

Our Mission:

To provide water quality education and funding for cost effective clean water projects that improve the North Fork Ninnescah Watershed which feeds Cheney Lake.

H2info

CHENEY LAKE WATERSHED, INC.

FALL 2007

Meet the Citizen's Management Committee - Allan Grilliot

Allan Grilliot grew up near Castleton next to Red Rock Creek just before it joins the North Fork Ninnescah. Little did Allan realize as he herded cattle in pastures along Red Rock Creek that some day he would serve on a committee of fellow farmers and ranchers whose mission it is to encourage their neighbors to implement Best Management Practices that keep the water in the streams clean.

Allan graduated from Kansas State University with a BS in Animal Science. After college Allan spent the next 2 years in Australia working on cattle ranches. The first year was spent on a purebred Angus cattle station (ranch) as part of an Agriculture exchange program where the grass was thick and lush. He stayed a sec-

ond year on his own and worked on a 10,000 head, 1-million acre station in a more arid region of Australia.

He serves on the CMC because he feels it's important to be informed on water quality issues and help those in his

community stay informed. Allan believes it's important that farmers and ranchers remember they are not the end user and it's important to work with the downstream user. In 2002 Allan completed the Kansas Environmental Leadership

Program to help him understand water issues on a statewide basis and to help those that are not involved with farming learn more about what farmers and ranchers are doing to help improve the environment.

Allan's service on the CMC since 1998 is appreciated and we look forward to more of Allan's leadership in the years ahead.



Allan Grilliot

Currently Allan is the Operation Manager at the Pratt Facility for MachineryLink, and lives with wife Stacie and son Bryson in a newly completed home on their farm several miles from the farm where Allan grew up. Allan has a busy work and family schedule but he finds time to serve on the Citizen's Management Committee (CMC) as he has for the past 9 years.

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Fall harvest a good time to plan conservation measures

Taken from Successful Farming – Fall 2006

David Shelton University of Nebraska Extension ag engineer



**Grassed
Waterway**

*“Buffers also
provide
excellent
habitat for
pheasants,
songbirds and
other
wildlife”.*

Fall harvest is an excellent time to scout and plan for conservation practices that can be installed or implemented to help reduce soil erosion and improve water quality.

These practices include grassed waterways, filter strips, field borders, windbreaks, no-till planting and/or decommissioning out-of-service wells.

The combine cab offers an excellent vantage point to note where channels have developed in the field from the concentration of runoff water. These rills generally develop in the same places each year -- they get filled in by spring tillage, re-develop during the growing season and get bounced over by the combine during harvest. Year after year the erosive cycle is repeated unless corrective measures are taken.

Consider installing grassed waterways in these areas. As the name indicates, a grassed waterway is a shaped or graded channel that is seeded to grass. This channel forms an area where water can flow down the slope in a controlled manner. Erosion is reduced because the velocity and energy of the flowing water is reduced by the grass stems, and the roots help hold the soil in place. Grassed waterways in a field can substantially lessen the possibility of equipment damage by eliminating gullies caused by runoff.

Conservation buffers, such as filter strips and riparian forest buffers, placed along the

edges of streams or other water bodies serve as a last line of defense for sediment and other pollutants that might enter the water. They are effective at trapping sediment and enhance the infiltration of runoff water. Buffers improve safety by keeping equipment away from the edge of the stream. Buffers also provide excellent habitat for pheasants, songbirds and other wildlife. When planted to trees, a buffer may provide income for future generations.

Grassed field borders can provide a convenient location for unloading combines into trucks or grain carts, loading planters or for turning around combines, planters and other equipment. Controlling field traffic in this manner can greatly reduce the likelihood of developing a compaction problem within the field. Field borders often can be used to eliminate crop rows that would otherwise be planted up-and-down hill, further reducing soil erosion. They also can provide wildlife habitat.

Windbreaks, shelterbelts and living snowfences are similar practices, where rows of trees and shrubs are planted to protect an area from wind and/or blowing snow. Living snowfences often are established along roads or lanes to control drifting snow; windbreaks/shelterbelts are usually planted to protect farmsteads, feedlots and other structures. Windbreaks can be effective in reducing

heating costs and improving livestock performance in the winter and they provide excellent wildlife habitat.

All of the practices mentioned here require a commitment of land and the planting of permanent vegetation (grasses, shrubs, trees).

No-till planting is a proven conservation practice that often just requires a change in management and some equipment adjustments. The first step in implementing a no-till system is to make sure that the residue from the harvested crop is uniformly distributed behind the combine by using a straw spreader or chopper to avoid leaving windrows or piles of residue that can interfere with the planting operation the next spring. A chaff spreader also may be needed for more uniform residue distribution, particularly when harvesting soybeans or small grains with a header greater than 20 feet wide. In the spring, planter adjustments may include tightening the down-pressure springs, adding extra weight and making sure that the furrow openers are sharp.

Out-of-service water wells, especially those that are old and/or in disrepair or that do not meet current well construction standards, threaten groundwater quality as well as human health and safety. Perhaps you drive around one of these wells in a field or there is one elsewhere on land that you own or farm. If so, resolve to have it decommissioned as soon as possible.

