



Eastern I70 Chapter

Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams

Happenings

WEBSITE - WWW.KAWS.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

Jeff Bunch—Tetra Tech EMI
Debbie Sumner—NRCS
Chris Lecuyer—KDWP
Andy Sauer - Johnson Co.
Stormwater Management
Lisa Cox - City of Overland Park
Jaime Gaggero - KDHE

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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January 9 Meeting Review

KAWS Coordinator's Report

Review minutes of the last meeting – The meeting convened at 1 pm at the Golf Course Superintendents Assoc. of America office in Lawrence with 19 people in attendance. John briefly discussed the minutes from the last meeting that was held on November 14 in Topeka. All action items had been taken care of.

WRAPS update — John provided a brief update of where the statewide process is at. KAWS applied for demonstration project dollars in 14 different WRAPS areas through coordination with the WRAPS sponsors. A recommended funding amount has been supplied to the Natural Resources Sub-cabinet and approved. At the current reduced rate, KAWS will either have to eliminate planned projects or staff. This will be determined at our next Board meeting.

A statewide WRAPS conference is planned for January 17-18 in Wichita and everyone is invited to attend. A new website for WRAPS is up and running, please check it out at www.kswraps.org

John provided an update on the Middle and Lower Kansas WRAPS and passed out maps detailing the areas covered. Rick Davis is the coordinator for the Middle Ks with 4 meetings having been held to date. Both the Lower and Middle Kansas have been recommended for funding in 2007 at a reduced amount than was requested. More detailed amounts should be available at the next meeting once final offers have been made to KAWS.

A short briefing on the Wakarusa WRAPS was also supplied. Aimee Polson, WRAPS coordinator, has taken a new position. We wish her well in the new position and thank her for contributions to the Chapter.

Web Service Update – An update on the KAWS web based mapping service was provided. Additional training was held on December 14 in Hutchinson and January 4 in Fort Scott. There will be one more opportunity to learn more about the site at the WRAPS Conference on the morning of January 17. DASC will be

Coordinator's Report (cont. from page 1)

suppling the presentation and will provide answers to all your questions.

The KDHE TMDL layer has been added as well as a new land cover layer and many of the Glacial Hills projects. A video helper is being added to help new users figure out how to utilize the site's tools.

Action Needed: Let John know if any changes or additions need to take place to the site

Chapter projects – John passed out an updated project spreadsheet. The Wak-n-duk wetland and Lenexa stream restoration projects that were brought to the last meeting were added. The Lenexa project has been approved by the PMT and has a contract in place. It is needed to help KAWS meet their grant match requirements. The wetland project was approved by the Steering Committee and now is ranked as our first priority project. It will be taken to the PMT for final approval.

The 3 Kendall stream projects that are on the chapter list will be sent in for EQIP as one project. KAWS has agreed to supply \$1000 toward the cost of the project through it's funds or partner dollars. This will help the project rank out higher and hopefully get it approved.

A new contract has been approved between KAWS and The Watershed Institute (TWI). The fees have increased to a maximum of \$6100 per project. At the new increased rates, KAWS will only be doing stream projects that are pre-approved. At this time, they will only be approved if there is a special need for it to be a demo in a new county or area. KAWS also has rates for water assessments to help groups determine the best locations to focus their efforts.

Stream projects are eligible for EQIP if they meet the farm use requirements. They are also eligible for WHIP in some areas that may not be eligible for EQIP. KAWS can help them rank out higher by putting in partner dollars. Do to the shortage of technical assistance dollars for stream projects, only a very limited number will be completed. Everyone is encouraged to seek this funding through EQIP if possible.

Watershed Improvement Grant (WIG) for the Delaware - KAWS received a Watershed Improvement Grant from EPA to expand on the work done under the RGI grant. The Saving Money and Time publication will be printed for partners to use and special educational workshops will be held in the Delaware and Fall River watersheds. The Fecal Coliform Bacteria working group will be utilized to help lead the process. The Glacial Hills RC&D has signed a contract to carry out the required activities in the Delaware. Will Boyer will be hired to assist the RC&D with these activities.

Habitat Team – John discussed the Habitat Team that had been formed in the 3 Rivers Chapter area. They recently formed a Habitat Improvement Team, which is comprised of representatives from local Pheasant and Quail Forever Chapters, Ks Alliance for Wetlands and Streams, Ks Department of Wildlife and Parks, Corps of Engineers, US Fish and Wildlife Service, local Conservation Districts and Fort Riley. Habitat work will primarily be focused in Marshall, Washington, Clay, Riley, Geary, and Pottawatomie counties. The Habitat Team will offer a variety of wildlife habitat improvement practices including strip disking, food plots, native grass planting, invasive species control, burning, and woody invasion control. Through programs such as EQIP, CRP mid-management practices, WHIP, and the Upland Bird Initiative

The group had a lot of good discussion and felt that there was a couple of good options to pursue

Upcoming Chapter meetings, activities, and events

NEXT 170 Chapter meeting – March 13, 2006 in Topeka

Statewide WRAPS Conference – January 17-18
Delaware WRAPS meeting – January 24
KAWS Board meeting – March 6

Ks Graziers Asssoc. Annular meeting – Jan. 20
Marketing Speciality Workshop – Jan. 31

for this area. We will plan to coordinate a meeting of many of the interested partners by late spring or early summer to discuss the potential.

Action needed: If you or anyone you know is interested in helping get a Habitat Improvement Team started in this area, contact John

KDWP Upland Bird Initiative – Mike McFadden, with the Ks Dept. of Wildlife and Parks, provided a handout outlining the program. Funds are being provided to landowners in Region 2 to help develop habitat for upland birds. If you are interested in the program, please contact your local biologist and they will work with you to see if you are eligible. See the brochure attached for details.

Farm Bill – There are some significant reductions planned in their staff by 2008, which involves combining offices across the state. They are also looking at some drastic cuts in TSP funding that were discussed as well. KAWS will continue to pursue an MOU agreement with NRCS for technical assistance, but nothing can take place until additional funds are available.

The WRP program was also discussed. More applications are needed to utilize the existing funds. If you know of anyone that might be interested in developing a wetland, please have them contact their local conservation district right away. The application deadline ends in March.

Update on KAWS activities – Eric Johnson, part-time project coordinator for KAWS and LIP coordinator with KDWP, took a new position with KDWP last spring. That position has been filled by Murray Laubhan. Project responsibilities will be transferred to him soon. His email is murrayl@wp.state.ks.us

The new KAWS online cost share system is being set up so that other groups and organizations can utilize it. Plans are to have it provide the necessary reports for grants to include project expenditures and load reduction information. A presentation on the system will

be provided at the WRAPS conference in Wichita on January 17.

Action Needed: If you are interested in utilizing the new online system for your group or organization, let John know

Partner Updates – Marie Thompson, with the Lawrence Art Guild, and Fred DeVictor, Lawrence Dept of Rec, provided a presentation on the Kansas River Expression of Soul Project in Lawrence. They are currently seeking help with funding this excellent trail project and would like any assistance chapter members could provide. If you are interested in helping fund the project or pursuing a grant to do so, please contact Marie. Her contact info is on the attached brochure.

Next meeting dates – Discussion revolved around having a regional conservation workshop this spring in place of a chapter meeting. The chapter meetings for 2007 have been set, but the May one might be changed due to the workshop. ***They are currently March 13, May 8, July 10, September 11 and November 13.***

Action needed: Evelyn will check to see if the Shawnee County Farm Bureau meeting room is available and let John know

We would like to send special thanks out to Mark Johnson and the GCSAA for hosting the meeting and briefing us on the their activities.