

Oklahoma Conservation Partnership Report

June 2011



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

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Dedication for Historic Landmark

Oklahoma NRCS and ARS hosted a dedication ceremony June 3, 2011, inviting past and present engineers, inspectors and design staff to unveil the monument placed in front of the USDA building in Stillwater.

Oklahoma has been a leader in flood control for over 60 years constructing 2,107 flood control dams in 61 counties that provide \$82 million in annual benefits to the state. **The American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers (ASABE) recognized the USDA's small watershed program as a national historic landmark in agricultural engineering during their recent conference.** This is a designation that has only been recognized by 57 significant developments since 1926. Other landmarks have been the cotton gin, vegetated waterways and recognized in 2011 the

small watershed program joins the once-over mechanical harvester and the anhydrous ammonia application technology for this recognition. To be eligible for nomination event must be associated with the advancement of agricultural engineering in North America, must have occurred at least 20 years prior to nomination, must have caused a significant impact on the industry as evidenced by the breadth of its acceptance, its monetary savings, or in its increased environmental or product safety for farmers or other consumers and must be new and unique to North American agriculture.

Oklahoma was chosen for the ceremony site because not only did Oklahoma build the first structure on Cloud Creek, but there have been several other firsts in the program completed here.

Coincidentally, NRCS Chief Dave White testified before congress this week that nationally about 2,200 dams will reach the end of their designed life this year and half of the nation's watershed dams will reach that milestone in the next five years. On average that is one dam every day for the next two decades. For Oklahoma, at least two dams will reach the end of their design lives every week, on average, for the next ten years. Oklahoma Congressman Frank Lucas authored the Rehabilitation Amendments to the PL-83-566 Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program. The amendments authorized the USDA, NRCS to provide technical and 65% cost share assistance to rehabilitate high hazard flood control dams.



Plaques are located at the USDA-NRCS State Office in Stillwater, and the USDA-ARS Hydraulic Engineering Research Unit near Stillwater. A granite monument is placed at the Agriculture Building on the State Capital Complex in Oklahoma City.

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Historic Landmark — ...continued



Current watershed staff were able to glean from those who went before in the program asking site specific questions and gaining perspective on current techniques and processes to understand how far the program has come.

A reception followed the dedication where retired NRCS employees shared stories with current staff.



Artwork Selected for 2011 American Indian Heritage Poster



This year's winner of the American Indian Heritage Poster contest is Carrie Silverhorn of Miami, Okla. Silverhorn is a member of the Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma and is of Eastern Shawnee/Wyandotte decent. The 32 year old has been an artist since childhood and claims, "Art is the passion that drives me to create beauty from my surroundings and allows me to produce what my imagination whispers to me."

Every year, an American Indian residing in the selected American Indian Alaska Native Employee Association (AIANEA) region, is eligible to enter their artwork in a contest sponsored by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). This year, the South Central Region [Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas] was selected. Oklahoma was charged with conducting the contest. The winning artwork is then produced into a poster used during American Indian Heritage Month, which is in November.

On June 17, 2011, seventeen entries were judged at the NRCS state office, in Stillwater, Okla. "Judging wasn't easy," State Conservationist Ron Hilliard said. "We received some outstanding pieces of art and each artist brought something different into their painting." This year's title was *Conservation: Preserving our Land for Future Generations*. The theme was "A true conservationist is a man who knows

that the world is not given by his fathers, but borrowed from his children."

Judges included Hilliard, members of the Oklahoma Civil Rights Committee: Tara Thomas, Chris Best, Tom James, Lloyd Evans, Joy Martin, Cambra Soukup, Raul Hinojosa, Matt Ward, Steven Davied and Cleaon Bradford; Assistant State Conservationists (FO): Lanny Miller, Jamey Wood, Chad Kacir and Jasper Parker; Choctaw Nation Tribal Resource Conservationist Ann Colyer; Cassandra Sites, budget analyst; Choctaw Nation tribal member Darrel Dominick; and Caddo Nation member Milton Sovo.

