

Campbell County Conservation District

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The mission of the Campbell County Conservation District, in accordance with state statute, is to promote the best use of the land, water, and other natural resources within the district by encouraging the use of Best Management Practices. To further these efforts, the district provides assistance, information, and education throughout the county.

District Board Supervisors:

Dennis Walter, Chairman;
Larry Varney, Vice Chairman;
Alan Ahrman, Secretary/Treasurer;
Ken McCormick; Sanford Record;
Gene Dobbs; and Ron McCormick.

District Staff:

Linda Grizzell, Admin. Sec.; Mary Kathryn Dickerson, District Coordinator; Kristin Scott, Agriculture Conservation Technician.

USDA Natural Resources

Conservation Service:

Ed Thompson, District Conservationist

Ky. Division of Conservation:

Linda Hunter, Field Representative

All programs and services of the Natural Resources Conservation Service and conservation districts are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, political beliefs and marital or familial status.

Conservation Field Day showcases county farm - Over 75 people gathered at the Flagg Spring Ranch in Campbell County in June for a conservation field day sponsored by the Campbell County Conservation District. Hosts for the field day were Randy Haas, and Jim and Dorothy Haas. The field day highlighted rotational grazing, pasture management, forage improvement with warm season grasses, forest management and alternative forest products, heavy use areas, and stream crossings and stream buffers. The 2006 Cooperator of the Year, Doug Gehner, was honored during the event. Guest speakers included: Randy Haas; Ed Thompson, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Don Sorrell and DJ. Scully, Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service; Gary Johnson, Kentucky Division of Forestry; and, Kristin Scott and Mark Jacobs, Conservation Districts.

Farmland Work Group Study Released - The Farmland Study for Campbell County was presented to the Campbell County Fiscal Court in September. In October, a report was made to the Kentucky Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE) Corporation, Kentucky Department of Agriculture. The project was funded in part by a grant from the PACE Corporation. Matching funds and in-kind services were provided by the Conservation District and their partners, the Campbell Conservancy; Campbell County Fiscal Court; Campbell County Planning Commission; Northern Kentucky Area Planning Commission; Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service; Campbell County Cattle Association; and Campbell County Farm Bureau.

A subcommittee was formed in November to help develop comments and strategies for incorporating farmland protection and promotion of agriculture in to the Campbell County Comprehensive Plan. Several meetings were also held with county agricultural producers over the winter and in April 2006, a public meeting was held to release the study. Board members Alan Ahrman Dennis Walter, and Ron McCormick, along with past board member Helen Fehr and staff Mary Kathryn Dickerson and Linda Grizzell are working on the project.

Campbell County Legislative Breakfast - The Campbell County Conservation District, along with the Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service, and Campbell County Cattle Association, hosted a breakfast meeting for legislators in November. Topics addressed were agricultural diversification, the Campbell County Farmland Study, and other issues facing the agricultural community. This annual event provides a forum for agricultural organizations and agencies to present issues of concern to state legislators. Conservation District board members who attended were: Dennis Walter, Ron McCormick, Ken McCormick, Sanford Record and Larry Varney.

Campbell County Comprehensive Plan Update - The Conservation District board participated in the comprehensive plan update process through the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee. Dennis Walter and Ron McCormick represented the district and the Farmland Work Group.

Conservation Field Days Grant - The District, in cooperation with the Boone and Kenton Counties Conservation Districts, received a grant for a series of field days to address forestry practices, warm season grasses for forage, and the federal Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). A Summer Forage Field Day at Big Bone Lick State Park in August attracted 28 people and 45 people attended a Conservation Program Field Day in September at Split Rock Conservation Park. As a part of this grant, a forestry field day was held in October 2004 and a Farm Program Open House was held in January 2005. The grant was through the Kentucky Division of Conservation Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Fund.

Agriculture Water Quality Act - A total of 540 landowners have filed a self-certification form with the District stating that they have developed and are implementing a water quality plan for their operation.

An **Agriculture Water Quality Committee** formed by the Campbell, Kenton, and Boone County Conservation Districts meets regularly to help local producers comply with this law enacted in 1994. The committee includes representatives from over ten agencies and organizations involved in agriculture and water quality. Campbell County Conservation Board Members Sanford Record, Gene Dobbs, Alan Ahrman, and Dennis Walter, and staff Mary Kathryn Dickerson, and Kristin Scott serve on the committee. In December, the committee visited the Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky International Airport to tour the de-icing/storm water system. In July, Ken Palisin, Northern Kentucky Area Development District, made a presentation on the scattered-site sewage project.

Dead Livestock Disposal Program - The District received a matching grant from the Kentucky Department of Agriculture to assist landowners with proper disposal of fallen livestock. This year 38 producers participated in the program. The program also assists the county animal shelter with costs of proper disposal of companion animals.

Forage Improvement - The conservation district administers the fund to distribute forage improvement cost share money within the county. This is a program of the County Agriculture Development Board set up to administer funds from the Phase I tobacco settlement. Board member Kenneth McCormick and Alan Pfefferman serve as the district's representatives to this board, and board member Gene Dobbs is the fund administrator. Dennis Walter and staff Linda Grizzell and Mary Kathryn Dickerson attended a Phase I Agriculture Development Council training program in March.

Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Fund -

This year \$38,985 was approved for four county producers through the Ky. Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Fund to help them install Best Management Practices on their farms to resolve resource problems.

Agricultural Districts - There are fourteen agricultural districts in Campbell County with a total of 11,289 acres and 225 landowners. The board is pursuing solutions to issues regarding the consequences for agricultural districts located in areas considering incorporation as new cities. The District hosted two Agricultural District workshops this year, one at the Campbell County Environmental Education Center in February and one at the East Campbell County Firehouse in March. Mary Kathryn Dickerson presented information about the Kentucky Agriculture District and Kentucky Purchase of Agriculture Conservation Easement programs. Board members Larry Varney, Dennis Walter, Ron McCormick, Sanford Record, Ken McCormick, Gene Dobbs, and staff Linda Grizzell also attended and assisted with the workshops.

Technical Assistance - Technical assistance is provided to Campbell County through Ed Thompson, District Conservationist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, our federal partner; and Conservation District Staff Kristin Scott. In 2005 - 2006, they provided assistance to over 610 Campbell County landowners concerning conservation planning, rotational grazing systems, wildlife habitat improvement, forestry practices, animal waste control, nutrient management, storm water runoff, drainage, erosion and sediment control, and other conservation considerations.

Conservation Progress:

Conservation Plans for Cropland Written - 526 acres
Conservation Plans for Grazing Land Written - 947 acres
Practices for Enhancement of Wildlife Habitat - 21 acres
Reduction in the Acreage of Cropland Soils Damaged by Erosion - 36 acres
Soil Erosion Reduced - 394 Tons

Projects and Partners

The District supported many individuals, organizations, agencies, and projects throughout the year, including:

- Dennis Walter, Ken McCormick, and Larry Varney represented the district on a regional **NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program** work group to select local practices for the program.
- Dennis Walter is a board member of the **Campbell Conservancy**. District Coordinator Mary Kathryn Dickerson serves as an advisor to the Conservancy.
- Dennis Walter made presentations regarding the

Farmland Work Group Study to the **2015 Vision Committee** on land use planning and the **Campbell County Fiscal Court**.

- Larry Varney attended the **No. Ky. Urban and Community Forestry Council** Annual Fall Meeting in November.
- Sanford Record and Mary Kathryn Dickerson attended the **Banklick Watershed Council** public meeting in November.

Education and Outreach

Urban Forestry Grants - The Campbell County Conservation District has been giving matching grants for Urban Forestry and Community Beautification since 1993 to help cities and communities establish programs or develop projects to protect and conserve our natural resources. The project must be done on lands located in Campbell County that are owned, leased, or otherwise controlled by city, county, state, or federal government and must include funding or in-kind contributions in an amount equal to the grant request. This year three grants were awarded. The **City of Melbourne** received \$500 for the Latonia Avenue Street Beautification project, phase 2; the **City of Newport** received \$1000 for the West End Planting project; and the **City of Bellevue** received \$1,000 to help plant street trees and remove invasive street tree species.

Education Grants - The Campbell County Conservation District has offered education grants since 1991 to assist schools in fostering learning about conservation and our environment. Grant applications are accepted from October through January each year. This year three grants were awarded: **Grandview Elementary School** received \$671 to fund their "Weather – Measurement, Prediction and Effects" project; **Grant's Lick Elementary School** received \$958 to help fund an expansion of their Outdoor Classroom Project; and **Highlands High School** received \$971 to purchase materials for the school library.

Workshops and Programs

- The district reached over 250 individuals this year through programs for schools and the Sanitation District #1 *Waterific* program.
- The district supports the **NKU Environmental Education Alliance** and the **Environmental Education in No. Ky. Resource Guide** was updated and is available through the district office.
- **Jessie R. Gehner** and **Michelle Marie Simon** were awarded the 2006 Campbell County Conservation District Scholarships. Jessie, a graduate of Campbell County High School, is a student at Northern Kentucky University, majoring in Biology. She is the daughter of Joan and Doug Gehner of California. Michelle is a graduate of Bishop Brossart High School. She will attend the University of Kentucky-

College of Agriculture this fall, and plans to study veterinary science. Michelle is the daughter of Rick and Alice Simon of Alexandria.

