

CAMPBELL COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT



ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

www.campbellkyconservation.org

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

OUR SUPERVISORS & STAFF _____	3
FINANCIAL SUMMARY _____	4
DISTRICT COMMITTEES _____	5-11
RENTAL EQUIPMENT _____	12
OTHER _____	12



St. Anne Woods and Wetlands

What is the Conservation District? Kentucky Conservation Districts are Special Purpose Government Entities, organized under Kentucky Revised Statute 262. Conservation Districts are responsible for protecting our soil, water, and other natural resources. The Campbell County Conservation District (CCCD) was established in 1945 by a vote of the citizens of the county.

Mission Statement: The Campbell County Conservation District partners with citizens and private landowners as well as other organizations to promote the sustainability of the land, water, and other natural resources by encouraging the use of Best Management Practices. We do this by providing expertise, financial assistance, and hosting educational programs.

OUR SUPERVISORS

2022	2023
Richard Simon, Chairman	Richard Simon, Chairman
Dr. William Landon, Vice-Chair	Susan Ortlieb-Turner, Vice-Chair
James Benton, Secretary/Treasurer	Larry Schadler, Secretary/Treasurer
Susan Ortlieb-Turner	C. Kevin McCormick
C. Kevin McCormick	Jason Kilmer
Jason Kilmer	Richard Carr
Richard Carr	Kirsten Hill

OUR STAFF

Patti Dischar, District Manager
Linda Grizzell, Administrative Assistant
Mary Kate Perkins, Summer Intern
Brianna Stadtmiller, 75/25 and Education Coordinator (Jan-June)

