Grundy County Conservation Connection

October 2016 – December 2016 Volume 9 Issue 2

http://www.swcd.mo.gov/grundy

Women In Ag – Paradise In The Ozarks

The Ramada Inn Oasis is gorgeous and was a fun setting for this conference. Monday kicked off with vendors and a fun luau setting for individual or group pics. Ladies had the choice to attend Holistic Farming-Rotational Beef & Poultry, Young Living Essential Oils, Soil Health with Ray Archuleta, Organic Gardening/Pest Management, Electric Fencing with MFA and Harvest Finds – Tips and Treasurers for the Home. The banquet was a luau theme and many ladies came dressed for the occasion. Nick, Ruell and Abbey were the wonderful entertainment, singing old and new songs as well as playing various instruments. More entertainment was gained as beach balls came across the crowd and the ladies really got into passing them on. Following the banquet the Hospitality Room and Silent Auction were open giving everyone a chance to mingle, visit, place bids and make more friends.

Ladies loaded onto 4 motorcoaches on Tuesday, which caravanned to the Talbot Conservation Area. Ladies were able to load up on hay wagons and trailers and took a small tour of the area. It was then time to load back on the motorcoaches and the next travel landed the ladies at the Springfield Livestock Marketing Center for lunch and speaker. The final destination took the ladies to Baker Creek Heirloom Seed Company. This was an exciting adventure. Tours led the way to see the crops grown, saw a demonstration how to bag corn, watch the mechanics work to packet the seed and how orders are fulfilled. As well, ladies were able to see the restaurant and visit many small shops including an old-time mercantile, herbal apothecary, blacksmith shop, western jail and see the poultry & livestock too. Ladies then loaded back up to head back to the Ramada Oasis where some took the evening option to visit the Pythian Castle for a ghost tour. As always the hospitality room and silent auction were open for the ladies to enjoy rest of the evening.

Wednesday opened with the Impacts of Missouri Weather on Agriculture by the National Weather Service. It was fitting after ½ an hour or so multiple phones started going off with a flood warning for the area. This made the session a memorable one! Ladies then had free time to check out and ended with an amazing closing session with Ashley Reynolds with KY3. Ashley hit many topics of various scams and getting the word out. This was a very interactive session and was beneficial for the ladies to hear of these scams in order to become more aware and protect themselves from fraud.

The torch was passed to Central for the 2017 WIA State Conference. Sandy Stratman, Maries County, accepted the torch and briefly spoke to the ladies and announced the conference may be around Lake of the Ozarks area.

Thank you to the SW Planning Committee for a great conference and we look forward to 2017 in Central!!

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2016 State Women In Ag Conference Pics

2016 State Women In Ag Conference Pics

FSA News

Grundy County FSA Committee Election

Every eligible agricultural producer should participate in Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees elections - - whether you are a beginning or longtime producer, or whether you have a large or small operation - - because FSA county committees are your link with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Agricultural producers of legal voting age may be eligible to vote if they participate or cooperate in any FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm also may be eligible to vote.

Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in an FSA program may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee. Individuals may nominate themselves or others as a candidate. The 2016 Grundy County Committee election will be held in LAA-2. This includes townships Franklin, Lincoln, Trenton, and Jackson. To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign nomination form FSA-669A. The form includes a statement that the nominee agrees to serve if elected.

Ballots will be mailed to voters by Nov. 7, 2016, and must be returned to the FSA county office or postmarked by Dec. 5, 2016. Eligible voters must contact their local FSA county office before the final date if they did not receive a ballot. **Ballots will be counted on 12/08/2016 at 10:00am at the Grundy County Committee meeting.**

Election Period

June 15, 2016 – The nomination period begins. Request nomination forms from the local FSA county office or obtain online at www.fsa.usda.gov/elections.

Aug. 1, 2016 – Last day to file nomination forms at the local FSA county office.

Nov. 7, 2016 – Ballots mailed to eligible voters.

Dec. 5, 2016 – Last day to return voted ballots to the FSA county office.

Jan. 1, 2017 – Newly elected county committee members take office.

NW Envirothon Competition Set for November 3rd

The NW Regional Envirothon Competition is set for Thursday, November 3, 2016 at Crowder State Park in Trenton. Team Registration deadline is Friday, October 7th. Learn more about the Envirothon by calling Heather at 660-359-2006 ext. 101 or email heather.keith@swcd.mo.gov or visit http://swcd.mo.gov/grundy/Envirothon.htm

MDC News

Preparation is Part of the Prescription!

