

MINUTES OF THE SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mark Taddiken at 8:30 a.m. on January 16, 2007 in Room 423-S of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present:

Raney Gilliland, Kansas Legislative Research
Art Griggs, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Judy Seitz, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Pat Lehman, Executive Director, Kansas Association of Conservation Districts
LaVern Wetzel, President, Kansas Association of Conservation Districts
Rodney Vorhees, Chairman, State Conservation Commission
Connie Richmeier, District Manager, Finney County Conservation District
Keri Harris, District Manager, Franklin County Conservation District
Fred Cholick, Dean College of Agriculture and Director of K-State Research and Extension
Constantine Cotsoradis, Deputy Secretary, Kansas Department of Agriculture

Others attending:

See attached list.

Hearings on **SB 60–Conservation Districts, funding**, were opened.

Pat Lehman, Executive Director, Kansas Association of Conservation Districts (KACD), appeared in support of **SB 60 (Attachment 1)**. He thanked the chairman for holding hearings on Conservation Day at the Capitol. Conservation districts in Kansas are divided into five areas with each area electing a county supervisor to be a director who serves on the Board of Directors of the KACD. Mr. Lehman stood for questions.

LaVern Wetzel, President, Kansas Association of Conservation Districts testified in favor of **SB 60 (Attachment 2)**. He stated that the KACD believes in a strong commitment to conservation practices that define Kansas and preserves the state's natural resources for future generations. There were no questions for Mr. Wetzel.

Rodney Vorhees, Chairperson, State Conservation Commission, spoke in support of **SB 60 (Attachment 3)**. He noted that the increase in funds would provide 96 county conservation districts with additional operating funds to assist with implementing natural resource programs to protect and enhance the natural resources in Kansas. Mr. Vorhees stood for questions.

Connie Richmeier, District Manager, Finney County Conservation District, presented testimony in favor of **SB 60 (Attachment 4)**. She stated that the state has only this moment to conserve our natural resources for they are non-renewable and will be needed for future generations.

Keri Harris, District Manager, Franklin County Conservation District, spoke in favor of **SB 60 (Attachment 5)**. She said that without the increase in funding many county conservation districts may be faced with reducing staff and services, or even closing the doors completely.

There were no questions for Ms. Richmeier and Ms. Harris.

Chairman Taddiken said the hearing on **SB 60** will be continued to next week.

Fred Cholick, Dean of the College of Agriculture and Director of K-State Research and Extension presented the annual report for the Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops (KCSAAC) (**Attachment 6**). He said the KCSAAC works in partnership with state and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations and agricultural organizations to assist family farmers and ranchers to boost farm profitability, protect natural resources and enhance rural communities. He also presented the annual report of the K-State Research and Extension (on file at Kansas State University).

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE Senate Agriculture Committee at 8:30 a.m. on January 16, 2007 in Room 423-S of the Capitol.

Dr. Cholick highlighted a few of the projects mentioned in the report:

1. modified intensive early stocking (strategically and methodically moving cattle on and off grazing land)
2. K-State partners with communities in facilitating activities like Walk Kansas to improve health and reduce health care costs
3. Kansas' Grow the Grower giving local producers training and information needed to be successful in the local market
4. Promoting canola as an alternate crop

He also reviewed the K-State Research and Extension budget responsibilities and fund source data for FY 2007.

Dr. Cholick stood for questions.

During the first five years of the Center's (KCSAAC) operation, \$375,000 of state funding has resulted in approximately \$3.2 million dollars of grant funds.

Dr. Cholick said the focused areas of excellence are bio-economy bioenergy, bio material, agriculture food safety and security, integrating agriculture, and science, technology and youth development.

He stood for additional questions.

Constantine Cotsoradis, Deputy Secretary, Kansas Department of Agriculture, requested the introduction of a bill to create a fund to receive damages from the Republican River Compact should it become necessary to seek monetary damages if Nebraska does not provide the water as required by the Compact.

Senator Marci Francisco made a motion to introduce a bill to establish the Republican river water conservation projects fund.

Senator Pine seconded the motion. Motion passed.

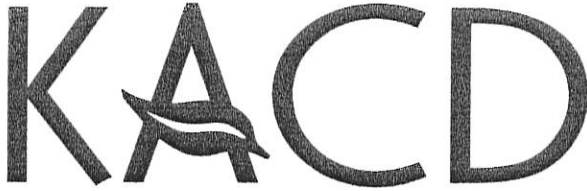
The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 17.

SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE GUEST LIST

DATE: Jan. 16, 2007

NAME	REPRESENTING
Steven Graham	K-State Research & Extension
Gay Ford	KWS
Pat Johnson	KACD
Tracy Steuts	KWO
Red Vorhees	SCC
Kerith Harris	Franklin Co CD
Scott Colun	SCC
Janie Hicmanew	Finney CCD -
Mark Heim	SCC
Cv Cotsoradi,	KDA
Gene Albere	KACD
Ronald Brown	KACD
Ray Hammarlund	KDAC
PAT APPLE	DIST 12 KS SENATOR
John Donley	KS Lusk Assn.
Emily Goier	Hein Law Firm
Kenee Klinges	Sen Pyle



Kansas Association of Conservation Districts

Representing Local Conservation Districts

Senate Committee on Agriculture
By Pat Lehman
Executive Director, Kansas Association of Conservation Districts
Testimony – SB 60
January 16, 2007

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I am Pat Lehman, Executive Director of the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts. I am here in support of SB 60.

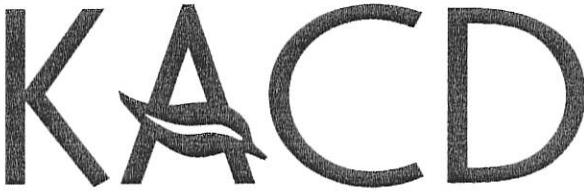
Today is Conservation Day at the Capitol, an annual event promoting conservation in Kansas. I would encourage you to visit the displays on the first floor of the rotunda.

First of all, I would like to thank Senator Schmidt for introducing SB 60, a bill aimed at increasing aid to conservation districts. I would also like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for providing a hearing on this bill today.

Conservation districts in Kansas are divided into five areas. Each area elects a county supervisor to be a director who serves on the Board of Directors of the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts. Four of the five directors are here today: LaVern Wetzel from Kinsley, president; Gene Albers from Cunningham, vice president; Ronald Brown from Fort Scott, secretary/treasurer; and all of you know former State Representative Don Rezac from Emmett, director. Jon Starns from Brewster, immediate past president and now director, could not be here because of too much snow and too many cattle.

I will let the other conferees explain the specifics of the bill. I ask that you pass SB 60 favorably, and I will be glad to answer any questions.

*Senate Agriculture Committee
1-16-07
Attachment 1*



Kansas Association of Conservation Districts

Representing Local Conservation Districts

Senate Committee on Agriculture
By LaVern Wetzel
President, Kansas Association of Conservation Districts
Testimony – SB 60
January 16, 2007

Thank you, Chairman Taddiken and members of the committee; I am LaVern Wetzel, President of the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts. I am testifying in favor of SB 60.

In the 1930s, a severe drought across the Great Plains led to one of the darkest periods in Kansas history. Minimal rain and poor soil management resulted in huge black dust storms. The worst such storm in memory occurred on April 14, 1935, a day that came to be known as "Black Sunday." On that day, an estimated 300 million tons of soil blew from the land.

But just as every cloud has a silver lining, the clouds of dust were no exception. Out of that disaster was born a commitment to soil conservation, which led to the passage of legislation establishing the Erosion Control Service as part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The ECS later became the Soil Conservation Service and then the Natural Resources Conservation Service, which today continues to provide technical assistance to private landowners and managers to help them conserve their soil, water, and other natural resources.

In a letter to all state governors in February 1937 urging them to set up conservation districts, President Franklin D. Roosevelt said, "The nation that destroys its soil destroys itself." The Kansas Legislature took that admonition to heart, and a month later Governor Walter Huxman signed a bill into law that created conservation districts in Kansas. The bill also provided for the creation of a state soil conservation committee as an agency of the state, whose purpose was to assist in the formation of conservation districts and to coordinate their affairs.

The Kansas Association of Conservation Districts (KACD), a voluntary, nongovernmental, nonprofit organization, was established in 1944 to support programs designed to advance the conservation and orderly development of Kansas land, water, and related resources. Its members are the conservation districts located in the state's 105 counties.

Thus were forged key partnerships among federal, state, and local entities all committed to a common goal: wise and efficient conservation practices to protect the state's natural resources. These partnerships spanning more than six decades have been highly effective and mutually beneficial, allowing for shared space, equipment, and knowledge.

*Senate Agriculture Committee
1-16-07
Attachment 2*

Because of the mutual benefit afforded by these partnerships, what impacts one also impacts the others. The Kansas Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has been given the challenge to prepare for major budget reductions that threaten not only that agency's programs and services but local conservation districts offices as well. The level of budget cuts NRCS currently faces, and therefore local conservation district offices face as well, is particularly challenging for committed conservationists.

