



Franklin County Conservation District Newsletter



VOL. 30 NO 1

SPRING 2016

Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District



Board of Supervisors



INVITES YOU TO ATTEND THE

72nd Annual Meeting

Thursday, March 17, 2016

Election will be held 4:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m.

Outstanding Farmer
Awards

Poster Contest
Awards

Knights of Columbus Hall
Highway 50 & Clearview Drive
Union, MO

Entertainment

Attendance Prizes

No Reservations Are Necessary!

Dan Brunjes

Dan Brunjes, Chairman

Bernard Laune

Bernard Laune, Vice-Chairman

Carl Danz

Carl Danz, Treasurer

John Helling

John Helling, Member

Matthew Herring

Matthew Herring, Secretary

**SECTION
OMITTED**

Understanding the Source & Benefits of the Soil & Water Conservation District Cost-Share Funding

By Theresa Dunlap, St. Charles County SWCD



Landowners at an SWCD workshop

Missouri's Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) employees have recently been asking cooperators (landowners participating in SWCD cost-share), if they are aware of the source of the money for the state cost-share program. Many of them have said they are not. Here is an explanation.

Missouri is Unique

There are soil and water districts all over the country, but Missouri is the only state with a state-wide sales tax dedicated to soil and water conservation. SWCDs were born out of the Dust Bowl era, when legislators realized that the future of American farming (and consequently, the ability to feed all Americans) depended on the protection of healthy soil and water resources. When farms fail, communities fall apart, and consumers pay more for scarcer products. The Midwest portion of the country, often referred to as the "bread basket", not only feeds Americans, but also many people around the world who depend on the health of farms in that region.

In 1984, Missouri voters approved a one-tenth-of-one-percent Parks, Soils, and Water sales tax to fund SWCD conservation efforts AND state parks, with one-half penny of every 500 dollars worth of sales funding 114 Missouri SWCDs.

State parks use the funds to protect land resources, and provide recreation opportunities. By preserving large swaths of land throughout the state, they are able to protect and preserve historic and natural places for all to enjoy.

SWCDs use the funds as financial incentives for landowners to implement conservation practices that help prevent soil loss, improve soil health, and protect water resources. Prior to the passage of the sales tax, Missouri had the second highest rate of erosion in the nation. Since then, the erosion rate has dropped more than any other state, with more than 148 million tons of soil kept on the land and out of waterways. Voters reauthorized the sales tax in 1988, 1996 and 2006. In Fiscal Year 2015, the Soil and Water Conservation Program funded more than \$2.44 million worth of projects throughout Missouri.



An example of erosion on a farm. This problem was solved by terracing the field.

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Cost-Share Practice Categories

“Cost-share” is the sharing of the cost of a conservation practice on agricultural land. There are seven categories of cost-share offered by the Soil and Water Conservation Program.

- Sheet/Rill and Gully Erosion
- Grazing Management
- Irrigation Management
- Animal Waste Management
- Nutrient and Pest Management
- Sensitive Areas
- Woodland Erosion

Each category has specific “practices” that apply. An agricultural producer may receive up to 75% of the cost of installing one of these practices. A “practice” is either the physical structure that conserves soil and water (like a terrace or waterway), or it is a behavior that brings about the desired conservation outcome (managing grazing, following a nutrient application plan, decommissioning a well).

Program Benefits All Citizens

Farm conservation not only benefits the farmer by improving the productivity of his/her land, but it also benefits the entire community AND the lives of all future Missourians.

Benefits to the Farm

- Keep valuable topsoil in place
- Optimize the use of natural water systems and protect them from pollution
- Improve efficiency of grazing, optimize the health of livestock and protect local streams
- Control runoff, decrease pollutant loads in streams, and optimize plant health with proper amounts of water and nutrients
- Recycle animal waste for use on the land
- Protect groundwater on farms

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BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Daniel Brunjes, Chairman
Bernard Laune, Vice Chairman
Carl Danz, Treasurer
Matthew Herring, Secretary
John Helling, Member

1004 Vondera Ave. • Union, MO 63084
636-583-2303 • 855-535-5203

The Franklin County Conservation District was organized in 1944 with a primary objective to solve soil and water conservation problems. The District, upon request, aids in planning and applying appropriate land use and conservation treatment measures.