As land managers we are continuously making preparations. Rather its disking food plots, putting out trail cameras, exercising our dog prior to season, or tuning up the bow we are getting ready for the next season or management activity. However, one thing constantly getting pushed to the back burner is fall preparation for that dormant or spring prescribed burn. It happens every year, me included. We get sidetracked by the opening day of dove season or making last minute tree stand adjustments. We justify to ourselves, "It can wait. I am not burning for a while."

A Management Tool

Prescribed fire is perhaps one of the most beneficial land management practices. It improves wildlife habitat by setting back the succession rate of a field and controlling undesirable woody and herbaceous vegetation. A correctly timed burn will encourage beneficial seed producing plants and create bare ground for upland game. Many of our state's native ecosystems, such as prairies, savannas and glades developed under fire.

Native prairie

Firebreak Installation

Before conducting the burn firebreaks should be installed well in advance. Fall is the optimal time to put in firebreaks. The best type of fire line is a bare-soil firebreak. A heavy disk, plow or 3 point tractor mounted tiller are good implements for installing these types of firebreaks. A minimum of 60% bare mineral soil needs to be exposed, 100% is better. This may require multiple passes. Unclean firebreaks, with dead grass interspersed through the tilled soil can allow the fire to run across your firebreak. A hard lesson learned. I know!

Properly installed disked firebreak

It may be necessary to first close mow and then spray the grass with chemical to kill it. This will make tillage easier if the sod is very thick. Areas that are highly erodible, such as waterways or steep slopes should be close mowed in the fall and then re-mowed in early March to create a green firebreak. Firebreaks can be seeded with winter wheat and red clover which will provide a great winter food source for wildlife.

The width of the firebreak is not nearly as important as quality of construction, but there is a basic rule for how wide a firebreak should be. A firebreak needs to be two times the height of the adjacent vegetation, again this in not the place to skimp. The saying, "More is better," definitely applies. On a final note don't get too hung up on the mechanics. If you have a 10 foot disk and your firebreak only needs to be 6 foot then the firebreak is 10 foot. On the flip side of the coin, if you have a 6 foot disk and need an 8 foot firebreak take the time to make the extra pass.

MDC News

The "Others"

There are several other considerations that come into play when planning for your prescribed burn. If there are power poles or power lines present mow down the fuel load around these areas. A creosote power pole burns quite nicely and is rather difficult to extinguish! Experience can be a cruel teacher at times! High voltage power lines can discharge electricity to the ground through the carbon particles in the smoke. Decreasing the fuel load or excluding these areas from the burn unit altogether can decrease personnel hazard or actual damage to the power line from the heat. The same can be said for close mowing around electric transformer boxes and telephone pedestals.

You may want to install a high mowed heat intensity reduction line against your tilled line. This decreased fuel load will not put off as much heat as the firing crew works along the line. They will thank you for your thoughtfulness. An intensity reduction line is mandatory though for warm season grass fields.

Do you have a burn plane? A burn plan is a useful tool that can provide guidance on the best way to orchestrate prescribed fire. An MDC, Private Land Conservationist (PLC) or Pheasant Forever Farm Bill biologist can assist you in writing a burn plan. Similar to firebreak construction this should be done well in advance of the day you plan to burn. Requesting a burn plan a few days before you plan to burn may not be a practical time frame for the planner. It is important to remember that a prescribed burn plan is only a tool. It does not release the landowner for liability associated with prescribed burning.

Final Thoughts

The use of prescribed fire should never be taken for granted and the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) does not condone indiscriminant use of fire on the landscape. Landowners who use burning as a land management tool should have clear objectives and participated in an MDC sponsored prescribed burn workshop to learn how to safely and properly use prescribed fire. If you are interested in prescribed burning, but apprehensive about conducting the burn yourself professional contractors are available for hire. A list can be obtained from your PLC or soil and water district.

There is no greater sense of accomplishment than to execute a successful prescribed burn. Proper planning and preparation is the key!

MDC News

Native Thistles versus Exotic Thistles

<u>Not ALL thistles are bad</u>! Native thistles are very important nectar and food plants for pollinators. Thistles provide nectar for Monarch butterflies on their long fall migration. Goldfinches wait to nest until the first thistles bloom, and line their nests with the soft down. However, 3 exotic invasive thistles are noxious weeds and should be controlled. **Check before you spray! The leaves of exotics are typically green on both sides**, while **leaves of natives usually have whitened wooly undersides**. Exotic thistles also tend to have heavily branched stems and more numerous flower heads per stem.

Exotic invasive Musk Thistle (*Carduus nutans*)

Biennial. Very prickly. Leaves not hairy. Leaves same color both sides. Blooms June-July.

Exotic invasive Bull Thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*)

Biennial. Very prickly. Blooms June - Sept.