In a state well-accustomed to fiscal constraints associated with its agricultural economy, belt tightening is nothing new. Kansans understand tough economic conditions all too well. We at KACD believe in a strong commitment to conservation practices that define Kansas and preserve the state's natural resources for future generations.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of KACD I urge your support of SB 60 and I will be glad to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you.

LaVern Wetzel
President
Kansas Association of Conservation Districts



Greg A. Foley, Executive Director

KANSAS
State Conservation Commission

Kathleen Sebelius, Governor

Senate Committee on Agriculture
by
Rod Vorhees
Chairperson
State Conservation Commission

January 16, 2007

Chairman Taddiken and members of the committee, I am Rod Vorhees, the Chairman of the State Conservation Commission (SCC). I was elected to the SCC by the elected county conservation district supervisors. I am here to provide testimony on SB 60 which will increase the amount of state and county financial aid to county conservation districts. The SCC is supportive of a proposal by the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts to increase the amount of funds conservation districts are able to receive under State Aid to Conservation Districts as it is vital to successful implementation of state and federal financial assistance programs.

State Aid to Conservation Districts, also known as Matching Funds, is a grant program providing financial assistance to Kansas conservation districts. The K.S.A. 2-1907c, as amended July 1, 1994, authorizes the state to match up to \$10,000 per district of the annual amount allocated to conservation districts by the board of county commissioners. These funds assist the 105 county conservation districts to effectively deliver local and state natural resource programs as prescribed under the Conservation District Law (K.S.A. 2-1901 et seq.).

Financial assistance enables conservation districts to:

- ⇒ Hire administrative and technical staff.
- ⇒ Acquire office supplies and equipment.
- ⇒ Coordinate various conservation programs.
- ⇒ Implement state financial assistance programs at the local level.
- ⇒ Carry out information and education campaigns promoting conservation.

A local five-member board, known as district supervisors, governs each conservation district. District supervisors are elected public officials who serve without pay. The 525 district supervisors donate nearly 50,000 hours per year establishing local priorities, setting policy, and administering programs to conserve natural resources and protect water quality.

Senate Agriculture Committee

1-16-07

Attachment 3

This county matching program provides a \$10,000 match to county provided funds for conservation district operation to implement state financial assistance and other programs. Currently, the Aid to Conservation Districts allocation is \$1,048,000. State appropriations supplement county allocated funds and are utilized by conservation districts for operational expenses as listed above but also provide personnel for clerical support to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in exchange for providing office space and equipment to implement state financial assistance programs.

An additional \$1,086,154 is requested for state fiscal year 2008 to increase the state appropriations to match county supplied funds, not to exceed \$25,000 per district, contingent on statutory change. The Kansas Water Authority supports legislative actions in revising K.S.A. 2-1907c to increase the state financial assistance to conservation districts to match county supplied funds, not to exceed \$25,000 per district. The provisions of K.S.A. 2-1907c authorizing state appropriations to match county supplied funds, not to exceed \$10,000 per district has been at the current funding level since 1994.

The increase will provide 96 county conservation districts with additional operating funds to assist with implementing natural resource programs to protect and enhance Kansas' natural resources. The attached table lists the FY 2007 county appropriations for each conservation district, eligible FY 2008 match from the state, and the FY 2008 Proposed Match figures. Furthermore, the increase in matching funds will illustrate to county commissioners the states' commitment to conservation, and provide an opportunity for counties to take advantage of increased matching funds from the state.

Additionally, in the past year, the USDA Farm Services Agency and the Natural Resources Conservation Service announced plans to close around 11 of its offices in Kansas due to federal budget cuts. Most Kansas conservation districts are commonly collocated with the federal offices, allowing cost savings and improved delivery of services and technical assistance to federal and state assistance programs. The proposed closure of USDA offices would eliminate many Kansas conservation districts' ability to exist in these areas. Subsequently, office closures reduce the effective delivery and implementation of state financial assistance programs. Conservation district operational expenses will increase without the co-location support of a USDA presence.

Also, in the FY 2008 budget request the SCC requests \$2,000 for Elk County Conservation District to match FY 2008 county appropriations. If the state match is approved all conservation districts will receive the maximum \$10,000 state match in the history of the program.

On behalf of the State Conservation Commission, I respectfully request legislative support of this proposal for FY 2008.

