

Oklahoma Conservation Partnership Report

July 2011



NRCS

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VISION: Productive Lands – Healthy Environment -- MISSION: Helping People Help the Land

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Zone 1 Review — submitted by

Soil Conservationist Eric Shaw, Newkirk Field Service Center, began his career with NRCS on May 23, 2011. Eric comes from Antlers, Oklahoma and graduated from OSU with a BS degree in Plant and Soil Sciences.



Soil Conservationist Tiffany Green, Cherokee Service Center, began her career with NRCS on June 6, 2011. Tiffany came from the Tahlequah area and graduated from Oaks Mission School. She graduated from Langston University this spring with a degree in Natural Resources Management. Tiffany has two daughters, Avrey and Audrey.

Selections have also been made for the vacant soil conservation technician positions in Newkirk, Fairview, and Beaver. **Payton Mumford** from Fox, Okla., was selected for the Newkirk vacancy. **Jimmy Ward** from Mustang, Okla., was selected to fill the Fairview vacancy. And **Barrett Robertson**, Higgins, Texas, was selected to fill the Beaver position. These individuals will begin working the last week in August.

Oklahoma City Field Service Center

The Oklahoma City Field Service Center welcomes **Taylor Nero** for the summer. By the end of the summer she will let us all know what she has learned from the staff and cooperators in Oklahoma County.

Zone 1 Review — *continued*

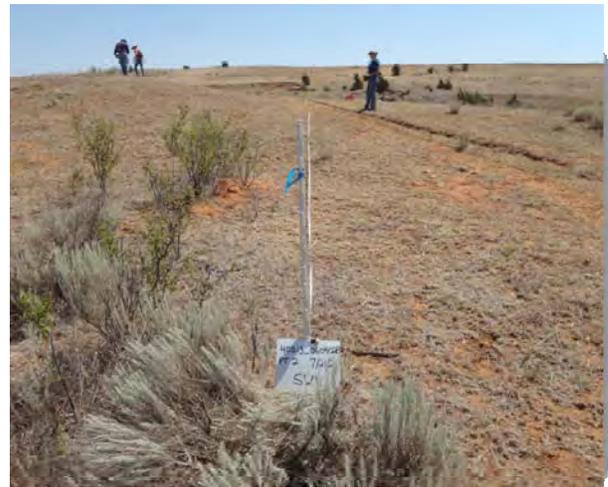


My name is Taylor Nero. I am from Oklahoma City and graduated from Mustang High School in May 2011. I enjoy volunteering whenever I have spare time. I plan to attend the University of Oklahoma in the fall and major in International Business with a minor in Spanish. This summer, I am interning with NRCS through REYAP (Retired Educators for Youth Agricultural Program), in order to become educated in the field of agriculture. I have set a list of competencies (self-development, directing others, comfort level around high management) that I need to improve while I am here. I will be working with NRCS until August 5, 2011.

Zone 1 National Resources Inventory (NRI)

The **NRI for grazing land** is in full swing in northwest Oklahoma. Team members **Jordan Green, Denise Turner, Donna Neumeyer, Tiffany Green, Ray Hinojosa, Chris Best** and **MacKenzie Gaines**, have completed field work on 10 segments to date in Woods and Woodward counties while basking in the lovely summer heat. For those unaware, the NRCS is mandated to assess the status, condition, and trends of soil, water, and related resources on the nation's non-Federal lands. The NRI program serves as the federal government's principle source of information on natural resources in the United States. It plays a key role in development of conservation policy and programs for the nation. It also serves to educate the public regarding natural resource issues and provides a comprehensive, nationally consistent source of data for researchers in many fields. Types of data collected about grazing land include: landcover/use, landscape and soils, ecological site, pastureland condition/rangeland health, plant

Ray Hinojosa, Denise Turner, and Tiffany Green collect NRI data. Photographer this day was Donna Neumeyer.



Zone 1 Review — *continued*

Woodward Technical Service Office

July 11-12, 2011, the Woodward TSO hosted a **Student /Trainee Irrigation Tour and Training**. The tour started with a stop at an Ellis County hog farm. Attendees looked over a recently purchased rotary drum composter that NRCS and the local producer partnered to install.



