Board Member Dennis Walter Received a 10-Year Distinguished Service Award from the Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission.

The Executive Committee of the Campbell County Conservation District meets 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 2013 – June 2014

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, Gretchen Vaughn, and Rick Simon; and, former board members Helen Fehr and Alan Ahram. Staff assisting were Linda Grizzell, John Stork and Mary Kathryn Dickerson.

Land Use Committee – Dennis Walter, Chairman; Linda Bray-Schafer; and, Sanford Record. Advisory Committee: DJ. Scully, Don Sorrell, and Dave Koester, Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service; Ian Young, NRCS Supervisory Natural Resource Manager; 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/Gretchen Vaughn, Rick Simon, 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; and, Rick Simon. With the addition of St. Anne, the committee name was changed to Hawthorne St. Anne Advisory Team (HSAAT).

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 September the Campbell County Conservation District moved into their new office space at the Campbell County Courthouse in Alexandria through a lease with the Campbell County Fiscal Court. The Conservation District acquired more square footage at a lower monthly fee.

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Technical Assistance - Technical assistance is provided to Campbell County through Ian Young, Supervisory Natural Resource Manager, and Emily Anderson with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), our federal partner, and Campbell County Conservation District staff. In 2013-14, staff provided assistance to over 200 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 District 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 five contracts under the 2008 Farm Bill. These contracts cover 200 acres of land and are valued at $ 69,745. An additional eight applications covering 250 acres have been received. The value of those applications is $48,881.

Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Act - A total of 603 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.

(Continued on page 2)
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 Farm Bureau, Campbell County Future Farmers of America, Northern Kentucky Horse Network, Northern Kentucky University Center for Environmental Restoration, and the Campbell County Economic Progress Authority.

The Marketing and Outreach Committee, chaired by Linda Bray-Schafer, launched its fifth annual Campbell County Backroads Farm Tour this year. Visitors enjoyed the warm and generous hospitality of fifteen Campbell County farm owners on Sat., July 27, 2013. The tour attracted more than 1,345 visitors with 4,689 farm visits at all locations. Most of the visitors were from Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati with 6 states and 24 cities represented. The tour showcased community-supported agriculture, vegetable and produce growers, four vineyards, a cow-calf operation, 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 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 12,172 acres and 249 landowners.

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 employee association helps provide training and support for district employees.

Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts (KACD) – The state convention was held at Bowling Green. Board members Rick Simon, Ron McCormick, Ken McCormick and Sanford Record, attended the meeting as well as staff members John Stork and Linda Grizzell. Dennis Walter, Ron McCormick, Ken McCormick, Sanford Record, Gretchen Vaughn, Linda Bray-Schafer, Mary Kathryn Dickerson, John Stork, and Linda Grizzell attended the KACD Area 5 meeting in Kenton County at Sanitation District #1. Board members serve on statewide KACD committees, which meet annually: District Outlook 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.

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

Staff Member Mary Kathryn Dickerson Celebrated 25 Years with the Campbell, Boone, and Kenton Conservation Districts–Mary Kathryn Dickerson began her district duties on 1 January 1989. She was honored with an open house in recognition of her 25 years of service.

(Continued from page 1) Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Fund – No producers were approved this fiscal year. Pending completion, one producer is to be awarded $2,553 through the Ky. Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Fund to help install Best Management Practices on his 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 Ron McCormick and former board member Alan Ahlman served as the district’s representatives to this county board. The Conservation District administers the program in Campbell County. Twenty-four producers were approved and awarded $53,724 this fiscal year. Staff John Stork performs the field visits for the District to verify completion and that all requirements are met.

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.

(Continued on page 3)
The District hosted several Heritage Property Tours. Tours for Conservation District board members from Kenton County and Campbell County to help them learn more about land management.

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 land slides.

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

Board member Ken McCormick attended Northern Kentucky Urban & Community Forestry Council Annual fall dinner in October and a Reforest Northern Kentucky 2013 event at St. Anne in March.