Poster contest committee members who organized the event included STC Secretary Connie Fitzpatrick, Administrative Assistant Kim Brandt, Public Affairs Specialist Crystal Young, Visual Information Specialist Terri Daniel and District Conservationist and National AI/AN SEPM Dr. Carol Crouch. Daniel will use the artwork to develop the poster and distribute to all NRCS offices in the 50 states plus the Caribbean and Pacific Basin.

...see judging photos on last page

Office of Public Affairs — ...submitted by Terri Daniel

Crystal Young, public affairs specialist, has accepted a position with the Department of Defense at Hill AFB, in Ogden, Utah. She will be in the public affairs division, directing and producing videos for the military.

Young was hired under the Career Intern Program nearly two years ago. She brought extensive video experience with her, and was eager to learn all aspects of a public affairs office.

Crystal said this move is closer to home and is happy she and her daughter Zyla will have family nearby. Good Luck Crystal, we wish you the best.



Water Resources Report — submitted by Bill Porter

| Status of Oklahoma Watershed Rehabilitation Projects as of 6-15-11 | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Watershed | Dam No. | County | Conservation District | Status | |
| <i>In Planning</i> | | | | | |
| Cottonwood Creek | 16 | Canadian | East Canadian CD | Estimated completion 9-1-11 | |
| Cobb Creek | 3 | Washita | Deer Creek CD | Estimated completion 9-1-11 | |
| Upper Black Bear | 62 | Noble | Noble County CD | Estimated completion 9-1-11 | |
| <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 | |
| Ft Cobb Laterals | 10 | Caddo | South Caddo County CD | Estimated completion 8-1-11 | |
| Bartiz Creek | 1 | Dewey | Dewey County CD | Estimated completion 10-1-11 | |
| Bartiz 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 | |
| <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 5-1-11 | |
| 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 9-1-11 | *ARRA |
| Sallisaw Creek | 33 | Sequoyah | Sequoyah County CD | Pending | |
| Caney-Coon Creek | 2M | Coal | Coal County CD | Estimated start 8-1-11 | |
| <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 9-15-12 | *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 | *ARRA | |
| | | | | *American Recovery Reinvestment Act | |

Engineering Events — *submitted by Chris Stoner*

Geological investigation contracts for Barnitz Creek Sites 5 and 11

Geological investigation **contracts for Barnitz Creek Sites 5 and 11 have been completed and awarded.** The contractor is drilling the bore hole locations for Barnitz Creek Site 5 during the month of June. Drilling of the bore hole locations for Barnitz Creek Site 11 will begin in July. Bore hole soil information is logged and photographed for use in the preparation of the Geologic Investigation Report. Soil samples will be boxed and shipped to the NDCSMC in Lincoln, Nebraska, for further testing and the development of the Soil Mechanics Report. The information will be used to develop the rehabilitation designs for these existing Floodwater Retarding Structures.

Sugar Creek L43

The Sugar Creek Site L43 final inspection occurred June 28, 2011. This site cost approximately \$1.7 million to rehabilitate. The auxiliary spillway at Sugar Creek L43 was damaged during a storm event in 2007. The rehabilitation included a roller compacted concrete cutoff wall in the auxiliary spillway, a



Zone 1 Review — *submitted by Lanny Miller*

Buffalo Field Service Center

The Buffalo NRCS Field Service center along with the Harper County Conservation District held its annual **Outdoor Classroom for Harper County 6th graders on May 12, 2011.** There were 51 children in attendance from the Buffalo and Laverne public schools. Lessons were given on soil erosion, hunting safety, soil science, wildlife identification, team building as well as fishing and hiking in the afternoon. Assistance was provided by NRCS Soil Scientists, ODWC, and the OSU Extension.

