

2010 meeting held; 36 plaques handed out

SHERMAN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2010

This is the Annual Report of the Sherman County Conservation District for the Calendar year of 2010.

The 2010 Annual Meeting was held Feb, 15, 2010 at the VFW in Goodland. Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Nemechek received the Banker's Award and Mr. and Mrs. Robin Deeds were recipients of the Windbreak Award. Greg Nemechek and Steve Evert were recipients of the Friends of Agriculture Award.

One hundred twenty-five cooperators enjoyed the meal furnished by the District and local banks. Lynn Ihrig introduced the Mangus Family who provided the entertainment for the evening. Scott Jarrett was elected to the board by secret ballot. Lynn Ihrig was appointed advisor to the board.

Thirty-six plaques were presented at the 2010 Annual Meeting for the Poster, Limerick, Essay and Computer Technology Contest. Sandy Rodgers, District Manager presented conservation programs prior to the contest.

The Goodland Star-News published the Annual Soil Conservation Edition and continues to support the efforts of Conservation in Sherman County

Sherman County Farmers continue to support conservation in Sherman County. All Compliance plans are on schedule. Approximately 428 CRP contracts are in place for approximately

48,070.7 acres.

The State Water Resources Cost Share funded jobs for 2010 included tanks, livestock wells, pipelines and septic systems that were failing. There are 16 active EQIP contracts, one Wetland Reserve Program contract, four Conservation Security Program contracts and five Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program contracts in Sherman County.

The Sherman County Conservation District continues a strong education and information program. Representation and information was presented at the Ag Expo in Goodland in February. A fair booth was displayed in August. Sandy Rodgers, District Manager worked with fifth graders on the Poster, Limerick, Essay and Computer Technology Contest. The third through fourth Grades also participated in the Poster and Limerick Contest. Sandy gave programs in the classroom. In April the local fourth graders along with fourth graders from area counties met in Colby and attended the fourth annual "Conservation Kids Roundup" sponsored by the Northwest Kansas Conservation and Environmental Alliance. The Sherman County Conservation District Board supported the "Women in Denim" Conference held at the Prairie Museum at Colby in October. The District Board awarded Kaleb Keith a graduating senior in Sherman County a scholarship to attend Colby Community College.

The District offers grass seed, flags, trees, rabbit netting, and weed barrier for sale as a service to area cooperators, as well as, providing

additional funding for the District Programs.

Sherman County Conservation District paid dues to the National Association of Conservation Districts, the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts, the KACD Auxiliary, Western Prairie RC&D, and the Kansas Association of Conservation District's Employees Organization.

The District works closely with their conservation partners, including State and National legislators, NRCS, County Commissioners, K-State Extension, Wildlife and Parks, FSA, Groundwater Management District #4, High Plains Roosters chapter of Pheasants Forever, and many others to reach mutual conservation goals. The District continued their Memorandum of Understanding with Wildlife and Parks concerning cost share funds. Sandy Rodgers serves as the Conservation District's representative to the Western Prairie RC&D with Fred Hall serving as alternate. Sandy Rodgers is currently the President of the Western Prairie RC&D. Greg Nemechek represents the Sherman County Commissioners and serves as Vice President. Greg Nemechek and Sandy Rodgers accepted the State Earth Team Award at Wichita in November. Western Prairie RC&D was recognized as the State Earth Team Award Recipient RC&D in 2010. Greg Nemechek, Sandy Rodgers, Mary Volk, Janet Rumble, and Fred Hall serve on the local advisory committee for Western Prairie RC&D and Fred Wedel serves as an advisor to that group.

The Sherman County Conservation District

Manager, Sandy Rodgers, continues to participate in the Northwest Kansas Conservation and Environmental Alliance. This group consists of District Managers representing eight County Conservation Districts. Their objective is to search for funding through grants and foundations to enhance and ensure a quality environment for future generations in Northwest Kansas. The group is planning their fifth Annual Conservation Roundup for fourth graders in April. Sandy was re-elected President of the group.

