

**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:

Larry Varney, Chairman (July-Dec); Ron McCormick, Vice Chairman (July-Dec), Chairman (Jan-June); Dennis Walter, Vice Chairman (Jan-June); Ken McCormick, Secretary/Treasurer; Gene Dobbs; Linda Bray-Schafer; Rick Simon (Jan-June), and Sanford Record.

District Staff:

Linda Grizzell, Administrative Secretary; Mary Kathryn Dickerson, District Coordinator; John Stork Agriculture Conservation Technician.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service:

Greta Steverson, Lead District Conservationist; Allen Arthur, Soil Conservation Technician

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, 2012 - June 30, 2013

The Campbell County Conservation District reviewed and revised their Long Range Plan during this fiscal year. They focused on six major areas of work from that plan during 2012 - 2013.

Conservation Planning and Implementation

Technical Assistance - Technical assistance is provided to Campbell County through Greta Steverson, District Conservationist, and Allen Arthur, Soil Conservation Technician, with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), our federal partner, and Campbell County Conservation District staff. In 2012-13, staff provided assistance to over 275 Campbell County contacts 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 NRCS, Conservation District, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, and Kentucky Division of Forestry work together to assist landowners with programs under the federal Farm Bill. Landowners have several years to complete practices and are required to maintain the practices for up to 20 years, depending on the program requirements.

The staff also currently provides ongoing assistance for 17 contracts under the 2008 Farm Bill. These contracts cover 1,522 acres of land and are valued at \$ 293,481. An additional five applications covering 265 acres have been received. The value of those applications is \$ 9,876.

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The **Natural Resources Conservation Service** held a **Local Work Group** meeting in Walton in November to establish local priorities for the Environmental Quality Incentives Fund Program. Conservation District supervisors Ron McCormick, Dennis Walter, and Larry Varney attended, along with conservation district staff members.

Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Act - A total of 601 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.

Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Fund – This state fund provides cost share assistance to agricultural landowners with soil erosion and water quality issues on their farms. This year \$2,553 was approved for one county producer through the Ky. Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Fund to help install Best Management Practices on their farm to resolve resource problems. Producers may be granted up to two years to complete their practices.

County Agricultural Investment Program (C.A.I.P.) - The County Agricultural Development Council administers funds from the Phase I tobacco settlement. Funds are available for investment areas such as cattle genetics, cattle handling facilities, forages, fencing, on-farm water, agricultural diversification, and hay/grain storage facilities. Board member Dennis Walter and former board member Alan Ahrman served as the district’s representatives to this county board. The Conservation District administers the program in Campbell County. The county council awarded \$2,496 to one producer this fiscal year to complete the previous program year. Staff John Stork performs the field visits for the District to verify completion and that all requirements are met.

Chairman Ron McCormick and staff Linda Grizzell attended the Kentucky Agriculture Development Fund training in Winchester.

The District operates a **Cricket 3-ton Lime**

Spreader for rent to Campbell County farmers for \$25/day for spreading lime to improve productivity by increasing the soil pH. Before using the lime spreader farmers must attend a safety training program offered by the Campbell County Extension Service. The spreader was purchased as a cooperative effort of the Campbell County Farm Bureau, Campbell County Extension Service, Campbell County Cattle Association, and the Campbell County Conservation District. It was rented by four farmers this fiscal year and brought in revenue of \$125. It is housed and managed by board member Ron McCormick.

Farmland protection

The District continues to build on the work started through the 2005 Farmland Study for Campbell County. Board members and staff from the Campbell County Conservation District and their partners continue to work to implement recommendations from the study. Partners include: Campbell Conservancy, Campbell County Fiscal Court, Campbell County Planning Commission, Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service, Campbell County Cattle Association, Campbell County Farm Bureau, Campbell County Future Farmers of America, Northern Kentucky Horse Network, Northern Kentucky University Center for Applied Ecology, and the Campbell County Economic Progress Authority.

