

## SOIL AND WATER Resources

December 2014

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### **Governor's Conference on Natural Resources held in Springfield**

The Governor's Conference on Natural Resources was held Nov. 12 and 13 in Springfield. Soil and Water Districts Commission Chair Gary Vandiver served on a special panel to talk about the costs and benefits of natural resources protection. The Soil and Water Districts Commission and Soil and Water Conservation Program integrates multiple state, local and federal resources to become a successful leveraging tool for voluntary conservation on agricultural land.

In addition to addressing soil erosion and water quality, the program is an economic stimulator for the agricultural communities in all 114 counties. Attendees were able to learn about the changes the program is making to prepare for the future and keep the momentum going for many years to come.

Kenny Brinker of Harrison Creek Farm LLC received the Governor's Award of Excellence for Agriculture (operation, farm, or other ag-related business or organization). Harrison Creek Farm LLC is a 2,800 sow farrow-to-finish operation owned by three Brinker families. The farm is approximately 3,500 acres in Callaway County and all hogs are processed in a member owned slaughter plant in St. Joseph, which markets directly to wholesalers and retailers.

The Brinker family continually looks for ways to improve their operations. Innovative barn design and the invention of a unique portable disinfection unit help ensure employee safety and productivity during cleaning and disinfection.

The Brinker's have worked hard to improve the land for future generations. They have worked with the local Soil and Water Conservation District and partner agencies to construct terraces and install waterways, including two ponds and an 8-acre lake to assist erosion control. In addition, they have implemented a no-till corn/soybean rotation and have used variable rate fertilization for many years, decreasing the risk for over application of nutrients.

Conservation of the land is not their only goal. They have also conducted a timber stand improvement program to allow tree species to thrive. Each year they plant wheat, clover, or grain crops to benefit local wildlife. They have increased quail and rabbit habitat on their property by planting beneficial grasses and other species along field edges. Congratulations to the Brinkers for your dedication and caring for Missouri's natural resources!



Gov. Nixon, Kenny Brinker and his son Cody Brinker and Missouri Department of Natural Resources director Sara Parker Pauley.

## Panel Discusses 30 Years of Parks, Soils and Water Tax Benefits at MASWCD Conference in December

A special panel discussed the history and benefits of the Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax at the Missouri Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts annual meeting held in December at Tan-Tar-A. Several of the panel participants were involved in the original initiative petition.

Don Wolf, former director of Missouri's Soil and Water Conservation Program, talked about the legislation that was created more than 30 years ago to address Missouri's high erosion rates.

Kathryn Braden, Taney County SWCD, said, "We've changed for the better in those years. It keeps our parks maintained for recreational areas and provides education for both rural and urban people to show the correlation between soil erosion and water quality."

Brad Powell, Bates County SWCD, said, "The Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax is a tool in a very big toolbox we have in Missouri."

Many more people shared their memories during the panel presentation. The panel presentation and others were filmed at the conference for a video being produced about the benefits Missouri has seen because of dedicated funding for soil and water conservation practices.



## St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve and Iron County Soil and Water Conservation Districts Hold 17th Annual Lady Landowners Tour

The St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve and Iron County Soil and Water Conservation Districts held its 17th annual Lady Landowners Tour on Oct. 30 with 165 attendees. The event took place at Bonne Terre's beautiful Stone Park, just 15 minutes north of Farmington in St. Francois County.

Attendees heard educational presentations including a look at 30 years of benefits from the Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax. Colleen Meredith, Missouri Department of Natural Resources Soil and Water Conservation Program (SWCP) Director, talked about how much improvement of the land has taken place since the dust bowl and spoke about the opportunities the program's cost-share practices can provide to landowners. Deanna Smith, SWCP district coordinator, talked about cover crops, which benefits soil health, decreases erosion and runoff, recycles nutrients, helps with weed suppression, soil biology, and more.

Attendees also enjoyed other speakers in the afternoon such as Katie Kammler, University Extension horticulture specialist and Ste. Genevieve county director east central region, who did a presentation about growing pumpkins.