Dennis Stipe, civil engineering technician, looks over a rotary drum composter on one of the many stops during the irrigation tour/training conducted recently.

The group then travelled to Harper County's Ditch Valley where they met up with Mr. R.A. Lotspeich, a local producer and Ditch Historian. Driving along the ditch, built in 1895, to the Cimarron River, several stops were made along the way to see the original hand crank gates and have Mr. Lotspeich share his knowledge and stories of the historic ditch and generations of people who have worked the land over the last 116 years.



Students Anika Tourie-Lolles and Yarusalem Morgan marvel at the ditch, built in 1895.



R.A. Lotspeich, local historian, tells the story of Ditch Valley.

Zone 1 Review — *continued*

Woodward Technical Service Office — *continued*

Tuesday started early with a drive to Guymon to join up with **Alan Messenger**, district conservationist, for a day of various irrigation tours. The group visited fields that utilize flood, center pivot, drip system and furrow irrigation systems. Messenger explained how each of the different systems worked and the benefits of each. Before concluding the outing, the group made a stop to view a “guzzler” in operation.

A special thanks to **David McKay**, resource engineer, **Don Sternitzke**, water management specialist, **Dennis Stipe**, civil engineering technician, **Alan Messenger**, district conservationist.



Diana Neumeyer, David Criswell, Anika Tourie-Lolles, and Meredith Shiflet listen as District Conservationist Alan Messenger explains the benefits using various irrigation systems.



Tommy Ketchum in background with Resource Engineer David McKay.

Zone 2 Review — *submitted by Jasper Parker (Acting)*

An all employees and conservation district staff **Safety Meeting** was held at Sequoyah State Park in Wagoner County. The focus of the meeting was being prepared in the event of a disaster.



Heather Winn and Dawn Andrew, Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, provided a presentation on Disaster Preparedness.

Zone 2 Review — ...continued

Julie Olzawski York provided a display on AgriAbility including products and materials.



Wilma Fraley, retired Claremore TSO clerk, and her husband George, were the guests of honor at the meeting. Wilma was presented with a book of cards and a special retirement cake from the state office.

Stillwater Field Service Center

A **Prescribed Burn Meeting**, held the evening of July 19, 2011, was a joint effort of the Payne, Pawnee, Noble and Lincoln County Conservation Districts and NRCS staffs. The meeting was held at the Payne County Fairgrounds in Stillwater, Okla. Approximately 150 people attended the meeting. Presentations were given by John Weir, OSU Extension specialist, **Brandon Reavis**, grassland specialist, Kelly Hurt, State Firewise coordinator, and Ron Voth with the High Plains RC&D. General information about benefits of fire and burn plans were discussed. And also included in the discussion was the formation of a new Oklahoma Prescribed Burn Association that would offer affordable liability insurance for land users carrying out prescribed burns.



Zone 2 Review — *continued*

Vinita Field Service Center

On June 17, 2011, the NRCS and the Craig County Conservation District held a **free seminar** at the USDA Service Center, in Vinita, Okla. It provided conservation program information to assist Craig County land managers with installation and maintenance of conservation practices. There were two sessions: 9:00 am and 1:00 pm. District Conservationist **Erik Friend** explained the details of the conservation programs from the USDA Farm Bill. Refreshments were provided by the Craig County Conservation District. There were three in attendance at the 9:00 am session and though few, they had many questions. An EQIP application was accepted. The 1:00 pm session had no one in attendance.

From July 25—30, 2011, the NRCS and the Craig County Conservation District sponsored a display booth at the **Craig County Free Fair**. Information and brochures about conservation programs and services were provided by the Vinita Field Service Center. **Jo Callison**, programs coordinator for the district, and **Erik N Friend**, district conservationist, provided information to the fair attendees. The candy for the kids (and adults) was provided by the Craig County Conservation District.



On July 27, 2011, NRCS and the Craig County Conservation District held a **come-and-go open house** at the USDA Service Center in Vinita, Okla. Conservation program information was provided to assist Craig County land managers with installation and maintenance of conservation practices. There were two sessions: 9:00 am and 1:00 pm. **Erik Friend**, district conservationist, provided the details of the conservation programs from the USDA Farm Bill. Flyers were posted at 44 locations throughout Craig County. The open house was announced on KITO radio. Refreshments were provided by the Craig County Conservation District.

