



Resources



Riley County Conservation District

Summer 2017 Newsletter

www.rileycountyks.gov/conservationdistrict

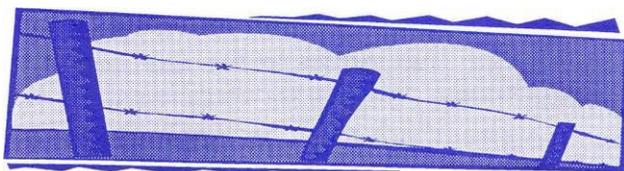
Volume 24, Issue 2

Sign Up in June for Cost Share Funds for Water Resources and Non-Point Source Pollution Control Practices

The Kansas Department of Conservation (DOC) will soon adopt their FY 2018 budget and allocate state funds to the county conservation districts to cost share on highest priority projects such as those listed below. **The Riley County Conservation District will accept applications from landowners for these cost share funds from June 1st through June 30th, 2017.**

The **Water Resources Cost Share Program** assists with:

- Terraces
- Grassed waterways
- Livestock ponds
- Livestock waste structures
- Critical area plantings
- Diversions
- Feedlot or field windbreaks
- Dry hydrants
- Riparian fencing (fencing livestock away from stream)
- Pasture and hay land planting
- Spring developments
- Establishing streamside buffers
- Livestock wells
- Wetland development or restoration
- Cross fencing



Water Resources projects are best discussed in person with Aubrey Evans or Kevin Religa. Please

call Aubrey or Kevin at (785) 537-8764 ext 301 or 303 to arrange a short meeting.

The work under these contracts must be completed this fall or winter or the funding will be lost. It will be important to have a definite schedule and a contractor lined up to complete the work quickly.



The **Non-Point Source Pollution Control Program** funds assist with:

- On-site wastewater systems (repairing or replacing failed septic systems or lagoons - **these funds are only available for currently and continuously occupied homes** – not for empty homes nor for new home construction)
- Abandoned water well plugging
- Soil testing
- Livestock waste systems
- Riparian fencing (fencing livestock away from a stream)
- Livestock watering and pasture and rangeland management – which can include alternative water sources, cross fencing, native grass seeding and other practices

NPS projects are best discussed with Aubrey Evans at (785) 537-8764 ext 301, and a preliminary application may be completed by phone.

Only this one signup is planned for the fiscal year.

Applications for these cost share funds which are received by June 30th will be evaluated, scored and presented to the RCCD Board for approval.

It is anticipated that the first round of awards will be made in mid July, for **construction beginning after the awards.**

Please note that cost share funds are not available for work which is started before approval by the DOC and before a signed contract is in hand. So please call and discuss your project before beginning any work.

Cropland or Lawn & Garden Soil Testing



With the high cost of fertilizer, concerns for water quality and drinking water treatment costs, **you don't want to apply any more nutrients than are necessary.** Soil testing is available through the Riley County Extension Office at 110 Courthouse Plaza in Manhattan, at **70%** cost share, with a maximum of **10 tests per year per landowner for cropland, and 2 tests per year per landowner for lawn and garden** - until the limited cost share funds are expended.

Livestock Waste Systems

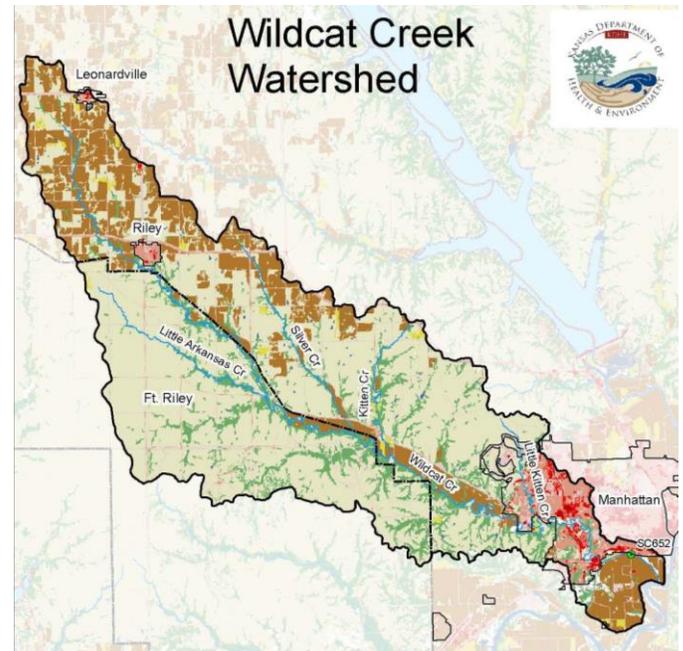
The RCCD may provide cost-share for livestock waste systems, and in certain cases the DOC may contribute additional funds, including design costs. EQIP funds may also be available for larger projects.