The St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve and Iron SWCDs rotate as the host district. Next year the Lady Landowners Tour will be hosted by Iron County. Thanks to the planners of the 2014 tour - Wilma Carlyon, Sue Denninger and Terri Matthews.

## Soil and Water Conservation Program Realignment

On Dec. 1, 2014, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources realigned some of its programs to improve efficiency to better serve the public. The Soil and Water Conservation Program is now a part of the Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

The move also brings the 319 Nonpoint Source Program to the Soil and Water Conservation Program. The 319 program is voluntary and 319 grants have accomplished significant results in reducing nonpoint source pollution in Missouri. Many soil and water conservation districts have been sponsors for 319 grants.

## Missouri Beef Summit to be Held Jan. 5

Gov. Jay Nixon will convene a beef summit to discuss opportunities to maximize the potential of Missouri's cattle industry at 9 a.m. on Jan. 5, 2015, at the University of Missouri Reynolds Alumni Center in Columbia.

Topics at the summit will include the feasibility of building and operating a large-scale packing plant in Missouri and expanding the number of in-state feeding facilities. Construction and operation of new processing and feeding facilities could create thousands of jobs in cattle and livestock-related industries, helping revitalize the rural economy. Watch the summit live online at <http://stateofmo.adobeconnect.com/beef>.



District coordinator Deanna Smith visits with Madison County SWCD board chairman J.C. Shetley during a workshop break at the MASWCD conference.

## 2015 Missouri State Fair Theme Announced

Missouri State Fair Director Mark Wolfe has announced "Show Offs Welcome" as the theme for the 2015 Missouri State Fair. The theme fits with our state's 'show-me' motto.

The Missouri State Fair is the premier agriculture showcase in the state. The young men and women who participate in the Fair have devoted many hours to raising or growing their best. They've put in the work, and exhibiting at the State Fair is their chance to show off that work.

Wolfe also announced that attendance at the 2014 Fair, 361,496, helped to generate positive revenue earnings in several areas including the grandstand, carnival and campgrounds. The number of livestock entries increased, which also contributed to an overall positive experience.

Participation in livestock shows and competitive exhibits was also up this year with nearly every county in Missouri represented, including 4,300 Missouri 4-H and FFA youth.

Entries totaled nearly 31,000, a three percent increase over last year. Categories tracking upwards included goat, FFA, rabbit, agriculture and home economics.

Great weather, special events, diverse attractions and fantastic Fair food helped make

this year successful. Special celebrations and commemorative activities held on Opening Day, Military Appreciation Day, Governor's, Legislators' and Judges' Day and Youth in Agriculture (YIA) Day attracted diverse crowds.

The Fair also honored women involved in Missouri agriculture with free gate admission on Governor's, Legislators' and Judges' Day; helping set another record-high attendance of more than 31,000.

A new promotion was offered on the final Saturday of the Fair -- Celebrate Kids in Agriculture (YIA) Day. The day included free gate admission for kids 12 and younger, and the special contests and activities available created a memorable experience for families.

The next Missouri State Fair will be held Aug. 13 through 23, 2015 at the fairgrounds located in Sedalia.



## Franklin County Concrete Outlet Saves Soil

by Stephen Sparks - Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District

This fall, the Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District was contacted by landowner Marvin Ley who had a large erosion site between his crop and pasture fields. The erosion site had gullies with an average 12 foot top width and 3 foot bottom width that had occurred over the course of 10 to 20 years. District calculations showed a drainage area of 88 acres and the soil loss per year was losing approximately 25 tons of soil.

The district was able to survey and design a waterway 650 feet long with a 32 foot bottom width. A stable outlet was needed at the end of the waterway. With the large drainage area, the district designed a 10'x8'x4' concrete drop box with 12 foot wing walls.

The landowner was able to install both practices in September and received state cost-share for the construction, seeding and mulch of the waterway and for the construction of the concrete structure and the rock.



Construction of the outlet.



Concrete outlet and gravel.



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