



# SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT OF PERRY COUNTY

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**Meetings the First  
Monday Night  
of Each Month**

1003 North Main

**547-4077**

**Extension 3**



OUR SOIL ★ OUR STRENGTH

## NEWSLETTER

Perryville, MO 63775

January 2013

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### DISTRICT STAFF

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*Helping People Help the Land*

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

For information on programs, sign-up deadlines and more, check out the  
Perry SWCD Website at <http://www.swcd.mo.gov/perry/index.html> and the Missouri NRCS Website at <http://www.mo.nrcs.usda.gov/>

## ATTENTION: THE COST-SHARE SIGN-UP

The Perry County Soil and Water Conservation District will be having their cost-share sign-up from February 1 - 28, 2013. This sign-up will be for practices that landowners wish to complete after July 1, 2013. There will be no changes this year in the policy. Just remember that at the time of sign-up you will need to pick the conservation concern you would like to do. There are three choices; Sensitive Areas, Sheet and Rill/Gully Erosion and Drainage Water Management (see attached article for information on these three choices.)

Landowners can come into the office anytime during business hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m) during the month of February. At this time you will draw a number at random from the hat. Whatever that number is will be the number you are on the list. For example, if you draw number "30" then you will be listed as that. If you draw "1" then you will be the first to get your practices completed. We will work our way down the list until all funds have been exhausted. You must be an owner or operator to draw a number.

Landowners are still not eligible to receive cost-share in any two consecutive years. For example, landowners that received a cost-share payment this fiscal year (July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013) will not be eligible to receive cost-share in fiscal year 2014. These landowners will be eligible again in fiscal year 2015. A landowner will be able to receive up to \$8,500.00 for fiscal year 2014.

A new policy was started last year that to qualify for new vertical drain cost-share assistance on a farm, landowners will need to have all previously installed vertical drains adequately maintained on the tract they are signing up for. Should vertical drains be found not being maintained, that tract number will not get cost-share funds for that fiscal year. If you are planning on drawing a number for vertical drains, double check your existing pipes for maintenance and make repairs, as needed, so you will qualify for cost-share funds.

Be sure to mark your calendar to sign-up anytime between February 1-28. If you have the need for any practices, this year may be the year to get it completed. Remember, erosion control does not cost - it pays. If you have any questions, just call 547-4077 (ext 3) or come by the office at 1003 North Main in Perryville.

## ANNUAL MEETING

The Perry SWCD will have an annual meeting again this year. The meeting is scheduled for April 4th at the American Legion Hall. An election for Supervisors will be held in conjunction with the meeting. Watch the next newsletter for more information!

## **INFORMATION ON COST-SHARE SIGN-UP**

There will be three (3) conservation concerns that you can sign-up for cost-share in FY2014:

The first one is Sheet and Rill/Gully Erosion. This includes terraces, critical area treatment, diversions, terraces, ponds, structures and waterways.

The second one is Sensitive Areas. This includes the regular vertical drain practice and sinkhole treatment in grazed pastures. This practice allows landowners to construct an exclusion fence around sinkholes to prevent cattle from becoming trapped in the bottom of a sinkhole while still providing shade. This practice does not have an erosion calculation so sinkholes that do not have enough erosion to qualify for a vertical drain will qualify for sinkhole treatment. The landowner will receive a one-time, out of production incentive payment of \$300/acre with a maximum of \$1200 for 4 acres. In addition, cost-share funds are used to cover 75% of the state average cost for either 4 strands of barb wire or 2 strands of high tensile fencing. This practice will help landowners protect their investments by preventing potential loss of cattle, reducing soil erosion caused by cattle climbing in and around the sinkhole and improving groundwater quality by preventing bacterial, nutrient and sediment contaminants from reaching ground water and drinking water sources.

The third practice is Drainage Water Management. Benefits are 1) improved drainage (timelier planting in the spring); 2) holding existing water or adding water for irrigation during the growing season and; 3) improved nutrient utilization. The primary purpose is not drainage, but improved nutrient uptake and, therefore, improved water quality. Main practice details are that the field must have cropping history 3 out of last 5 years. Land will have to be graded and no cost-share is provided for grading. Tiles (4" laterals, 6-8" mains) are usually installed at 30' spacing and a water control box is required to regulate the water table. Tiling is capped at \$262.50/acre, which is approximately ½ of the cost of tiling. The local district cost-share cap of \$8,500 per landowner every other year limits practice to 30 acres of tiling. Nutrient and Pest Management is required for two years following tiling installation.

Feel free to call or come by the office if you have any questions concerning these practices.

## **TIMBER SALE WORKSHOP**

Missouri Department of Conservation will be having a timber sale workshop on February 12<sup>th</sup> 2013 from 6:30pm to 8:30pm at the University of Missouri Extension office. The extension office is located in the county administration building on N. Main Street. The workshop will cover all aspects of having a timber sale for Missouri landowners.

## **FOREST MANAGEMENT FIELD DAY**

Missouri Department of Conservation will be hosting a forest management field day at Seventysix Conservation Area. It will be held on March 2, 2013 from 9:00am to 1:00pm. Seventysix is located at the end of Hwy D in eastern Perry County. Lunch will be provided. The field day will cover all aspects of forest management; timber sales, timber stand improvement, tree planting, prescribed burning. In case of bad weather, the field day will be moved to March 16<sup>th</sup>. Please RSVP if you are going to attend at 547-4537.