The **Outreach Task Force**, chaired by Linda Bray-Schafer, launched its fourth annual Campbell County Backroads Farm Tour this year. Visitors enjoyed the warmth and generous hospitality of thirteen Campbell County farm owners on Sat., July 14, 2012. The tour attracted more than 2,000 visitors with 6,500 farm visits at all locations. Most of the visitors were from Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati with 11 states and 72 cities represented. The tour showcased community-supported agriculture, vegetable and produce growers, four

vineyards, a museum, horse farms, and beef and grain farms. Visitors were directed along some of the county’s most scenic back roads while stops along the way offered the opportunity to



Campbell County Farm Tour

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purchase fresh produce, honey and wine, and learn from some of our best farmers about the farming process.

Agricultural Districts - There are fourteen agricultural districts in Campbell County with a total of 12,171 acres and 249 landowners.

Through a partnership with the Cooperative Extension Service Agriculture Agents, the **Northern Kentucky Agritourism Network** was officially formed as a 501 (c)3 organization and includes the counties of Campbell, Boone, Kenton, and Pendleton. Supervisors Dennis Walter is the president and Linda Bray-Schafer serves on the steering committee.

Develop local programs to meet local needs and promote state and national programs that further conservation

Non-Traditional (Alternative) Agriculture Grant – The Conservation District received a grant from the Kentucky Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Fund to assist landowners who are not eligible for traditional Farm Bill cost share programs. The grant assists landowners to install practices to control sediment and erosion. Two applications were approved and four producers have been awarded a total of \$8,475. One application is pending completion.

Farm Dump Removal Grants – The Conservation District received a grant from the Kentucky Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Fund to assist in cleaning up farm dumps. Four applications were approved and two have been awarded \$1,442.50 this fiscal year. Two producers were given permission to use the funds to clean up debris caused by the March 2012 tornadoes; the other two are pending completion.

Dead Farm Animal Disposal Program - The District received a matching grant from the Kentucky Division of Conservation Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Fund to assist landowners with proper disposal of fallen livestock. This year 53 producers participated in the program. The program also assists the county

animal shelter with costs for proper disposal of animals. A total of \$4,109.11 was awarded from the grant this fiscal year.

Pond Scum Project - District staff has been working the past few years with local farmers and lake owners to help identify problems with algae. The Boone, Campbell and Kenton County Conservation Districts received a Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Environmental Grant for a joint program to demonstrate Best Management Practices for pond and lake algae growth that may affect their use for livestock water and other purposes. Partners in this project are Dr. Miriam Kannan with Northern Kentucky University (NKU) and the Foundation for Ohio River Education (FORE). A field day was held in August 2012, followed by a workshop at NKU in April 2013.

Weed Management Project - The Boone, Campbell and Kenton County Conservation Districts received a KSW9 Environmental grant for a joint program to demonstrate effective ways of controlling invasive species on private and public lands. Results of a survey conducted by Northern Kentucky University students are pending. Field days were held in October 2012 at the Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area and at the Curtis Gates Lloyd Wildlife Management Area in March 2013.

The Boone, Campbell and Kenton County Conservation Districts hosted their fourth **Joint Agency Meeting** in February. This year’s meeting featured a presentation on the Gunpowder Creek Watershed Initiative. Representatives from Natural Resources Conservation Service; Farm Service Agency; the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet - Division of Air, Waste Management and Water; the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources; and the Kentucky Division of Forestry attended. Board members Rick Simon,

Sanford Record, and Ken McCormick attended; and staff Linda Grizzell, John Stork and Mary Kathryn Dickerson also attended.



Left: Gene Dobbs tests pond water

Right: Larry Varney & Joe Darpel remove invasives.

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Tree Planting and Urban Forestry Enhancement - The Campbell County Conservation District has been giving matching grants for Tree Planting 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 accomplished 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 four grants were awarded. The City of Bellevue received \$800 for their "City-wide Tree Planting Plan", the City of Alexandria received \$800 for their "Tribute Park and City Park Enhancement" project, Fort Thomas Forest Conservancy received \$500 toward their "Model Native Garden Phase I Plant identification Signage", and the City of Southgate Park & Tree Board received \$900 for their "The Value of Native Kentucky Trees" project.