Boise City Field Service Center

The local FSC and OSU Extension Office have teamed together to offer the county producers **a series of OSU Master Cattlemen's Class.** Tuesday, June 21, 2011, Dr. Rodney Jones, Farm Development Specialist from Enid and Dr. Britt Hicks, Area Extension Livestock Specialist, met at the office and presented topics primarily focusing on the current drought conditions and some of the options that are available. One of the topics discussed was the different supplements that could be helpful during times of drought. Much was benefited by learning the diverse aspects of ranching and have staff has encouraged county producers to attend the meetings so they can utilize the availability of information pertaining to the area and specific problems.

Zone 1 Review — *continued*

Guthrie Field Service Center



Introducing Anika Ture'-Lolles, student trainee this summer for the Guthrie Field Office:

I am currently a junior college student at Langston University in Langston, Oklahoma. My major is in Agriculture of Science. In spring of 2012, I will be obtaining a Bachelor of Science degree. I am from Taft, Oklahoma, located in Muskogee County where I was raised.

Overall the knowledge I am receiving through this training with NRCS is most excellent. The internship program that USDA NRCS offers students is a valuable tool and a most wonderful program. Thank you NRCS.

On June 21, 2011, the Logan County Conservation District, OSU Extension Office and the NRCS conducted a **Brush Management Workshop**. The workshop was held at Jerry Pfeiffer's with 38 people present. Francis Beiling, representative from DuPont, presented a program about herbicide options for brush control, and OSU Extension Rangeland & Ecology Management Specialist Terry Bidwell, talked about prescribed burning in addition to providing training on identification of invasive weeds and brush species. Jerry Pfeiffer discussed using goats for management of brush species. For the conclusion of the meeting, contractors exhibited how their equipment worked in cedar removal.



Terry Bidwell discusses the importance of prescribed burning with 38 workshop participants.

Watonga Field Service Center

Ag Appreciation Banquet—The Blaine County Ag Appreciation Banquet was held April 21, 2011. Four honorees were named as the **2011 Farm and Ranch Families of the Year**. There were also five others that were inducted into the **Ag Hall of Fame** for Blaine County.

Progressive Agriculture Safety Day—The fifth annual Progressive Agriculture Safety Day was held April 27, 2011, at the Blaine County Fairgrounds. Fourth grade students and their teachers visited eight different stations. There were sessions held on how children should take responsibility for their own safety, be respectful of their parents' safety rules

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Zone 1 Review — *continued*

Watonga Field Service Center...*continued*

and share safety tips with their family and friends. Many hands-on lessons were presented. This safety day is presented by the Blaine County Soil Conservation District and the Blaine County Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service.



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

Okmulgee Field Service Center

A **Beginning Farmer Program** sponsored by Langston University was held at the Beggs Rodeo Club June 13, 2011. Approximately 15 attended the program. The NRCS presentation included information on technical assistance the agency provides followed by a question and answer session. Materials on NRCS programs was distributed to the participants. An announcement of the **Hispanic/Women's Compensation Claims** was made, along with printed materials available for those interested.

Wagoner Field Service Center

On June 15, 2011, **NRCS hosted a training day for teachers** in Wagoner County. The teachers represented grades pre K—12th taking a continuing education class to learn how to use natural resources in the classroom to educate students about math and science. The Wagoner Field Office took them up to Claremore, Okla., to the Rogers State University Conservation Education Reserve. The 20 teachers in attendance got to tour the 120 acres and speak with Robert Gibbs about the teaching opportunities related with outdoor classrooms. The day was well received and multiple teachers asked if they could schedule Robert or NRCS to speak at their classed this coming fall.

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Zone 2 Review — *continued*

Wagoner Field Service Center...*continued*

Pictured right are teachers from Wagoner County being instructed on how to use nature as a teaching tool in math and science.



Zone 3 Review — *submitted by Chad Kacir*

Cordell Field Service Center

The Cordell Field Service Center is **providing assistance on several watershed projects in Washita County.** **Boggy Creek Sites #17 and #23 and South Clinton Laterals Site #3** have each been reinforced with rock rip-rap on the front toe of the embankment. There are 33 flood control structures on the Boggy Creek Watershed and 14 structures on the South Clinton Laterals which are perpendicular drainages into the Washita River from the south in Washita County.

