CAPE GIRARDEAU COUNTY

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Lend a Helping Hand to Conservation of Land

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

NEWSLETTER

MDC Incentive for Establishing NWSG for Forage Production

The Missouri Department of Conservation Southeast Regional Coordination Team (SERCT) has announced a new incentive program which will provide additional financial assistance to establish Native Warm Season Grass (NWSG) in pasture and hay land systems. This is an effort by the SERCT, partnering with the local SWCD, to enhance forage systems and promote more wildlife friendly practices on local farms. Adding NWSG to a forage system not only improves summer forage availability but also provides nesting and brooding cover for a variety of wildlife species.

The incentive is an additional $100.00 per acre for planting an approved NWSG mix when installing a Pasture Seeding or Critical Area Seeding practice thru the Soil and Water Conservation Program. Approved mixes can include Big Bluestem, Indian Grass, Little Bluestem, Switchgrass, Side Oats Grama or Eastern Gamagrass. The practice limit per landowner is 30 acres and the planting must use Missouri Source Identified/Missouri Origin Seed. The practice must be completed by May 15, 2010.

For more information contact the local SWCD office or the MDC Private Land Conservationist in your county.

New Cost-Share Practices

Legislation was passed and signed by the Governor in June of 2009, which allows soil and water districts to address water quality practices as well as soil erosion across the state. With this change districts can now cost-share on both erosion control and water quality practices countywide. Prior to the passage of this legislation soil and water districts assistance with cost-share on water quality practices was limited to AgNPS SALT Projects (Agricultural Non-Point Source Pollution Special Area Land Treatment). These projects were by watersheds. Cape County has had two of these projects, Hubble Creek which ended in June 2007, and Byrd Creek which will not end until June 2015. A brief description of all available practices is listed below.

Permanent Vegetative Cover Establishment

Practice cost-shares on converting cropland to pastureland. Cost-share is available for seeding, fertilizer, and lime.

Permanent Vegetative Cover Critical Areas

The practice cost-shares on critical areas on farms which are susceptible to erosion or where runoff, carrying substantial amounts of a sediment, constitutes a significant pollution hazard, or where both exist. Cost-share is available for reshaping and reseeding the area.

Water Impoundment Reservoir (Pond)

Cost-share is available for farm land on which the construction of a water impoundment structure is necessary for erosion control in areas not in dense forest cover.

Sediment Retention, Erosion or Water Control Structure (Dry Structure)

Cost-share is available for specific problem areas on farms where runoff of substantial amounts of sediment, or runoff containing pesticides or fertilizers constitute, a significant pollution hazard.

Sod Waterways

Cost-share is available for farmland needing permanent sod waterways to safely convey excess surface runoff water in a manner that will reduce erosion.

Diversions

Cost-share is available for farmland subject to erosion from excess surface or subsurface water runoff where the problem can be corrected by such diversion facilities.

Planned Grazing System

Cost-share is available for pastureland where permanent vegetative cover is established and can be enhanced through the use of a planned grazing system. The landowner must follow an approved grazing system plan. The plan can include water development, water distribution, fencing, liming, and seeding. The landowner/operator must have attended an approved grazing school to be eligible for this practice.

Drainage Water Management

The purpose of this practice is to improve the soil environment and water quality by regulating the water table and ground water flows to increase nutrient uptake in cropland. The installation and operation of a water control structure should not impact adjacent fields or drainage systems. The landowner must be able to show crop history for three of the past five years. A wetland determination performed by NRCS has to be completed on the fields of interest prior to survey and design.

Nutrient Management

The purpose of this practice is to demonstrate the environmental and economic advantages of following a nutrient management plan and to provide operators an incentive to encourage the adoption of new management techniques and/or technologies for applying commercial fertilizer. An incentive is offered of $30 per acre up to $4,500 per year with a lifetime maximum of $13,500.

Pest Management

The purpose of this practice is to minimize chemical entry of contaminants to ground and surface water by properly following a pest management plan. The pest management plan should assist the producer in determining whether, when, and how an application of pesticides should occur for the crop. An incentive is offered of $15 per acre, not to exceed $2,500 per year, with a lifetime maximum of $7,500.

Sinkhole Treatment

The purpose of this practice is to improve the quality of recharge waters entering the groundwater system; improve chemical and nutrient management within sinkhole watersheds; and reduce soil erosion within sinkhole watersheds. Cost-share is available for fencing to exclude livestock from the designated area. Additionally, a one time out-of-production incentive payment is offered with a maximum of $300 per acre with a limit of $1,200 per sinkhole.