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 one grant was awarded. Crossroads Elementary received \$1,000 for their "Plants and Trees with a Purpose Phase II" project. Board member Larry Varney attended the Crossroads Elementary Appreciation Luncheon in September. He toured their outdoor classroom, which was enhanced by funds from the District's Education Grant.

Conservation Scholarships - Alexandra Lynn Rawlings received a \$1,000 scholarship for her academic year through the Campbell County Conservation District. She is a sophomore at the University of Louisville and her field of study is biology. Zoe Sarakatsannis also received a \$1,000 scholarship. She will be a freshman at the University of Kentucky and her field of study is natural resources and environmental science.

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 and partners.

The District sponsors a \$175 scholarship to attend the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources' **Camp Webb**. This year the District awarded a scholarship to Elise Brown from Crossroads Elementary. Scholarships are made possible by donations from local hunting and fishing clubs and sponsors, such as the Campbell County Conservation District.

Writing and Art Contests - "*Kentucky's Forests... Branching Out*" was the topic for this school year's Conservation Contests. In the Art Contest there were 786 entries from ten schools. In the Writing Contest there were 117 entries from six schools. County and school winners received a certificate of achievement from the District. Also from the District, the art winners received a Why Do Leaves Change Color? book and the writing winners received the book Trees: A Golden Guide. All winners received a t-shirt and a booklet Kentucky Forest Trees: How To Know Them published by the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service. All teachers received a t-shirt and a copy of the UK booklet from the Conservation District. The K-2 art winner received a \$25 check from the District. Students also received Legislative Citations to honor their work from Senator Katie Stine and Representatives Joe Fischer, Adam Koenig, Dennis Keene, and Tom McKee. The meal was catered by Sis's Family Restaurant & Catering from Newport.

Katy Drinkhouse, Grandview Elementary, was the recipient of the District's **Teacher Incentive Award** for the Writing and Art Contests.

Highlands High School of Ft. Thomas competed for the fourth time in the East Regional State *Envirothon* competition in April with two teams. Team A came in fourth and Team B came in twelfth out of 19 teams. Team A moved to the state competition coming in eighth out of nine teams.

Left: County & Third Place State Winner Sydnie Schell, Highlands High School, and her teacher Colleen Epperson.



Right: Missy Jo Hollingsworth, Cooperator of the Year.

The Cooperator of the Year was Missy Jo Hollingsworth of Saddle Lake Equestrian Center. She was nominated for the award by the Campbell County Conservation District for her hard work

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and stewardship of her farms on Nelson and Burger Roads. She owns quarter horses and her operation concentrates on breeding, raising, and training horses. She has completed several best management practices through the District's Farm Dump and Alternative Agriculture programs. Saddle Lake has been a Backroads Farm Tour stop for the past four years and will be again for the farm tour in July 2013.

Promote the value of all county lands and natural resources and work for their protection

Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area - The Conservation District received a grant from the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund Board (KHLCFB) to help purchase what is now the Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area along the Licking River. The Northern Kentucky University Center for Applied Ecology removed invasive species, enhanced the wetland meadow, and repaired several areas along the stream. An old barn and house on the property were removed, and efforts to preserve a log cabin home site continue. The Campbell County Conservancy deeded five adjacent acres of land to the Conservation District, which will help to provide safe access to the property. A suitable parking area is being pursued as work continues to have the property open in the future for hiking, bird watching, nature study, and a stop along the Licking River for canoeing and kayaking. A joint advisory team for Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area composed of members from the District, Conservancy, and Fiscal Court researches and discusses issues affecting the property.

St. Anne Woods & Wetlands - The Conservation District received a grant this year from the KHLCFB to purchase approximately 160 acres of land in Campbell County known as the St. Anne Woods & Wetlands. While an agreement has been reached, the property has not transferred at this time.

The Conservation District assisted with a project at St. Anne Wetlands to install seven small wetlands of varying sizes and depths in what was formerly a corn field. District Coordinator Mary Kathryn Dickerson worked with the St. Anne Wetlands Education

Committee and the Center for Wetlands and Stream Restoration to design and install the wetlands. Two wetland restoration workshops were held as part of this project on September 7 and 8, 2012. The workshops provided hands-on training to over 60 individuals from Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, and Taiwan.

