Gary Bruner	District Conservationist
Coleen Davison	Soil Conservationist
Bob Allen	Conservation Technician

*"Water Wisdom" is financed by a grant from the State Conservation Commission Non Point Source Pollution Control Fund and the State Water Plan Fund.*

**Miami County Conservation District**  
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