

O K L A H O M A C O N S E R V A T I O N CONVERSATION

Information for and about Oklahoma's Conservation Districts

Volume 58, Issue No. 2/3 February/March 2012

OACD State Meeting 2012 — Branding Conservation

The Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts (OACD) held its 74th Annual State Meeting at the Reed Conference Center in Midwest City Feb. 26–28, 2012. The meeting was cosponsored by the Oklahoma Conservation Commission (OCC).

Sharon Glidden kicked off the Monday morning opening general session with a talk and presentation entitled “Don’t Fear Change.” Glidden is the owner and operator of Tiger Mountain Ranch Resort located in Henryetta. Recently she founded a treatment and rehabilitation center for substance addictions.

State Sen. Ron Justice, Rep. Phil Richardson and J.D. Strong, executive director of the Oklahoma Water Resources Board, spoke in a session explaining how the recently-completed Oklahoma Water Plan came about and the role played by members of the state’s conservation community in providing input. Other sessions included topics on water quality monitoring and flood control dam safety. The theme of the meeting, Branding Conservation, focused attention on methods conservation districts can use to raise awareness of the roles they play in local natural resources management.

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South Caddo No-Till Drill Dedication

The South Caddo Conservation District held a dedication ceremony on March 9 to announce a new piece of agricultural equipment available for use in the area. The conservation district hosted the event at its office at 1001 Petree Road, Suite A, in Anadarko.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s (USFWS) Partners for Wildlife Program has provided a 10-foot John Deere seed drill to the South Caddo Conservation District through a \$30,000 grant to help landowners plant native grasses to help restore native wildlife habitat. USFWS provided the drill to the conservation district for the purpose of planting 2,000 to 5,000 acres of native grass in Caddo County and surrounding counties. The conservation district will rent the drill to area producers to plant native grasses, wheat, rye or other crops.

The John Deere model 1590 drill is equipped with one large and one small seed box. It is completely hydraulic and the operator can raise and lower the front and back sets of planters independently of each other. The large seed box has a 35-bushel capacity.

“We greatly appreciate the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service helping the South Caddo Conservation District to make this equipment available,” said Ron Walzer, district board vice chair. “This will be a useful tool for farmers, producers and landowners in the area.”

State Rep. Phil Richardson and Sen. Ron Justice spoke at the dedication as did Mike Thralls, Oklahoma Conservation Commission; Terry Dupree, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and Clay Pope, Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts.

“We are pleased that the natural resource *South Caddo No-Till Drill, continued on page three*



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Our vision:

Responsible care for Oklahoma’s natural resources.

Our mission:

To conserve, protect and restore Oklahoma’s natural resources, working in collaboration with the conservation districts and other partners, on behalf of the citizens of Oklahoma.

www.conservation.ok.gov

Conservation Calendar

For more events and information, click on
"Calendar of Events" at
<http://conservation.ok.gov>

Conservation Commission Meeting,
April 2, Oklahoma City

Oklahoma Envirothon,
April 3, Stillwater

**Clean Lakes & Watersheds Association
Meeting,** April 12-13, Edmond

Cherokee Nation Environmental Festival,
April 13, Tahlequah

**Managing Risk with Composting &
Rainwater Harvesting,**
April 14, Taloga

Conservation Day at the Capitol,
April 16, Oklahoma City

Dewey County Natural Resource Day,
April 24, Taloga

**Managing Risk with Composting &
Rainwater Harvesting,**
April 28, Okeene

National Land & Range Judging Contest
May 1-3, Oklahoma City

Conservation Commission Meeting,
May 7, Oklahoma City

**Managing Risk with Composting &
Rainwater Harvesting,**
May 12, Woodward

Memorial Day Holiday, May 28

**Managing Risk with Composting &
Rainwater Harvesting,**
June 2, Clinton

Conservation Commission Meeting,
June 4, Oklahoma City

Conservation Commission Meeting,
July 2, Oklahoma City

Independence Day Holiday,
July 4, Oklahoma City

In our thoughts...

Will Brock, NRCS district conservationist for Kiowa County CD, lost his grandmother on Jan. 27.

Dan Jones, Grant County CD director, passed away Feb. 26.

Rita Niece, West Caddo CD secretary, lost her mother on Feb. 28.

Becky Inmon, Oklahoma County CD secretary, lost her husband Craig on Feb. 28 after a long illness.

Shanon Phillips, OCC/WQ director, lost her father-in-law Fred Wilton on March 3 after a long illness.

Mike Kastl, OCC/AML director, lost his father Emil E. Kastl on March 6.

Gary Garman, retired NRCS Ouachita Mountains RC&D coordinator, lost his wife Kathy on March. 13.

Branding Conservation, continued from page one

Chesapeake Energy donated a pickup truck that was given to a conservation district selected by a drawing. Kiowa County Conservation District won the pickup in the drawing held following the OACD banquet on Feb. 27.