Okmulgee Field Service Center

District Conservationist **Ron Goedecke** attended a **Beginning Farmer Program** sponsored by Langston University at the Beggs Rodeo Club on June 13, 2011. Approximately 15 attended the program. Goedecke presented information on technical assistance NRCS provides, and answered questions from the group. Handouts were given for outlining NRCS services and programs. Also available, was information and materials regarding the Hispanic/Women Compensation Claims.

Stilwell Field Service Center

A **Civil Rights Training Meeting** was held in Stilwell on July 28, 2011. **Sheila Shepperd**, NRCS Civil Rights Division, flew in from national headquarters to provide the training.



Zone 3 Review — *submitted by Chad Kacir*

Purcell Field Service Center

The NRCS, the McClain and Cleveland County Conservation Districts and Farm Service Agency hosted an **Open House** on July 6, 2011. The purpose was to provide program information to the local landowners, Tribes, Tribal Members, women in agriculture and all underserved populations.

Mangum Field Service Center

Greer County NRCS employees recently began **completing field reviews and developing conservation plans** on the 25 CRP applications that were accepted through sign-up 41. The current drought conditions have prohibited contract participants from doing any construction that requires compaction, so many projects have been put on hold (such as ponds, terraces, and waterways). Staff has been trying to get most of the design information put together on these projects so that construction can start as soon as soil moisture conditions improve.



Waurika Field Service Center

Jefferson County SWCD sponsored a **Drought Assistance Informational Meeting** at Bills Catfish restaurant on July 19 2011. Forty-three producers attended to hear guest speakers, including Sandy Nobile, district conservationist, who discussed available NRCS cost sharing programs such as EQIP. Tom Herje, CED with FSA informed participants about the NAP programs and insurance opportunities available as well as ECP program expectations. Also, David Schumpert, CPA from Walters, Okla., spoke and gave advice on tax consequences due to weather related sale of livestock. The Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service Agent Mike Jeffcoat was also present and provided a handout with information dealing with maintaining the herd through the drought. David Oakman with FSA loans was also available for consultation.



Kim Walker, district conservationist, discusses programs with a local producer.

Chickasha Field Service Center

On July 14, 2011, at 6:30 pm, the Chickasha Field Office held a **2008 Farm Bill informational meeting** in order to inform the Grady County producers of the current programs offered with an emphasis on historically underserved producers. Historically underserved producers included beginning farmers or ranchers, socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers, and limited resource farmers or ranchers. Some of the programs the Chickasha Field Office team discussed included CSP, EQIP, GRP, WHIP, and WRP. Each producer was provided an informational packet that included several information sheets on each program, as well as literature on the agency. This literature included In Partnership with People and a Healthy Land, Helping You Help Your Land, and Conquest of the Land Through 7,000 Years. The literature was included to help producers understand our mission and

goals of helping the American people with the management of our natural resources and each individuals' land.

Staff has high hopes that this 2008 Farm Bill informational meeting has helped our local producers understand our current programs as well as a better understanding of the NRCS's missions and goals.

Zone 4 Review — *submitted by Jamey Wood*

Training the Trainees

This summer, Zone 4 is hosting seven student employees. Listed below are the students' name, field of study, duty station and supervisor:

Pam Brittain – Ag Economics & Plant/Soil Sciences – Holdenville FSC – **Brent Reavis**, district conservationist

McKenzie Foster – Rangeland Ecology – Ardmore FSC – **Jim Williams**, district conservationist

Kristen Hedge – Agricultural Education – Hugo FSC – **Jose` Mendoza**, district conservationist

Matt Howell – Agricultural Leadership – Tishomingo FSC – **Randy Hall**, district conservationist

Molly Vich – Engineering – McAlester TSO – **Tim Miller**, Resource Engineer

Cody Woolly – Agricultural Education – Idabel FSC – **Ken Swift**, district conservationist

Merica Xiong – Natural Resources Management – Poteau FSC – **Donna Neumeyer**, district conservationist

Pictured l to r, Pam Brittain, Kristen Hedge, Cody Woolly, Matt Howell kneeling in front, Molly Vich, Merica Xiong, McKenzie Foster. Also pictured are Robert Hunnicutt, Latimer County CD equipment manager, and NRCS Soil Conservation Technician Allen Oliver.