The Conservation District provided a grant to two Eagle Scouts for a project to build bridges to connect new trail segments in the main wetland area.

Campbell Conservancy – In August 2006, the Conservancy and Conservation District Board approved an agreement through which the Conservation District provides administrative and technical services to the Conservancy for a nominal fee. The Conservation District also provides a space for meetings and storage of records. District Administrative Secretary Linda Grizzell provides staff support for the Conservancy.

Bellevue Landslides – The Conservation District was instrumental in connecting Bellevue residents and city officials with resources to assist them in trying to resolve issues with landslides.

Partnerships

Staff member Mary Kathryn Dickerson represents the District on the **Solid Waste Technical Advisory Committee**.

Board member Larry Varney attended the 2012 **Licking River Watershed Watch** Annual Meeting in Winchester, KY in February. He also volunteers with the group as their web master.

Board member Larry Varney attended **Northern Kentucky Urban & Community Forestry Council** Annual fall dinner in October and a Reforest Northern Kentucky 2012 event in Ft. Thomas in Campbell County in April.

Supervisor Ken McCormick now represents the District on this Council.

Left: Sister Mary Jo Hummeldorf in the new wetlands at St. Anne.



Right:

OKI-RCC Conservation tour held in Campbell County.

Outreach and Partnerships

The Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Conservation Council (OKI-RCC) annual meeting was held at the OKI-Regional Council of Governments office in April. Board members Sanford Record, Ken McCormick, and Rick Simon attended. Ken McCormick participated on the planning committee for the meeting. Ken is the new treasurer. Campbell County hosted the **annual conservation tour** for the organization in October and visited the Thomas More Ohio River Biology Field Station, St. Anne Wetlands, and Shady Meadows Farm owned by Gene and Marcy Dobbs. Ken McCormick, Sanford Record, Larry Varney, Linda Bray-Schafer, Linda Grizzell, Mary Kathryn Dickerson, and John Stork attended.

Board member Larry Varney participates in the **Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI-RCG) Planning Forum** that meets quarterly. OKI-RCG is committed to helping local government in the region implement well-defined land use and transportation strategies and enhance and conserve environmental resources. Staff member Mary Kathryn Dickerson participated in several focus groups for the OKI-RCG transportation planning initiative.

Big Bone Lick State Park Discovery Days – Board member Larry Varney worked at October’s Big Bone Lick State Park Discovery Days. Staff Mary Kathryn Dickerson organized the Boone-Campbell-Kenton District booth at the three-day event. Staff Mary Kathryn Dickerson worked the school-day booth on Friday and had approximately 350-400 visits from students, parents, and faculty. The Districts hosted over 500 visitors total during the festival. The booth focused on Kentucky’s forests, which was the theme of the annual Conservation Writing and Art Contests this year.

Board members participated in the **Alexandria Fair & Horse Show** by purchasing a fair book advertisement featuring “Farming is Alive in Campbell County” supporting Campbell County farmers. They also purchased animals at the 4-H/FFA Livestock Sale, in partnership with several other

organizations, and sponsored the 4-H Forestry Award (a check for \$25) at the Alexandria Fair and Horse Show. Board member Larry Varney presented the forestry award at the fair to Logan Stadtmiller.

The quarterly newsletter, *Landscapes*, reaches over 2,000 Campbell County farmers and other cooperators.

Board member Larry Varney maintains a web site for the District, at <http://home.fuse.net/campbelld>.

The district **Facebook** page can be found at Campbell County Conservation District, Kentucky.

The district supports the **Northern Kentucky University Environmental Education Alliance** and the **Environmental Education in No. Ky. Resource Guide** is available through the district office.

Equipped to serve the community

The Campbell County Conservation District is a member of the **National Association of Conservation Districts, Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts, and Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts Employee Association (KACDE)**. The conservation district supports the work of the KACDE with a small donation each year, earning them the “Handtool Award”. The employee association helps provide training and support for district employees.

Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts (KACD) –The state convention was held at the downtown Marriott in Louisville in July. Board members Ken McCormick, Ron McCormick, Sanford Record, Gene Dobbs, and Larry Varney attended the meeting as well as staff members Mary Kathryn Dickerson, John Stork, and Linda Grizzell. Ron McCormick, Ken McCormick, Gene

Dobbs, Rick Simon, Linda Bray-Schafer, Dennis Walter, Sanford Record, Mary Kathryn Dickerson, John Stork, and Linda Grizzell attended the KACD Area 5 meeting in Henry County. Board members serve on statewide KACD committees, which meet annually: District Outlook

Left: Jeff Rice, Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts chairman, visits with Ron McCormick at the state legislative reception.



Right:



Ken McCormick and Teacher Incentive Award Winner Katy Drinkhouse.

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and Leadership Development and Public Information and Awards, Sanford Record; Natural Resources, Rick Simon; and Education and Youth, Ken McCormick.

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

Board members Ron McCormick, Ken McCormick, Linda Bray-Schafer attended the **2013 Agriculture Legislative Appreciation Reception** at the Kentucky State University Research and Demonstration Farm in Frankfort in February. Staff Mary Kathryn Dickerson also attended and provided displays from Boone, Campbell, and Kenton County Districts.

The Conservation District participates in the **10-minute Supervisor Trainings** provided by Division of Conservation Field Representative Linda Hunter during district board meetings.

Board members Rick Simon, Ron McCormick, Ken McCormick, and Sanford Record attended a supervisor training with Boone and Kenton counties in January.

Soil & Water Conservation Commission – Chairman Larry Varney was appointed by the Governor to serve on the Kentucky Soil & Water Conservation Commission (SWCC) effective July 1, 2010. The SWCC provides leadership and guidance for the



Campbell County Conservation District Board of Supervisors

Seated, from left: Chairman Ron McCormick, Vice Chairman Dennis Walter, Board Member Linda Bray-Schafer. Standing from left: Board Member Rick Simon, Board Member Sanford Record, Board Member Gene Dobbs, and Secretary Treasurer Ken McCormick.

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Kentucky Division of Conservation and Kentucky's 121 Conservation Districts. Larry's term ended on December 31, 2012 as the result of the 2012 November election.

Board member Ron McCormick made a presentation to **Campbell County Fiscal Court** at their regular meeting in June. The presentation covered the District's goals, accomplishments, and plan of work. Staff Mary Kathryn Dickerson assisted in the preparation and also attended the meeting.

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

Standing Committees of the District July 2012 – June 2013 (service from July 2012 – December 2012 noted in italics).

Executive Committee – Ron McCormick, Dennis Walter, and Ken McCormick.

Farmland Work Group - Campbell County Conservation District members on the Farmland Work Group include Dennis Walter, Linda Bray-Schafer, Ron McCormick, Rick Simon and Larry Varney ; and, former board members Helen Fehr and Alan Ahrman. Staff assisting were Linda Grizzell, John Stork and Mary Kathryn Dickerson.

Land Use Committee – Dennis Walter, Chairman; Linda Bray-Schafer; *Larry Varney*, and, Sanford Record. Advisory Committee: DJ. Scully, Don Sorrell,

and Dave Koester, Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service; Greta Steverson, NRCS District Conservationist; and, John Stork, 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 – Ken McCormick, Chairman; Gene Dobbs, Rick Simon, *Larry Varney*, and Ron McCormick. Advisory Committee: DJ. Scully and Owen Prim of the Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service and Helen Fehr, former district board member.

Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area – Ken McCormick, Chairman; Rick Simon and advisors Larry Varney and Alan Ahrman.

District Funding - Conservation 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.

District Property - In December 2010 the District purchased 2.456 acres of land in Southern Campbell County. Future plans for the land have not been confirmed. This fiscal year the Conservation District arranged office space at the Campbell County Courthouse in Alexandria through a lease with the Campbell County Fiscal Court. The Conservation District will be acquiring more square footage at a lower monthly fee. The move is planned to be completed by November 2013.