OFFICE STAFF PERSONNEL

Lori Nowak, District Clerk, FCSWCD
Stephen Sparks, District Technician, FCSWCD

Renee Cook, District Conservationist, NRCS
Rhonda Davault, Lead Resource Conservationist, NRCS
Kervin Bryant, Soil Conservationist, NRCS
Teresa Morris, Soil Conservationist, NRCS
Jerry Busch, Area Soil Technician, NRCS

Lia Heppermann, Private Land Conservationist, MDC
Ryan Diener, Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist

Benefits to the Community

- Availability of fresh local food
- Cleaner drinking water resources
- Cleaner recreational water features
- Less sediment in storm water runoff
- Less nutrients in storm water runoff
- Protection of aquatic animals in creeks and rivers
- Preservation of productive soil for future generations

Cost-Share Approval Structure

Cost-share practices are developed by the State Soil and Water Conservation Program Commission. The Commission is a seven-member board consisting of farmers/landowners from around the state, who are appointed by the governor and serve three-year terms, rotating out at different intervals and representing both major political parties. They have no political influence, but rather are tasked with making decisions for the state program based on input from the 114 SWCD local boards. Each of those local boards consists of four farmers/landowners from that county, and a University of Missouri Extension representative – usually an agronomist by degree. The members are elected by local landowners.

While the Commission, at the state level, determines practice specifications and other business operation decisions; the local boards actually review and approve the local requests for cost-share and manage the local employees.

Navigating Cost-Share Process

A landowner wishing to access the cost-share program needs to contact an SWCD employee in their local district. A District Specialist will visit with the landowner to determine needs and explain specific practices. The practice is then designed by either SWCD Specialist or one of the NRCS staff, and is presented for approval by the board before work begins. Landowners can arrange to complete the work themselves, or hire any contractor to do the job.

Call today to find out more: 636-583-2303, ext. 3.



FLOOD DAMAGED STATE COST SHARE PRACTICES?

The Missouri Soil & Water Commission held a meeting to approve a motion for reconstruction of State Cost Share practices damaged by the December 2015 flooding. Reconstruction funding is available provided the practice is under its maintenance life span and meets certain component qualifications. If you have a practice that was damaged, please contact the Franklin County SWCD office at 636-583-2303 extension 101.

NOMINATED CANDIDATES ANNOUNCEMENT

FRANKLIN COUNTY SWCD BOARD ELECTION

Let it be known that the Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District will hold an election for one supervisor in each of two different territories in the county. Territory I includes Boles, Calvey and Prairie Townships and Territory III includes Boone and Meramec Townships. The election will take place on March 17, 2016 from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Franklin County Soil & Water Conservation District Office, USDA Service Center Building in Union and 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Union. If you need directions you can call the district at 636-583-2303 extension 3.

Each landowner in the district is allowed one vote per area. Please present at least one form of photo identification to vote.

Nominating committees for the election have submitted names of the following qualified candidates:

Territory I (Townships: Boles, Calvey & Prairie)
Daniel Brunjes, Boles Township - incumbent
Tyler Baumgarth, Boles Township

Territory III (Townships: Boone & Meramec)
Michael Stumpe, Boone Township
Denise Sue Koch, Boone Township

Any landowner that was not nominated by the nominating committee may have their name added to the ballot, if they reside in one of the two territories where an election is to be held. They must meet the qualifications to be a board supervisor and have secured a petition of at least ten (10) signatures of land representatives in the territory they wish to represent. The petition must be submitted to the Franklin County Soil & Water Conservation District, at least ten (10) days before the election date listed above.

Supervisors manage the administration of district policies and programs, as well as district personnel and funds. The district is supported by the one-tenth-of-one-percent parks, soils and water sales tax. For additional information on the district election, contact the district office at:

FRANKLIN COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
1004 Vondera Avenue, Union, MO 63084, 636-583-2303 ext. 101, lori.nowak@swcd.mo.gov

SECTION OMITTED

USDA/NRCS Assistance Requests Can be made Online

The USDA/NRCS recently announced a new online portal, Conservation Client Gateway, which offers producers the ability to work with conservation planners online to access Farm Bill programs, request assistance and track payments for their conservation activities.

“What used to require a trip to the USDA service center can now be done from a home computer through Conservation Client Gateway,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack.