The previous four months were the driest four months on record. Along with **the drought, increased oil and gas drilling activities using the new horizontal hydraulic-fracturing process, has left many lakes, ponds, and streams either dry or very low in water.** The lower water levels in the pools of the flood control structures have allowed for implementing the needed repairs along the front toe of the embankments that have been damaged by years of wave action. The Cordell NRCS field office staff and the Washita County Conservation District staff have been busy providing the technical assistance so that many more years of flood protection can be provided by these structures.



Boggy Creek #23 with rock rip-rap recently installed on front toe of embankment.

Two watershed sites in Washita County are undergoing extensive rehabilitation work to replace the principal spillway, and improve the embankment and the emergency spillway to meet current engineering specifications and safety guidelines. Both of these sites are well beyond the original designed 50 year performance and with the improvements from the rehabilitation are expected to function for another 50 or more years.

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Zone 3 Review — *continued*

Cordell Field Service Center...*continued*



Turkey Creek #9 is located in the northwest part of Washita County near the community of Foss. The embankment is being totally worked over and has been cut for the installation of a new principal spillway.

Cobb Creek #1 is located in the northeast part of Washita County south of Weatherford. A coffer dam was constructed to retain part of the conservation pool of water and preserve the fish habitat. Southwestern Oklahoma State University, as a partner for the operation and maintenance along with the Deer Creek Conservation District, has been able to receive a trophy bass lake status for this site and preserving that status was important.



Duncan Field Service Center

The Duncan Field Service Center held its **Annual Outdoor Classroom** with Halliburton and Duncan Public Schools. There were nearly 450 students and 73 adults that attended the event. The outdoor classroom offers kids and adults the opportunity to learn about and appreciate their natural resources, while having fun. They also learn about the agency and what programs and services are available.



Left, Kim Davis, OSU Extension, illustrates stream bank erosion and its effects.

Right, Soil Conservation Technician Curt Owens discusses soil properties and fossils.



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Zone 3 Review — *continued*

Duncan Field Service Center...*continued*



Stacy Cramer, Duncan FSC, teaches the children about the water cycle.

Purcell Field Service Center

The NRCS, Oklahoma Tribal Conservation Advisory Council (OTCAC) and Indian Nations Conservation Alliance (INCA) joined forces to offer **training on Animal Disease Traceability** to Tribes, tribal landowners, and local farmers and ranchers. Other USDA agencies involved were the Animal Plant Health and Inspection Service (APHIS) and the Farm Service Agency (FSA). The training, held May 12, 2011, was hosted by the Citizen Potawatomi Nation at their Tribal Traditions Grounds in Shawnee, Okla.



Left, Attendees listen as Dr. Wiemers, APHIS, discusses why animal disease traceability is needed.



Above, attendees look over materials offered at the FSA Informational Booth.

Dr. John Wiemers, APHIS, trainer, discussed why animal disease traceability is needed, the impacts, and proposed rules for tracing. Brian Thomas, INCA, provided training on the value of cattle identification, methods, and the importance of accurate record keeping. Attendees received program information and funding opportunities from NRCS District Conservationist Shawn Fleming and FSA, CED Vernon Wellman. A booth offered additional USDA Farm Bill program materials and information.

NRCS State Conservationist Ron Hilliard, Art Muller, OTCAC board member and representative for the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, and Darrel Dominick, INCA board member and Oklahoma Conservation Commission Tribal Relations Coordinator, welcomed the attendees. Dr. Carol Crouch, district conservationist and National American Indian Alaskan Native Special Emphasis program manager, facilitated and moderated the training.

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Zone 3 Review — *continued*

Purcell Field Service Center...*continued*



Training participants at the NRCS Informational Booth collect information on Farm Bill Programs and services offered through the agency.

