



SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF PERRY COUNTY

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Meetings the First
Monday Night
of Each Month

1003 North Main

547-4077

Extension 3



OUR SOIL ★ OUR STRENGTH

NEWSLETTER

Perryville, MO 63775

August 2014

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DISTRICT STAFF

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District Technician

NRCS STAFF

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District Conservationist
Dana Seibel,
Resource Conservationist
Scott Crumpecker
Soil Conservationist

Helping People Help the Land

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

For information on programs, sign-up deadlines and more, check out the Perry SWCD Website at <http://www.swcd.mo.gov/perry/index.html> and the Missouri NRCS Website at <http://www.mo.nrcs.usda.gov/>

N340 Cover Crops – Cost Share now Available



The Perry County Soil & Water Conservation District is pleased to announce that they are now able to cost share on cover crops. This practice will apply to no-tilled cropland acres where row crops are grown and a cover crop management system is not currently being implemented. The policy states that the crop prior to the cover crop and following the cover crop have to be no-tilled. All cover crop mixes must include at least 25% cool season annual grass or small grain component. Cover crops cannot be grazed or mechanically harvested. The incentive payment for this practice is set at \$30 per acre with a maximum enrollment of 20 acres. The deadline for signing up is September 15, 2014 to implement this practice this fall. For more information contact the office at 547-4077 ext. 3.

Interested in Becoming Certified Organic?

The Missouri Department of Agriculture (MDA) has a cost share funds available to help cover the costs of the organic certification process. Refer to this link for more information:

<http://agriculture.mo.gov/abd/organic/certcostassistance.php>

Continuous Conservation Reserve Program Open Again!

Thanks to the new Farm Bill, the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is back in action. The purpose of CRP is to retire erodible crop ground into resource conserving plant cover of grasses or trees. The 10 to 15 year contracts reduce soil loss, improve water quality, and create wildlife habitat. There is an annual rental payment and cost-share for installation of the conservation practices. CRP has two main signups, a General and a Continuous. While the General signup is not available this year, the Continuous practices are open. These practices are typically more wildlife friendly and include quail habitat through whole field enrollment or buffers, riparian buffers, filter strips, buffers along pasture, contour grass strips, and pollinator habitat. Some of these Continuous practices have additional incentives including increased rental rates, signup incentives, and increased cost-share. For almost all of the CRP practices, you must have a cropping history for 4 years between the years 2008 to 2013.

If you are interested in quail and turkey, there are three CRP practices that provide great habitat. First, there is CP33, where 30' to 120' grass buffers are installed along cropfields. The grasses are a mix of native warm season grasses and forbs. CP33 also requires the landowner to provide shrubby cover for the quail through edge feathering, building down tree structures, or planting native shrubs. If you would like to take an entire cropfield out of production, the CP38 program uses the same native grass and forb mix, the shrubby cover component, and adds food plots. The mixture creates a place for turkey and quail to nest and brood. The third option is CP42, the pollinator plot. This program uses a diverse mix of wildflowers to create a feeding station for bees, butterflies, and other small insects that turkey and quail chicks feed on. This is a great option for smaller parcels in high profile areas.

Please contact our Quail Forever biologist Mary Crowell if you are interested in learning more about putting CRP and great wildlife habitat on your property. Mary is stationed in the Ste. Genevieve County USDA, but frequents the St. Francois and Perry County USDA offices weekly. You can reach her by email: mcrowell@quailforever.org or by phone at (573) 883-3566 ext. 109 or (573) 415-7330.

Prescribed Fire Workshops **Thursday, August 28, 2014**

Where: Southeast Regional Conservation Office
2302 County Park Drive, Cape Girardeau, MO 63701
When: 1:00 -4:30 pm and 6:00- 9:30 pm

Presented by: Missouri Department of Conservation

This workshop will be given two different times to provide landowners a better opportunity to attend.

Prescribed fire is a low cost way for landowners to manage grasslands, CRP and old fields for forage production and/or improve wildlife habitat.

This workshop will include classroom discussions on methods, equipment, safety, and why and when you would use fire as a management tool. Emphasis will include how to conduct a safe and effective burn to control sprouts, encourage beneficial plants and create better quality quail habitat. Participation will qualify landowners to have a prescribed burn plan prepared for their fields and use available loan equipment.

Attendees will also be invited to optional demonstration burns which will be conducted later in March around the region to demonstrate the use of tools and techniques.

