

SOIL AND WATER Resources

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Soil and Water Districts Commission Holds August Meeting at the Missouri State Fair in Sedalia

The Missouri Soil and Water Districts Commission met on Aug. 19 inside the Lowell Mohler Assembly Hall/ National Guard Armory at the Missouri State Fair in Sedalia.

A presentation was made to Dave Baker, who is retiring from the University of Missouri. "Because of you the partnership has broadened between the University and the department" said Missouri Department of Natural Resources director Sara Parker Pauley.

"I look at this as one of the most important things I do as an administrator because you can impact a lot of people in the state," said Baker. "We've had a lot of conversations about where this agency can go. There is no other state that can match what we have with the cooperative relationship between the Missouri Departments of Natural Resources, the Missouri Department of Agriculture and NRCS." Soil and Water Districts Commission chair Gary Vandiver said, "On behalf of the other commissioners, I can safely say we will miss having you here. You have been a friend and a mentor and that means a lot."



Dave Baker was recognized for his years of service to the citizens of Missouri. (l to r): Colleen Meredith, Dave Baker, Missouri Department of Natural Resources director Sara Parker Pauley and Soil and Water Districts Commission chair Gary Vandiver.
MoDNR photo by Van Beydler



Dave Baker reacts with laughter at a humorous poster presented by Colleen Meredith and Sara Parker Pauley.

MoDNR photo by Van Beydler



Dave Baker poster art.

MoDNR photo by Van Beydler

Director Pauley and Soil and Water Conservation Program director Colleen Meredith presented Baker with a plaque recognizing his service and a humorous poster featuring Baker and colleagues working with the commission.

Baker is well known for promoting farm safety and is a big NASCAR® fan.

Other agenda items affecting all soil and water conservation districts are:

- The commission agreed to support the Aug. 8, 2015 disaster declaration FEMA-4238-DR and assist with reconstruction of soil and water conservation practices currently under a maintenance agreement that were damaged from severe storms, tornadoes, straight-line winds and flooding during the period May 15 to July 27, 2015 in eligible counties designated in this declaration and subsequent related declarations.
- The commission heard an end of fiscal year budget update and the status of the new fiscal year budget.

The commissioners will attend the upcoming Aug. 24 through Aug. 28 area meetings to be held in Chillicothe, Dexter, Licking, Sedalia, Shelbina, Springfield, St. Joseph and Union. The area meetings will include the background and resulting recommendations from the subcommittees working on the Plan for the Future that will be included in the document to be submitted for public comment.

The subcommittees include:

- Program Delivery and Operations
- Current Conservation Practices
- Information and Education
- Emerging Issues

Kurt Boeckmann updated the commission about the status of the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) projects in Missouri. Contracts should be awarded after in-state funding becomes available from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The department plans to select different watersheds when applying for funding in the second sign up, which is anticipated this fall.

Dr. Randy Miles introduced Dr. Joshua Millspaugh, interim director of The MU School of Natural Resources, as Dr. Mark Ryan has retired. Dr. Miles is still the director of the Soil Health Assessment Center. As of Aug. 18, the center had received 174 samples related to the cover crops program, which started on July 1. Miles told the commission Phase I and Phase II construction of the lab is nearly complete. Phase III to connect the two buildings with a breezeway and developing the training room will be later this year.



Dr. Joshua Millspaugh

The next commission meeting is tentatively scheduled on Oct. 14 at the M. W. Boudreaux Memorial Visitors Center at Mark Twain Lake in northeast Missouri. For agendas and updates about the location and time of upcoming meetings visit the commission Web page at dnr.mo.gov/env/swcp/meetings.htm.

LiDAR Services Used to Stake a Terrace System

Elizabeth Cook of the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Tim Donze of Surdex Corporation recently gave a presentation to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources about the highly accurate, high-resolution elevation data known as LiDAR. Aerial LiDAR (light detection and ranging) is collected by airplane mounted lasers and provides extremely useful topographic data for natural resources management.

One of the examples of LiDAR was from a terrace project by a district technician in the Knox County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Annual National Association of Conservation Districts Poster Contest Deadline is Nov. 6

The annual National Association of Conservation Districts poster contest provides kindergarten through 12th grade students with an opportunity to share their thoughts about soil, water and related issues.

Judging for Missouri posters will take place the second week of November. Winners will be invited to attend the annual training conference to be held in December at Tan-Tar-A.

Area Meetings Held Across Missouri

Staff from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources' Soil and Water Conservation Program and Soil and Water Districts commissioners met with board members and staff from many Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) at the annual area meetings held Aug. 24 to 28.

The meetings were held at in conjunction with the area directors for the Missouri

Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MASWCD) in eight locations across the state; Chillicothe, Dexter, Licking, Sedalia, Shelbina, Springfield, St. Joseph and Union.

The soil and water districts commissioners updated attendees about several actions taken by the commission during the past year.

Agency partners including the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Missouri Department of Conservation, University of Missouri Soil Health and Assessment Center and Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts attended to provide an update about programs that interface with the Soil and Water Conservation Program.

The background and resulting recommendations from the subcommittees for the Plan for the Future were presented and discussed. A document based on those recommendations will be submitted for public comment. The outreach and education plan for the future subcommittee discussed methods to reach their primary audience - farmers, and also the public. The goal is to increase farmers understanding of the benefits derived from the Soil and Water Conservation Program to enable the most effective use of soil and water resources, and to increase the public's understanding of the economic, recreational, water quality and soil savings benefits of the program. The plan for the future program delivery and operations subcommittee is working on improvements in recruitment, retention and progression as their three main goals.

The department is engaged in an effort to enhance effectiveness and efficiency as a way of doing business; a way of being good stewards of tax payer dollars, of providing exceptional customer service, and of achieving its mission day in and day out looking for non-value-added, non-necessary steps in every day work.

Soil and Water Conservation Program Welcomes New District Coordinator Jake Wilson

Jake Wilson joined the Soil and Water Conservation Program as a district coordinator on Aug. 12. "I grew up in Tuscumbia, which is located along the Osage river in Miller county," said



Soil and water district commissioner H. Ralph Gaw welcomes the attendees at the area meeting held in Springfield.

MoDNR photo by Van Beydler

Jake. "I learned how important soil and water conservation is as I worked on poultry, swine and cattle farms and spent countless hours exploring the river in my teen years."

Jake received a Bachelor's degree from Missouri State University in 2005. He has done aquaculture research, taught high school science and agricultural extension work, among other things. "I am coming to this job after several years doing extension work with Lincoln University where I have also been pursuing a Master's degree."

"In 2009 my wife, Misty and I moved to Fortuna where my son Thomas and I are the 4th and 5th generations to live in the house where my father was raised. Our small family farm straddles the Moniteau and Morgan county lines. When I am not working, I spend as much time as I can with family and friends fishing and hunting. I also love experimenting with different types of food crops and have over 20 different types of fruits in addition to a large vegetable garden that I enjoy maintaining. The Soil and Water Conservation Program is the perfect home for me and I am looking forward to putting my education, experience and skills to work for you."



Jake Wilson with his son Thomas and wife Misty.



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