In addition to on-the-job training at the assigned duty stations, the students have also taken part in other training workshops and tours throughout the Zone: ATV Training provided by **Allen Oliver**, Tishomingo soil conservation technician; Forestry workshop near Talihina provided by **John Mustain**, state forester, and ODAFF; Engineering workshop provided by Zone 4 Resource Engineers **Tim Miller** and **Lynnette Dominguez**; In-the-field training on Wildlife by Rosalee Walker with Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation; Ecological Sciences workshop and in-the-field training by **David Wells**, conservation agronomist; Soil Science in-the-field training provided by **Carl Woods**, resource soil scientist; Tour of the Kerr Center and agricultural facilities in LeFlore County; and, Plant identification and basic grazing lands training provided by **Harry Fritzler**, grazing lands specialist.

Before the summer student tour of duty ends, the Noble Foundation will provide a tour for the group that includes the Oswalt Farm Research Projects, Wildlife Research Projects, Coffey Ranch Grazing Management System, and the Red River Farm Two Story Grazing System - Pecans & Livestock. The students will finalize their summer work experience by giving presentations at Stillwater on August 4, 2011.

We wish the best for these ambitious students and look forward to watching where their futures lead.

Zone 4 Review — *continued*



Pictured l to r, Conservation Agronomist David Wells discusses plants to students "Kenzie" Foster, "Golly" Molly Vich, Pam Brittain (kneeling and obscured from view) Kristen Hedge, and Merica Xiong

June 29, 2011, the Coalgate Field Service Center moved into a new building located at 106 East Post Ave. The Coalgate office had previously been in the same location for 46 years. The Coal County Conservation District constructed the new building with office space and district machinery storage barn all under one roof.



McAlester Field Service Center

The **Pittsburg County Conservation District Youth Board** recently toured two local facilities that are important to area agricultural base. They toured the Big V Feed Manufacturing facility in McAlester and the Kiamichi Natural Gas Power Plant near Kiowa. The Youth Board consists of Gabe Loman, Brandon Morrison, Dillon Brewer, Dillon Camp, Morgan Wynn, Emily Orr, Tyler Bush, Dalton Morrow and Jared Morgan.



Zone 4 Review — *continued*



The Youth Board poses in front of the Kiamichi Natural Gas Power Plant near Kiowa.

Engineering Events — *submitted by Chris Stoner*

Sugar Creek Site L44 Groundbreaking

On July 15, 2011, a **groundbreaking ceremony** was held for **Sugar Creek Site L44** near Anadarko, Okla. Nearly four years after the devastating damage to much of the conservation infrastructure in Caddo County caused when Hurricane Erin reformed as an inland tropical storm over western Oklahoma, construction has begun to rehabilitate this damaged site. In a show of public support for this project, and the many other projects under construction in Caddo County, several state elected officials were in attendance, in addition to representatives from the offices of Congressman Frank Lucas, Congressman Tom Cole, and Senator Tom Coburn. Following the groundbreaking at site L44, a short ceremony was held to allow supporters to voice their thoughts on the importance of conservation projects. Lunch was provided, and then several attendees participated in a **conservation project tour** which included the under construction **Farrow Rock Drop structure** and the **recently completed Sugar Creek Site L43** rehabilitation project.

The following is a short write up of the final inspection of Sallisaw 18M

On July 13, 2011, the **final inspection** was held for the rehabilitation of **Sallisaw Creek Site 18M**. The meeting was led by **Joe Freeland**, project engineer. In addition to NRCS, the meeting was attended by representatives from the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and the contractor. The City of Stillwell also attended since the site is a water supply for the city. Earth Builders, the contractor, was still working to place riprap rock on the front slope. Minor grading, impact basin riprap, vegetation, mulching and safety fencing still need to be done, but work will be completed in two weeks.