Mr. and Mrs. Lynn Ihrig, Mr. and Mrs. Dean Graber, Mr. and Mrs. Scott Jarrett, Dennis Shank and Sandy Rodgers attended the KACD Convention held at Wichita in November. Dani Mangus was the State Essay Winner and Emily Smith received State Honorable Mention for her Limerick.

The District reviewed their long-range program and also reviewed the memorandums of understanding with all cooperating agencies.

The Sherman County Conservation District's objective is to promote locally led conservation and to assist landowners and operators apply conservation practices to the land with the technical assistance from the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

The Conservation Office is available for assistance to anyone needing help solving his or her conservation needs. The District Board meets the first Thursday after the first Tuesday of every month with the exception of July.

What's underneath makes all the difference in soil

By Steven P. Graber

Resource Soil Scientist

I often get requests for soil investigations to determine if the soil in an area is suitable for a particular purpose.

The purpose may be for a pit pond, an embankment pond, ag waste lagoon or storage pond, or a septic tank absorption field. Regardless of the purpose, what is below the surface is going to make all the difference in the world if the soil will function for the intended purpose or not.

Over the years, I have observed the overwhelming desire to have a pond in arid portions

of western Kansas. If we can somehow overcome the obvious problem of lack of rainfall to keep water in the pond, sometimes the soils are completely unsuitable.

In order for the pond to hold water, it needs to act like a bathtub with a permanent stopper in the drain. However, many times the site not only is missing the stopper, but it has numerous drain holes. This means there is a lot of macro-pore space, exhibited by the presence of many rock fragments. Thus, it leaks like a sieve.

Where do the ponds need to be located? In the drains! What else is in the drains?

Anything and everything that has washed out of the uplands for eons!

In some locales, this is not clayey soil material, but fragments of limestone and sand. Either one of these creates the macro-pore space that is death to a pond, regardless if it is a pit pond or an embankment pond.

Sometimes this is evidenced by the material that shows up on the surface or is encountered in the process of exploring the site. Therefore, it is imperative before spending money on a water impoundment of any sort, a soil investigation is in order to determine if the soils will be suitable

for the pond.

Depending on the type of material creating the macro-pore space, different methods of construction or sealing materials may be used to increase the water-holding capacity of the soil, but either way, it could be costly.

For more information about soil suitability, please contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Service office or conservation district office located at 210 W. 10th in Goodland. To learn more about NRCS, visit the Kansas NRCS Web site at www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov.

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Buffalo rancher and wife raise grass-fed

By Pat Schiefen
pjschiefen@nwkansas.com

Bison rancher Ken Klemm is leading by example in his approach to raising buffalo, cattle and soon sheep. He and his wife, Laurie, were picked as this year's Friend of Conservation.

Klemm hopes to slaughter the first of his grass-fed, no hormone and no antibiotic beef in February. He plans to offer the beef as a lower than buffalo cost option but with the same quality and healthful characteristics. Then he plans to add this to his existing nation-wide distribution network.

He says they sell steaks, burgers, roasts, hot dogs, three types of sausages, two types of jerky and ribs through The Buffalo Guys. Klemm said he attends food shows throughout the country, has nationwide grocery distribution and website sales.

"I find most consumers amazingly ignorant about where their food actually comes from. The vacuum that this ignorance creates is often fill with romanticized stories, half-truths and some outright lies fed to them by all manner of 'information' purveyors. I find that speaking the unvarnished truth to the consumer is most helpful. The American consumer is not stupid - just ill or miss-educated and most of them have a responsive ear for hearing the truth and respond well to it," Klemm said.

"Anything that the truck brings in should seriously evaluated," said Klemm of his ranching operation. "We are in the sunshine harvesting business. The sun shines, the rain falls (sometimes) and the grass grows. We use grazing species to harvest this grass and convert it to meat. We then convert the meat into dollars. We never lose sight that our base resource is the grass and we are grass growers first and stockmen second (even though I prefer the stock side of things)."

"Buffalo and elk were the primary grazers on these grasslands for millennia," Klemm said. "We have the buffalo factor covered, but in my observations it is apparent that the land needs elk or a close replacement for their grazing preferences, to achieve the next level of health and profitability. This is where the sheep fit in."

So in March Klemm expects to establish an malignant catarrhal fever free flock of sheep.