USDA NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

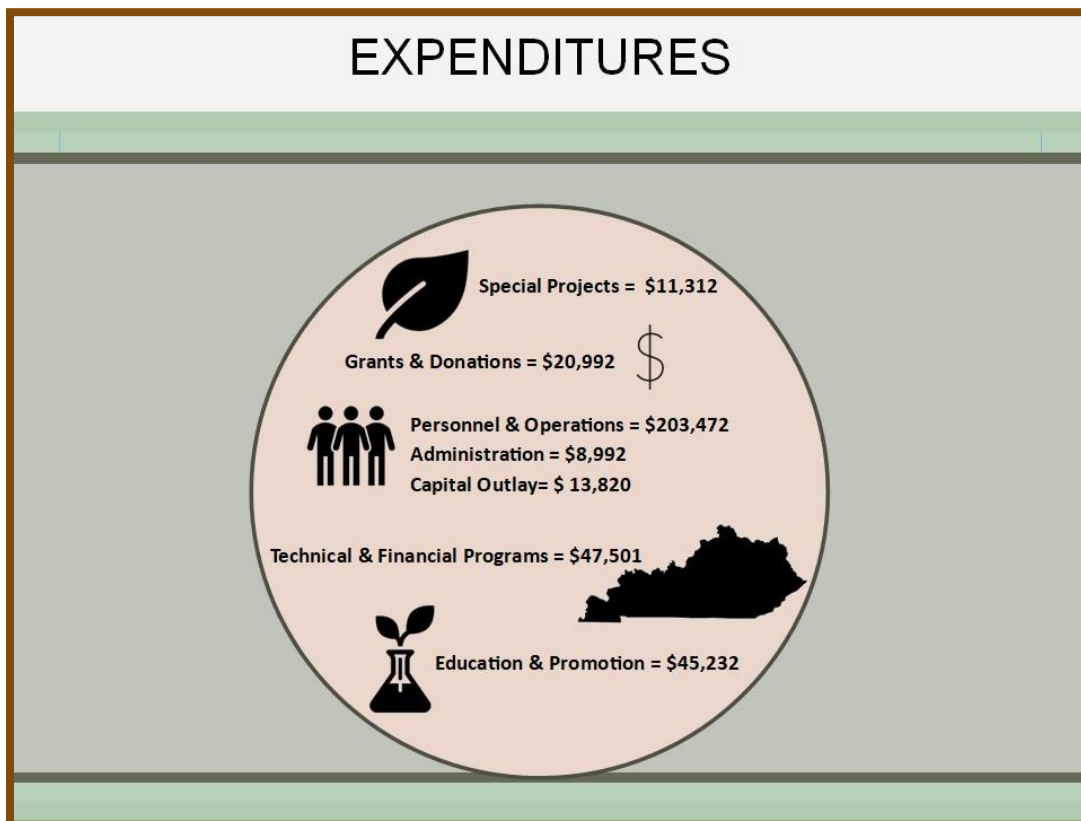
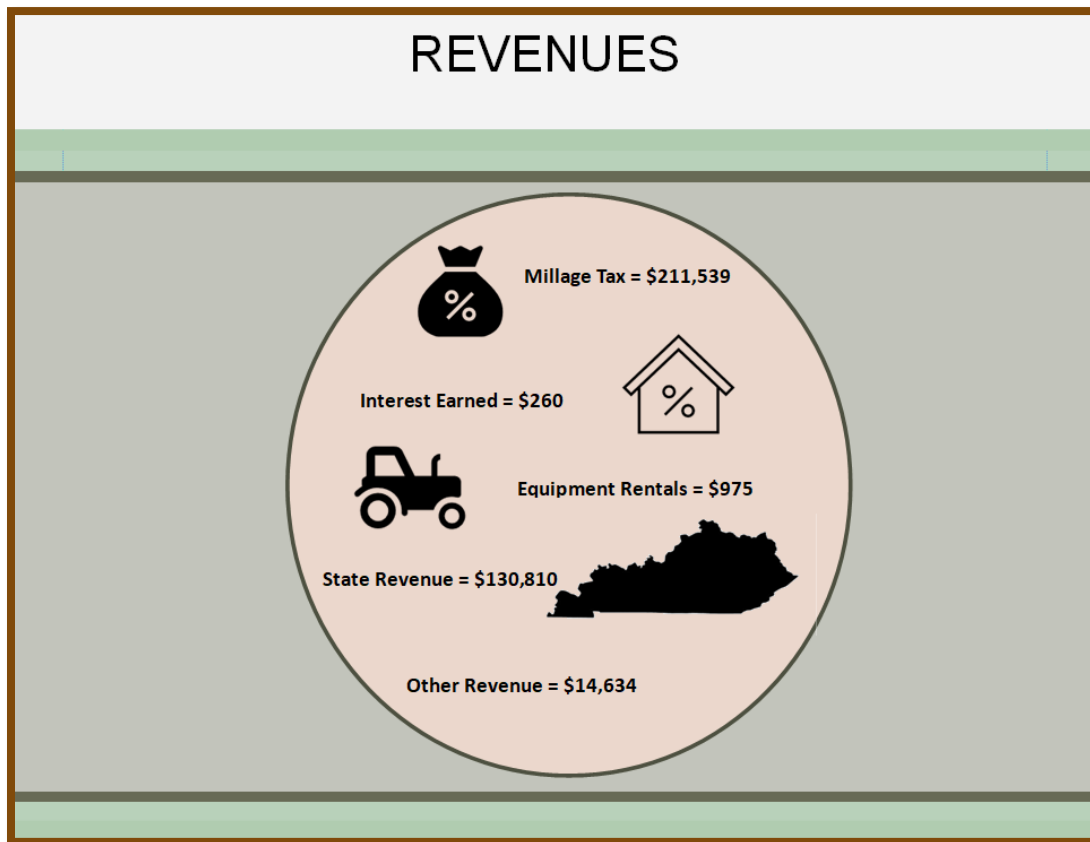
Ian Young, Supervisory District Conservationist

KENTUCKY DIVISION OF CONSERVATION

Kimberly Barton, Environmental Scientist
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The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service and Conservation Districts prohibit discrimination in all programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY



DISTRICT COMMITTEES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Committee members included the board chair, vice-chair, and secretary/treasurer. Annual staff reviews were completed on time, memorandums of agreement were reviewed annually and edited as needed, and the entire board reviewed the 2022-23 Annual Plan of Work quarterly.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

This committee prepared the draft 2023-24 Annual Budget for the Board's approval, reviewed the 2022-23 Annual Budget quarterly, presented recommendations to the board, and monitored the receipt of compensating tax information from the Kentucky Department for Local Government. Invoices were approved, and the secretary/treasurer reviewed and signed the credit card statements, bank statements, and bank reconciliations. The committee also monitored financial reporting deadlines required by the Department for Local Government and met the deadlines for submission of the District in Good Standing Report for state direct aid calculations.