Leaves green underneath

Exotic invasive Canada Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*)

Perennial. Not common in MO. Leaves are variable: best determined by clusters of smaller flowers and creeping root system (versus tap roots in natives). Blooms June-Oct

SF 2016

Native Field Thistle (*Cirsium discolor*)

"Weediest" of the natives and fairly prickly. Found in fields and roadsides. Biennial or short –lived perennial that needs disturbed soil to germinate. Does not spread by creeping roots. Blooms July-Oct

Leaves whitened underneath

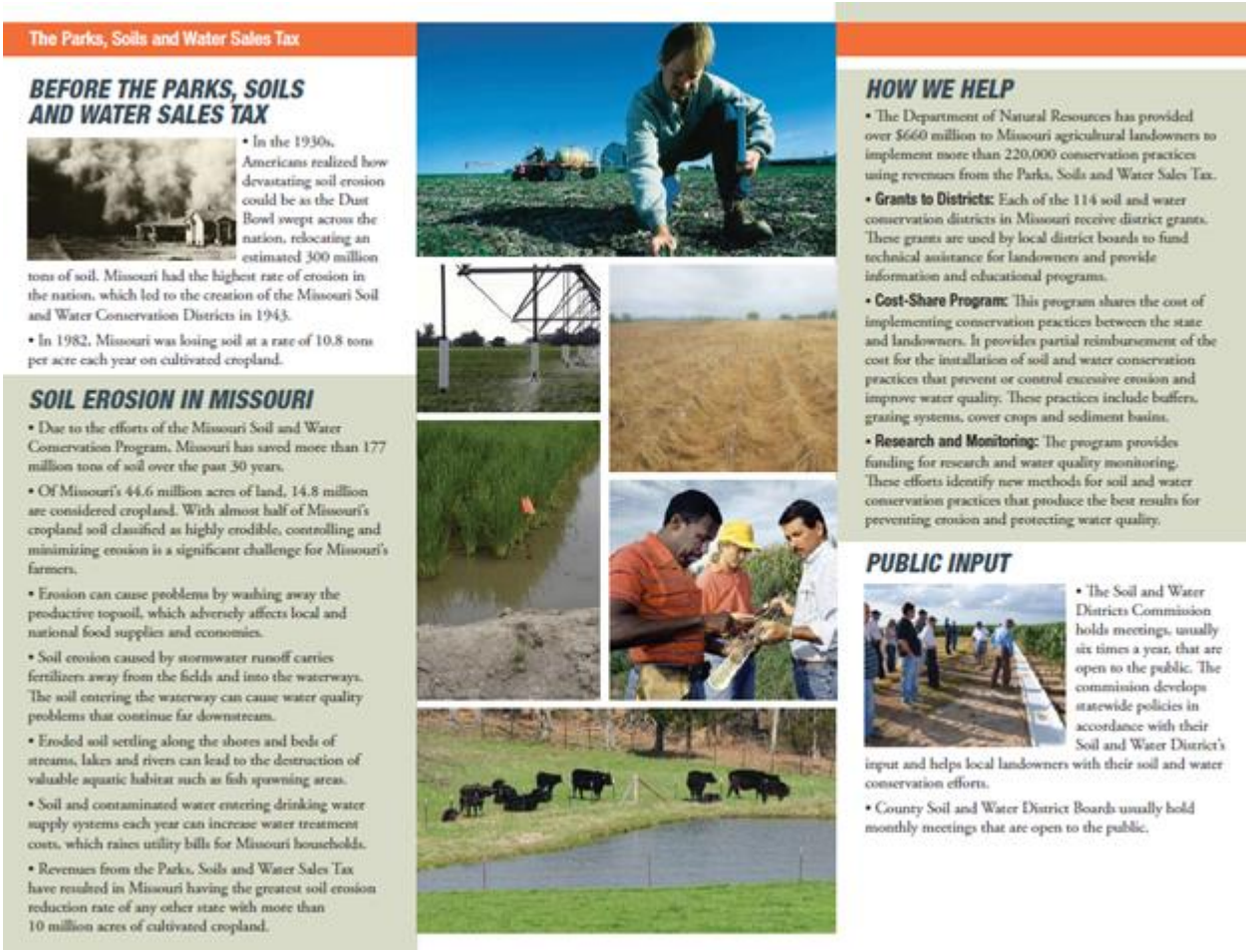
Native Tall Thistle (*Cirsium altissimum*)

Typically in woods, less common in fields. Not very prickly. Blooms July-Oct.

