



Blue Thumb Grants to Districts



Beginning in 2011, Oklahoma's Conservation Districts can apply for \$500 grants from Blue Thumb to aid in educating citizens about sound conservation practices, particularly those that protect water quality.

Possible Ideas for Grant Proposals...

- ◆ Partner with a local high school to form or enhance a science or ecology club
- ◆ Offer a “Best Management Practice” tour
- ◆ Facilitate a natural resource day with a WQ emphasis
- ◆ Develop, improve, or expand an outdoor classroom
- ◆ Offer a “no-till” workshop
- ◆ Create educational signage for a natural area, park, or rain garden
- ◆ Hold a groundwater screening with a groundwater protection workshop
- ◆ Partner with a local municipality to offer a workshop on urban stream protection
- ◆ Educate local officials on conservation
- ◆ Install a demonstration rain garden
- ◆ Hold a water conservation/rain barrel workshop

A little more information...

- ◆ Districts are encouraged to look at problem areas within their boundaries and create a proposal to address these.
- ◆ When considering a proposal, conservation districts are encouraged to consider projects that will:
 1. Provide conservation education to a large audience
 2. Have an impact over time
 3. Be of interest to local media for expanded coverage
 4. Showcase the conservation district as the local “resource protection” agency

And please keep in mind...

- ◆ The Water Quality Division can provide assistance to complete some types of projects. Please do not hesitate to call with any questions.



Grants to Districts

Oklahoma Blue Thumb
2010 Oklahoma Association of
Conservation Districts Area Meetings

WHAT: The Oklahoma Blue Thumb Program will provide ten \$500 grants to qualifying conservation districts.

WHEN:

- ◆ November 1, 2010—February 1, 2011: Apply for grants
- ◆ February 28, 2011 (OACD Annual Meeting): Announcement of Grant Recipients
- ◆ March 1—December 2, 2011: Grant Projects Completed
- ◆ December 16, 2011: Project Reports and Request for Grant Funds due to Blue Thumb Office (128 East 3rd Avenue, Bristow, OK 74010)

WHERE: The project should take place within your conservation district.

HOW: Apply for a grant by preparing a proposal of *no more than three pages* that provides an overview of the project. Provide information on who is your audience, why your proposal should be funded, and include a brief budget. Please include the following:

- ◆ Annual Report from July 1, 2009—June 30, 2010
- ◆ Letter from conservation district chairman explaining how the proposed event, effort, or educational tools will make a difference for the good of conservation.



What Projects will be funded?

The other side of this announcement has a few suggestions for projects that conservation districts can consider. District board and staff members are encouraged to think about what type of project will be the most effective to—

Demonstrate how conservation practices can:

- ◆ Make farming and ranching more profitable
- ◆ Protect the water quality of local streams and rivers
- ◆ Protect topsoil and/or

Educate children and youth about the:

- ◆ Local wildlife, both plants and animals
- ◆ Meaning of stewardship and the importance of protecting resources for future generations
- ◆ Sound “best management practices” that result in healthy farms, ranches, streams, rivers, lakes, and other public and private lands and/or

Encourage people to use their local conservation district and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service office.

Funds will be provided for conservation districts that propose sound projects that are 1) doable 2) will reach a large audience, and will ultimately 3) lead to greater protection of our natural resources.

Do not hesitate to call for more information, or even to gain input on ideas.

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