

**Campbell County
Conservation District
8350 E. Main Street,
Alexandria, KY 41001-1214
859-635-9587 or 859-635-5666
FAX: 859-635-0496**

Office hours:
Mon., Wed., Fri., 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.
E-mail: campbellcd@fuse.net
Web Site: [www.nkcd.org/
campbellconservation](http://www.nkcd.org/campbellconservation)

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:

Ron McCormick, Chairman; Dennis Walter, Vice Chairman; Ken McCormick, Secretary/Treasurer; Gretchen Vaughn; Linda Bray-Schafer; Rick Simon, Sanford Record (July-December); and Peter Garrett (January-June).

District Staff:

Linda Grizzell, Administrative Secretary;
Mary Kathryn Dickerson, District Coordinator;
John Stork, Agriculture Conservation Technician;
Amy Wing, Conservation Assistant (May-June)
Erin Rowekamp, Conservation Program Assistant

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service:

Ian Young, Supervisory Natural Resource Manager; Allen Arthur, Soil Conservation Technician (July-October); Emily Anderson, Soil Conservationist (July-October); Kevin Bryan, Soil Conservationist (June)

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, 2014 - June 30, 2015

The Campbell County Conservation District reviewed and revised their Long Range Plan during this fiscal year. They focused on 7 areas of work from that plan during 2014 - 2015.

Conservation Planning and Implementation

Technical Assistance - Technical assistance is provided to Campbell County through Ian Young, Supervisory Natural Resource Manager, and Emily Anderson and Kevin Bryan with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), our federal partner, and Campbell County Conservation District staff. In 2014 - 15, staff provided assistance to over 150 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 nine contracts under the 2008 and 2014 Farm Bills. These contracts cover 415 acres of land and are valued at \$130,105. An additional four EQIP applications were not funded valued at \$22,155.

Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Act - A total of 608 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.

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Farmland protection

Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Fund – No producers were approved this fiscal year. 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 ten investment areas such as large animal, forages, fencing and on-farm water, agricultural diversification, and farm infrastructure. Randy Haas and Ron Steffen serve as the district’s representatives to this county council. The Conservation District administers the program in Campbell County; no program was administered this fiscal year.

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 \$100. It is housed and managed by board member Ron McCormick.

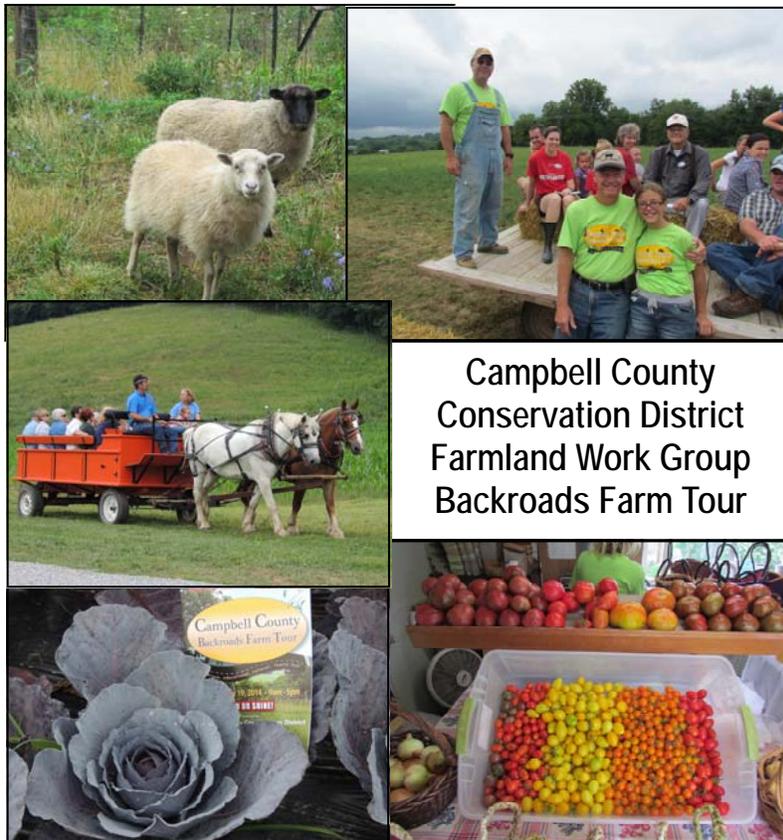
The District continues to build on the work started through the 2005 Farmland Study for Campbell County. Board members and staff from the Campbell County Conservation District and their partners continue to work to implement recommendations from the study. Partners include: Campbell Conservancy, Campbell 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 Environmental Restoration, and the Campbell County Economic Progress Authority.

The **Marketing and Outreach Committee**, chaired by Linda Bray-Schafer, launched its sixth annual **Campbell County Backroads Farm Tour** this year. Visitors enjoyed the warmth and generous hospitality of fifteen Campbell County farm owners on Sat., July 19, 2014. The tour attracted more than 1,439 visitors with 5,001 farm visits at all locations. Most of the visitors were from Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati with four states and 54 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 purchase fresh produce, honey and wine, and learn from some of our best farmers about the farming process.