Zone 4 Review — *submitted by Jamey Wood*

NRCS and OTCAC partnered with the Choctaw Nation to hold a conservation **informational meeting to discuss funding opportunities for local farmers, ranchers, Tribes and tribal landowners**. Attendees received information on the Conservation Stewardship Program, USDA Farm Bill Programs and program opportunities from other federal and state agencies. The meeting was held May 26, 2011, at the Choctaw Nation Community Center located in Idabel. The meeting was open to the public and dinner was provided for all attendees.

Choctaw Nation Agriculture and Natural Resources Director Jack Pate, USDA Rural Development State Director Ryan McMullen, and Jamey Wood, NRCS Assistant State Conservationist for Zone 4, provided the welcome. NRCS Choctaw Nation Tribal Resource Conservationist Ann Colyer, presented NRCS Farm Bill program information; FSA, CED Jerry Robinson presented FSA program information; McMullen presented information on community based opportunities; Dr. Kim Winton, US



Choctaw Nation Agriculture and Natural Resources Director Jack Pate receives special award from RC&D Council.

Geological Survey, presented stream monitoring and *real time* flood data that the agency provides to the public; and Terry Dupree, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, presented information on agency programs. Dr. Carol Crouch, District Conservationist and national AI/AN SEPM, was moderator and facilitator.

The evening was highlighted by presenting Pate with a special award for demonstrating Tribal community support, outreach, and leadership in southeast Oklahoma. The award was presented by Frank Acker, president of the Ouachita Mountains Resource Conservation and Development Council.



Participants listen intently as they are informed about programs and services available to them.

Zone 4 Review — *continued*

EQIP Forestry Workshop Held

Partnering with the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture's Forestry Division, NRCS employees took part in an **EQIP Forestry Workshop held June 14, 2011**, near Tallihina. Over 30 NRCS employees from Zone 4, both seasoned employees and summer student trainees, participated in the educational activity. "We wanted to provide a quality forestry-related workshop to allow our employees to better understand the practices and methods related to both planting and managing forestlands enrolled in the EQIP program in Oklahoma," said John Mustain, NRCS state forester/agronomist. The all-day workshop showcased site preparation, tree planting and thinning, and woody release. Craig Marquardt, forester with the Oklahoma Forestry Services, presented detailed information to the employees identifying how the field practices and program guidelines can help to conserve natural resources and provide long-term financial gains for landowners. "I enjoyed learning about the various aspects related to timber management and how important the forestry resources are to Southeast Oklahoma" said Molly Vich, summer engineering intern stationed at the McAlester Technical Service Office.

ATV Training

Allen Oliver, Soil Conservation Technician, Tishomingo Field Service Center, recently provided **training for new NRCS employees on ATV Safety**. Allen also partnered with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in providing some of their employees this training as well.



Upper left, participants ready themselves as Allen Oliver gives instructions. Upper right, participants learn how to load and unload ATV. Middle, learning to maneuver an ATVs is vital. Lower left, Oliver emphasizes the importance of helmets and gloves by insisting participants wear them, even for a photo op!

Zone 4 Review — *continued*



Atoka Field Service Center

Atoka NRCS and Atoka County Conservation District set up an **information/outreach booth** at the **26th Annual Lane Research Field Day**. Highlighted this year was the pollinator poster of bees. Over 150 posters were distributed, along with NRCS program informational materials. Approximately 570 attended the event.

Pictured left are P.J. Martin, rangeland management specialist, and Glenna Bradford, Atoka County CD district secretary. The two were available to talk to interested folks about programs and services available, and hand out informational materials.

Durant Field Service Center

The Durant Field Service Center provided an **information booth** at the **17th Annual Golden Harvest Day** at the Jim and Barbra Esbenshade farm, in Bryan County, on June 18, 2011. The booth was manned by PJ Martin, rangeland management specialist, and retired District Conservationist, Paul May. Local and area Texoma producers congregated to witness antique tractor collectors perform farming techniques. Visitors also got to collect potatoes after being dug, watch restored Farmall, John Deere, Allis Chalmers, and Massey-Ferguson tractors work the ground with 1-bottom to 4-bottom plows, grind sweet corn, watch an old wheat thrasher at work, and numerous other displays of antique farming equipment.