Bison in a coral at Beaver Creek Buffaloes. The Klemm's have about 700 head at the 3,500 acre ranch in the northeast corner of Sherman County. Goodland Star staff photo

The fever is a group of viruses carried by the sheep and goats that can cause fatal disease in cattle, bison and deer.

Klemm said he learned his approach to ranching from a course called Holistic Resource Management founded by Allan Savory in 1988. Klemm said he would be more than willing to visit with anyone about this approach.

Klemm and his wife bought and moved to Buffalo Creek Buffalo in northwest Kansas in 1999. Buffalo Creek Buffalo consists of several contiguous ranches with a combined acreage of around 3,500 acres of grassland part of which is owned by his partner in The Buffalo Guys Peter Thieriot of Elk Mountain, Wyo. The valley also supports populations of mule deer, whitetail deer, wild turkey, bobcat, coyote, swift fox, prairie

dogs, Bald Eagles, Golden Eagles, hawks, owls and other birds of prey. An occasional elk has been spotted as have rare sighting of mountain lion, says the website, www.BeaverCreekBuffalo.com.

He said they try to make management decisions that are good for native wild species and have developed watering points to help support wildlife.

Buffalo Creek Buffalo has about 150 cows, their calves, the breeding bulls and all of last years calves. The herd of around 700 lives out on native range yearlong and is gathered once or twice a year for management, says the website.

Late in the fall the 1 1/2 year old calves are separated from the main herd and then pastured

on the ranch's best grass to finish them.

Klemm is the first born American from German parents.

"I was born and raised in Chicago but fixed that the day after I graduated from High School," said Klemm. "I took a train to Cheyenne, Wyo., and began my new life."

He was a professional back-country guide, mule packer and trapper in the Yellowstone region. Then he began working as a day-labor cowboy on a 115,000 acre ranch in San Luis Valley of Colorado.

"This ranch had buffalo and I took a shine to them," said Klemm.

He soon became a full-time ranch hand, then a foreman and later general manager.

Laurie Klemm keeps books and is a full-time

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stock, cattle



Buffalo rancher Ken Klemm at his office at 114 W. 12, today. He and his wife, Laurie, raise grass fed buffalo and cattle on their ranch on the Beaver Creek.

Photo by Pat Schiefen/The Goodland Star-News

education specialist with the Lawrence Virtual School.

The couple has five children. Austin is 20 and works at a feed yard in Lexington, Neb. Emily, 19, is a freshman at Adams State in Alamosa, Colo. Jessica, 17, is a junior at Goodland High School. Levi, 14, is an eighth grader at Grant

Junior High School. Colter, 10, is a fourth grader who is home schooled through the Lawrence Virtual School.

Klemm says that his religious beliefs are the bedrock to every decision and action made in my business and my political efforts.

Watershed planning part of Republican River pact

By Duane Cheney

Resource Conservation and Development Coordinator

The Republican River Restoration Partnership is dedicated to provide watershed planning within the Republican River Watershed and its tributaries.

This includes an area of approximately 24,900 square miles: 7,700 square miles are in Colorado, 9,700 square miles in Nebraska, and 7,500 square miles in Kansas.

The RRRP was formed in 2002 during a meeting held in Benkleman, Neb. A group of interested farmers from Colorado, Kansas, and Nebraska (most were representatives of Resource Conservation and Development Councils) met to discuss what ways watershed planning could be provided across the states lines.

A series of educational workshops and organizational meetings were set up over the years since then.

In 2009 the RRRP incorporated and is in the process of acquiring information on watershed needs and concerns in the three states to be developed into dedicated goals, objectives, and actions for its planning process.

Presently RRRP is using the Kansas Department of Health and Environment's Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy process as its format, along with the "Stream Corridor Restoration" manual, as a guide in their planning process.

The mission established for the RRRP is to provide leadership in bringing federal, state and local entities together in the planning and coordination of sound conservation practices in the Republican River Basin.

RRRP is anticipating the three states work-

ing together to achieve long-term benefits. RC&D Councils are active partners in this process with council members from four RC&Ds in the three states.

