

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; Gene Dobbs; Ken McCormick; Ron McCormick.; and Sanford Record.

District Staff:

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

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service:

Ed L. Thompson Jr., 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.

Campbell County Conservation District Annual Report *July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2007*

Farmland protection work has top priority

The Farmland Study for Campbell County was presented to the Campbell County Fiscal Court in September 2005. Board members and staff from the Campbell County Conservation District and their partners, the Campbell Conservancy, Campbell County Fiscal Court, Campbell County Planning Commission, Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service, Campbell County Cattle Association, and Campbell County Farm Bureau continue to work to implement recommendation from the study. Campbell County Conservation District members on the Farmland Work Group include Dennis Walter, Ron McCormick, Alan Ahrman and former district board member Helen Fehr, as well as staff Linda Grizzell and Mary Kathryn Dickerson.

A subcommittee was formed in November 2005 to help develop comments and strategies for incorporating farmland protection and promotion of agriculture into the Campbell County Comprehensive Plan. This subcommittee's efforts resulted in the inclusion of two items in the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan that will support agriculture and farmland: Economic Development and Employment - Support the continued economic viability of Campbell County's working farms and agricultural enterprises; and, Community Character Preservation - Provide a viable and continuing strategy for preserving quality farmland.

Public outreach work continued in April 2007 with the formation of an event subcommittee to host a dinner to promote locally-grown foods and share information about farmland protection strategies. The event will be held at Northern Kentucky University (NKU) on August 6, 2007. The committee, chaired by Richard Hoskin, includes: Linda Bray-Schafer, Northern



Logo designed by Kathy Stewart

Kentucky Horse Network, who chaired the facilities committee; Jessica Metzger with the Northern Kentucky University Center for Applied Ecology, which is sponsoring the event on the campus of NKU; Kathy Stewart, NKU Director of Special Events; Ed Devoid, Chartwells Higher Education, NKU Dining Services; Campbell County Judge Executive Steve Pendery; Don Sorrell and Dave Koester with the Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service; Helen Fehr, Chuck Heilman and Don Girton, community volunteers with the Farmland Work Group; Bob Huck, Campbell County Farm Bureau; and Dennis Walter, Ron McCormick, Linda Grizzell and Mary Kathryn Dickerson with the Campbell County Conservation District. Dennis Walter, Richard Hoskin, Ed Devoid, and NKU Chef Alan Mullins appeared on ICN-6's *Northern Kentucky Magazine* to promote the event.

Dennis Walter represented the group at an April American Farmland Trust Roundtable in Lexington, which brought together representatives of groups and organizations in Central Kentucky working on farm protection issues.

A subcommittee of the Farmland Work Group met with the Campbell County Property Valuation Administration several times during the year to assess methodology for farmland and forestland. Alan Ahrman and Dennis Walter represented the Conservation District on this subcommittee.

Dennis Walter made several presentations regarding the Farmland Work Group Study to the Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts - Area 5 during their annual meeting, and met with the Campbell County Fiscal Court and Campbell County Planning and Zoning on several occasions.

Agricultural Districts - There are fourteen agricultural districts in Campbell County with a total of 11,792 acres and 236 landowners. The board is pursuing solutions to issues regarding the consequences for agricultural districts located in areas considering incorporation as new cities.

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 2006 - 2007, they provided assistance to over 268 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 needs.

The staff also currently provides ongoing assistance for eleven (11) landowners who have completed Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contracts initiated in 2002. Landowners are required to maintain the practices for up to ten years. EQIP, a program of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Farm Bill), helped fund \$125,147.78 in conservation practices on 1,243 acres of land. EQIP goals include the reduction of soil erosion and non-point source pollution, as well as promotion of at-risk species wildlife habitat conservation. Another 13 contracts for EQIP are still being completed. These contracts will affect 1,505 acres of land and represent an investment of \$287,692.48 in EQIP funds.

Three landowners are currently involved in the Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program (WHIP), another program of the Farm Bill that will affect 36.8

acres of land and represent an investment of \$5,287.13. NRCS and District staff assist the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources with this program.

Conservation Progress-

- *Conservation Plans Written* - 1,871 acres
- *Cropland with conservation applied to improve soil quality* - 600 acres
- *Land with conservation applied to improve water quality* - 1,407 acres
- *Grazing and forest land with conservation applied to protect and improve the resource base* - 971 acres
- *Non-federal land with conservation applied to improve fish and wildlife habitat quality* - 49 acres
- *Certified Nutrient Management Plans written and applied* - 2

Agriculture Water Quality Act - A total of 548 landowners currently have a self-certification form filed 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 as needed 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.

Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Fund - This year \$53,157 was approved for three 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.