Water Resources Report — *submitted by Bill Porter*

Status of Oklahoma Watershed Rehabilitation Projects as of 7-20-11

Watershed	Dam No.	County	Conservation District	Status	
<i>In Planning</i>					
Cobb Creek	3	Washita	Deer Creek CD	Estimated completion 9-1-11	
Upper Black Bear	62	Noble	Noble County CD	Estimated completion 11-1-11	
<i>Planning Completed - Awaiting Design</i>					
Sallisaw Creek	32	Sequoyah	Sequoyah County CD	Pending Landrights	
Sallisaw Creek	29	Sequoyah	Sequoyah County CD	Pending	
<i>In Design</i>					
Quapaw Creek	15M	Lincoln	Lincoln County CD	Pending	
Barntiz Creek	1	Dewey	Dewey County CD	Estimated completion 10-1-11	
Barntiz Creek	11	Dewey	Dewey County CD	Estimated completion 8-1-12	
Barnitz Creek	5	Dewey	Dewey County CD	Estimated completion 3-1-13	
Sallisaw Creek	28	Sequoyah	Sequoyah County CD	Estimated completion 4-15-12	
Sallisaw Creek	30	Sequoyah	Sequoyah County CD	Estimated completion 6-15-12	
Fourche Maline	7M	Latimer	Latimer County CD	Estimated completion 5-1-13	
Cottonwood Creek	16	Canadian	East Canadian CD	Estimated completion 6-1-13	
<i>Planning & Design Completed - Awaiting Construction</i>					
Cottonwood Creek	54	Logan	Logan County CD	Pending Landrights	
Sallisaw Creek	34	Sequoyah	Sequoyah County CD	Pending Landrights	
Upper Clear Boggy	36	Pontotoc	Pontotoc County CD	Estimated start 9-1-11	
Sallisaw Creek	26	Adair	Adair County CD	Estimated start 9-1-11	
Upper Clear Boggy	33	Pontotoc	Pontotoc County CD	Estimated start 8-15-11	*ARRA
Upper Clear Boggy	34	Pontotoc	Pontotoc County CD	Estimated start 9-15-11	*ARRA
Sallisaw Creek	33	Sequoyah	Sequoyah County CD	Pending	
Caney-Coon Creek	2M	Coal	Coal County CD	Estimated start 8-1-11	
Ft Cobb Laterals	10	Caddo	South Caddo County CD	Estimated start 10-1-11	

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Water Resources Report — *continued*

Watershed	Dam No.	County	Conservation District	Status
<i>Under Construction</i>				
Cobb Creek	1	Washita	Deer Creek CD	Estimated completion 2-1-12
Turkey Creek	9	Washita	Washita County CD	Estimated completion 1-1-12
Upper Clear Boggy	35	Pontotoc	Pontotoc County CD	Estimated completion 12-15-11 *ARRA
Sugar Creek	L-44	Caddo	South Caddo County CD	Estimated completion 9-1-12 *ARRA
Cottonwood Creek	15	Kingfisher	Kingfisher County CD	Estimated completion 2-1-12 *ARRA
<i>Rehabilitation Completed</i>				
Sandstone Creek	16A	Roger Mills	Upper Washita CD	
Barnitz Creek	14	Dewey	Dewey County CD	
Mill Creek	18	Johnston	Johnston County CD	
Double Creek	1,2,3,4,5,6	Washington	Caney Valley CD	
Cavalry Creek	6	Washita	Washita County CD	
Sandstone Creek	12,17A	Roger Mills	Upper Washita CD	
Sergeant Major Creek	1,2	Roger Mills	Upper Washita CD	
Cobb Creek	2	Washita	Deer Creek CD	
Sallisaw Creek	15,16,20	Adair	Adair County CD	
Big Wewoka Creek	29	Seminole	Seminole County CD	
Cottonwood Creek	17	Canadian	East Canadian CD	
Sallisaw Creek	18M	Adair	Adair County CD	*ARRA
Sugar Creek	L-43	Caddo	West Caddo County CD	*American Recovery Reinvestment Act *ARRA

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