The purpose of RRRP: To become informed and inform others; encourage all three states to work together in improving the health of the Republican River and its tributaries; continue implementing sound/acceptable conservation practices that enhance the quality of our farmland and streams and restore the desired ecology of the Republican River; and have an effective organization to carry out the mission and achieve the vision

This will require technical services from many state and federal agencies, universities, and interested organizations. These services will help support the plan in order to achieve long-term benefits for every citizen living in the basin.

The partnership includes the RC&D Councils, Natural Resources Conservation Service, KDHE, Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams, conservation districts, universities, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, Kansas Water Authority, and many others in the state of Kansas.

For more information on RRRP, contact Bob Martin (Western Prairie RC&D and RRRP Representative) at (785) 322-5563 or Duane Cheney (NRCS RC&D Coordinator) at (785) 462-7671 Ext. 5.

Visit your local NRCS office at 210 W. 10th in Goodland to learn more about natural resources conservation. More information is available on the Kansas Web site at www.ks.nrcs.usda.gov.



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'Conservation Then and Now' state essay



Dani Mangus uses a bolt cutter to cut a fence wire while her dad Danny holds the fence to get a goat's head pushed back inside the fence. Danny said he sort of wishes the goats didn't have the horns that would make it much easier to get their heads back inside. Dani showed where she had cut other wires before for the same reason,

Photos by Tom Betz/The Goodland Star-News

By Tom Betz

nt.betz@nwkansas.com

A heart felt essay describing the dust filled days of the "dirty 30s" compared to the cleaner and brighter farming conditions of today won a state Conservation award for Dani Mangus, 13, who lives a little northeast of Kanorado.

Dani is the youngest of four children of Danny and Charlene Mangus who live about two and one-half miles north of old U.S. 24 on Sherman County Road 5.

As to her descriptions about the dirt storms from 80 years ago Dani said she listened to stories from her Grandma and Grandpa who lived through those hard years. She said she had seen some photos of the dust storms, and felt it was a good way to write about how important soil conservation is today.

She said in class the teacher said they could write an essay about conservation programs and decided she could use some of the current farming practices in the essay. She said the other options were a power point, limerick or poster.

She said she put the conservation practices in where they fit including no-till, conservation reserve program and rotational grazing. She said besides the essay she did a power point.

In the essay Dani described a dirt storm in 1937: "...My dad's wheat and corn crops are gone...It's hard for the cattle to breathe. The dirt is so thick on their backs that weeds have sprouted..."

She said that came from her grandpa who told her the cows had plants growing on their backs.

Dani's older brother Devin had written essays and Charlene said Joann Wahrman of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary, told him when he was writing to put some heart in the essay.

"I told Dani why don't you make the essay something from the heart," Charlene said. "You

can list all the facts, but do it like a story and that is what she did."

"What I thought was what would it be like back in those days," Dani said, "and that is sort of how that came together."

Charlene said Dani likes being a farm girl, and like to go out to work with her dad.

Dani has been entering things in the Sherman County Conservation District for several years. She did a limerick when she was in third or fourth grade that got a state honorable mention

"There once was a farmer named Tilly; who thought planting wind breaks was silly. So there were no trees to catch the breeze; and blew all the top soil to Hilly."

Another one she did was about a pheasant named Fred who hid in the CRP so the hunters couldn't find him.

Charlene said she feels it

is great that Sandy Rodgers, from the Conservation District, goes to the schools and talks about conservation.

"She does that to get more response by getting the teachers involved," Dan Mangus said. "She gets the teacher to promote it in class."

He said a number of the teaches have an appreciation for what the conservation program is about.

Charlene said those who live on a farm understand it pretty quickly.

"Farm kids, especially if there are animals, grasp a lot of things about nature," she said.

Dani said once in class the book being read was "Old Yeller" and her buddy sitting beside her asked Mr. Tedford what castration was.

"Mr. Tedford looked at me," Dani said, "and I had a big smile because I knew what it meant, and he had a smile because he knew that I knew. Mr. Tedford explained to him and I didn't say anything."

Danny said city kids don't know a lot about this stuff like the difference between a bull and a steer.



