

Kenton County Conservation District

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**Board meets the second
Tuesday of each month at the
District office, 7:00 p.m.**

The Kenton County Conservation District will encourage the protection and management of our county's natural resources, emphasizing the importance of our watersheds, natural environment and agricultural lands. In accordance with state statute, we will actively promote sound land use policies and practices through education and community involvement. (Revised March 2002)

District Board of Supervisors:

Marc Hult, Chair;
Margaret "Peggy" Kelly, Vice Chair;
John J. Heist, Secretary – Treasurer;
Ed Bessler; Scott Kimberlin;
Janet Scanlon; John Toebben.

District Staff: Sally Aaron,
Administrative Secretary;
Kristin Scott, Agriculture
Conservation Technician; Mark
Jacobs, Conservation Technician;
and, Mary Kathryn Dickerson, District
Coordinator

**Natural Resources Conservation
Service:** Ed Thompson, District
Conservationist

**Kentucky 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.

Annual Report July 1, 2005 - June 30, 2006

Kenton County Conservation District

Riparian Buffer Grant - Work continues on this project at Middleton-Mills Park. A grant through the Kentucky Division of Conservation Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Fund funded the installation of a demonstration project for riparian buffers. The buffer area was established along a small lake. With help from about twenty volunteers from the community 450 native trees and shrubs were planted at the site in April 2005, and some replanting was done in the fall of 2005. The Kenton County Fiscal Court signed a 10-year maintenance agreement for the area, and Steve Trauger from the Kenton County Parks and Recreation Department provided assistance with the project. A workshop at the site is being planned for the fall of 2006.

Conservation Field Days Grant - The District, in cooperation with the Boone and Campbell Conservation Districts, received a grant for a series of field days to address forestry practices, warm season grasses for forage, and the federal Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). A Summer Forage Field Day at Big Bone Lick State Park in August attracted 28 people and 45 people attended a Conservation Program Field Day in September at Split Rock Conservation Park. As a part of this grant, a forestry field day was held in October 2004 and a Farm Program Open House was held in January 2005. The grant was through the Kentucky Division of Conservation Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Fund.

Farmland Protection Initiative

The Kenton County Conservation District continued work on this project, originally funded by a grant from the Kentucky Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE) Corporation, to explore farmland preservation options for Kenton County. The district has applied for a grant to publish results of the study to make them available to the public.

Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Program— Four applications were funded by the state in 2005 for a total of \$ 45,622.00 to help install Best Management Practices for improvement of water quality.

County Agricultural Development Board – The District is represented on this council by farmers Jeremy Wolfe and Joe Bergman. This council is responsible for administering funds for the Phase I Tobacco Settlement. The District administers a program for the County Agricultural Development Board, the Agricultural Diversification Program. For the 2005 program, eleven applications were received. Of those, nine were funded, with two being withdrawn prior to requesting reimbursement. A total of \$11,437.75 was awarded. The total project amount, including participant's share of the cost, was \$46,943.69. The program is intended to assist landowners to diversify their farming operations, rather than rely on tobacco as a main cash crop. Board members Janet Scanlon, Peggy Kelly, Marc Hult, and Scott Kimberlin are on the district's oversight committee. Staff Mary Kathryn Dickerson attended the statewide Agricultural Development Conference in March, and she and District Administrative Secretary Sally Aaron attended an area meeting in Williamstown.

Agricultural Districts - There are five agricultural districts involving 39 landowners with a total of 2,947.2 acres in Kenton County. This voluntary state program provides some protection for farmers who wish to keep their land in agricultural production.

Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Act - A total of 365 water quality plan certifications have been received by the conservation district. **An Agriculture Water Quality Committee** formed by the Boone, Campbell, and Kenton County Conservation Districts meets regularly to help local producers comply with this law enacted in 1994. The committee includes representatives from over ten agencies and organizations involved in agriculture and water quality. In December, the committee visited the Cincinnati-Northern Kentucky International Airport to tour the de-icing/storm water system. In July, Ken Palisin, Northern Kentucky Area Development District, made a presentation on the scattered-site sewage project.

Dead Livestock Disposal Program - The District received a matching grant from the Kentucky Division of Conservation to assist landowners with proper disposal of fallen livestock. Since the program started in February 2001, 66 landowners have participated in the program. The grant is also made available to the county animal shelter to assist with direct costs for disposal of companion animal carcasses.

Water Quality Monitoring - The District has been collecting water quality data on Doe Run Lake since 1991, and the streams in Highland Cemetery since 1993. Testing continues at each site. The District also participated in the Great American Secchi Dip-In through Kent State University. This project measures the clarity of lakes across North America. Board member Marc Hult works with the **Licking River Watershed Watch**.

Projects and Partners

- Scott Kimberlin was appointed by the District to serve as a member of the **Kenton County Extension Committee**.
- The District board supports and assists the **Northern Kentucky Urban and Community Forestry Council**.
- Marc Hult represented the District on a regional Natural Resources Conservation Service **Environmental Quality Incentives Program** (EQIP) work group to select local practices for the program.
- **Banklick Watershed Council** - Marc Hult works with the Banklick Watershed Council, which issued its first plan this year to identify and solve problems in the watershed.
- Conservation Technician Mark Jacobs represents the board on the **No. Ky. Urban and Community Forestry Committee**.
- District Coordinator Mary Kathryn Dickerson represents the board on the **No. Ky. Area Solid Waste Technical Advisory Committee**.

