



Buffalo Wallow Chapter

Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams

Happenings

October 2002

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, NRCS, Tribune
Tom Norman, KDWP, Garden City
Debbie Ohman, Gray Co. CD,
Cimarron

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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August 28 Meeting Review

New Grant Funds to be Available for Projects

As a part of his update on KAWS activities to the Buffalo Wallow Chapter, Tim Christian described the use for the year-three funds received through the **KDHE 319 Incremental Grant**. Funds will support KAWS activities and it adds \$50,000 to complete wetland and stream projects on private lands. Drue Durst, KAWS marketing coordinator, will be working on developing the criteria and simple paperwork needed to implement the project portion of the grant. Conceptually, the projects approved would be up to \$5,000 with a 40 percent match (total project cost up to about \$8,400) required from the landowner. The match can be cash, other non-federal funds, labor, or other in-kind. The criteria will be provided to chapters before year's end so they can solicit and prioritize projects.

Additionally, Christian explained that these funds, plus another grant application (yet to be approved) should provide the resources to hire a KAWS chapter coordinator for western Kansas to serve the three chapters and to help cultivate any new chapters. He noted that a limiting factor in soliciting and recruiting new projects is not having a person on the ground to help chapter members complete the needed contacts and follow up. Christian encouraged members to submit projects for consideration under the **Kansas Water Office/EPA Wetlands Protection Program Grant** as those funds are currently available. The intent is to provide demonstration projects for educational use, so that is a stipulation with the landowner. These projects can range up to \$15,000-\$20,000 and must be approved through the Grant Project Management Team.

KAWS Coordinator's Report

Next Buffalo Wallow Chapter meeting November 7, 9:30 a.m., Lakin Public Library, Lakin, KS

Tim Christian provided an update on KAWS activities noting **Drue Durst** has been hired as of August 1 to serve as marketing coordinator. KAWS is also looking at adding other chapter coordinators and project coordinators to help get projects completed. The Long-Range Funding Plan approved by the Executive Committee in May 2002 calls for a minimum of five chapter coordinators and three project coordinators by 2005.

He emphasized that KAWS is not trying to usurp any agency or organization's work, but to help out in areas where little expertise exists now – wetlands and stream projects, or as he said, "adding another set of hands and feet to get the work done."

He outlined the second Wetlands Protection Program Grant that the Kansas Water Office has applied for using KAWS staff to implement. This grant will provide at least \$175,000 for demonstration projects in targeted watersheds on

the same order as the current grant provides \$159,000 within those same watersheds. This second grant provides for the additional money to secure two half-time positions...completing the needed funding for the western chapter coordinator. Approval is expected by October or early November.

Christian covered the new NRCS cooperative agreement recently signed. KAWS will provide a number of print and video products to NRCS to help promote the Wetlands Reserve Program. Additionally, KAWS will hold five regional farm bill meetings directed at landowners over the next few months.

He provided an overview of recent marketing projects including updates on the web site. Drue is working on the summer issue of **Resources** and is always looking for good articles and photos. He is learning the grant opportunities and will be coordinating the grant reports, expenditures, and other grant details. He is the prime contact for funding questions and grant opportunities. Durst offices with Christian in McPherson and his contact information is 620.241.3636 and e-mail ddurst@cox.net. The website has all current information so check it out at www.kswetlands.org.



Photos by Tim Christian

Hundreds of sites along the Arkansas River are in need of stabilization as depicted in these two photos taken near Garden City. Even though the River does not maintain continual flows at this point, when water does run the erosive forces move the sandy material quickly causing unstable slopes and encroaching cuts that threaten crop fields, power lines, roads and other infrastructure, not to mention the sediment and nutrient loading that calculates into thousands of tons and hundreds of pounds of nitrogen, phosphorous, and other degrading elements.

Kevin asked for member updates.

Dan Baffa, Lee Richardson Zoo, reported on a meeting with the Corps of Engineers and the City on September 10 to discuss a feasibility study for an extensive riparian habitat restoration project. The costs to the city/county would be \$125,000 and the area may extend from Holcomb to east of Garden City about 2-3 miles.

Mark Sexson, KDWP, reported on the Waters of Kansas zoo exhibit receiving \$100,000 from the Department through state's allocation of CARA funding. He thought once the display is formalized, perhaps another application could be made to the PLJV.

He also mentioned that he had talked with a principal at a 5,000-head Grant County dairy on doing something with their wastewater before it goes through their irrigation systems. He thought perhaps a wetland treatment system might be an option for them. Tim and he will give the project a visit after the meeting.

He also asked if the Chapter could get a short PowerPoint presentation from Dennis Haag on stormwater treatment – concepts/specifics to use with city/county staff and with livestock operators. Tim will investigate and see if a product can be developed.

The group prioritized Bob Price's project for funding through the KWO/EPA grant pending all permits and plans being approved. Tim will contact Robert Frisbie, K-State RE, to see where the plans and permits are in the process. They also supported the notion of completing one or two stream stabilization sites on the Arkansas River where it runs through Price's property. Tim will have Phil Balch, SCC, schedule on-site and see what design work is needed.

Tim reviewed the chapter identity materials and provided copies. He covered the plan of action and edits will be made so the plan can be distributed prior to the next meeting. He asked if the Buffalo Wallow Chapter would consider hosting a seminar in late February or March to cover a variety of topics including urban wetland and riparian applications, Playa Lakes Joint Venture opportunities, and stream bank treatment. The group supports the idea and will work with Tim to plan the event. Tim will relay the information to the other western chapters and see how they might help out, too.

Upcoming Chapter meetings, activities, and events

NEXT Buffalo Wallow Chapter meeting—November 7, 9:30 a.m., Lakin Public Library, Lakin, KS.

Mid-Plains Chapter meeting, November 6, Kinsley KACEE Annual Meeting, November 1-2, Atchison
Lower/Little Ark One-Day Seminar, November 4, Hutchinson
KACEE Annual Meeting, November 1-2, Atchison