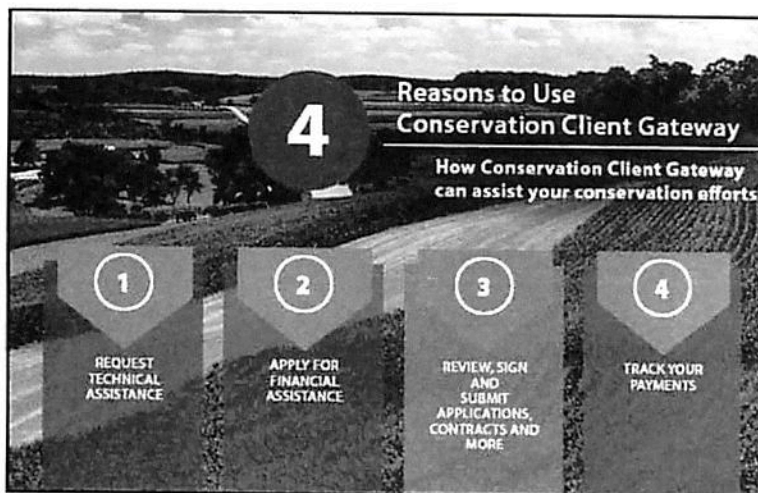
Using the portal is entirely voluntary, giving producers a choice between conducting business online or traveling to the service center. Activities that can be accomplished online include:

- Requesting NRCS technical and financial assistance.
- Reviewing and signing conservation plans and practice schedules
- Completing and signing an application for a conservation program
- Reviewing, signing and submitting contracts and appendices for conservation programs
- Documenting completed practices and request certification of completed practices
- Requesting and tracking payments for conservation programs
- Storing and retrieving technical and financial files, including documents and photographs.

“Our goal is to make it easy and convenient for farmers and ranchers to work with USDA,” Vilsack said. “Customers can log in 24 hours a day, seven days a week to electronically sign documents, apply for conservation programs, access conservation plans, report practice completion or track the status of conservation payments.”

Conservation Client Gateway is available to individual landowners and will soon be extended to business entities, such as Limited Liability Corporations. It is part of the agency’s ongoing Conservation Delivery Streamlining Initiative.

Access the site by typing *Conservation Client Gateway* into the search bar of your internet browser..



CSP Funding Boost Provides More Opportunities for Missouri Farmers in 2016

COLUMBIA, MO, Jan. 28, 2016 – Farmers have until March 31 to apply to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for voluntary assistance offered through the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). The deadline applies to farmers and ranchers new to the program and to those who signed CSP contracts in 2012 who want to renew those contracts for another five years.

“There is a great opportunity this year for farmers to participate in CSP,” State Conservationist J.R. Flores said. “The 2016 budget approved by Congress allows us to enroll significantly more acres into CSP than we were able to the past several years.”

In addition to allowing NRCS to fund up to 265,000 new acres, Flores said the budget allows the agency to renew all of the 413 CSP contracts that Missouri farmers and ranchers signed in 2012. Those contracts, covering 192,000 acres, will expire on December 31 if not renewed. Farmers may renew the contracts signed in 2012 on a non-competitive basis if they are willing to adopt additional conservation activities, such as improving water quality or soil health.

The 2014 Farm Bill offers farmers and ranchers a wider variety of options through CSP to address natural resource challenges. The full list of options applies to new and renewal applications. New conservation activities include testing the effects of cover crops on soil health, incorporating wildlife-beneficial management, and using innovative irrigation efforts to reduce water use. CSP pays participants for conservation performance — the better the performance, the higher the payment.

CSP applications for 2016 contracts can be submitted at local NRCS offices until March 31. More information about CSP is available on the NRCS website: www.mo.nrcs.usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).

FRANKLIN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
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COMING EVENTS

Tuesday, March 8, 2016
SWCD Regular Board Meeting
8:00 a.m., USDA Service Center

Thursday, March 17, 2016
Elections/Annual Meeting
6:30 pm., KC Hall in Union

Tuesday, April 5, 2016
SWCD Regular Board Meeting
8:00 a.m., USDA Service Center

Tuesday, May 10, 2016
SWCD Regular Board Meeting
8:00 a.m., USDA Service Center

Monday, May 30, 2016
USDA Service Center closed
Memorial Day Holiday

Tuesday, June 14, 2016
SWCD Regular Board Meeting
8:00 a.m., USDA Service Center

Call to confirm meeting date and times. All regular meetings are open to the public.



Quarterly Quote

*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful,
committed citizens can change the world
indeed it’s the only thing that ever has.”*

— Margaret Mead

THANK YOU

The District Board appreciates the cooperation of the businesses that advertise in our newsletter and hope that our readers patronize these advertisers. The Board especially appreciates the financial assistance of the Franklin County Commission. Thanks also to our partners in conservation: NRCS, FSA, DNR, University Extension, MDC, Quail Forever. Assistance from the Soil and Water Conservation District is available to all county residents regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, gender identity, reprisal, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation or individual’s income. State Cost-Share funds are available for agriculture landowners that have active erosion and are approved to complete practices that solve the erosion problem and for practices that protect our water quality.