The district achieved a 100% rating and received bonus dollars as well as the calculated direct aid dollars. The district's revenue is provided through a county millage tax on real property and funding from the Kentucky Division of Conservation. Financial reports are available at the district office or can be viewed on the Kentucky Department for Local Government website under Special Purpose Government Entities.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE

The committee monitored bills in the House and/or Senate as they related to the district or county landowners and presented recommendations to the Board.

FARMLAND WORK GROUP

This committee consists of all the board members and partnering organizations including the Campbell County Cattle Association, Campbell County Farm Bureau Federation, Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service, the Northern Kentucky Horse Network, and the Campbell Conservancy, Inc. Their main objective is to carry out the elements as outlined in the Farmland Work Group Strategic Plan, developed in 2005 and updated through 2025.



Backroads Farm Tour- The Campbell County Backroads Farm Tour was held with 10 farms participating. Our partners at Campbell Media assisted us with videotaping each of our farm hosts, who provided a description of their farm and all they do. The video was promoted on our website and social media platforms.

Farm Preservation Seminars -The committee partnered with The Campbell Conservancy Inc. and the Campbell County Extension Service to continue our Farm Preservation Seminar series to educate our community on family communication and continuing the family farm. One was held in January with David Marrison as the guest speaker; the second one was in February with Steve Isaacs as the guest speaker. We will continue this seminar series in the fall of 2023.

Farm To Fork - On September 29, the Campbell County Conservation District gathered at Seven Wells Winery with many community members for a Farm to Fork dining experience. Chef Renee Schuler of Eat Well took us on a delicious and memorable journey through Campbell County farmland as each bite recalled an image of local producers working to provide quality, ethically raised, and grown products for our guests' enjoyment. The dinner conversation focused on enhancing awareness of Campbell County agricultural enterprises, Stewardship and Conservation, Access to quality local foods, and current Challenges affecting the Economic viability of Campbell County farms. The evening provided guests with a better understanding and appreciation for the assets the Campbell County farming community brings to the table. Working together we can enhance the awareness of our local food network and help ensure our county's food security, public health, environmental viability, and future vitality.



Cooperator Dinner - On October 20 members of our agricultural and urban communities were honored at a cooperator dinner held at South Wind Farm. The Young Farmer award was presented to Jonathan Neltner, the Master Conservationist award was presented to Kevin and Lisa Rust, and the Cooperator of the Year award was presented to Michael Breetz, Licking Valley Cattle Co. Our ten backroads farm tour hosts were awarded two calendars each, and local cost share

recipients were awarded certificates. The FFA Chapter was awarded a check for \$300.00 for their hard work during our farm-to-fork and farm tour events. Our Campbell County Agricultural Development Council representatives Larry Schadler and Harold Dawn were given certificates for representing the district on the council for the past four years. Our farm tour sponsors were recognized for their support of our farm tour and farm-to-fork events. Seven Tree Planting and Urban Forest Enhancement Grant recipients were recognized with certificates.

HAWTHORNE & ST. ANNE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HSAA)

A joint advisory team for Hawthorne Crossing and St. Anne Woods and Wetlands, composed of members from the district, Conservancy, Fiscal Court, and county citizens researches and discusses issues affecting the Heritage properties. The district owns two properties acquired through grants from the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Fund Board; the state holds conservation easements on them.



Hawthorne Crossing Conservation Area

The Hawthorne Crossing property is adjacent to the Licking River. Hawthorne Crossing continues to be monitored and natural resources conserved. The property is currently closed to the public. A suitable parking area is being pursued to have the property open in the future for educational activities, hiking, bird watching, and nature study. The Conservation District is now part of a regional initiative for the Licking River

corridor to increase the recreational use of the river and gain more access points. This year we had a researcher conduct an Odonata Dragonfly survey. A pollinator habitat in the upland was established through a stewardship grant from Campbell County Extension. Approval from the Heritage Board was granted to begin plans for temporary parking and a shelter.

