

KANSAS FSA CELEBRATES 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF CRP

June 7th was a beautiful sunny day when the Kansas Farm Service Agency celebrated the 20th Anniversary of the Conservation Reserve Program in Dickinson County. FSA Assistant Deputy Administrator Larry Adams, and Bill R. Fuller, State Executive Director of Kansas FSA, along with conservation partners Harold Klaege, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Mike Hayden, Secretary, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, and Scott Carlson, Assistant Director, State Conservation Commission, provided comments on the success of the program in Kansas. As the original co-sponsor of legislation creating the CRP, U.S. Senator Pat Roberts represented by Ag Assistant for Kansas Mel Thompson discussed the history of CRP.

Rod Winkler, Conservation Specialist, Kansas Farm Service Agency introduced landowners and speakers at the four featured sites to approximately 140 attendees:

---Dwight and Marvel Meuli welcomed the tour to a CP21 Filter Strip site planted to brome grass in 2002. Steve Swaffar, Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams, informed the audience that this practice could cut sediment in surface runoff as much as 90 percent and enhance wildlife.

---The tour moved to a CP33 Upland Bird Habitat Buffer owned by Kevin and Lynne Murphy that was planted this spring. Roger Wells, Quail Unlimited, provided the history of the practice that was first available in October 2004. Jim Pitman, KDWP Wildlife Biologist, informed the audience that buffers will significantly increase the Northern Bobwhite Quail population by providing nesting and brood-rearing cover.

---Richard Townsend welcomed the tour to a CP15B Contour Grass Strip on Terraces enrolled in 2002. Mr. Townsend and Jon Ungerer, Natural Resources Conservation Service, outlined the wildlife benefits and erosion reduction.

---The last CRP site, owned by John Betz, was a CP25 Rare and Declining Habitat. Mr. Betz explained that this practice allowed him to return the field to the original condition left by Native Indians. David Nomsen, Pheasants Forever, discussed the wildlife benefits of the practice while standing amongst the wildflower-grass mixture planted in 2005.

The buses returned to beautiful Brown Memorial Park, south of Abilene, where attendees enjoyed a wonderful meal sponsored by Pheasants Forever, who also provided snacks and water along the tour. SED Fuller provided awards to Kingman County USDA Service Center, Anderson County USDA Service Center, and Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks for their efforts, teamwork, and coordination in implementing the quail habitat buffer practice.

CRP has become the largest conservation program on private lands in America. The popularity of CRP is a result of the broad support from agricultural, conservation, wildlife, water quality, and other natural resource interests. The involvement of many CRP partners, both government agencies and private organizations, have contributed to the growth and utilization of this important program.

Nationally there are 36,021,403 acres enrolled in CRP on 732,356 contracts. Kansas ranks 4th in the nation with 3,109,615 acres enrolled on 47,517 contracts. The five top practices in Kansas are: CP10 Established Grass on 1,737,670 acres; CP2 Native Grass on 842,485 acres, CP25 Rare and Declining Habitat on 403,446 acres; CP21 Filter Strips on 28,425 acres; and CP33 Upland Bird Habitat Buffers on 23,958 acres. Kansas enrolled 103,000 acres during the first sign-up of CRP in 1986. Kansas CRP participants have received \$2.5 billion in CRP payments during the past 20 years of the program.

Attend an event in your area to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the Conservation Reserve Program!



Assistant Deputy Administrator, Larry Adams.



(l to r) Kansas SED Bill Fuller; Steve Swaffer, Kansas Alliance of Wetlands and Streams; Assistant Deputy Administrator Larry Adams, Senator Robert's Ag Assistant Mel Thompson; NRCS State Conservationist Harold Klaege; State Conservation Commission Assistant Director Scott Carlson; and Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks Secretary Mike Hayden.



Kansas SED Bill Fuller and Assistant Deputy Administrator Larry Adams standing in CP15B Contour Grass Strips on Terraces.



Group standing in CP25 Rare and Declining Habitat.



CP33 Upland Bird Habitat Buffers planted this spring.



Group on CP15B Contour Grass Strips on Terraces.