Dani Mangus

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winner for rural Sherman County girl

Dani is into raising goats, and Charlene said they have been getting calls from people to see if the goats are about to have their kids. She said one person called to say their grandson was visiting and wanted to bring him out to see the little baby goats.

Dani said she had a bunch who were due, and figured with the expected winter weather moving in they were hoping the goats would hold off for a few days.

Danny said on Tuesday the kids started being born on Monday, Jan. 31, and said they had one each day until Monday when they had two born. He said there are a few more to go, and his shop is full of goats.

He said the nanny's and kids are doing fine. He said the heat lamps help as it is zero outside and the lamps keep it around 20 degrees inside. He said the goats stay close to the heat lamps.

Charlene said Dani has always wanted to be involved, and if Danny was getting ready to go out Dani would ask where he was going and could she go along.

"Even if it was something like pulling fence posts she wanted to go," Charlene said. "I thought I would have someone to help in the kitchen and help with the cooking and cleaning, but not her."

Danny said Dani learned to work with the old irrigation setting stuff, and when they had cows she would help work them and be in charge of filling the syringes.

"She has a good base of training," Charlene said, "and knows about cleaning the barn and shoveling the after stuff. When the goats are kidding if she had to help them she puts her gloves on and reaches in to help."

"I sort of feel sorry for the kids in town. There is always something to do out here. It may not always seem like fun."

Dani is in 4-H and will be showing goats for breeding and market this summer. She said she will enter her photography, citizenship and performing arts. She helps with the sewing group, but her big projects are the goats.

She started with two nanny's four years ago and now it is up to about 20 – not counting the ones born in the past week.

With the nanny's getting ready to deliver her dad let her set up some pens in the shop to get

the little ones out of the cold weather.

Danny said that is a scheduling problem with the cold. He said you have to have the kids born now so they are old enough and big enough to show at the fair. He said it would be nice to have them born a couple of months later, but they would not be big enough.

Dani said it is best to do it now between the end of January and the last of February. She said you could have some as late as the first of March. At the fair the class is for zero to six months, from six to 12 months and one from 12 months to about 36 months. She said you can show the ones born in March in the zero to six months class. The ones in the six to 12 months are the ones mostly born in January and they try to get them up to about 70 pounds by fair time.

Danny said they wanted to get some new blood lines in the goats and purchased a billy from north of Greeley that is not related to any others in the area.

Charlene said Dani is a junior member of the American Goat Association and learning how to do the papers and records.

One of Dani's other projects is photography and had one photo last year that made it to the state fair, and was selected to be part of the state fair traveling photo exhibit.

She said the black and white photo is of two old cameras positioned on an old wooden bench in front of a tree at their house. She said a neighbor had the two old cameras. One was an old box camera and the other one opened up with a lens and bellows. She said she took it at a different angle and printed it in black and white.

"The photo got a state fair ribbon," she said. "It was a pretty cool picture."

"She is a pretty lucky girl," Charlene said. "She has visited a number of campuses with her brothers around."

"When Devin is here he had her out on the grain cart trying to teach her stuff about tractors. Stephen, our middle son loves to hunt, and when he was home they went out and shot a coyote."

The coyote was one they heard many nights when out doing chores she said.

Dani said one evening she was doing chores and the coyote was scaring up pheasants from across the road and the pheasants were flying up into the yard. She said it sounded pretty



Dani Mangus has been the historian for the Ruleton Eager Beaver 4-H club and showed off the binder she has been keeping.

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Girl's writing winner in state essay contest

close too.
 "Stephen took me hunting and we sat and waited for about 20 minutes and the coyote came in and he shot him," she said. "It was a pretty good sized male."

Dan said they have gotten a Pyrenees puppy to raise with the goats, and to help keep the coyotes away. The Pyrenees will attack a coyote.

Charlene said Dani goes down to see her other brother Michael and Emily at the University of Kansas. She said Emily is working on her doctor degree and took Dani to the lab at KU medical. Michael studies bio fuels.

"Her brothers have given her a taste of things," Charlene said.

Being the last one at home, Dani, is quick to say she doesn't feel she is being spoiled.