On September 22, 2014, Campbell County Conservation District’s Farmland Work Group hosted their third **Farm to Fork** event to

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increase awareness of agriculture in Campbell County and the impact it has in our community. The event was held at the Alexandria Fairgrounds. After visiting six demonstration areas, which were a part of the Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service's "Grow It, Eat It, Wear It" event, guests were served a dinner with the menu dictated by what was freshly harvested from local small family farms. Guest speaker James R. Comer, Ky. Commission of Agriculture, said that farming is the most important occupation in the world .



Left: Guest speaker Commissioner of Agriculture James Comer

Board member Dennis Walter and Farmland Work Group member Don Girton attended a **Campbell County Planning and Zoning public hearing** in September in support of landowners' rights concerning revisions to A-1 and R-RE zoning. In November board chairman Ron McCormick attended a Campbell County Fiscal Court meeting in appreciation for their support approving the majority of the R-RE and A-1 zoning recommended changes from Dennis and Don.

In October board member Gretchen Vaughn attended the **American Farmland Trust Farmland Food & Livable communities Conference** in Lexington.

In November the Farmland Work Group hosted its second **Right To Farm Forum** held at the Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service in Highland Heights. The topic was on **Agriculture Taxes** with guest speakers Jonathan Shepherd, UK Area Farm Management Specialist, and Tammy Baumann, ETA Investment and Tax Advisors. The next one was held in March with guest speakers Planning and Zoning Director Cindy Minter and Daniel Braun, Campbell County Property Valuation Administrator. This topic was on "**Zoning As It Relates To You and Your Land**".

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 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. One application was approved and one producer has been awarded a total of \$2,175.

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. No producer applications were received this fiscal year.

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 47 producers participated in the program. The program also assists the county animal shelter with costs for proper disposal of animals. A total of \$3,832.11 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). Pond scum booklets were purchased this fiscal year to close out the balance of the grant funds.

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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. A DR mower and three battery-powered chainsaws were purchased with grant funds this fiscal year.



Left: Supervisor Dennis Walter, Sue Neltner City of Alexandria, Sherri Spaulding Newport Parks Renaissance Commission.

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 three grants were awarded. The City of Alexandria received \$1,000 for their “Beautification of Alexandria Community Park”, the City of Silver Grove received \$1,000 toward their “Tree Planting” project, and the Newport Parks Renaissance Commission received \$1,000 for their “Buena Vista Park” 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. St. Joseph Camp Springs School received \$1,000 for their “St. Joseph Outdoor Learning Center” project.

Board member Ken McCormick attended an appreciation luncheon at Crossroads Elementary in

September.

Conservation Scholarships—Five \$1,000 scholarships were awarded this year through the Campbell County Conservation District: Nicole Marie Robertson: her field of study is biology; Cayman Amber Riley: her field of study is marine biology; Anna Elizabeth Snowball: her field of study is environmental science; Maria Mara Grothaus: her field of study is agriculture; and Luke Allen Trapp: his field of study is veterinary sciences.

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 Gracen Horton from Woodfill Elementary in Ft. Thomas. Scholarships are made possible by donations from local hunting and fishing clubs and sponsors, such as the Campbell County Conservation District.



Seated Left: County Art Winner Quinton Wehby, Will White, Owen Davis, Makenna Steffen. Standing: Teacher Incentive Award Winner Kristen Schnell, Bonnie Markus, Rachel Hammons, Sarah Richardson

Writing and Art Contests – “*The Soil Daily Times....Protect Kentucky’s Soil*” was the topic for this school year’s Conservation Contests. In the Art Contest there were 712 entries from five schools. In the Writing Contest there were 159 entries from seven schools. From the Campbell County Conservation District, the art winners received the book Sand and Soil. The writing winners received the book Mini Farming: Self-Sufficiency on 1/4 Acre. All winners received a t-shirt, a certificate of achievement, and Miracle Gro Groable

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Seed Pods donated by Home Depot Cold Spring Store from Manager Alan Goderwis. 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, Miracle Gro Groables, and the book Mini Farming: Self-Sufficiency on 1/4 Acre from the Campbell County Conservation District.

Students also received Legislative Citations from Representatives Joe Fischer, Thomas Kerr, and Dennis Keene. The meal was catered by Tailored Catering from Alexandria.

Kristen Schnell, St. Thomas Elementary, was the recipient of the District's **Teacher Incentive Award** for the Writing and Art Contests.



Envirothon Team
Left: Autumn Geerer-Vignes, Nina Grau, Alexis Begnoche, Katelyn Helton, Colleen Epperson (Leader), Kevon O'Hanlon,

Highlands High School of Ft. Thomas, under the leadership of Colleen Epperson, competed for the sixth time in the East Regional State *Envirothon* competition in April with two teams. They came in 10th overall from the state competition.



Left: Gretchen Vaughn Greensleeves Farm, Conservation Agriculture Technician John Stork

Master Conservationist was Gretchen Vaughn
Gretchen Vaughn of Greensleeves Farm was selected by NRCS Supervisory Resource Manager Ian Young as the 2014 Campbell County Conservation District Master Conservationist. The

district award is part of the National Conservation Districts' recognition program. Gretchen was chosen for the award because of her hard work to improve the quality of her land in Campbell County.