Spring Development

The purpose of this practice is to protect and enhance water quality through proper collection and distribution of the ground water resource in areas where livestock have free access to a spring or seep. The development will provide a dependable supply of suitable water for distribution. Cost-share is available for pipe and trenching, one distribution point (tank), and fencing.

Sinkhole Improvement

The purpose of this practice is to prevent or reduce erosion and prevent or reduce pollution of the land or water from agricultural or silvicultural nonpoint sources. Cost-share is available to address specific problem areas on farms where runoff to sinkholes cause gully erosion and carry substantial amounts of sediment or runoff containing pesticides or nutrients, which constitute a significant pollution hazard. The practice is limited to sinkholes having chronic drainage problems that cannot be alleviated by other reasonable alternatives. Cost-share is available for earthwork and shaping, pipe, concrete, risers, seed, fertilizer, and lime.

Field Border

The purpose of this practice is to protect water quality by trapping sediment, chemicals, and other pollutants and to reduce erosion from wind and water. Cost-share is available for the edges of crop fields and to connect other buffer practices within a field. The maximum width allowed is 60 feet with a minimum width of 20 feet. In addition, a one time out-of-production incentive payment may be authorized for $600 per acre.

Filter Strip

The purpose of this practice is to reduce erosion and prevent or reduce pollution of land or water from agricultural nonpoint sources. The practice is available on areas situated below cropland, hayland, or grazing land where sediment, nutrients, pesticides, and animal waste may leave these areas and enter environmentally sensitive areas. Filter strips have to be a minimum of 25 feet wide and a maximum width of 100 feet. In addition to cost share for establishing the filter strip, a one time out-of-production incentive of $1,000 per acre is offered.

Stream Protection

The purpose of this practice is to reduce excess amounts of sediment, organic material, nutrients, and pesticides in surface runoff and reduce excess nutrients and other chemicals in shallow ground water flow with a secondary benefit of streambank stabilization. The practice is for areas immediately adjacent to permanent or intermittent streams, streams containing perennial pools, or natural wetlands, where livestock have uncontrolled access for watering purposes. The minimum width of the excluded area must be 25 feet with a maximum width for the financial incentives 150 feet. In addition to the cost share to exclude the area, a one time out-of-production incentive of $500 per acre is offered.

Woodland Protection through Livestock Exclusion

The purpose of this practice is to protect soil and plant resources from grazing by domestic livestock. Cost-share is for existing woodland areas susceptible to excessive erosion due to livestock grazing. Cost-share is available for permanent field fencing to exclude livestock from woodland that lies within an existing functional interior or property line fence.

Use Exclusion

The purpose of this practice is to protect, maintain or improve the quality of the plant, soil, and water resources. Cost-share is available in areas where vegetative establishment and maintenance, soil condition, and water quality are in need of protection. Cost-share is available for permanent fence, including excluding livestock from an existing pond. In addition to cost-share, a $5 per acre, one time incentive is available.

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There are additional practices that are not yet available in Cape Girardeau County. If any of the practices listed below are of interest to you, please contact the office so that the necessary steps can be taken to possibly allow funding for these practices in the future. The practices that are **not** yet available to the county are as follows:

Permanent Vegetative Cover Improvement
Terrace Systems
Terrace Systems with Tile
Windbreak Shelterbelt Establishment
No-Till Systems
Permanent Vegetative Cover Enhancement
Irrigation System, Sprinkler
Irrigation System, Surface and Subsurface
Irrigation System, Tail Water Recovery
Irrigation Water Conveyance
Structure for Water Control
Waste Management Systems (Beef, Dairy, Poultry, Swine)
Waste Utilization
Composting Facility
Incinerator
Well Decommissioning
Riparian Forest Buffer
Streambank Stabilization
Forest Plantation
Timber Harvest Plans
Restoration of Skid Trails, Logging Roads, Stream Crossings and Log Landings

There are a lot of changes and everyone is learning new ways and new practices. Please be patient with us as we try to accommodate everyone's request for assistance on agricultural land. For more information, please contact the soil and water district office at 573-243-1467 ex3.

New USDA Conservation Program Makes New $$$ Available

The 2008 Farm bill created the new Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) to encourage producers to address resource concerns by improving, maintaining and managing existing conservation activities and completing addition activities. Through the new CSP farm owner/operators will be compensated for:

Installing and adopting additional conservation activities.
Improving, maintaining, and managing conservation activities already in place.
Adopting resource conservation crop rotation.