"I have said when she gets ready for the first Snoball or Homecoming it is not going to be the color of the dress or how her hair is or what flower the boys are bringing," Charlene said. "It will be the brothers asking 'mom who is taking her.'"

Dani gets a taste of many different things and until recently she has been singing with her dad and brother. Danny injured his guitar hand several months ago and has not been able to play. He said it is getting better, but not as fast as he would like.

Dani works with the goats and has a special area set up in the shop to be able to hand feed and

handle the baby goats. The area has a chair and special arrangements so she can hold the goats and care for them.

The goats have two different pens east of the house. One is a long one allowing the goats to move around and has some wind protection from the north. The second pen is south of the house and is for the younger goats.

Out at the south goat pen a goat had stuck its head through the wire squares and was stuck. To get the goat out Dani got a bolt cutter and cut the wire to bend it out push the goat's head back through and bend the wire back in place. She showed a couple of other places where the goats had done the same thing.

Dani is in seventh grade at Grant Junior High. She thinks the school is pretty cool. Coming from North she has seen the proposed renovation and additions. She said it looks good.

She said she was disappointed in this year's school calendar because it did not have any photos from North. She said the kids always like to look and see if they are in the photos.

"There were no photos of kindergarten or fifth and sixth," she said.

She said the halls have a yellow dividing line, and the sixth grade doesn't really cause a problem because they are upstairs.

She said school is going good. They are done with basketball.

She said they are doing a lot of work on com-

puters like book reports and papers.

She said they had a special tech class for one quarter and she got to be one of the 16 who took it. She said the class got to do photos and other stuff. She said now they are working on taking photos and learning how to edit them.

The goats have been listening to her music solo as they are getting ready for music contest. Dani said her solo is "Homeward Bound," and doing "Reflections," for the women's ensemble and "Misty Morning," for the mixed ensemble.

She said she keeps hoping he dad's hand will get better so they can sing together.

Conservation Then and Now

By Dani Mangus

Today is June 15, 1937. The time is 2:30 p.m. and it is very dark in our house. There is so much dirt in the air that mom wets a sheet down and swirls is around to get the dirt out of the air so it is much easier to breath.

My dad's wheat and corn crops are gone due to the dry weather and day after day high winds. The pasture ground is almost gone. It's hard for the cattle to breath. The dirt is so thick on their backs that weed seeds have sprouted. We only have a few head left.

What chickens we have go in early to roost because it is so dark. I see my dad work hard to try to save the farm; my mom tries to make the best of it.

When I look out the window I do not see life. There are no trees, nothing green, no wildlife; all I see are drifts of dirt as high as the window-sills.

We've had to many years of this. I'm only 12 years old and know I will not stay on the farm.

Now it is June 15, 2010. I get up early in the morning because the sun is shining in the window. Mom is doing her housework and I know it is her day to do her bookwork.

I ask dad if I can go with him to start the sprinkler irrigation system on the no-tillage corn. He switched to no-tillage to save moisture, fuel, residue, time and energy.

I love to go with my dad to see nature. Most of the time I see pheasants running with their young in the CRP fields grown by my dad and also in the numerous windbreaks we've planted around our farm.

Later in the afternoon dad and I will go out and check the cows. The pastures are green and in really good shape. Dad practices rotational grazing and never over grazes, it works really well. I love my days out on the farm with dad.

See ESSAY, Page 15

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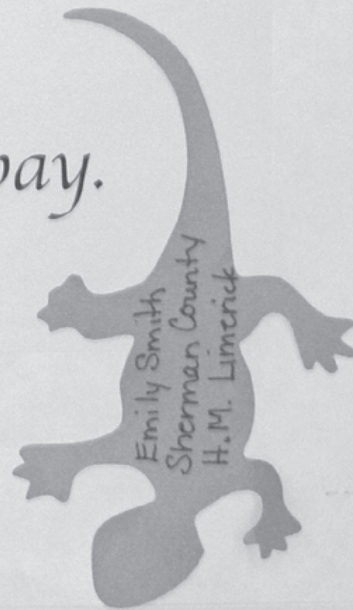
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Emily Smith was the Sherman County Conservation District Limerick winner and received a State Honorable Mentions.