Funding provided by Division of Conservation, Kansas Department of Agriculture through appropriation from the Kansas Water Plan Fund. All programs and services are provided to anyone regardless of race, gender, color, national origin, religion, age, marital status or handicap.

Additional Funds May Be Available for Wildcat Creek Watershed

The District has grant funds to cost-share on **projects that would improve water quality in the Wildcat Creek watershed located west of Scenic Drive and above Manhattan.** This is a large area including Riley and reaching to Leonardville – see map. Eligible projects might include moving a feedlot or winter feeding area away from a creek, adding a spring tank or other water supply for livestock where a stream is the only current water source, seeding buffers or filter strips along a stream outside the Conservation Reserve Program, and possibly erosion control projects. Talk to

Aubrey or Kevin at (785) 537-8764 ext 301 or 303 if you have an idea for work within this watershed.



Ownership and Name Changes on Conservation Contracts

Please notify NRCS if you sell land that is under an EQIP or CSP contract, or if the land has been transferred to a trust, LLC, or partnership. Many landowners are changing ownership designation by creating trusts. Contract transfer paperwork needs to be completed for any of these changes to avoid contract violations and payment delays. Direct deposit banking information also needs to be updated. **Even if you notify FSA, you also need to notify NRCS separately** of any changes. Thank you.

Conservation Compliance and You By Kevin Religa, District Conservationist

If you are a USDA program participant any high-erodible cropland that you own and/or operate is subject to the Conservation Compliance Provisions of the 1985-2014 Farm Bills. Highly-erodible land (HEL) determinations were made from 1986-1990 on most cropland in Kansas. Highly-erodible land determinations are based on certain soil types and land slopes. Every year NRCS conducts compliance checks on a random number of farm tracts that are received from the Farm Service Agency producer database. Compliance checks consist of documenting any erosion concerns on HEL cropland, measuring terrace heights, evaluating terrace outlets and waterways, and documenting crop residue levels. If erosion issues are

found NRCS will work with you to get the situation resolved in a reasonable timeframe so an out-of-compliance situation does not happen.

With recent rains many terrace systems have failed and many waterways in the county are reaching the end of their 20 year lifespans and need rebuilt. I urge you not to wait or ignore erosion issues. That neglected ditch in that soybean field may cost you a tractor spindle or combine axle come harvest time. The Conservation District and NRCS have cost-share programs and technical assistance to help you solve those problems.



Attention EQIP Contract Holders

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contract holders are encouraged to **certify practice completion** as soon as the practices are completed.

Grassland practices such as prescribed burning, chemical brush control, aerial spraying, fencing, and mechanical brush control **should be certified within 30 days of completion**. Prescribed grazing and rotational grazing practices **should be certified no later than December 1st** of each year. **Cropland practices** such as no-till, nutrient management, and pest management **should be certified by August 1st** of each year.

Timely certification of practices avoids unnecessary delays in payments due to contract modifications and extensions, and saves time for all involved. **Call (785) 776-7582 ext 303 for Kevin Religa**, NRCS District Conservationist.

ENVIROTHON

48 teams of 4-5 students plus their teachers took part in Envirothon events recently. **Manhattan High School's Team took 4th place overall** at White Memorial Camp regional in Council Grove, KS. Their teacher is Mr. Noah Busch— **Congrats Indians!**

Top teams from each school participated in the **2017 Kansas Envirothon competition**, which was held near Claflin on April 26th. The Envirothon program is for students in grades 9 -12 who do fieldwork and compete in subject areas of Wildlife, Forestry, Soils, Aquatics, and the Current Environmental Issue. Riley County was represented at State by Manhattan High School, in their first state competition since 2014. **Thanks to our Riley County schools for supporting Envirothon!** We hope to see you out next year!



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Conservation Newsletter

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Kevin C. Religa,
District Conservationist
Lisa Wainwright,
Soil Conservation Technician
Alysia Towey,
Range Conservationist
Reese Wilkison,
Student Trainee

Riley County Conservation District Board meetings are generally held the second Thursday of each month -
(April-October at 7:30 PM, and November-March at 6:00 PM). The public is welcome to attend – please call to verify time of meeting.