To be eligible producers must be an operator or owner/operator on the farm, as determined by the Farm Services Agency (FSA), must enroll their entire Ag operation, and be eligible for USDA Program benefits. Cape Girardeau County has three land uses that are eligible for CSP payments: cropland, pastureland, and non industrial private forestland. Annual payments will be for 5 years and based on a ranking score developed for each application. Ranking is based upon existing conservation and additional conservation activities that will be implemented. If accepted into CSP, payments will range from:

$12-22 per acre per year on Cropland
$7-14 per acre per year on Pastureland
$6-12 per acre per year on Non Industrial Private Forestland

The program is available nationwide and will enroll 12,769,000 acres each year from 2009 through 2017. Sign up is continuous but ranking periods for all applications will be held sometime through October and December for determining who is selected.

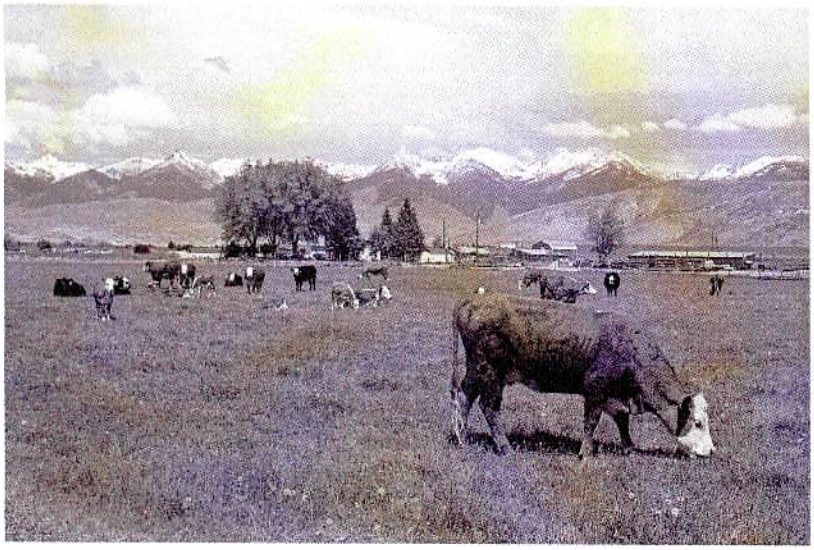
For more information and updates about CSP and other Farm Bill topics, please refer to the U.S. Department of Agriculture web site http://www.usda.gov/farmbill or the Natural Resources Conservation Service web site http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/csp or the Missouri NRCS web site http://www.mo.nrcs.usda.gov/programs. Interested producers can also contact the local NRCS office at 480 West Jackson Trail, Jackson MO 63755 or phone 573-243-1467 ext. 3.