Native Carolina Thistle (*Cirsium carolinianum*)

Biennial or short-lived perennial. Found in open woodlands. Very unlikely in fields. Narrow stems and leaves; hardly prickly. Blooms May-June.

The Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax



The Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax

BEFORE THE PARKS, SOILS AND WATER SALES TAX

• In the 1930s, Americans realized how devastating soil erosion could be as the Dust Bowl swept across the nation, relocating an estimated 300 million tons of soil. Missouri had the highest rate of erosion in the nation, which led to the creation of the Missouri Soil and Water Conservation Districts in 1943.

• In 1982, Missouri was losing soil at a rate of 10.8 tons per acre each year on cultivated cropland.

SOIL EROSION IN MISSOURI

• Due to the efforts of the Missouri Soil and Water Conservation Program, Missouri has saved more than 177 million tons of soil over the past 30 years.

• Of Missouri's 44.6 million acres of land, 14.8 million are considered cropland. With almost half of Missouri's cropland soil classified as highly erodible, controlling and minimizing erosion is a significant challenge for Missouri's farmers.

• Erosion can cause problems by washing away the productive topsoil, which adversely affects local and national food supplies and economies.

• Soil erosion caused by stormwater runoff carries fertilizers away from the fields and into the waterways. The soil entering the waterway can cause water quality problems that continue far downstream.

• Eroded soil settling along the shores and beds of streams, lakes and rivers can lead to the destruction of valuable aquatic habitat such as fish spawning areas.

• Soil and contaminated water entering drinking water supply systems each year can increase water treatment costs, which raises utility bills for Missouri households.

• Revenues from the Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax have resulted in Missouri having the greatest soil erosion reduction rate of any other state with more than 10 million acres of cultivated cropland.

HOW WE HELP

• The Department of Natural Resources has provided over $660 million to Missouri agricultural landowners to implement more than 220,000 conservation practices using revenues from the Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax.

• **Grants to Districts:** Each of the 114 soil and water conservation districts in Missouri receive district grants. These grants are used by local district boards to fund technical assistance for landowners and provide information and educational programs.

• **Cost-Share Program:** This program shares the cost of implementing conservation practices between the state and landowners. It provides partial reimbursement of the cost for the installation of soil and water conservation practices that prevent or control excessive erosion and improve water quality. These practices include buffers, grazing systems, cover crops and sediment basins.

• **Research and Monitoring:** The program provides funding for research and water quality monitoring. These efforts identify new methods for soil and water conservation practices that produce the best results for preventing erosion and protecting water quality.

PUBLIC INPUT

• The Soil and Water Districts Commission holds meetings, usually six times a year, that are open to the public. The commission develops statewide policies in accordance with their Soil and Water District's input and helps local landowners with their soil and water conservation efforts.

• County Soil and Water District Boards usually hold monthly meetings that are open to the public.

Find out more about The Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax at http://dnr.mo.gov/env/swcp/ or http://swcd.mo.gov/grundy/assistance.htm

Videos can be viewed at:

The Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cv5aLxTzqTM&annotation_id=55ffc06e-0000-2a72-b5b3-94eb2c085910&a

Working For You: The Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0cm_XzpulA

NRCS News

News

United States Department of Agriculture: Natural Resources Conservation Service
Contact: Curt McDaniel, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs
Phone: 573-876-0909
Date: September 6, 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NRCS Announces November 18 Application Deadline for Financial Assistance
COLUMBIA, MO – The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announced November 18 as the first cut-off date to apply for fiscal year 2017 funds through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

"EQIP provides a wide range of opportunities to help Missouri farmers, ranchers, and landowners improve the quality of natural resources on their land," State Conservationist J.R. Flores said. "An extensive variety of problems can be solved through EQIP, and I encourage our customers to visit their local NRCS field offices to explore how we can assist them."

EQIP allows farmers, ranchers, forestland managers and landowners to conserve natural resources by making available financial assistance to improve soil, water, air, plants, animals and related resources.

General EQIP provides opportunities for financial assistance statewide to applicants who have natural resource problems on their land, including concerns associated with crops, livestock, forest and wildlife. Applicants can sign-up for traditional soil and water conservation practices as well as newer practices aimed at mitigating climate change and increasing habitat for the Monarch Butterfly.

Soil health remains a priority. Along with helping row crop farmers increase organic matter and water-holding capacity, dedicated funding will be available for farmers and ranchers to incorporate pasture practices that improve soil health through greater diversity and better grazing management. Funding will also be available to address resource concerns through Agroforestry.