To register for one of the workshops please contact the Missouri Department of Conservation at 573/290-5730 or the Cape Girardeau County SWCD at 573/243-1467 ext. 3



Get advice on your forest with MO Woods App

By Brian Schweiss, MDC

Hey, landowners, grab your smartphones. There is a new app ready for landowners with woods and forests.

It was developed specifically to assist Missouri landowners in an initial evaluation of their woodlands for forest health, wildlife habitat and timber sale potential.

In the app there are links to other resources that may be of use too, such as: insect and disease issues for Missouri woods, wildlife habitat improvement options and timber sale guidance (from the Call Before You Cut website). Landowners now can email their results along with a picture of their woods and even request assistance from a forester.

Both iPhone and Android users can download this app, as it is available in both app stores. Start by searching for "Missouri Forestkeepers" or "MO Woods." Once downloaded on your phone, head to the woods. The app will guide you through some steps to gather information. A series of pictures will help determine details about the woods.

One of the first questions asked is about forest density. The app requires a visual estimate of the density using low, medium and high as references. Next up is tree species identification. Identify the primary species in your forest that make up the main canopy of trees. Leaf pictures are provided to assist in identification.

For each species chosen, the app asks for an estimate of the percent present in the forest. It also asks for an average size of tree for each species. Three categories are there to give guidance on how to measure trees. Then, figure out the average quality of your trees in the species. Pictures are provided to serve as a guide.

Continue on to the next step and three different prescriptions will be given: one for timber sale potential, one for forest health, and one for wildlife value. Interested landowners can then send an email to request further assistance or to simply ask a question about their forest.

The MO Woods app is not a substitute for a forester. It is meant to be a starting point, and is written to capture statewide scenarios in broad categories. It will not identify specific market conditions or forest health issues. When in doubt, send an email to a local forester.



NRCS and MU Hosting Free Soil Health Expo August 13-14

The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the University of Missouri are hosting a free Soil Health Exposition August 13-14. The exposition will be at MU's Bradford Research and Extension Center (4968 Rangeline Road), about six miles east of Columbia.

The two-day exposition will feature vendors, tours, demonstrations and presentations by farmers who have successfully incorporated cover crops into their operations.

The exposition will feature an open admission, so participants may attend as few or as many of the sessions as they choose. Events will be occurring from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. each day. Topics will include: climate variability; understanding soil data; economics of cover crops; cover cropping and improved infiltration; effects of Glyphosate on soil biology; the latest soil health field equipment; field demonstrations; soils exhibits; and soil pits and properties. Equipment and seed dealers also will be present. Contact the Perry SWCD or NRCS for a detailed agenda.

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Fuel Savings with Reduced Tillage

The Energy Estimator for Tillage is one of several tools from Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) developed to increase energy awareness in agriculture. The tool estimates diesel fuel use and costs in the production of key crops in your area and compares potential energy savings between conventional tillage and alternative tillage systems. The crops covered are limited to the most prevalent crops in 78 Crop Management Zones (CMZ's). NRCS agronomists have identified these crops and estimated typical fuel use associated with common tillage systems. Without including every crop and tillage system, the Energy Estimator gives you an idea of the magnitude of diesel fuel savings under different levels of tillage. Go to: <http://ecat.sc.egov.usda.gov/Default.aspx> and enter your: zip code, number of acres of specified crops and cost of diesel fuel per gallon to determine the potential annual fuel savings over conventional tillage.

Ephemeral Gullies and HEL Compliance

This past winter and spring we experienced a lot of erosion due to freezing and thawing and high rainfall. This is readily observable through the formation of Ephemeral Gullies. Ephemeral gullies are small gullies that form frequently in well defined, shallow depressions in fields that have had some previous tillage and are small enough to be crossed with normal tillage operations.

In order to maintain eligibility for USDA programs and crop insurance; producers must follow a crop rotation and use tillage practices to meet soil loss requirements on Highly Erodible Land (HEL). This requirement includes controlling ephemeral gullies. Please note that tilling (working in) ephemeral gullies and not doing anything else to control them does not meet this requirement. Ephemeral gullies typically require a vegetative seeding or structural practice to control. Examples of control could be seeding them and leaving them in permanent grass, installing a structure, or terraces. Failure to control ephemeral gullies could jeopardize your eligibility for USDA programs and crop insurance.

**PERRY COUNTY
SOIL AND WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
1003 North Main St.
Perryville, MO 63775
(RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED)**



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