GRAZING SCHOOL

BY: Derek Miesner
Byrd Creek SALT Technician

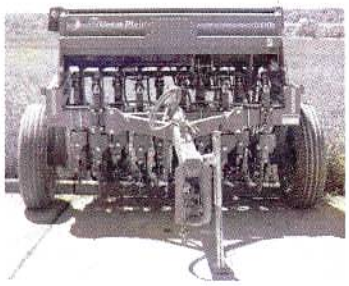
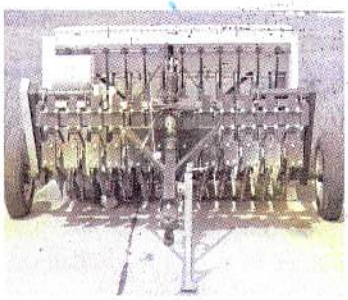
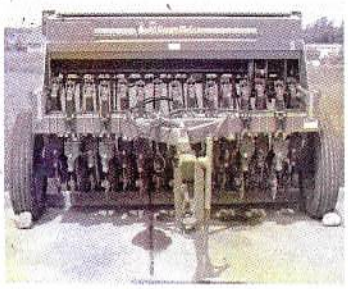
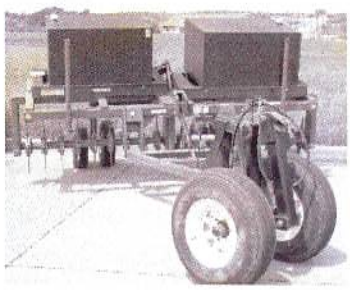
The grazing school on August 25th & 26th was a huge success with the school being full with 48 people attending, and 9 of those 48 being from the Byrd Creek Watershed. On the 25th the school started out with a presentation by Mark Kennedy, NRCS State Grassland Conservationist. He discussed the art and science of grazing and how flexibility is a must when you are first starting out. He also talked about some of the major costs that could be saved from stockpiling and strip grazing tall fescue. Then Patty Roth with the NRCS gave a short presentation on evaluating your farms resources, and why you must know your starting point before you can map your way to your destination. She gave everyone some very good starting points to think about, and how to use all of your existing facilities to lower starting costs. Mark Kennedy then gave a slide presentation on different fencing systems that are available for cattle, horses, and goats. He said that when you are just starting your grazing system electric fencing is always a good start because it is much easier to move and change then a permanent four strand barbed wire fence. He also talked about many of the products out there and which ones gave you the most bang for your buck. After that Mark Nussbaum, NRCS Area Engineer, gave a presentation on the most important part of a grazing system which is the watering system. He talked about the only way to have a successful grazing system is being able to deliver adequate amounts of quality drinking water to the right locations. He also showed how the utilization rate of the pasture decreased when the livestock had to travel more then 800-900 feet from their water source. After lunch we did a field visit to Rick Aufdenberg's farm to look at his current grazing system. His grazing system is made up of 24 paddocks on 147.8 acres of which 24.6 acres are currently planted in Caucasian Bluestem. Aufdenberg said that since he began his grazing system he is now able to produce more than double the pounds of forage, and emphasized the importance of adequate water distribution in all fields. He also says that by using the management-intensive grazing system, it allows for flexibility. The grazing system allows Aufdenberg the flexibility to work off-farm. We looked at his fencing and watering systems and he gave us some of the pros and cons of some of the different products he has tried. Patty Roth then demonstrated how to do a proper pasture evaluation to determine exactly how much forage is in a field. Mark Kennedy then showed us how to do some grazers arithmetic using the grazing stick that was provided to all who attended.

On day two we started with a presentation on plant nutrient management given by Gerald Bryan, crop specialist with the University of Missouri Extension. He discussed nutrient cycling and manure distribution in pastures and how to make your fertilizer pay you. Mark Kennedy then gave a presentation on forage diversity and plant growth and explained how almost any mainstream forage can be managed for quality feed. Some forage inherently contains more energy and protein than others, but nearly any can be managed to produce livestock products from pasture. After that Roger Eakins, livestock specialist from Cape County University of Missouri Extension, explained how to match livestock needs and their nutrition. He explained how grazing animals select the best quality forage that is available and will eat it first and then eat the less desirable, which is why it is very important to move the livestock. Ben Davis, MU Extension Livestock Specialist from St. Francois County, then gave a presentation on economics of forage and livestock management. He explained that with input prices at such high levels intensive grazing can improve reproductive efficiency, increase sales price, lower feed costs and other variable costs. Then to wrap it all up Mark Kennedy discussed layout and design of different grazing systems. He stressed again that grazing management strategies must be flexible, and that a lane between all the paddocks increases the ease of livestock movement and reduces stress on livestock and you. All in all I think that everyone who attended the grazing school walked away from it with many new ideas, and a lot of valuable knowledge.



FOR RENT NO TILL DRILLS & PASTURE RENOVATOR

The SWCD would like to remind everyone the District has a 10' Great Plains Drill and a 7' Great Plains Drill for rent along with a 8' Truax Drill (warm season grasses). The District also has a Rhino Pasture Renovator also available for rent. The 10' drill rents for $8/AC, the 7' drill rents for $7/AC, the 8' drill rents for $10/AC, and the renovator rents for $6/AC. If you would like to schedule either the drills or the renovator, please call 573-243-1467 ext 3.

WILDLIFE WAYS

DID YOU KNOW.....

More than 900 species of bats exist worldwide, accounting for about one quarter of all mammal species.

Fall Covey Headquarters Calendar

October: Conduct quail covey call census 45 minutes before sunrise on clear calm mornings.
Spray native grass planting for invading fescue and brome after a killing frost.
Eliminate fescue and brome from shrub thickets, woody draws, and fence lines after leaf drop.

November: Start your edge feathering operations – make new homes for quail.
Prepare ground for shrub plantings.
Order tree and shrub seedlings from the MDC nursery – www.mdc.mo.gov. Basal spray undesirable trees according to herbicide level now through March.