St. Anne Woods and Wetlands

A section of the St. Anne Wetlands (South Wetlands) on Anderson Lane in Melbourne, KY is open to the public



from dawn to dusk each day. Kiosks developed by the St. Anne Wetlands Education 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 North Wetland is adjacent to the NKU REFS facility and is predominately used for research. This area is open to the public during events. The Upland Woods is located adjacent to the St. Anne Retreat Center. This area will hopefully be open to the public following the establishment of a public entrance and parking facility.

Seven bridges have been replaced and two pollinator habitats have been established within the St. Anne Uplands. The project was completed in the spring of 2022. We are continuing invasive removal per contract for the next three years.

NKU CER- The Northern Kentucky University's Center for Environmental Restoration has been approved to complete restoration and preservation work in St. Anne Woods and Wetlands including invasive species removal. A stream that was eroding the bank was restored at St. Anne upland in the spring of 2023.

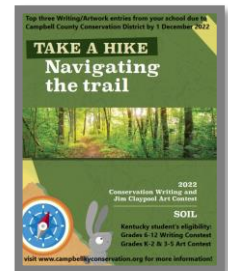


NKU REFS - The Conservation District has partnered with the Northern Kentucky University Research and Education Field Station (NKU REFS). The field station is located next to the St. Anne Wetlands. Their focus is research, education, and community involvement. District Manager, Patti Dischar, is on the steering committee as a representative for the Conservation District. The summer talk and walk series were able to be held this year.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The district holds an annual education awards dinner to honor the winners from the Jim Claypool Art and Conservation Writing Contests, scholarship recipients, and education grant recipients. The topic for this year's art and writing contest was "Take a Hike Navigating the Trail". In the Writing Contest, we had 42 entries from one school and 694 entries from eight schools in the Jim Claypool art contest. Farm Bureau representatives Meg Crail and Jennifer Metcalf assisted our board in judging the entries. Depending on the ranking, the First Place County winners in the Jim Claypool Art and Conservation Writing Contests may receive a check ranging from \$25 up to \$250 from the Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation.

James McGuire was our Area 5 Regional winner in the art contest. From the Campbell County Conservation District, Grades 6-12 contest winner and teacher received a Grow Your Soil: Harness the Power of the Soil Food Web to Create Your Best Garden Ever book. Grades K-5 winners received an Under Your Feet...Soil, Sand, and Everything Underground, an All-Around book. All students received a certificate of achievement, and all students and teachers received a t-shirt. In Campbell County, the art entries from grades K-2 are judged separately, and that county winner received a JONOMI Home & Garden TM Vegetable Root Viewer Kit-Indoor Planter with Window to Watch Roots as They Grow, Science Experiment for Live Vegetable Plants. This year the art and writing winners in grades 4, 5, and 6 had the opportunity to attend Camp Webb for free. The registration fee of \$275 was paid in full by the Campbell County Conservation District for all who apply and are accepted by the camp. This fiscal year three students attended and were awarded full scholarships to Camp Webb from Campbell County: James McGuire (Art & Writing), Mason Downton-Turner, and Peyton Darlington.





Envirothon - The District registered three teams from Highlands High School to participate in the Envirothon Contest. The contest was in Lexington, Kentucky and all three qualified for the state competition; two out of three teams placed 5th & 9th.

Soil Stewardship Week -The committee promoted Soil Stewardship Week with Supervisor, Kirt Hill & District Manager, Patti Dischar presented the district's goals and accomplishments to the Fiscal Court in May.



Environmental Education Programs -The District is working towards increasing its involvement in environmental education. Education/Outreach Coordinator Brianna Stadtmiller was hired in January 2023. She presented educational programs during Conservation Kids Camp, STEM Day at Campbell Ridge Elementary, and NKY Bird Camp. She also participated in camp at the Boone County Arboretum in Boone County.



Conservation Scholarships - The District awarded a \$1,500 scholarship each to Weston Wolf, Emma Wade, and Julianna King. Campbell Media interviewed each candidate discussing their college careers and future goals. Their videos can be found on our website.