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 41 producers participated in the program that assisted in the disposal of 28 cows, 16 horses and one hog. The program also assists the county animal shelter with costs of proper disposal of pets.

Agriculture Development Fund- The conservation district administers the fund to distribute cost share money within the county. This is a program the County Agriculture Development Board set up to administer funds from the Phase I tobacco settlement using the menu approach to include model programs

such as cattle genetics, cattle handling facilities, forages, fencing, ag diversification, hay/grain storage facilities, and a non-model hay handling program. Board members Kenneth McCormick and Dennis Walter serve as the district's representatives to this board. Ken McCormick and staff Linda Grizzell attended an Agriculture Development Workshop training program in May.

Campbell County Ag Community Leaders' Breakfast

– The Campbell County Conservation District hosted a breakfast meeting for legislators in November at the Campbell County Environmental Education Center at A. J. Jolly Park. Speakers included representatives from the Northern Kentucky Vintners and Grape Growers Association, Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service, Campbell County Farm Bureau, Northern Kentucky Horse Network, and the Conservation District. Topics addressed were agricultural diversification, farmland protection, 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, Alan Ahrman, Ken McCormick, Sanford Record, and staff Linda Grizzell, Kristin Anderson (Scott), and Mary Kathryn Dickerson.

Northern Kentucky Horse Network – In May 2006, the Campbell County Conservation District, along with the Boone and Kenton Conservation Districts and Cooperative Extension Services of Boone, Kenton and Campbell counties, started meeting with a group of horse farm owners about ways to better manage environmental issues, such as horse manure and over-grazing of pastures. The group identified a number of challenges and opportunities for horse owners and horse farm operators and decided to address them. The Northern Kentucky Horse Network was officially formed in November 2006 with the mission to help horse owners of all interests and ability levels to keep up with current equine issues, share information, work to reduce horse mistreatment, promote agri-tourism, and encourage sound farm management.

Campbell Conservancy - Dennis Walter is a board member of the Campbell Conservancy and District Coordinator Mary Kathryn Dickerson serves as an advisor. In August 2006, the Conservancy and Conservation District board approved an agreement through which the Conservation District will provide administrative and technical services to the Conservancy for a nominal fee. The Conservation District will also provide a space for meetings and storage of records. Members of the Conservancy are:

David Peck, chair; Dr. Yvonne Meichtry; Dennis Walter; Joe Piller; Lisa Araya; Don Girton; Melissa Williams; and Peter Garrett.

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.

Projects and Partners

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

- Larry Varney represented the district on a regional **NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program** work group to select local practices for the program.
- Larry Varney attended the **No. Ky. Urban and Community Forestry Council** Annual Meeting in November, the Annual Governor's **Conference on the Environment** in November, and the **Licking River Watershed Watch** annual meeting in February.
- Dennis Walter attended the first **Governor's Summit on Agriculture** in March.
- The Conservation District presented a Conservation Appreciation Award to the **Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service** during their awards dinner in March. Don Sorrell, Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources, accepted the award on behalf of his co-workers David Koester, Owen Prim, and DJ. Scully, and the staff and board of the Extension Service.

Education and Outreach

Your Place in a Growing Community – The Boone, Campbell and Kenton County Conservation Districts jointly sponsored a series of workshops in January, February, March and April to look at resource planning on your property and why what you do on your land can have a huge impact in the neighborhood. Sessions included Beyond Landscaping; rain barrels and rain gardens; managing invasive species; issues and trends; and the condition of local waterways and watersheds. The last session took participants to Camp Michaels and Boone Woods Park to walk their watersheds. Over 20 people participated in the series. Guest speakers included Heather Mayfield with ORSANCO, Matt Whooten with Sanitation District #1, and Conservation District staff Mary Kathryn Dickerson and Mark Jacobs.

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 \$900 for the Latonia Avenue Street Beautification project, phase 3; the **City of Newport** received \$1,300 for the Newport Downtown Renaissance District project; and the **City of Bellevue** received \$1,300 to continue their program to plant street trees and remove invasive street tree species along Berry Street.

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: **Sonlight Ridge Academy** received \$250 to help with construction of an Aquatic and Botanical Garden Learning Center; **Newport Middle School** received \$1,000 for their Environmental Education Initiative in partnership with Lafarge Gypsum of North America; and **Sts. Peter and Paul** received \$500 for improvements to an outdoor learning center that was recently established at the school.

Workshops and Programs

- The district reached over 300 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** is available through the district office.
- **Caitlin Jo Foltz, Michelle Marie Simon and Brittany Ann Peters** were awarded scholarships through the Campbell County Conservation District. Both Caitlin and Michelle received scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 for the academic year and Brittany received a scholarship for \$500 for the first semester. Michelle is a student at the University of Kentucky (UK) – College of Agriculture, pursuing a degree in animal Sciences; Caitlin is also a student at UK, majoring in Agriculture Education with a minor in Horticulture; and Brittany plans to enroll in

Morehead State University in the field of veterinary technology.