Conservation Awards

Conservation Hall of Fame

The Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts and the Oklahoma Conservation Commission established the Oklahoma Conservation Hall of Fame in 1985. Each year, one or more friends of conservation and/or conservation district directors are inducted in recognition of a positive influence on Oklahoma's conservation programs. This year OACD inducted three individuals into the Hall of Fame.

OACD President Joe Parker named Scotty Herriman of South Coffeerville, Okla., to the Oklahoma Conservation Hall of Fame during the organization's banquet on Feb. 27. In addition to serving on the Nowata Conservation District Board since 1977, Herriman served as president of OACD 2007-2008.

Sue Harper Brown of Weatherford was named to the Oklahoma Conservation Hall of Fame as a "Friend of Conservation." She worked as secretary for the Deer Creek Conservation District for many years and since her retirement has served as an associate board member for the district.

The late state Sen. David Myers was named posthumously into the Conservation Hall of Fame as a "Friend of Conservation." Myers served in the Senate from 2002 until his death in November 2011 and was remembered for his support of conservation, agriculture and rural communities. His widow, Sara Myers, accepted the award on his behalf.

OACD President's Award

The Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts has presented its "President's Award" since 1983 to one or more individuals or organizations that have shown outstanding support of conservation efforts in Oklahoma or the nation. OACD President Joe Parker presented the President's Award for 2012 to Mike Dain, Farm News director for the Oklahoma Agrinet radio network. Parker commended Dain for his long-time accurate, fair and supportive coverage of agriculture, conservation and rural interests.

Employee Recognition

Susan Henning, district manager for the Kay County Conservation District, was named Employee of the Year by the Oklahoma Association of Conservation District Employees (OACDE) and commended for her work in conservation education and public outreach. George Stunkard, OCC Area III Commission member, also received an OACDE President's Award for his support and encouragement in the formation of the employees association.

Branding Conservation, continued on page four

Awards & Recognition

Congratulations: Charlotte Stieber

Charlotte Stieber, OCC/AML administrative officer, was honored at the February 2012 meeting of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission for almost 30 Years of service to OCC and the State of Oklahoma. She retired at the end of January. Charlotte worked in the same OCC division since she started in 1982. She received the Stan Barnard Award from the National Association of Abandoned Mine Land Programs. She also assisted OACD and the OACD Auxiliary for many years.



Dennis Boney, OCC/CP watershed technician, was recognized at the March Commission meeting for being named Employee of the Quarter.

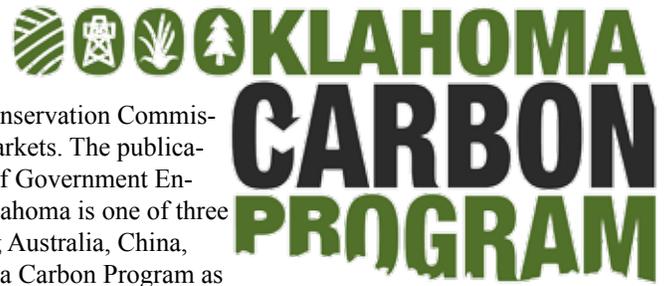
Gene Spurlock, OCC/AML inspector, was recognized at the March Commission meeting for 30 years of service to OCC and the state of Oklahoma.

Kelly Mocklabe, OCC/FMHR administrative officer, was recognized at the February Commission meeting for 30 years of service to OCC and the state of Oklahoma.

Cheryl Cheadle, OCC/WQ Blue Thumb coordinator, was recognized at the March Commission meeting for 20 years of service to OCC and the state of Oklahoma.

Shellie Willoughby, OCC/IT GIS coordinator, was recognized at the March Commission meeting for 15 years of service to OCC and the state of Oklahoma.

Oklahoma Named in International Carbon Markets Report



The voluntary carbon sequestration program run by the Oklahoma Conservation Commission is included in a new report on government programs and carbon markets. The publication by Ecosystem Marketplace titled Bringing it Home: Taking Stock of Government Engagement with the Voluntary Carbon Market was released March 1. Oklahoma is one of three U.S. states included in the report alongside ten other countries including Australia, China, Thailand, and the Netherlands. The Commission describes the Oklahoma Carbon Program as another example of the successful Conservation Partnership in Oklahoma between the Oklahoma Conservation Commission, NRCS and Conservation Districts who work together to deliver voluntary programs that assist farmers and ranchers.

“We are thrilled to be included in the report,” said Stacy Hansen, director of the carbon program. “Through this program, we promote healthy ecosystems rather than simply the air quality aspects of carbon sequestration. We also collect data on soil health and management systems that we hope will help agriculture producers cope with severe weather events and a changing climate.” Another reason the program is so successful, said Hansen, is because of the Commission’s ongoing support from EPA’s Clean Water Act grants.