Retired District Conservationist Paul May holds up the newest pollinator poster and helps work the booth at the recent Golden Harvest Day in Bryan County.



Holdenville Field Service Center

The Holdenville Field Service Center would like to introduce **Pamela Brittain, student-trainee soil conservation technician**. Brittain is from Holdenville and is a 2009 graduate of Moss High School. She recently graduated from Eastern Oklahoma State College with an associate's degree in Agriculture Education. Brittain plans to attend Oklahoma State University in the fall where she will be majoring in Agriculture Education.

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Zone 4 Review — *continued*

Holdenville Field Service Center...*continued*

Land Judging Contest

The Holdenville NRCS Field Service Center, along with the Hughes County Conservation District and the Eastern Oklahoma State College, held its **Annual Southeastern District Land Judging Contest** in Hughes County. Teams from 16 high schools in the region competed for scholarships provided by Eastern Oklahoma State College and the Ouachita Mountains RC&D Council. The Wetumka soils judging team received the highest overall score and took home the first place trophy.



Pictured above is the Wetumka soils judging team, coached by Dayla Peel. The team placed first in the competition.

Stigler Field Service Center

Mike Van Wyk, soil conservationist serving in the Stigler NRCS Field Service Center, assisted the Haskell County OSU Cooperative Extension Service with conducting an initial **nine-hour Poultry Waste Management Education Session** for poultry producers and commercial and private litter applicators. The training session was held at the Haskell County OSU Extension Service office in Stigler on Saturday, June 11, 2011, with a total of 10 participants. Topics covered included Oklahoma poultry laws and regulations, environmental background, understanding AWMPs, nutrient management, soils and litter sampling, phosphorous, conservation, fine tuning AWMPs, and litter marketing. Information on Farm Bill Programs and services offered through NRCS and Conservation Districts was also presented.



Poultry producers and applicators listen as Haskell County OSU Extension Agent Brian Pugh, discusses poultry waste management.

Zone 4 Review — *continued*

Zone 4 Health and Safety Meeting

What do “getting teed-off at work” and “reptile romance” have in common? Answer... “Jamey’s Survivor Island Games”! **On June 16, 2011, Zone 4 NRCS and Conservation District employees and their families enjoyed a fun-filled, day-long team building activity at Robbers Cave State Park near Wilburton.** “I wanted our employees to relax and have fun while at the same time, get to better know the other employees in the zone they don’t get to work with on a daily basis,” said Jamey Wood, Zone 4 assistant state conservationist for field operations.

Employees participated in a wide variety of wacky games and activities including Note in a Bottle and Water War. Also, there were natural resource-based activities including Nutty about Nature (plant and tree ID), Stepping Out (pacing course) and Reptile Romance (poisonous snake ID). “I enjoyed having fun with our co-workers and seeing Jamey dodging golf balls,” said District Conservationist Cindy Ward from the Antlers Field Service Center.

Along with a hamburger cook-out, the group listened to an ATV safety presentation, given by Allen Oliver, soil conservation technician from the Tishomingo Field Service Center. Oliver serves at the Zone 4 ATV Safety Instructor. The group was treated to the history of Robbers Cave State Park, presented by the park manager.

One of the highlights of the day was the “Water War” competition (paddle boat races) on Carlton Lake. Two members from each of the eight teams had to paddle their boat all the way across the lake and back to complete the leg-cramping challenge. And it looks as though somebody may have been cheating!



The group assembled at the pavilion where Jamey Wood presented annual NRCS Spot Awards. Also awarded was the winning team of “Jamey’s Survivor Island Challenge”. The team, “The Slow Pokes” included Robert Hunnicutt, Jim Williams, Molly Vich, O.B. Boyd, Cody Woolly, Jose` Mendoza and Melissa Williams. Congratulations goes to the Slow Pokes!

Judging artwork not as easy as one might think...



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