Outreach and Partnerships
The Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Conservation Council (OKI-RGC) annual meeting was held at the Cincinnati Nature Center in March. Board members Ron McCormick, Ken McCormick, and Sanford Record attended. Ken McCormick participated in the planning committee for the meeting. Ken is the treasurer. Staff members Mary Kathryn Dickerson and John Stork were speakers this year.

In October, Ron McCormick, Ken McCormick, Sanford Record, and staff Linda Grizzell attended the OKI-RGC annual tour hosted by Clermont County SWCD. They toured the algae wheel wastewater treatment system at the Cincinnati Nature Center, visited their “playscape”, and their Shor Park Wetland Restoration and Biodiversity Project.

Board member Ken McCormick participated in the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI-RGC) Planning Forum that meets quarterly. OKI-RGC is committed to helping local government in the region implement well-defined land use and transportation strategies and enhance and conserve environmental resources.

AJ Jolly Park 50th Anniversary Celebration - Board members Rick Simon, Ron McCormick, and Sanford Record along with staff members Linda Grizzell, Mary Kathryn Dickerson, and John Stork worked at the Campbell County Conservation District's booth at the AJ Jolly Park 50th Anniversary Celebration. The focus of the display was pond scum and water quality. It integrated data collected by Thomas More College and Northern Kentucky University students.

Big Bone Lick State Park Discovery Days - Board members Rick Simon, Ron McCormick, Ken McCormick, and Sanford Record worked at October’s Big Bone Lick State Park Discovery Days and Salt Festival. Staff Mary Kathryn Dickerson organized the Boone-Campbell-Kenton District booth at the three-day event. Staff Mary Kathryn Dickerson and John Stork 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 Pond Scum.

Farm Dump Removal Grants – 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. One application was approved and two producers have been awarded a total of $4,350.

Dead Farm Animal Disposal Program - The District received a matching grant from the Kentucky Department of Conservation Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Fund to assist landowners with proper disposal of fallen livestock. This year 52 producers participated in the program. The program also assists the county animal shelter with costs for proper disposal of animals. A total of $4,125.86 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 algal 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).

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.

The Boone, Campbell and Kenton County Conservation Districts hosted their fifth Joint Agency Meeting in March. This year’s meeting featured a public forum on “Improving Our Forests in Boone, Campbell, and Kenton Counties”. Our panelists included representatives from Natural Resources Conservation Service; the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources; the Kentucky Division of Forestry; the Boone-Campbell-Kenton Conservation Districts; and the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service.

This year three grants were awarded. The City of Bellevue received $1,000 for their “City-wide Tree Planting Plan”, the City of
designated as a stop along the Licking River for canoeing and kayaking. The District hosted two Stewardship hikes at the property in April. Representatives from Vision 2015 and the Allen and Loureena Weber restoration and preservation of the land, and water and significant natural characteristics, including its ecological and aesthetic values. The property lies adjacent to Hawthorne Crossing.

The Cooperator of the Year was Kevin Rust. Kevin Rust was chosen as the 2013 Campbell County Conservation District Cooperator of the Year. The district award is part of the National Conservation Districts’ recognition program. Kevin was chosen for the award because of his hard work to improve the quality of his land in Campbell County. A volunteer of the year award was presented to Bob Grizzell for his many hours of service with outreach events and the move to the District’s new office. Also this year, an appreciation award was presented to Melissa Williams for helping the Conservation District with many issues and projects over the years. Prior to the acquisition of the property, students from the Ohio River Foundation worked to remove invasive burning bush, installed water bars on the Cloister Trail to reduce erosion, and repaired a foot bridge which is used for crossing over the creek on the Trillium Trail. The Conservation District made other necessary repairs on additional foot bridges, such as replacing or repairing railings, and added steps and rock walkway approaches to the Trillium Trail bridge.

Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area - Last fiscal year the Northern Kentucky University Center for Applied Ecology now the Northern Kentucky University Center for Environmental Restoration (NKU-CER) removed invasive species, enhanced the wetland meadow, and repaired several areas along the stream. This fiscal year they completed their first year of monitoring which revealed that they exceeded their goal of 75% native species cover. This site will continue to be monitored in the future and corrective action taken as necessary. Efforts to preserve a log cabin home site continue and a suitable parking area is being pursued to have the property open in the future for hiking, bird watching, nature study.

The Campbell County Conservation District supports the Kentuckiana Association of Conservation Districts’ Auxillary 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 Andrew Alwell from Sts. Peter and Paul School. 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 – “Mission H2O” was the topic for this school year’s Conservation Contests. In the Art Contest there were 914 entries from eight schools. In the Writing Contest there were 157 entries from six schools. From the Campbell County Conservation District, the art winners received a Spring Waters Gathering Places book. The writing winners received two sets of Kentucky Aquatic Wild Cards: Upland Reservoirs & Big River Ecosystems and Wetland Sloughs & Stream Ecosystems. In Campbell County, the art entries from grades K-2 are judged separately, and that winner received a $25 check from the Campbell County Conservation District. All Teachers received a t-shirt and a Project WET Curriculum and Activity Guide from the Campbell County Conservation District. Students also received Legislative Citations to honor their work from Senator Katie Stine, and Representatives Joe Fischer, Adam Koenig, Dennis Keene, Tom McKee, and Thomas Kerr. The meal was catered by Sis’s Family Restaurant & Catering from Newport. A section of the St. Anne Wetlands, Anderson Lane, Melbourne, This site will continue to be monitored in the future and corrective action taken as necessary. Efforts to preserve a log cabin home site continue and a suitable parking area is being pursued to have the property open in the future for hiking, bird watching, nature study.

The area will also be designated as a stop along the Licking River for canoeing and kayaking. The District hosted two Stewardship hikes at the property in April. Representatives from Vision 2015 and the Campbell Conservancy, as well as neighbors and Conservation District supervisors attended.

In April, the District accepted a gift of 11.5 acres of land from Allen and Loureena Weber for the purposes of conservation, restoration and preservation of the land, and water and significant natural characteristics, including its ecological and aesthetic values. The property lies adjacent to Hawthorne Crossing.

St. Anne Woods & Wetlands - The Conservation District received a grant from the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Board (KHLF) to purchase land in Campbell County known as the St. Anne Woods & Wetlands. On 11 September 2013, a total of 146.46 acres was purchased by the Conservation District from the Sisters of Divine Providence. A celebration of stewardship was held on 21 November 2013 to commemorate the transfer of the St. Anne Woods & Wetlands to the Campbell County Conservation District.

Prior to the acquisition of the property, students from the Ohio River Foundation worked to remove invasive burning bush, installed water bars on the Cloister Trail to reduce erosion, and repaired a foot bridge which is used for crossing over the creek on the Trillium Trail. The Conservation District made other necessary repairs on additional foot bridges, such as replacing or repairing railings, and added steps and rock walkway approaches to the Trillium Trail bridge. Following acquisition of the property, Northern Kentucky University students installed another water bar on the Cloister Trail. Additionally, the biological inventory and archeological assessment of the property are underway to ensure that natural and cultural features are protected.

A section of the St. Anne Wetlands, Anderson Lane, Melbourne, is open to the public from dawn to dusk each day. Kicks developed by the St. Anne Wetlands Education and Research Center will help guide you along the established trail. Research is encouraged at this site and visitors are asked to ensure that the research is undisturbed. The northern portion is open by appointment only. The Woods is located adjacent to the St. Anne Retreat Center. This area will be open to the public following the establishment of a public entrance and parking facility.

A joint advisory team for the Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area and St. Anne Woods and Wetlands, composed of members from the District, Conservancy, and Fiscal Court researches and discusses issues affecting the property.