The November 18 application deadline also applies to the following initiatives:

- On-Farm Energy Initiative - provides financial assistance, statewide, for farmers and ranchers to identify ways to conserve energy on their farms through on-farm energy audits, and financial assistance to implement recommendations identified in the energy audits.
- Seasonal High Tunnel Initiative - provides financial assistance, statewide, for farmers to construct seasonal high tunnels, which extend the growing seasonal for high-value crops in an environmentally safe manner.
- Organic Initiative - provides financial assistance, statewide, for farmers to install conservation measures on agricultural operations related to organic production.
- Ozark Highlands Restoration Partnership - provides financial assistance to help landowners improve the health and resiliency of forest ecosystems where Mark Twain National Forest and private lands meet in southern Missouri. Forest landowners in 27 Missouri counties are eligible to apply for funds to develop and implement forest management plans.
- Monarch Butterfly Habitat Development Project – provides financial assistance to help landowners establish Milkweed and other plants critical to the iconic Monarch Butterfly.

- Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative – provides financial assistance focusing on limiting nutrient and sediment movement occurring on land in the priority watershed areas. The seven Missouri MRBI watersheds are: James Bayou – St. John's Diversion Ditch and Mud Ditch (Mississippi and New Madrid Counties); Upper Buffalo Creek Ditch (Dunklin County); Bear Creek – West Yellow Creek (Linn County); Peno Creek and Spencer Creek (Ralls and Pike counties); Sugar Creek and Mission Creek – Missouri River (Buchanan and Platte counties); North River – (Marion, Ralls, Monroe and Shelby counties); Profits Creek – (Osage, Cole, Maries and Miller counties).
- National Water Quality Initiative – will provide financial and technical assistance to help farmers and ranchers in three watersheds install conservation practices that manage nutrients, pathogens and sediments. The watersheds include: Upper Troublesome Creek (Knox and Lewis counties), Givins Branch – Niangua River (Webster and Dallas counties) and Basin Fork (Pettis and Johnson counties).

Five Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) projects will be available in fiscal year 2017. Local partners were awarded RCPP funds to deliver conservation projects in specific regions across the state. The Missouri projects included in this announcement are:

- Cover Crops for Soil Health and Water Quality, in partnership with the Missouri Department of Agriculture;
- Our Missouri Waters, in partnership with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources;
- Regional Grassland Bird and Grazing Land Enhancement Initiative, in partnership with the Missouri Department of Conservation;
- Restoring Glade and Woodland Communities for Threatened Species in the Ozarks of Southeast Missouri, in partnership with the Missouri Department of Conservation;
- Northwest Missouri Urban and Rural Farmers United for Conservation, in partnership with the Jackson County Soil and Water Conservation District

NRCS accepts applications for all of its programs on a continuous basis, but applications must be filed for these programs by November 18 to be eligible for the next round of funding. Farmers can submit applications at local NRCS offices. NRCS also offers free technical assistance to all Missouri residents.

For more information about NRCS programs and assistance, visit http://www.mo.nrcs.usda.gov or contact the NRCS office serving your county. NRCS employees in county offices can provide more information about how to apply for benefits offered by NRCS.

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Mission Statement

The purpose of the Grundy County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is to construct and carry out a complete soil and water conservation program on all lands within Grundy County, Missouri. The district supervisors will work with all individuals, organizations and agencies interested in saving, maintaining and improving soil and water resources within the district.

Non-Discrimination Statement

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers. If you believe you experienced discrimination when obtaining services from USDA, participating in a USDA program, or participating in a program that receives financial assistance from USDA, you may file a complaint with USDA. Information about how to file a discrimination complaint is available from the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights. USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex (including gender identity and expression), marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) To file a complaint of discrimination, complete, sign and mail a program discrimination complaint form, available at any USDA office location or online at www.ascr.usda.gov, or write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (voice) to obtain additional information, the appropriate office or to request documents. Individuals who are dear, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD)."

2016 Upcoming Events

Holiday Closings

October

10th – Columbus Day

November

11th – Veteran's Day

24th – Thanksgiving Day

December

26th – Christmas Day Observed

EVENTS

October 20th
Northwest Women In Ag Night, Barton Campus
Trenton, Mo

November 3rd
NW Regional Envirothon
Crowder State Park
Trenton, Mo

November 28th -30th
Training Conference
Tan-Tar-A Resort

SWCD Board Meetings

October 17th – 9:00am

November 21st – 9:00am

December 12th – TBA

Board Meetings are held at the USDA Service Center
3415 Oklahoma Avenue

All meetings are open to the public with the exception of executive sessions. If you wish to be on the agenda please notify the District

conserving natural resources for our future

Grundy County SWCD
3415 Oklahoma Avenue
Trenton, Mo 64683

Happy Holidays to you from the Staff!

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