Measuring Streambank Erosion

Landowners and volunteers across the watershed have helped initiate a watershed study to directly measure streambank erosion. Dr. Barry Southerland from the NRCS West National Technology Support Center in Portland Oregon returned to the watershed in August 2007 to train volunteers to set bank pins and measure erosion rates.

There are ten locations throughout the watershed representing various classes of erosion from negligible to severe. Volunteers drove a total of nine rebar rods into the banks at each location in order to measure soil loss on the upper, lower, and middle of the bank at three points around a meander bend. The rods will be monitored at least annually for the next four years to see how much soil has been lost around each rod.

Dr. Southerland's sediment research in the watershed during

2006-07 used an estimated erosion rate for streambanks. Measurements from the bank pins will provide a more definitive recession rate for further studies.

Of primary interest to those in the watershed, this work puts us out on the river, providing us with lots of opportunities to see the changes that are taking place. Anyone who would like to be involved with this project in the future should talk with a CMC member or the watershed staff. Special thanks to all the landowners and volunteers who helped get this project off to a great start.



Dr. Barry Southerland pounds a bank pin into place

Rare Steak

A cattle rancher went into town on a Saturday night for a sit-down steak dinner. When the waiter brought him his steak it was rare--very rare. The cow-puncher looked at it and demanded that it be returned to the kitchen and cooked. "It is cooked," snapped the waiter. "Cooked--nothing," replied the cow-puncher. "I've seen cows injured worse than this and recover!"

SARE grants provide funds for farmers and ranchers to experiment on their own land

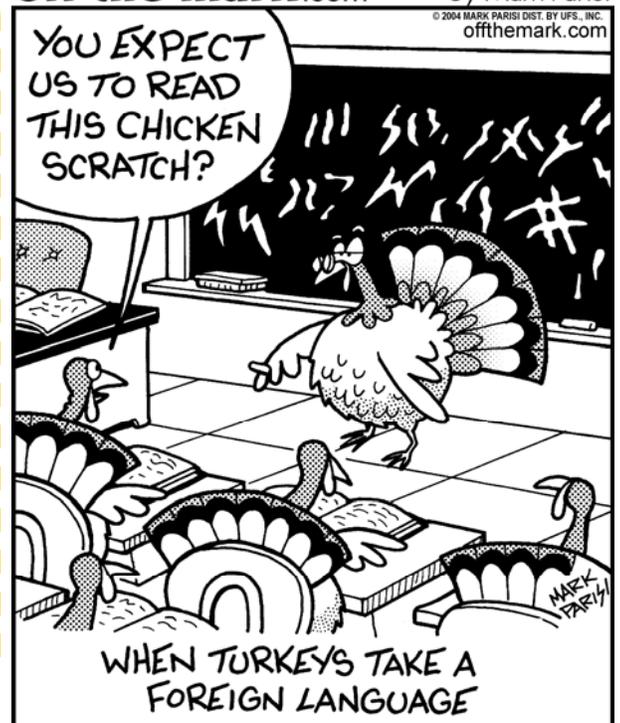
Jerry Jost-Kansas Rural Center, Lawrence

The North Central Region - Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (NCR-SARE) Program awards competitive grants to farmers and ranchers for on-farm research, demonstration, and education projects. NCR-SARE program of the USDA has allocated about \$400,000 for the 2007 Farmer/Rancher Grant Program. Competitive grants of up to \$6,000 are available for individual farmers and ranchers, and grants up to \$18,000 are available for groups of three or more farmers from separate operations who are interested in exploring sustainable agriculture. Farmers/Ranchers are invited to submit proposals that test, evaluate, and adapt sustainable agriculture practices for their operations; conduct learning circles, educational events, field days or demonstrations to further disseminate information to farmers/ranchers; develop new technologies; or create or modify equipment. Proposals are due December 3, 2007.

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by Mark Parisi

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All Reno County Conservation District programs and services are provided to anyone regardless of race, sex, color, national origin, ancestry, age or physical or mental handicap.

New cost share opportunities

- Funding will be available this winter through the watershed office for water quality projects related to livestock and streams. Projects that reduce the time that livestock spend along a stream would be eligible. These might include the addition of new watering points, cross-fencing, and the redesign or relocation of winter feeding areas. Staff from the watershed office and NRCS will work with you to make changes that make your life easier as well as protecting water quality. This cost share through the Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy (WRAPS) program will be supplemented with Wichita cost share to provide up to 100% of the county average cost of the practice.
- Farmers in parts of the watershed generally downstream of the point where Highway 17 crosses the Ninnescah are eligible for a \$200/acre incentive payment when signing up for most Continuous CRP practices. This area is also eligible for cost share to convert crop acres to permanent forages with assistance on seeding and fence costs.

Winter is always a good time to begin planning for conservation work. Having the plan in place helps you take advantage of cost share opportunities as they arise.

Contact the Cheney Lake Watershed for more information (620-665-0231).