FY 2008 SCC Budget- Aid to Conservation Districts

DISTRICT	CO. GENERAL FUND	CO. SPECIAL MILL LEVY	COUNTY OTHER	COUNTY TOTAL	STATE MATCHED	TOTAL	PROPOSED MATCH
ALLEN		\$ 20,000		\$ 20,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 20,000
ANDERSON		\$ 25,500		\$ 25,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 35,500	\$ 25,000
ATCHISON		\$ 23,000		\$ 23,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 33,000	\$ 23,000
BARBER	\$ 22,500			\$ 22,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 32,500	\$ 22,500
BARTON	\$ 27,810			\$ 27,810	\$ 10,000	\$ 37,810	\$ 25,000
BOURBON	\$ 41,000			\$ 41,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 51,000	\$ 25,000
BROWN		\$ 22,500		\$ 22,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 32,500	\$ 22,500
BUTLER	\$ 33,000			\$ 33,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 43,000	\$ 25,000
CHASE	\$ 15,500			\$ 15,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 25,500	\$ 15,500
CHAUTAUQUA	\$ 15,000			\$ 15,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 15,000
CHEROKEE	\$ 25,000			\$ 25,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 25,000
CHEYENNE	\$ 14,000			\$ 14,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 24,000	\$ 14,000
CLARK	\$ 12,500			\$ 12,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 22,500	\$ 12,500
CLAY	\$ 28,925			\$ 28,925	\$ 10,000	\$ 38,925	\$ 25,000
CLOUD		\$ 18,098		\$ 18,098	\$ 10,000	\$ 28,098	\$ 18,098
COFFEY	\$ 35,000		\$ 30,125	\$ 65,125	\$ 10,000	\$ 75,125	\$ 25,000
COMANCHE	\$ 15,000			\$ 15,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 15,000
COWLEY	\$ 28,200			\$ 28,200	\$ 10,000	\$ 38,200	\$ 25,000
CRAWFORD	\$ 23,912	\$ 10,000		\$ 33,912	\$ 10,000	\$ 43,912	\$ 25,000
DECATUR		\$ 10,000		\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 10,000
DICKINSON	\$ 30,000			\$ 30,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 25,000
DONIPHAN		\$ 22,000		\$ 22,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 32,000	\$ 22,000
DOUGLAS	\$ 93,500			\$ 93,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 103,500	\$ 25,000
EDWARDS	\$ 10,000			\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 10,000
ELK		\$ 10,000		\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 10,000
ELLIS	\$ 70,242			\$ 70,242	\$ 10,000	\$ 80,242	\$ 25,000
ELLSWORTH	\$ 29,000			\$ 29,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 39,000	\$ 25,000
FINNEY	\$ 45,000			\$ 45,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 55,000	\$ 25,000
FORD	\$ 42,000			\$ 42,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 52,000	\$ 25,000
FRANKLIN	\$ 10,855	\$ 35,145		\$ 46,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 56,000	\$ 25,000
GEARY	\$ 24,000			\$ 24,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 34,000	\$ 24,000
GOVE	\$ 10,000			\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 10,000
GRAHAM	\$ 20,500			\$ 20,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 30,500	\$ 20,500
GRANT	\$ 31,000			\$ 31,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 41,000	\$ 25,000
GRAY		\$ 23,599		\$ 23,599	\$ 10,000	\$ 33,599	\$ 23,599
GREELEY	\$ 11,303			\$ 11,303	\$ 10,000	\$ 21,303	\$ 11,303
GREENWOOD	\$ 16,500			\$ 16,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 26,500	\$ 16,500
HAMILTON	\$ 25,000			\$ 25,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 25,000
HARPER	\$ 10,000		\$ 20,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 25,000
HARVEY		\$ 15,300		\$ 15,300	\$ 10,000	\$ 25,300	\$ 15,300
HASKELL	\$ 22,000			\$ 22,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 32,000	\$ 22,000
HODGEMAN	\$ 16,000			\$ 16,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 26,000	\$ 16,000
JACKSON	\$ 51,909			\$ 51,909	\$ 10,000	\$ 61,909	\$ 25,000
JEFFERSON	\$ 45,000			\$ 45,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 55,000	\$ 25,000
JEWELL	\$ 19,250			\$ 19,250	\$ 10,000	\$ 29,250	\$ 19,250
JOHNSON	\$ 20,000			\$ 20,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 20,000
KEARNY	\$ 10,000	\$ 55,000		\$ 65,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 25,000
KINGMAN	\$ 10,000			\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 10,000
KIOWA	\$ 10,000			\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 10,000
LABETTE	\$ 13,000			\$ 13,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 23,000	\$ 13,000
LANE	\$ 6,000	\$ 29,500		\$ 35,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 45,500	\$ 25,000
LEAVENWORTH	\$ 37,000			\$ 37,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 47,000	\$ 25,000
LINCOLN	\$ 14,000			\$ 14,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 24,000	\$ 14,000

