



Buffalo Wallow Chapter

Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams

Happenings

WEBSITE – WWW.KSWETLANDS.ORG

Our Purpose:

The Chapter serves as a clearinghouse for wetlands and riparian areas information and activities, promotes educational opportunities with a variety of targeted audiences, and facilitates project implementation for wetland and riparian area projects within the participating counties.

Our Mission:

To ensure the future of wetlands, streams, and their adjacent riparian areas as an integral part of our Kansas heritage and landscape.

Our Vision:

A public that is well informed and involved in activities that foster the protection, enhancement, and establishment of wetlands and riparian areas in Kansas.

Steering Committee

Kevin Nelson

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Debbie Ohman

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Tom Norman

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Membership is free and open to any interested individual, organization or agency interested in wetland and riparian area conservation. For more information on KAWS and its activities please contact:

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Linda Hauder

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August 28, 2003 Meeting Review

Chanter Business

Kevin Nelson opened the meeting with introductions and a welcome at the Lakin Public Library. Attending were Nelson, Debbie Ohman, Tom Norman, Jen Campbell, Mark Sexson, Bob Price, Julie Jones, Linda Hauder, and Tim Christian.

Tim provided a KAWS update (refer to e-mail, handout) and introduced Linda Hauder as the new western Kansas chapter coordinator. She officially starts September 1, but she is traveling with Tim this week to meet with chapters.

Linda took a few moments to introduce herself to the group. With an extensive background in non-profit work and marketing, Linda came to the Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams after working as a Health Initiatives Specialist with the American Heart Association. Linda is very excited by the opportunities and challenges that lie before her as a Chapter Coordinator for KAWS.

Kevin asked for member updates.

Mark Sexson, KDWP – noted that KDWP and KDHE have been involved in a fish kill in Hamilton County. He suggested that KAWS might contact the dairy to discuss potential constructed wetlands to help contain their water and runoff. He noted the activity KDWP and others are involved in on the Circle K Ranch in Edwards County; again, he thought KAWS might be an active party to work on the Ark River should the land deal occur. He will keep us apprised as he is writing the plan. He also discussed work at Concannon reservoir wetland, a gravel pit to be donated to KDWP (Web Del) is on hold, and proposed work on Hodgeman County State Lake. He also identified the ConAgra plant in Garden City as a potential KAWS project as they need to deal with their wastewater, too.

Bob Price, landowner – asked about availability of cost-share funds to do dredging and sediment removal in wetland cells. He also inquired about funds for salt cedar control and fencing of riparian areas. He noted progress on his stream stabilization project on the Ark River – the designs are completed and submitted for permits and he is lining up a contractor. SCC staff are planning to help get started soon. He asked about the status of funds for the sheep lot project submitted to NRCS for design.

Discussion ensued on the issue of salt cedar control – private lands and public lands. Tim suggested that the USDA Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program might be a source of funds to do control work.

Coordinator's Report

Much has happened since March when we last met. The Board met in April and May, then again in July. We have made numerous decisions and are moving forward rapidly to cover the state with chapters. We hope to have that goal completed by late spring 2004.

The Board determined to adopt the statewide priority map after discussion with all our federal and state partners at the April 8 meeting. The map is the TMDL and Priority Habitat (layers) made up from KDHE and KDWP information. It will become part of the State Water Plan to help direct wetland and stream activities. The Board also approached KWO about managing the conference required as part of their EPA grant. KWO completed a sole source provider contract for KAWS to complete the conference on their behalf. The conference was planned and put on August 5-7 in Overland Park.

The Board re-structured and added two new members at the May meeting. They also revamped the Advisory Committee. We are incorporating and filing for IRS not-for-profit status. We had an interesting annual meeting in Great Bend with a good tour of The Nature Conservancy property adjacent to Cheyenne Bottoms.

In July, the Board approved hiring two new chapter coordinators – one for western KS and one for southeast and south central KS. We have moved forward on placing two new staff –the new western KS coordinator, and the new southeast/south central coordinator.

The KWO EPA grant required the completion of a statewide implementation plan for wetlands and riparian areas. The draft was completed for public input and used at the August conference.

Our conference was held with over 100 average attendance per day. The speakers and Tuesday's tour were all excellent. Local projects were featured on day 2 with wetland and stream experts speaking in day 3.

We completed shooting video on the Wetlands Reserve Program show we are producing for NRCS and we plan to produce it in early September. We are also working on a print publication and several other pieces on WRP.

We have collected video for our Playa Lakes Joint Venture product, too. We need to finish it by later this fall. Financially, we are situated currently with over \$700,000 in project funds and staffing five positions.

Grants: Project dollars shown

USFWS Private Stewardship Grant Program \$250,000 (declined)

KWO WPP '00 - \$155,000 about \$20,000 not spent but committed

KWO WPP 02 - \$180,000 (approved and KAWS sole source) \$90,000 additional through SCC and KWO

SCC WPP 03 - \$129,000 (declined)

US FWS CCI - \$75,000 (approved)

PLJV educational grant \$7,750 for PLEP promotion

KDHE 319 Incremental Year 3 (a) - about \$30,000 spent

KDHE 319 Incremental Year 3 (b) – over \$200,000 (available now)

EQIP EA funds – for on-going education

PLJV coordination funds - \$20,000 spent for CY 2003, \$20,000 requested

FMC Habitat Project - \$150,000 (requested to match KDHE grant)

Chapter Business (continued from page 1)

Other sources were discussed noting that SCC RWPP did a pilot project in Meade County several years ago.

Tim reviewed the current grants and asked that projects be identified and brought to the Chapter soon for consideration. He noted that the \$200,000 in KDHE 319 funds has to be spent by June 30, 2004, so the work needs to start by early spring at the latest to meet the deadline. The new KWO grant will begin October 1 with over \$180,000 to complete demonstration projects. He reviewed the guidelines for each fund source.

Tim discussed new funding ideas and strategies that KAWS is considering. He provided an overview of the US Army Corps of Engineers 206, 1335 and Congressional authority projects noting interest in the Kansas-Lower Republican basin and the Smoky Hill River to apply for these funds. He also noted changes at the Kansas Water Office and the plans to fund work that protects public water supply reservoirs and other public water supply sources. He covered several other grant op's that KAWS is looking at for potential project funds. Tim passed around a draft KAWS cooperative agreement that the Board is reviewing for use. It allows for KAWS to enter into easements with landowners to enhance existing programs such as CCRP or PLEP, or to provide a stand-alone easement for riparian or wetland protection. The concept is approved by KDHE for limited use and Tim encouraged the group to look for a good candidate to enroll in the next few months. Overall, the concept is not funded but KAWS will shop it around to find funds.

The Chapter will meet again on October 30 in Lakin and will incorporate a tour of Price's project into the day's activity.

Upcoming Chapter meetings, activities, and events

NEXT

Buffalo Wallow Chapter meeting

October 30, 2003, 9:30 a.m.

Lakin City Library, Lakin Kansas