“With EPA’s financial and technical support, we have one of the top water quality programs in the nation,” said Hansen. “By overlapping the water quality program and the carbon program, we are able to expand and synergize environmental benefits beyond the resource management goals of individual programs. Such programmatic partnering is essential, especially in these times of budget cuts.”

Since 2009, working with conservation districts, the program has certified over 30,000 acres of farmland for carbon credits equal to 20,300 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent. All of the credits were purchased through an aggregator by the Western Farmers Electric Cooperative. According to Hansen, this program is another way the Conservation Commission is fulfilling its mission to conserve, protect and restore Oklahoma’s natural resources through voluntary, incentive based programs.

“By working in collaboration with EPA, NRCS, conservation districts and other partners, on behalf of the citizens of Oklahoma, the Oklahoma Carbon Program emphasizes the co-benefits that practices such as range management, no-till crop production and forestry management provide,” Hansen said. “These benefits include protecting water quality, improving soil health, controlling soil erosion and providing wildlife habitat--and all of it is done through voluntary means without regulations. We are very excited about this program and we are glad to see voluntary, market based programs like this being recognized.”

Mike Rooker Reappointed as Area II Commissioner

The Oklahoma Conservation Commission received notice that on March 2, 2012, Gov. Mary Fallin reappointed Mike Rooker to serve a second five-year term representing central Oklahoma on the Oklahoma Conservation Commission. Senate confirmation is pending. Gov. Brad Henry first appointed Rooker to the post in May 2007 and the state Senate confirmed the appointment the same month, with his term beginning in July of that year.

Rooker, a life-long resident of Dale, has been a full time farmer since he and his brother took over the family farm when they lost their father in 1952. The operation included a dairy in which he also partnered with his brother until 1994. All the hay and grain for the operation was raised on the farm. He is co-owner of Rooker Farms, which includes a cow/calf operation.

Upon graduation from high school, Rooker received the Jr. Master Farmer Award, the Richards Award and the DeKalb Award. He was a member of the Conservation Leadership 2000 class and was named Ag Business Person of Shawnee the same year.

Rooker has served on the board of directors of the Shawnee Conservation District since 1994. Prior to that he served 15 years as a county committee member for the Farm Service Agency. Mike has served on the Sales Tax Advisory Committee for Shawnee twice. He also currently serves on the Cross Timbers Resource Conservation & Development Council.

Rooker’s hobby is restoring antique tractors and farm machinery and he serves as chairman of Shawnee Tractor and Engine Club’s Vintage Equipment Committee for SeptemberFest held annually at the Governor’s Mansion.

Mike and his wife Chris have three sons and seven grandchildren.



South Caddo No-Till Drill, continued from page one conservation partnership works so well in Oklahoma,” Dupree said. “Working with the Oklahoma Conservation Commission, and at the grassroots level with the South Caddo Conservation District and Natural Resources Conservation Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Partners for Wildlife program is able to accomplish its goal of restoring native wildlife habitat while also accomplishing the goals of local landowners,” he added.

“We are glad to see the state, federal and local government agencies work so well together in accomplishing resource conservation while keeping landowners’ goals as a priority,” Sen. Justice said.

“All of the natural resources are tied together,” said Rep. Richardson, “What affects one resource, like soil erosion, also affects other resources like water quality, so it is appropriate the these different entities work together to accomplish their mutual goals,” he said.

Members of the South Caddo Conservation District board Ron Walzer, Stan Mannschreck, Ralph Myers and associate member Gloria Stearns were present for the event. District staff Thomas Selph, Paula LittleChief, and Chris Allen were present as well as USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service staff Danielle Whaley, Jerrod Price, Barry Parker, Mike Scott and Brad Elder. Dan Lowrance, Area IV Conservation Commissioner, attended the event, as did Joe Parker, president of the Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts.

NRCS Partnership Awards

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service presented the following awards during the three-day meeting:

- Conservation Educator – Brenda Waltman, Nowata County Conservation District.
- Standing in the Gap – Cindy Ward, Garvin Conservation District secretary, and Janet Stewart, Oklahoma Conservation Commission general counsel.
- Conservationist District Director – Joy K. Elledge - Nowata County Conservation District director.
- Conservationist of the Year – Lisa Grey - LeFlore County Conservation District secretary.

Earth Team Awards

- Zone 1 – Newkirk Field Office and Kay County Conservation District
- Zone 2 – Tulsa Field Office and Tulsa County Conservation District
- Zone 3 – Clinton Field Office and Deer Creek Conservation District
- Zone 4 – Poteau Field Office and LeFlore County Conservation District



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Project Learning Tree
Workshops or Trunks
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Project WILD Workshops
Lisa Anderson, 405.990.1292

Oklahoma Conservation Conversation

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