FY 2008 SCC Budget- Aid to Conservation Districts

DISTRICT	CO. GENERAL FUND	CO. SPECIAL MILL LEVY	COUNTY OTHER	COUNTY TOTAL	STATE MATCHED	TOTAL	PROPOSED MATCH
LINN	\$ 28,500			\$ 28,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 38,500	\$ 25,000
LOGAN	\$ 14,500			\$ 14,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 24,500	\$ 14,500
LYON	\$ 24,500			\$ 24,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 34,500	\$ 24,500
MARION	\$ 28,790			\$ 28,790	\$ 10,000	\$ 38,790	\$ 25,000
MARSHALL	\$ 10,000	\$ 20,480		\$ 30,480	\$ 10,000	\$ 40,480	\$ 25,000
McPHERSON	\$ 27,000			\$ 27,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 37,000	\$ 25,000
MEADE	\$ 16,000			\$ 16,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 26,000	\$ 16,000
MIAMI	\$ 47,947			\$ 47,947	\$ 10,000	\$ 57,947	\$ 25,000
MITCHELL		\$ 16,615	\$ 1,559	\$ 18,174	\$ 10,000	\$ 28,174	\$ 18,174
MONTGOMERY	\$ 30,000			\$ 30,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 25,000
MORRIS	\$ 18,500			\$ 18,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 28,500	\$ 18,500
MORTON		\$ 32,000		\$ 32,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 42,000	\$ 25,000
NEMAHA		\$ 27,000	\$ 5,400	\$ 32,400	\$ 10,000	\$ 42,400	\$ 25,000
NEOSHO	\$ 16,750			\$ 16,750	\$ 10,000	\$ 26,750	\$ 16,750
NESS	\$ 18,000			\$ 18,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 28,000	\$ 18,000
NORTON	\$ 10,000			\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 10,000
OSAGE	\$ 28,000			\$ 28,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 38,000	\$ 25,000
OSBORNE		\$ 14,000		\$ 14,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 24,000	\$ 14,000
OTTAWA	\$ 17,000			\$ 17,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 27,000	\$ 17,000
PAWNEE	\$ 10,000			\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 10,000
PHILLIPS	\$ 14,000			\$ 14,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 24,000	\$ 14,000
POTTAWATOMIE	\$ 10,000	\$ 55,000		\$ 65,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 75,000	\$ 25,000
PRATT	\$ 13,000			\$ 13,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 23,000	\$ 13,000
RAWLINS	\$ 15,000			\$ 15,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 15,000
RENO	\$ 39,000			\$ 39,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 49,000	\$ 25,000
REPUBLIC	\$ 33,000			\$ 33,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 43,000	\$ 25,000
RICE	\$ 29,000			\$ 29,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 39,000	\$ 25,000
RILEY	\$ 66,086			\$ 66,086	\$ 10,000	\$ 76,086	\$ 25,000
ROOKS	\$ 20,000			\$ 20,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 20,000
RUSH	\$ 29,000			\$ 29,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 39,000	\$ 25,000
RUSSELL	\$ 10,000	\$ 15,000		\$ 25,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 25,000
SALINE	\$ 19,549			\$ 19,549	\$ 10,000	\$ 29,549	\$ 19,549
SCOTT	\$ 21,500	\$ 12,500		\$ 34,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 44,000	\$ 25,000
SEDGWICK	\$ 67,007			\$ 67,007	\$ 10,000	\$ 77,007	\$ 25,000
SEWARD	\$ 49,064			\$ 49,064	\$ 10,000	\$ 59,064	\$ 25,000
SHAWNEE	\$ 27,000			\$ 27,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 37,000	\$ 25,000
SHERIDAN	\$ 11,000			\$ 11,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 21,000	\$ 11,000
SHERMAN	\$ 22,000			\$ 22,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 32,000	\$ 22,000
SMITH	\$ 15,000			\$ 15,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 15,000
STAFFORD	\$ 12,500			\$ 12,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 22,500	\$ 12,500
STANTON	\$ 29,000			\$ 29,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 39,000	\$ 25,000
STEVENS	\$ 32,020			\$ 32,020	\$ 10,000	\$ 42,020	\$ 25,000
SUMNER		\$ 22,341		\$ 22,341	\$ 10,000	\$ 32,341	\$ 22,341
THOMAS	\$ 47,500			\$ 47,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 57,500	\$ 25,000
TREGO	\$ 10,000			\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 10,000
WABAUNSEE	\$ 25,000			\$ 25,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 25,000
WALLACE	\$ 14,000			\$ 14,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 24,000	\$ 14,000
WASHINGTON	\$ 17,500			\$ 17,500	\$ 10,000	\$ 27,500	\$ 17,500
WICHITA	\$ 18,000			\$ 18,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 28,000	\$ 18,000
WILSON	\$ 19,290			\$ 19,290	\$ 10,000	\$ 29,290	\$ 19,290
WOODSON	\$ 17,000			\$ 17,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 27,000	\$ 17,000
WYANDOTTE		\$ 59,974		\$ 59,974	\$ 10,000	\$ 69,974	\$ 25,000
TOTALS	\$ 2,187,909	\$ 594,552	\$ 57,084	\$2,839,545	\$ 1,050,000	\$ 3,889,545	\$ 2,138,154

