



# Mid-Plains Chapter

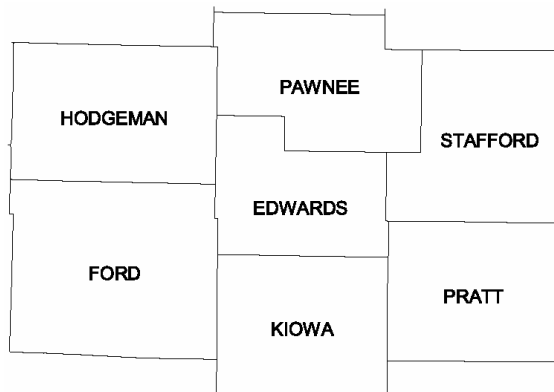
## Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams

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### Making the Most of Wetlands and Riparian Areas

#### **Mid-Plains Chapter 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.



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

**KAWS 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.

The **Mid-Plains Chapter** of the Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams organized in October 2001 to meet increasing needs for quality informational and educational materials stressing the importance of the function and values of these areas, to demonstrate how they can be enhanced, restored, and protected; and to encourage closer cooperation between land-owners, agencies, municipalities, developers and others that impact these valuable natural resources. **The Chapter** covers **Edwards, Ford, Hodgeman, Kiowa, Pawnee, Pratt, and Stafford** counties. The group is an affiliate of KAWS and supports its mission and vision.

#### ***The Challenge:***

The loss of valuable wetland and riparian areas contributes directly to impairment of the stream, rivers and water bodies in the area. Playa wetlands are frequent in this area and many have been farmed for decades. The unique characteristics of these important wetlands have been altered through sedimentation, draining, and removal of native vegetation. Although an arid climate, the rolling topography of the area accentuates soil erosion from cropland and other land uses when high-intensity events occur. Soil erosion along streams and rivers is aggravated altering stream channels, flows, and important hydrologic characteristics. Water quality is degraded through increased sedimentation, fecal coliform, and increased nutrient and pesticide loads. Upstream flooding is more frequent without these natural buffers in place to hold and release runoff water more slowly.

Wildlife habitat has been negatively impacted by the

## Making the Most of Wetlands and Riparian Areas—Mid-Plains

reduction and often the elimination of wetlands through draining, dredging and filling for crop production. Additionally, riparian areas have been pushed out to allow farming to bank side or livestock winter or calve in these areas concentrating manure and aggravating soil erosion. This impacts fisheries as well as increasing water temperatures, by removing the shading effect of the trees and shrubs, thus altering the aquatic plant, invertebrate, and vertebrate communities in permanent streams.

**The Chapter** supports a voluntary, educational approach that relies on open communications between members. The group embraces the KAWS philosophy of building local capacity to get projects “on the ground.”

### ***Who is Involved:***

**The Mid-Plains Chapter** of KAWS is providing oversight and support to help get quality wetland and riparian area projects on the ground. Currently, our partner/members include:

Edwards County Conservation District	Pawnee County Conservation District
Ford County Conservation District	Pratt County Conservation District
Hodgeman County Conservation District	Stafford County Conservation District
Kiowa County Conservation District	K-State Extension
Sunflower RC&D	Central Prairie RC&D
Army Corps of Engineers, Kansas City District	Kansas Forest Service
Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks	Pheasants Forever
Kansas Department of Agriculture	Kansas Water Office
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service	US Fish and Wildlife Service
Kansas Dept. of Health and Environment	State Conservation Commission
US Environmental Protection Agency	Individual landowners
Kansas Rural Center	Farm Service Agency
Kansas Department of Agriculture	Quail Unlimited
Streamlink	National Wild Turkey Federation
KS Assoc. for Cons. and Env. Education	Dodge City Community College
Ford County Commission	

### ***How Can You Get Involved:***

If you are interested in promoting wetland and riparian area enhancement, restoration or protection in this area, you can:

- Contact the Mid-Plains Chapter through the Edwards Co. CD for information and upcoming activities/meeting details
- Discuss your organization’s involvement with your leadership and offer the potential benefits from joining the Alliance - synergy, project technical support, project financial support, and the opportunity to help lead the community you live and work in to maximize the benefits wetlands and riparian areas offer
- Provide information to the Alliance on wetland and riparian area projects you are interested in seeing put on the ground
- Offer your support—technically, financially, or “in-kind” to help the Alliance succeed.
- Membership is free and open to anyone interested.

### ***For More Information:***

Contact the Edwards Co. CD at 620.659.3242, fax 620.659.3599, or mail to 120 E. 7th, Kinsley, KS 67547-1034.

For more information on KAWS, contact Tim Christian, KAWS State coordinator, at (620) 241-6921, or (620) 241-9618 (fax), e-mail [tdchristian@cox.net](mailto:tdchristian@cox.net) or mail to Box 236, McPherson, KS 67460.