## **SOLUTIONS FOR COMMON CASH CROP PROBLEMS**

What were your grain crop issues this year? Was it too dry? Did you have herbicide resistant weeds or compaction problems? While most turn to the conventional methods of reacting to these issues, some are turning to cover crops.

When cover crops are planted immediately following the cash crop harvest, they reduce, and sometimes even eliminate, the effects of these common problems. Even if a cover crop does not look like a lot on top of the ground over winter, the roots are continuously working to improve your soil. They increase the tilth of the soil, allowing for better water infiltration (reducing the effects of drought conditions). They scavenge the residual nitrogen from your previous crop and make it available to your next grain crop. They keep your precious top soil in place, protecting it from eroding off your fields. They reduce winter and spring annual weeds by not allowing them their ideal, bare ground growing conditions. They can also provide late winter and early spring forage that would not otherwise be available.

Stop by the NRCS office for more information about cover crops and find out how you can get money to help plant them on your farm.

## **KARST-CAVES-GROTTO SCULPIN**

Just as in the Rock, Paper, Scissors game karst, caves, and Grotto Sculpins all go together. But the one thing that ties them together is WATER.

Water flows through crevices in the limestone and slowly dissolves it to form our sinkhole-cave formations. Over time this moving water formed the caves that provide the habitat for the cave dwelling fish, the Grotto Sculpin.

In most non-karst landscapes, water becomes groundwater through a slow infiltration that naturally cleans the water as it moves down into the groundwater. In karst landscapes this slow infiltration does not occur. Sinkholes provide a direct connection to groundwater. When water goes down into a sinkhole or vertical drain in a karst area, it is entering the groundwater! Once the water is in the cave, there is no filtration. Whatever contaminants are in the water when it enters the sinkhole, are also then present in the water in the caves. Therefore, all filtering and cleaning of the water needs to occur prior to its entering a sinkhole.

In the extreme karst areas of Perry County (areas with lots of sinkholes), all of the surface water (runoff from roads, crop and pasture fields, yards, buildings, etc) runs into sinkholes. So sediment, pesticides, nutrients (organic and inorganic), bacteria, petroleum products, etc, have direct access to our groundwater through sinkholes. Why do we care? Our drinking water, whether from a well or city water, comes from groundwater. As residents of Perry County, we need to do our part to help assure we have the cleanest drinking water possible and by improving our drinking water quality it will also benefit the Grotto Sculpin.

## **SHOW ME THE MONEY!**

Crop prices are such that one wants to farm every inch possible and fertilize for higher and higher yields. However, in doing so, previously grassed areas where water leaves the field have been eliminated. Due to the karst topography we have in Perry County, this causes our drinking water quality to be in danger.

What can you do to help improve water quality in Perry County?

- 1) Establish grass borders in waterways, next to road ditches, creeks, crop field edges, sinkholes and ponds. These areas are "not the best" yield producing areas of the field. Installing a 25-50 foot grass filter (CCRP payment of \$100+/acre) would most times remove less than an acre of "marginal" cropland from the field. Grass filters out sediment, nutrients and chemicals before they run off into creeks, ponds, and sinkholes (direct inlets to ground water supply).
- 2) Keep livestock out of creeks, ponds, and sinkholes.
- 3) Run soils tests according to realistic yield goals and apply only the recommended fertilizers required by the plant. This will decrease the amount of fertilizer runoff.
- 4) Keep cover on crop fields over winter. Use a growing root (cover crop) or at the least, crop residue, to protect soil from the erosion associated with bare soils during winter weather.
- 5) Apply herbicides and pesticides carefully, using setbacks from sensitive areas (creeks, ponds, sinkholes), especially where established grass borders exist. This reduces chemical runoff.

These are just a few things we can do to assure we are drinking clean water. Many of the above can be completed on your own. However, between the Perry County SWCD, NRCS and FSA offices, funding is available for most of the above mentioned practices. Please stop by the USDA Service Center to find out what you can do and how we can help you financially.

## **REMEMBER THE BDSP-31 PRACTICE**

Remember there is an incentive practice for continuing protection of sinkholes that have been stabilized through the district cost-share Sinkhole Improvement practice. This incentive is applicable to sinkholes on which the ten-year maintenance agreement has expired. The incentive practice will allow landowners to receive \$300.00 to maintain or re-establish a 25 feet minimum buffer surrounding the sinkhole. This practice will need to be maintained for another 10 year period. For more information call or come in the office.

**2 - GREAT PLAINS NO-TILL DRILL**

10 ft. - 7 ½ inch spacing

(will do soybeans, milo, wheat, alfalfa, clover, fescue, orchard grass)

**\$8.50 AN ACRE**

(\$100.00 Minimum Charge)

or

**7 FT. GREAT PLAINS NO-TILL DRILL**

with warm-season grass box

**\$8.50 AN ACRE**

(\$35.00 Minimum Charge)

**TAILGATE MULCHER**

Trailer mounted, ideal for yards, conservation practices and road cuts.

\$75.00 - ½ Day • \$100.00 - 1 Day

To schedule call Karen at  
Perry County Soil & Water Conservation District  
547-4077

**FOR SALE - FINN MULCHER/STRAW BLOWER**

Perry Soil and Water Conservation District will accept bids for a 1999 Finn Mulcher/Straw Blower. All bids must be turned in to the Perry SWCD by 4:00 pm on March 1, 2013. The Perry SWCD reserves the right to accept or refuse all bids. For more information, please contact the office at 300 South Kingshighway, Perryville, MO 63775 or by calling Karen at 573-547-4077, Ext. 3.

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