3-4

Senate Committee on Agriculture
By Connie E. Richmeier
Finney County Conservation District Manager
Testimony – SB 60
January 16, 2007

Chairman Taddiken and members of the committee, I am Connie Richmeier, District Manager of the Finney County Conservation District. I also serve as a Representative of the Kansas Association of Conservation District Employees Organization and Treasurer of the National Conservation District Employees Association.

I am testifying in favor of SB 60 and to ask for your support. But first, let me give you a brief background of the Conservation Districts.

Conservation Districts were established in the 1930's when Congress, in response to national concerns over mounting erosion, floods and the sky-blackening dust storms that sweep across the country enacted the Soil Conservation Act of 1935.

The Act stated for the first time a national policy to provide a permanent program for the control and prevention of soil erosion. To encourage local participation in programs, President Roosevelt sent all state governors A Standard State Soil Conservation District Law, with the recommendation to enact legislation along these lines. By 1938, 27 States enacted legislation including Kansas.

In the 1950's & 1960's state laws were modified to allow Districts to meet emerging resource needs. This increase in responsibility and authority caused District officials to assume a greater leadership role in resource use and development in their communities.

Each of the 105 Conservation Districts in Kansas carry out programs for the use and development of soil, water and related natural resources. Conservation Districts are resource management agencies, coordinating and implementing resources and environmental programs at the local level in cooperation with federal and state agencies. Each District has a governing body made up of local public elected officials who share their talents, experience and knowledge of community needs and resources to guide districts in setting policies, goals and priorities for carrying out resource programs.

Senate Agriculture Committee
1-16-07
Attachment 4

They work with land managers, local government agencies and other local interested organizations in addressing a broad spectrum of resource concerns, erosion control, flood prevention, water conservation and use, wetlands, ground water, water quality and quantity, non-point source pollution, forest land protection, wildlife, recreation, waste water management and community development. Such work varies according to the resource needs of each district.

Conservation Districts also administer conservation educational programs for students, and adults, addressing topics on conservation of natural resources in rural and urban areas.

You may even say that the Conservation Districts bridge the gap between Federal, State and Local conservation efforts.

Conservation Districts have been successful in working with groups of motivated people in addressing local resource needs for the future. By increasing Conservation District funding, our work can continue. Conservation Districts realize that we only have this moment to conserve our natural resources for they are non-renewable and will be needed for generations to come. A second chance to conserve our natural resources is a luxury that we do not have.

In closing, remember success is planning today for tomorrow. Not only do we have this moment to conserve but we have this moment to plan a successful future of our natural resources for future generations.

Thank you for your support for SB 60 and I will be glad to answer any questions you may have.

Connie Richmeier, District Manager
Finney County Conservation District
2106 E. Spruce Street
Garden City, Kansas 67846



FRANKLIN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

107 East 23rd, Suite 2

Ottawa, Kansas 66067-9536

Phone 785/242-1109

Your Conservation Partner Since 1941

**Senate Committee on Agriculture
by
Keri Harris
District Manager
Franklin County Conservation District**

January 16, 2007

Chairman Taddiken and members of the committee, I am Keri Harris, District Manager for the Franklin County Conservation District. I have served as the District Manager for the Board of Supervisors of the Franklin County Conservation District since April 2001. I am here to give testimony on SB60, which proposes an increase to the amount of state funding received by county conservation districts.

The Franklin County Conservation District was formed in 1941. During the last 66 years, we have reached countless landowners and agriculture producers with the message of conservation while building a strong partnership with our local government and partnering agencies. We are the people the officials and the residents come to for answers about natural resource issues. Since 1941 we have also provided assistance with the implementation of effective conservation practices through our various programs including youth and public education, state funded cost share programs, grant programs for additional cost share related to water quality improvement and many other programs. All of these programs are vital to the continuation of conservation of the natural resources in Kansas.