- 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 Soil – It’s Worth Protecting*” was the topic for this school year’s Conservation Contests. The theme focused on Kentucky’s soil resources – their variety their importance, and ways that all citizens can help protect and improve soils. In the Art Contest there were 241 entries from seven schools. This year in the Writing Contest, there were 155 entries written in five schools. County and school winners received a certificate of achievement from The Courier Journal, and from the Conservation District, a Compost Gin Card Game, or a Squirming in the Soil, depending on their grade level. Teachers received a Life in a Bucket of Soil book from the Conservation District.
- **The World Beneath Your Feet** workshops sponsored to promote the Writing and Art Contests attracted over 20 teachers, parents and students to help them prepare for the contest. The workshops featured materials and activities about soils.
- **Kathleen Kreimborg**, St. Therese School, was the recipient of the District’s **teacher incentive award**.
- **Greg Rawe**, Gubser Mill, was chosen as the **Campbell County Conservation District Outstanding Cooperator**. Greg and his wife Millie, have a 68-acre farm on Wesley Chapel Road where they background steers in partnership with Greg’s brother Vince Rawe, and Terry Bezold.
- The quarterly newsletter, *Landscapes*, reaches over 1,800 Campbell County households.
- Board member Larry Varney maintains a web site for the District, at <http://home.fuse.net/campbellcd>
- Board members participated in the **Alexandria Fair & Horse Show** by purchasing a fair book advertisement with the theme, “From City to Country, Conservation Works,” focusing on the Campbell County Farmland Study. They also

purchased animals at the 4-H/ FFA Livestock Sale, in partnership with several other organizations, at the Alexandria Fair and Horse Show.

- **Big Bone Lick State Park Discovery Days** – The exhibit this year featured a display of plants titled “Did Lewis and Clark Find Me Here” and challenged people to identify the plants as native or introduced species. District programs were also highlighted. Over 225 people visited the booth during the festival. Board members and staff from the Boone, Campbell and Kenton Districts helped with the exhibit, including Sanford Record, Ron McCormick, and Larry Varney.

Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Conservation Council (OKI-RCC) The annual meeting was held at the OKI Regional Council of Governments in March. Urban forests and watershed protection were the featured topics. Board members Ken McCormick, Sanford Record, and Larry Varney attended along with staff Linda Grizzell. Ken McCormick participated on the planning committee for the meeting. A conservation tour is hosted each year by a member of the **OKI-RCC**. Those attending the tour in Dearborn County, Indiana, in September 2006 were: Supervisors Ron McCormick, Dennis Walter, Sanford Record, Larry Varney, and staff Linda Grizzell and Kristin Scott.

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

Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts (KACD) –The state convention was held in Owensboro in July 2006. Dennis Walter, Ken McCormick, Alan Ahrman, Ron McCormick, Sanford Record, Linda Grizzell, and Mary Kathryn Dickerson attended the meeting. Dennis Walter and members of the board participated in several conference calls throughout the year to discuss conservation issues.

Dennis Walter, Ron McCormick, Ken McCormick, Gene Dobbs, Larry Varney, Sanford Record and Linda Grizzell attended the KACD Area 5 meeting in Mason County. The Campbell County Conservation District introduced one resolution, which was adopted and will be forwarded to the KACD for consideration at their convention in July 2007. The resolution dealt with working with the state legislature to reinstate funding for the Kentucky Purchase of Conservation Easements program, enabling it to secure matching federal funding to further their work.

Board members serve on statewide KACD committees, which meet annually: Public Information, Sanford Record; Research and Natural

Resources, Larry Varney; and Education, Ken McCormick.

All board members attended a training session in Clark County in November, sponsored by the Kentucky Division of Conservation and KACD. They also attended a locally-sponsored joint training with the board members and staff of the Boone and Kenton Conservation Districts at the Crestview Hills City Building in January.

National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) – Sanford Record and Larry Varney attended the annual conference in Los Angeles 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.

The Campbell County Conservation District also participated in several joint meetings with the Boone and Kenton Conservation Districts to discuss planning for the future and joint projects and workshops.

Standing Committees of the District are:

Land Use Committee - Sanford Record, Chairman; Ken McCormick; and, Gene Dobbs. Advisory Committee: DJ. Scully, Don Sorrell, and Dave Koester, Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service; Ed Thompson, NRCS District Conservationist; and, Kristin Scott, Campbell County Conservation District Staff. Gene Dobbs is the Agriculture Water Quality Act contact in the event a 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 Helen Fehr, former district board member.

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.