A Mary Kathryn Dickerson Education Grant for \$3,000.00 was awarded to NKU REFS for adding electricity to their field station educational facility, and Johnson Elementary was awarded \$6,000.00 for their outdoor classroom.

LAND USE COMMITTEE

Agricultural Districts - The district has a total of 18 consisting of 19,704.78 acres and 536 landowners.

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

The district had one landowner approved in 2018 to receive funds from the **Electric Power Research Institute** through the Forestry in the Ohio River Basin Water Quality Trading Project. The site visit and final payment were made in May and completed this program.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING COMMITTEE

Their focus is to promote all district programs and events via the district's website, by increasing our presence on social media, or through other applicable means as recommended by the committee. Patti maintains the district's social media including our Facebook page (Campbell County Conservation District Kentucky), Instagram, Twitter, and the district's website (www.campbellkyconservation.org). You can also find the link to our YouTube channel where you can see videos from our Right to Farm forums, our Backroads Farm Tours, and our annual awards dinners. These videos are provided through services by Campbell County Media Central.



What's Happening -The Campbell County Conservation District places a two-page article in the spring and fall issues of What's Happening.

The **Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Conservation Council (OKI-RCC)** annual business meeting was held in person at The Kleingers Group in West Chester, Ohio in June. Supervisors Rick Simon (Alice), Larry Schadler, Kirt Hill, and staff Linda, Patti, and Brianna attended. Supervisor Rick Simon (Alice) and staff Linda and Patti attended the annual tour in October. It began at Shore Park in Milford, Ohio. It then proceeded to Valley View Foundation Community Gardens, Production, and Stream Restoration, onto East Fork State Park beach and ended in Williamsburg Nutrient Removal Wetland Project.



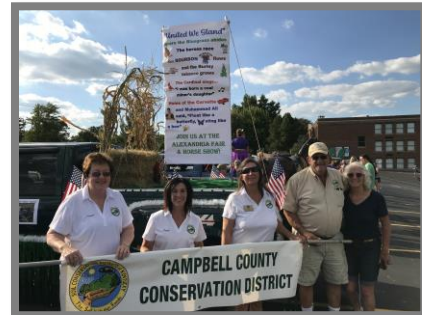
Fall & Spring EXPOs

The district partnered with Campbell County Extension to present Campbell County EXPOs!

Fall- The New Landowner EXPO was an open house forum at the Environmental Education Center. This allowed the landowners to talk to our partners about all the opportunities available in Campbell County.

Spring- The Campbell County Farm & Livestock EXPO was at the Alexandria Fair Grounds and allowed our citizens to learn about the Mobile Dairy Classroom, Kentucky Department of Agriculture tractor rollover safety, herding dog demonstration, and more!

Alexandria Fair & Horse Show/Parade - The district participated in the Alexandria Fair & Horse Show by purchasing the champion sponsorship package. The district entered the parade and displayed a banner on the fair's grandstand. Leah Redden was awarded \$75.00 for the 4-H Forestry Award, and \$2,062.50 was awarded to the 4-H/FFA Livestock Club for district purchases of their animal projects.



KACD Area 5 Spring Meeting was held at the Carroll County Camp Kysoc. Supervisors Rick Simon, Rick Carr, Larry Schadler, Jason Kilmer, and staff Patti Dischar, Linda Grizzell, and Brianna Stadtmiller attended.



The **KACD Convention** was held at the Sloan Convention Center in Bowling Green in July. Supervisors Rick Simon, Kevin McCormick, and Rick Carr; and staff Linda Grizzell and Patti Dischar attended. We had representation at Mockingbird Hill Farms in Butler County, a Leadership breakfast, KACDE Banquet, a live auction, and closing with a banquet on Tuesday evening. The district supported the auction with the donation of a gift basket containing locally grown and produced items. Some of our

supervisors walked away with some nice auction items.

Citizen's Academy was held in October and Supervisor Jim Benton represented the district.

Staff Patti Dischar and Linda Grizzell displayed a district booth at a **forage field day** at Don Weinel's farm in partnership with Campbell County Extension Service in July.