Kansas is fortunate to have a conservation voice with a strong presence in every county. Through this statewide network the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts and the State Conservation Commission are able to effectively reach landowners "locally" with their conservation message. While the dedication to conservation is strong, the funding to support it is not always as available in one county as it is in the next. An increase in State Aid to Conservation Districts would mean different opportunities for every county. To some county conservation district the increase in funding would mean the assurance of the continuation of services. Other counties may utilize portions of the additional funding to purchase updated equipment and office supplies to increase the efficiency of program implementation. Many counties may use the additional funds to expand upon the programs they already provide such as building a bigger and better community outreach programs through their information and education program. While at the same time an increase in funding would allow some counties to hire additional administrative and technical staff to assist with rising demand for program delivery.

*Senate Agriculture Committee
1-16-07
Attachment 5*

District supervisors volunteer their time to govern each county conservation district. As the District Manager I am in the office each day as the boards' representative. For many landowners in Franklin County I am the first contact they have with conservation. From this position, I can testify as to how important it is to all county conservation districts and to the residents we serve that we receive this increase in state aid.

Everyday landowners come through our office doors to ask questions about water quality; look for assistance with conservation; inquire about a cost share program; rent equipment to implement conservation practices; order grass seed to improve wildlife habitats; plus countless others. These are the requests that I, and district employees in 104 other counties, deal with everyday. Without this increase in funding many county conservation districts may be faced with reducing staff and services, or even closing the doors completely leaving the landowners with no one to turn to for assistance with conservation.

The work we do as conservation employees is not always easy, but at the end of the day I know we truly are making a difference in the quality of life for all Kansans. It is with that dedication to conservation, agriculture and all natural resources that I would respectfully ask for legislative support of the proposal in SB60 for FY2008.



January 16, 2007

**Dean of the College of Agriculture
Director of K-State Research and
Extension**

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Manhattan, KS 66506-4008
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<http://www.oznet.ksu.edu>

TO: Kansas Legislators

FR: Dr. Fred A. Cholick *Fred A. Cholick*
Dean, College of Agriculture
Director, K-State Research and Extension
Kansas State University

RE: Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops Annual Report

The Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops (KCSAAC) was established by Senate Bill 534 and passed by the 2000 Kansas Legislature out of concern for the future survival of family farms in Kansas. KCSAAC, a center within Kansas State University Research and Extension, works in partnership with state and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations and agricultural organizations to assist family farmers and ranchers to boost farm profitability, protect natural resources and enhance rural communities.

The Center is required to provide an annual report to the Senate and House Agriculture Committees. The 2006 annual KCSAAC report is enclosed and we will stand for any questions during our regular agriculture briefing. We have been able to leverage considerably more federal dollars with the Center's small state investment (about \$65,000/yr). I believe you will see that this Center is very successful in addressing sustainable agriculture issues and problems of Kansas family farms.

KCSAAC has established its reputation as a resource for producers, professionals and organizations with interest in diversifying agricultural production, increasing farm income through value added products, resource enhancement, and conserving natural resources.

As a result of partnerships and collaborations with state agencies such as the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Kansas Department of Commerce, non profit organizations such as the Kansas Rural Center, and agricultural organizations such as the Kansas Graziers Association and the Kansas Organic Producers, the center and its partners have identified needs, designed programs, and sought outside resources to benefit the citizens of Kansas.

Contact me or the KCSAAC Director or Coordinator if you have questions regarding the Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture and Alternative Crops.

KCSAAC Director, Pat Murphy, 785-532-5838 or jmurphy@ksu.edu

KCSAAC Coordinator, Jana Beckman, 785-532-1440 or beckman@ksu.edu

cc: Sue Peterson, Steven Graham

**Kansas State University
Agricultural Experiment
Station and Cooperative
Extension Service**

K-State Research and
Extension is an equal
opportunity provider and
employer.

**"Knowledge
for Life"**

*Senate Agriculture Committee
1-16-07
Attachment 6*

2006 Annual Report



Kansas Center
for Sustainable Agriculture
and Alternative Crops

Impacts of Community-Based Food System Efforts



- Thirty-five Kansas producers who participated in the small scale value added processing project have served as a resource or mentor for an additional 280 producers.
- Eight individuals that were mentored through the Growing Growers project are pursuing a career in production agriculture.
- Three new institutional organizations purchase locally grown food from producers local to their area.
- KSU Kramer Dining Hall sponsored a local foods event. At the event, students could choose a meal that was made with as many Kansas foods as were seasonably available.