Technical assistance is provided to Kenton County through Ed Thompson, District Conservationist with

the Natural Resources Conservation Service, our federal partner, and Kenton County Conservation District Staff Mark Jacobs and Kristin Scott. Additional information and assistance is also provided by district staff Sally Aaron and Mary Kathryn Dickerson. In 2005 – 2006, they provided assistance to over 441 Kenton County landowners 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 considerations.

Conservation Progress:

Conservation Plans for Cropland Written	100 acres
Conservation Plans for Grazing Land Written	240 acres
Practices for Enhancement of Wildlife Habitat	231 acres
Land Treated for Fish and Wildlife Habitat	115 acres
Reduction in the Acreage of Cropland Soils Damaged by Erosion	74 acres
Soil Erosion Reduced	335 Tons

Education and Outreach

Writing and Art Contests – *Kentucky’s Water – My Responsibility* was the topic for this year’s Conservation Contests. The theme focused on Kentucky’s water resources – their variety and importance, and ways that all citizens can help protect, restore and conserve Kentucky’s waterways and watersheds. This year there were 284 entries from six schools in the art contest and 359 entries from nine schools in the writing contest. The Kenton County Winner, Conner Dailey from R. C. Hinsdale School, was named the Kentucky Area 5 winner and his entry was forwarded to the state competition. The District sponsors an awards banquet each year for contest winners, grant recipients, and other awards.

Education Grants - The Kenton County Conservation District has been awarding grants to county educational institutions since 1989. Grant applications are accepted from October through January each year. This year, St. Augustine School in Covington received \$400 for their Exploring Water project for fourth grade students and Holy Cross Elementary School received \$400 for their “Can We Save Them? – Endangered Species the Clock is Ticking” project to purchase materials for the school library.

Rita Wesseling, St. Augustine School in Covington, was chosen as the Kenton County Conservation District Conservation Teacher of the year.

Programs and Activities

- **Big Bone Lick State Park Discovery Days** – The exhibit this year featured “Food From the Forest” and included native plants that were used as food in earlier days. District programs were also highlighted. Over 500 people visited the booth during the festival. Board members and staff from the Boone, Campbell and Kenton Districts helped with the exhibit.
- Mark Jacobs and Mary Kathryn Dickerson hosted a booth at the Northern Kentucky University **Earth Day** celebration in April, in cooperation with the Campbell and Boone County Conservation Districts. The district reached over 300 individuals this year through the following programs: Sanitation District #1 **Waterific** program and **Highland Cemetery** water and forest study with Beechwood High School.
- Jacobs presented programs for **Career Days** with Cincinnati Technical College and St. Henry High School. He also made a presentation for the Quail Unlimited Field Day.
- Agriculture Conservation Technician Kristin Scott completed the Cooperative Extension Service **Master Grazer Program**. She also made a presentation to the group on conservation systems and programs.
- Conservation Technician Mark Jacobs completed a **Kentucky Woodland Owner’s Course**, a series of four field days and workshops and attended the **Ohio River Valley Woodland & Wildlife Workshop**.
- The district supports the **NKU Environmental Education Alliance** and the **Environmental Education in No. Ky. Resource Guide** is available through the District office.

Community Education - The Conservation District sponsored a hike, led by board member Peggy Kelly, at Doe Run Lake in April with 12 people attending despite rain on that day.

Web Site - The Conservation District web site is provided through the Kenton County Fiscal Court at www.kentoncounty.org click on County Services.

Newsletters - The quarterly newsletter, *Landscapes*, reaches 1,637 Kenton County households.

Administrative Functions

The Executive Committee of the Kenton County Conservation District meets regularly with those of the Boone and Campbell County Conservation Districts.

The boards work together on conservation programs and employee policy.

Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Conservation Council (OKI-RCC)

Jack Heist serves as the Chairman for the organization. The annual meeting was held at Grailville, Ohio, in March with about 65 people attending. Farmland protection and water quality trading were featured topics. Staff Kristin Scott, Mark Jacobs and Mary Kathryn Dickerson attended. Mary Kathryn made a presentation about the district’s Agriculture and Farm Study.

Legislative Action - The board continues to work with the Kenton County Fiscal Court and their state Senators and Representatives.

The **Ky. Association of Conservation District's (KACD)** state convention was held in conjunction with the Southeast Region meeting of the National Association of Conservation Districts in Louisville in July 2005. Board member Marc Hult attended, along with staff Kristin Scott, Mark Jacobs, Sally Aaron, and Mary Kathryn Dickerson. Mark Jacobs attended the KACD Area 5 meeting in Campbell County.

Financial Report

The District received a direct aid grant from the Kentucky Division of Conservation to help fund a part-time Conservation Technician position. Other revenue is provided to the District through the Kenton County Fiscal Court. A complete financial report is available at the District office.