Campbell County Extension Service awarded the district its Volunteer/Ag & Natural Resources award in January. The district was nominated by Extension's Agriculture Agent Michelle Simon. Rick Simon, Rick Carr, Susan Ortlieb-Turner, Jim Benton, Patti, Linda, and Brianna attended.

Supervisor Jason Kilmer and Brianna Miller represented the district in **Ft. Thomas** for their **Earth Day** celebration in April.

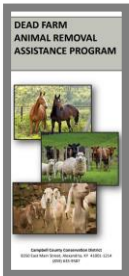
Supervisor Kirt Hill and Patti Dischar gave a presentation of our district at an informational meeting with the **Sierra Club** and Boone and Kenton County Conservation Districts in May.

TECHNICAL & FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE

One of the main duties of this committee is assisting landowners in complying with the Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Act and encouraging participation in state and federal cost-share programs. The district assists landowners in completing Agriculture Water Quality plans.

Environmental Grants are offered by the district. One is partially funded by the Kentucky Division of Conservation and two are funded by the Conservation District:

- **Farm Dump Removal Local Cost Share** Grants assist landowners in cleaning up farm dumps. The district approved one application this fiscal year; funds are provided by the district.



- **Dead Farm Animal Disposal Program** to assist landowners with the proper disposal of fallen livestock. Fifty-three producers participated in the program and \$12,813.00 was paid to our licensed haulers this fiscal year. \$7,500.00 of these costs was covered under an environmental grant from the Kentucky Division of Conservation. The district covered \$5,313.00 of these costs.

- **Supplemental Agriculture Local Cost Share** is to assist landowners who are not eligible for traditional cost-share programs to install practices for the control of sediment and erosion. The district provides funds for this program. One application was approved this fiscal year.

- **Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Fund** - One landowner was awarded \$12,705.45 for state cost share. Three applications were approved for funding.

County Agricultural Investment Program (CAIP) - The district has two representatives on the County Agricultural Development Council who may serve up to two two-year terms. They are Cyndi Bezold and Gary Nelson. The Council is responsible for setting guidelines for KY Agricultural Development Fund programs in Campbell County; the district administers the CAIP program. This program is offered every two years to Campbell County producers. The district received \$68,410.00 to administer the current program. Forty applications were received and 27 were approved for funding with five on the waiting list. Four landowners were awarded a total of \$10,000.00 this fiscal year.



District Grants - This fiscal year the district awarded Tree Planting and Urban Forest Enhancement Grants in the amount of \$3,000.00 to the City of Silver Grove and \$3,000.00 to the Westside Citizens Coalition. The 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 the city, county, state, or federal government and must include funding or in-kind contributions in an amount equal to the grant request.

Local cost share:

- Backyard Conservation** - The Campbell County Conservation District's Backyard Conservation Local Cost-Share Program is an incentive program intended to assist with landowner's costs while implementing conservation practices that benefit soil and water quality and wildlife habitat. This program is open to all landowners to apply, but preference will be for those landowners who are not eligible for other state and federal cost-share programs. The goal of this program is to help landowners be good stewards of the land by providing financial assistance for the implementation of conservation practices in their backyards. Possible projects for funding, but are not limited to rain barrels, monarch waystations, raised garden beds, certified backyard wildlife habitats (National Wildlife Federation, www.nwf.org), invasive removal, rain gardens, and composting. Seven applications were approved this fiscal year and one landowner was awarded \$465.00. Applications are limited to one per household/farm per fiscal year.
- Cover Crop** - This program was developed this fiscal year to protect areas prone to soil erosion. It is a 75/25 cost share with 75% of the project cost being reimbursed up to \$500.00. Applications are available in the office and on our website. Applications are limited to one per household/farm per fiscal year.
- Heavy Use Area** - This program was also developed this fiscal year. It is a 75/25 cost share with 75% of the project cost being reimbursed up to \$1,500.00. Three applications were approved this fiscal year and two landowners were awarded a total of \$3,000.00. Applications are limited to one per household/farm per fiscal year.