Demarkus Coleman, a K-State freshman, prepares a fajita salad made with locally grown corn, tomatoes, peppers and watermelon at the K-State Kramer Dining Hall local foods event, August 2006.

Picture: Nancy Peterson [KSRE News]

Value Added Agriculture Resource Web Page Launched July 2006

Since July, 660 visitors have accessed the value added web page.

The url is <http://www.k-state.edu/valueadded>

History of the Center

KCSAAC was established by Senate Bill 534, passed by the 2000 Kansas Legislature out of concern for family farms in Kansas. KCSAAC, a center within K-State Research and Extension, works in partnership with state and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations and agricultural organizations to assist family farmers and ranchers to boost farm profitability, protect natural resources and enhance rural communities.

2006 Conferences and Workshops

2006 Healthy Foods, Healthy Farms Conference
(approximately 300 people attended)

Farmers Market Manager and Vendor Workshop
(91 people attended)

2006 Kansas Graziers Association Winter Grazing
Conference (103 people attended)

Two Farmer/Rancher Grant Writing Workshops in
November (38 people attended)

Farm to School Interactive Television Workshop
on June 22, 2006 (17 people attended)

2007 Conferences and Workshops

Kansas Graziers Association Winter Grazing
Conference - January 20, 2007

The Well Being of Rural Kansas: Paths to Healthy
People, Healthy Environment and Healthy
Economies Conference - February 17-18, 2007

Farmers Market Manager and Vendor Workshop
on February 5, 2007

*The Center collaborates and facilitates with partners
to develop multidisciplinary projects and activities
directed towards research and outreach needs
expressed by Kansas producers and other
stakeholders.*

Pat Murphy, Director

Jana Beckman, Coordinator

3029 Throckmorton Hall, Manhattan KS, 66506

Phone: 785-532-1440 email: beckman@ksu.edu or jmurphy@ksu.edu

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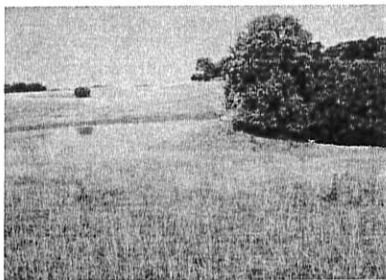
2006 Annual Report



Kansas Center
for Sustainable Agriculture
and Alternative Crops

Impacts of Organic Production System Efforts

- Conducted a needs survey. Organic growers identified *regionally specific* food source information related to organic production, processing and marketing.
- Kansas collaborated with Nebraska, South Dakota and North Dakota to submit a grant targeting organic production methods in the Great Plains region. The grant, "Training for Organic Farming and Ranching in the Great Plains" was awarded and will begin in 2007.



Outreach on alternative water sources, extended season grazing and multi-species grazing has been done collaboratively with the Kansas Rural Center and the Kansas Graziers Association.

Picture:
Clint Blaes [2006 Kansas SARE Intern]

Impacts of Grazing/Livestock Systems Efforts

- Thirty Kansas Graziers Association members implemented multi-species grazing, 52 members extended their grazing season, and 42 members developed alternative water sources for livestock water.
- Two producer surveys were administered. The top four meeting topics requested by producers included grazing schools, developing a forage usage plan, drought management decisions and low stress animal handling.
- Producers indicate they are implementing more complex grazing systems in efforts to manage drought, lower risk and increase profitability.
- In response to the requests made by producers, a low animal stress handling workshop is scheduled for January 20, 2007 and the agenda for the 2007 Range School has been modified to address producer needs.

During the first 5 years of the Center's operation, \$375,000 of state funding has resulted in \$3.2 million dollars of grant funds.*

The projects funded in 2006 include:
2006 Kansas Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program
Training and Facilitation of Successful Farm Family Businesses and Markets
2006 Kansas SARE Professional Development Program
Training for Organic Farming and Ranching in the Great Plains

Role of the Center

The Center serves as a resource center for producers, organizations and agricultural professionals in search of information related to sustainable agriculture.

The Center receives an average of 50 to 60 requests for assistance each month.

50% of the calls are from extension, agency and non-profit organizations and educators, 40% of the calls are from producers or consumers and 10% of the calls are from businesses, educators, or the media

The most common requests involve farmers' market and labeling information, grant sources and grant writing resources, value-added processing, and livestock/grazing systems.

* approximate amounts