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

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 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.

St. Anne Woods & Wetlands - The Conservation District received a grant from the Kentucky Heritage Land Conservation Board (KHLCFB) 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. Since then four monitoring plots were established in the areas where the invasive Burning Bush was removed by the students from the Ohio River Foundation. Two of the plots are located where the Burning Bush remained and will serve as a baseline. The additional plots are located where the Burning Bush had been removed and these will serve as an indicator of possible future forest health with the removal of Burning Bush. We are continuing to monitor the plots every couple of months for new growth. Additionally, the archaeological assessment has been completed and is being drafted. The biological inventory has been prolonged due to weather, but should be underway within this next fiscal year.

A section of the St. Anne Wetlands, Anderson Lane, Melbourne, is open to the public from dawn to dusk each day. Kiosks developed by the St. Anne Wetlands Education and Research

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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.

In October the St. Anne Woods and Wetlands was a stop on the **Camp Springs Herbst Tour**. Several visitors enjoyed taking a hike through the woods. Educational signs were placed along the way by staff member Erin Rowekamp. Board members Ken McCormick and Rick Simon manned the booth. Staff member Linda Grizzell also helped with the booth and assisted visitors.



Herbst Tour
Left: Ken McCormick, Rick Simon

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.

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. Board member Peter Garrett is also a Conservancy board member.

Partnerships

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

Board member Ken McCormick attended the **Northern Kentucky Urban & Community Forestry Council** Annual fall dinner in October .

Outreach and Partnerships

The Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Conservation Council (OKI-RCC) annual meeting was held at the Cincinnati Nature Center in March. Board members Ron McCormick and Ken McCormick attended. Ken is vice chairman. Staff members Erin Rowekamp and Linda Grizzell also attended.

In July, Ken McCormick, Rick Simon, Gretchen Vaughn, and staff Linda Grizzell and John Stork attended the OKI-RCC **annual tour** hosted by Dearborn County SWCD. They toured the Halls Farm to see their straw blanket operation, Salatin’s Orchard to tour their high tunnels and horticulture operation, and Hidden Valley Lake to see their land and tree management plans.

Big Bone Lick State Park Discovery Days – Board member 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 John Stork worked the school-day booth on Friday and had approximately 200-300 visits from students, parents, and faculty. The booth focused on soil to coincide with the Jim Claypool Art and Conservation Writing contest theme.

Board members participated in the **Alexandria Fair & Horse Show** by purchasing a fair book advertisement featuring “God Made A Farmer” 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 Ken McCormick presented the forestry award at the fair to Logan Stadtmiller.

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

Past board member Larry Varney maintains a web site for the District, at **www.nkcd.org/campbellconservation**.

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

The district supports the **Northern Kentucky University Environmental Education Alliance**.

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In April Board member Gretchen Vaughn gave a presentation to Fiscal Court on the District’s upcoming events and on promoting **Soil Stewardship Week**. Judge Steve Penderly signed the 2015 Soil Stewardship Proclamation, “Local Heroes Your Hardworking Pollinators”.

Board member Linda Bray-Schafer represents the board on **Green Umbrella’s** Regional Trails Alliance.

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.



KACD Convention Left: Rick Simon, John Stork, Ron McCormick, Linda Grizzell, Ken McCormick

Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts (KACD) –The state convention was held at Bowling Green. Board members Rick Simon, Ron McCormick, and Ken McCormick, attended the meeting as well as staff members John Stork and Linda Grizzell. Ron McCormick, Rick Simon, Ken McCormick, Pete Garrett, Gretchen Vaughn, Linda Bray-Schafer, John Stork, and Linda Grizzell attended the KACD Area 5 meeting in Mason County at the Mason County Cooperative Extension Service. 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 Ron McCormick; 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.

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 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 Ahrman. Staff assisting were Linda Grizzell, John Stork, Erin Rowekamp, Amy Wing, and Mary Kathryn Dickerson.

Land Use Committee – Dennis Walter, Chairman; Linda Bray-Schafer; and, Pete Garrett. 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.

Conservation Education and Public Information Committee – Ken McCormick, Chairman; Gretchen Vaughn, and Rick Simon. Advisory Committee: DJ. Scully and Owen Prim of the Campbell County Cooperative Extension Service and Helen Fehr, former district board member.

Hawthorne St. Anne Advisory Team (HSAA) – Ken McCormick, Chairman; Rick Simon and Pete Garrett.

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 Office - The Campbell County Conservation District office is located in the Campbell County Courthouse in Alexandria through a lease with Campbell County Fiscal Court.



Board Supervisors

Seated Left: Gretchen Vaughn, Vice Chairman Dennis Walter, Linda Bray-Schafer
 Standing Left: Chairman Ron McCormick, Rick Simon, Secretary/Treasurer Ken McCormick, Peter Garrett



Administrative Secretary
Linda Grizzell



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Natural Resources
Conservation
Service Supervisory
Manager Ian Young