- Tree Swap Program** - Through a partnership with a local landscaper, the district offered a program to help control the spread of invasive trees in Campbell County by allowing citizens to swap up to two invasive trees from their yard with up to two non-invasive native hardwood trees. Five applicants participated and received two trees each from the tree swap program. At the spring EXPO, a drawing was held for a chance to win more trees, and five lucky citizens were winners!



- Wastewater Disposal** - In recent years Campbell County has seen increases in population, development, and economic growth. Unfortunately, the County has also seen increases in water pollution. This Wastewater Disposal cost-share program is a financial incentive for landowners to dispose of effluent properly by providing funds for code-compliant plumbing installation/modifications of both supply- and drain/vent- pipes to carry wastewater into existing sewer/septic systems. Leach line repair will also be considered. A project may be funded up to \$2,500 and applicants must provide at least 25% of the total cost of the project. Campbell County residents are eligible to receive financial assistance only one time per location address. One application was approved for funding this fiscal year.

Technical Assistance for the District is provided by Ian Young-NRCS Supervisory District Conservationist and additional staff are available through the Kentucky Division of Conservation. For Campbell County, NRCS had two EQIP contracts funded this year on 31.2 acres totaling \$13,400.00. Five new CSP applications were received with three being ranked as eligible.

RENTAL EQUIPMENT

Through a memorandum of agreement, Southern States houses and maintains the district's Cricket 3-ton Lime Spreader. It is available for rent to Campbell County farmers for \$75/day for spreading lime to improve productivity by increasing the soil pH. Before using the spreader, farmers must view a training video or 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 12 farmers this fiscal year and brought in revenue of \$975.00.

OTHER EVENTS

Supervisor Jim Benton served on the Northern Kentucky Stream Restoration Advisory Committee.

Supervisor Jim Benton attended the Taking Root Tree Seminar in December.

The district completed an emergency preparedness practice by storing documents on a cloud server.

Supervisor Rick Simon participated in an OKI Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP) focus group event in November. The final question at this meeting was *"How do we get there?"*

Supervisor Rick Simon represented the district at State Conservationist Greg Stone's retirement party at the Bluegrass Stockyards in January.

Supervisor Kirt Hill attended the Taking Root Great Tree Summit in February.

Supervisor Rick Carr represents the district on the Campbell County Hazard Mitigation Planning Team.

Supervisors Kirt Hill and Larry Schadler participated in a **virtual training session** presented by the Division of Conservation in May.

NRCS SOIL TECHNICIAN & EDUCATION/OUTREACH COORDINATOR

The district hired an NRCS 75/25 Soil Technician and education/outreach Coordinator, Brianna Stadtmiller in January. Brianna studied Environmental Engineering at Cincinnati State. She has lived in Campbell County her whole life and graduated from Campbell County High School. She currently lives in Alexandria, with her parents and two dogs, Buster, the beagle, and Mack, the cattle dog. Her hobbies include gardening, beekeeping, sewing, and playing guitar. She began gardening with her family thirteen years ago and began beekeeping with them two years ago. She also enjoys sewing and quilting because she likes creating items for her family and friends. She would also like to take an active role in her community, as she is currently a youth leader at a local church, where she is also a part of the praise team. In the new school year, she plans on going between classrooms to teach demonstrations on soil and water conservation. Some activities that she will present to classes include creating soil profiles using pudding and other products to educate about the layers of soil, educating on soil erosion and ground cover using digital slides and a demonstration, and educating on composting practices.

CAMPBELL COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT INTERN

Our 2022 Summer intern was Mary Kate Perkins. She will be a senior at Morehead State University majoring in Agribusiness and Agronomy. Outside of CCCD, she is the youth director at Persimmon Grove Baptist Church and helps to run a 60-acre farm of Katahdin sheep in California, KY. From a young age, an appreciation for farmers has been instilled in her. With that appreciation, she knew she wanted to one day be involved in the farming community, helping farmers in any way she could. Here at the Campbell County Conservation District, she is looking forward to learning more about conservation work, as well as the cost-share programs that the district offers. By the end of her time here in the district, she would like to raise awareness of what the district offers and get involved in helping local farmers. We did not have a summer intern for June 2023.



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