- The Campbell County Conservation District supports the **Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts Auxiliary Scholarship** program through a donation of money. Items for the annual auction are donated by board members.
- **Writing and Art Contests** - "*Kentucky's Water – My Responsibility*" was the topic for this school year's Conservation Contests. The theme focused on Kentucky's water resources – their variety their importance, and ways that all citizens can help protect, restore and conserve Kentucky's waterways and watersheds. In the Art Contest there were 314 entries from 10 schools. This year in the Writing Contest, there were 198 entries written in five schools. The District sponsors an awards banquet each year for contest winners, grant recipients, and other awards.
- Five students from the Campbell County FFA, under the leadership of FFA Sponsor and Agriculture Teacher, **Ms. Erin Jury**, competed in the **Kentucky Regional Envirothon** in April. **Alex Kline, Emily Boden, Stacey Withrow, Kyle Combs, and Jessica Wildhaber** were coached by Ms. Jury, DJ. Scully of the Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service, Ed Thompson of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Mary Kathryn Dickerson of the Campbell County Conservation District. The team was sponsored by the Conservation District, and Mary Kathryn and board chairman Dennis Walter attended the FFA banquet to present the team with certificates of appreciation. The team finished 16th out of 32 teams, an accomplishment for their first year of competition.
- **Sr. Dolores Gohs**, St. Philip School, was the recipient of the District's **teacher incentive award**.
- **Doug Gehner**, Mentor, was chosen as the **Campbell County Conservation District Outstanding Cooperator** for 2006. Doug and his wife Joan have a 17-acre farm and a family business, "Mr. Cowpie's Party Animals," that is dedicated to teaching people about farming and natural resource conservation. Doug participated with the Conservation District, Natural Resources Conservation Service and Cooperative Extension Service in a number of programs to improve resource management on his farm.

Outreach

- The quarterly newsletter, *Landscapes*, reaches over 1700 Campbell County households.
- Board member Larry Varney maintains a web site for the District, at <http://home.fuse.net/campbellcd>.
- Board members manned a booth at the **Alexandria Fair & Horse Show**. The booth and fair book

advertisement theme was, "From City to Country, Conservation Works," focusing on Best Management Practices for the equine industry and other conservation programs.

- **Big Bone Lick State Park Discovery Days** – The exhibit this year featured "Food From the Forest" and included native plants that were used as food in earlier days. District programs were also highlighted. Over 500 people visited the booth during the festival. Board members and staff from the Boone, Campbell and Kenton Districts helped with the exhibit.
- District staff hosted a booth at the Northern Kentucky University **Earth Day** celebration in April.
- Agriculture Conservation Technician Kristin Scott completed the Cooperative Extension Service **Master Grazer Program**. She also made a presentation to the group on conservation systems and programs.
- Larry Varney attended the **Licking River Watershed Watch** Conference at Blue Licks State Resort Park in February.

Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Conservation Council (OKI-RCC) The annual meeting was held at Grailville, Ohio, in March with about 65 people attending. Farmland protection and water quality trading were featured topics. Board members Ken McCormick and Larry Varney attended along with staff Kristin Scott, Mark Jacobs and Mary Kathryn Dickerson attended. Mary Kathryn made a presentation about the district's Farmland Study. A conservation tour is hosted each year by a member of the **OKI-RCC**. Those attending the tour in Clermont County, Ohio, in September 2005 were: Ron McCormick, Ken McCormick, Sanford Record, Larry Varney and Linda Grizzell.

Legislative Action - Dennis Walter serves as the district's legislative liaison.

Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts (KACD) –The state convention was held in conjunction with the Southeast Region meeting of the National Association of Conservation Districts in Louisville in July 2005. Ken McCormick, Alan Ahrman, Ron McCormick, Sanford Record, Linda Grizzell, Kristin Scott and Mary Kathryn Dickerson attended the meetings.

Ron McCormick and Linda Grizzell attended the KACD Area 5 meeting in Campbell County. The Campbell County Conservation District introduced two resolutions, which were adopted and will be forwarded to the KACD for consideration at their convention in July 2006. One resolution would empower the KACD

and the Ky. Division of Conservation to work with members of the Kentucky General Assembly to study innovative tax incentive programs to encourage the preservation and protection of agricultural land and assist young or beginning farmers. The goal is to look at ways to help retain established agricultural land, encourage people to seek careers in farming and agriculture, and attract investment in rural Kentucky. The other resolution dealt with equalizing assessment of district dues for the National Association of Conservation Districts.

Board members serve on statewide KACD committees, which meet annually: Public Information, Sanford Record; Research and Natural Resources, Larry Varney; and Education, Ken McCormick.

National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) – Alan Ahrman and Ken McCormick attended the annual conference in Houston in February.

The **Executive Committee** of the Campbell County Conservation District meets regularly with those of the Boone and Kenton County Conservation Districts. The boards work together on conservation programs and employee policy.

Standing Committees of the District are:

Land Use Committee - Sanford Record, Chairman; Dennis Walter; and, Gene Dobbs. Advisory Committee: Mark Leopold, No. Ky. University Center for Applied Ecology; DJ. Scully, Don Sorrell, and Dave Koester, of the Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service; and, Kristin Anderson, Campbell County Conservation District Staff. Gene Dobbs is the Agriculture Water Quality Act contact, in event landowner is cited for violations under the Bad Actor clause of the Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Act (AWQA).

Conservation Education and Public Information Committee - Larry Varney, Chairman; Alan Ahrman, and Ron McCormick. Advisory Committee: DJ. Scully and Owen Prim of the Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service; and, Ron Browning, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources.

District Funding - District revenue is provided through a county tax on real property and funding from the Kentucky Division of Conservation. A complete financial report is available at the district office.