Balancing upland birds, predators

By Daryl Fisher,

Biologist, Dept. of Wildlife and Parks

One thought that often comes up when folks talk about not having enough pheasants or quail around, is the idea of predator control to increase bird numbers.

It is true predators destroy many eggs and kill young and adult birds. After all, that is how predators live, by killing and eating other animals.

So, does it make sense to expend a lot of time, effort, and money in removing predators to increase quail and pheasant numbers?

Studies have shown in areas of relatively poor upland bird habitat, extensive predator control can result in more birds than without predator control. However, in areas of good upland bird habitat, extensive predator control resulted in little or no improvement in fall bird numbers over not having any concerted predator control.

Poor habitat not only means there are fewer birds, it makes it easier for predators to find nests and kill a significant number of birds that are present.

In good habitat areas, more birds are around, but predators still have a difficult job of finding birds and nests.

Once old enough to be mobile, birds have a much better opportunity to escape predators when good habitat is abundant. Predators of upland birds are generalist predators, meaning when it becomes difficult to kill or find one type of prey, they switch over to hunting other prey, often meaning rodents. Many rodents eat eggs, so increased predation on rodents can further decrease overall predation on upland bird nests.

Enjoy the sport of predator hunting yourself, or let others partake in it on your farm or ranch. But will it make a huge difference in the bird numbers you have around? It probably won't.

Habitat is ultimately the key to having abundant populations of upland birds or most any other wildlife. Provide the proper habitat, and you will be doing the most you can to ensure the birds will be there.

Conservation 'Then and Now'

ESSAY, from Page 14

There is a big difference in these two stories. It is unfortunate so many farm families had to suffer through the "Dirty 30's".

Out of the devastation we have learned many new conservation practices. We have educated

ourselves so there is no repeat of the 30's.

This 12-year-old girl can see a bright future in farming. This includes blue skies, fresh air, green pastures, abundant wildlife, good crops, beautiful trees and clean water. These are all results of good farming and a little help from Mother Nature.

Congratulations to all the Sherman County Conservation winners. The Goodland Star-News staff enjoys talking to everyone, and sharing their wonderful stories.
 - The Editor

Congratulations to all Conservation winners!

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Western Prairie Area win Earth Team award

The Western Prairie Resource Conservation and Development Area has completed its 16th year in northwest Kansas, and was won the Earth Team Award from the National Resource Conservation Service in Wichita in November.

The Earth Team is the volunteer arm of the NRCS, and Western Prairie RC&D was nominated for the award by Diana Solko, secretary and Decatur County Conservation District Manager.

Sandy Rodgers, Sherman County Conservation District Manager is president of Western Prairie and Greg Nemechek of Sherman County is vice president. The award was presented by Eric Banks, NRCS state conservationist at the state convention in November.

In the nomination letter Solko wrote: Last year the Western Prairie RC&D had a total of 33 volunteers who contributed a total of 2,236 hours. Each volunteer showed enthusiasm for the Western Prairie RC&D's projects and met the challenge of seeing them all completed.

The Western Prairie RC&D Web site was updated with a totally new look. Council members encouraged additional counties to join the Northwest Kansas Regional Recycling Project in Thomas County. The Northwest Kansas Animal Shelter project at Goodland, Kan., was expanded to include the dog obedience training program at a Colorado prison facility.

Western Prairie RC&D Council at work

The Republican River Restoration Partnership became a high priority for Council members with several meetings and planning sessions held in northwest Kansas, as well as in southwest Nebraska.

Northwest Kansas Conservation and Environmental Alliance successfully completed their fourth year of educating fourth graders with the Conservation Round-Up. Over 290 students/teachers attended the Conservation Round-Up during April.

They sponsored a "Women in Denim" event for the wives of their landowners. The "Women in Denim" program was a great success with over 65 participants.

Council members revised and adopted a new loan program. This resulted in an additional loan being funded by the Western Prairie RC&D.

Planning and grant writing assistance was provided for a new complex, which now houses a new senior center, theater, bowling alley, and youth recreation center. This new complex was built at Oberlin, Kan.

Western Prairie RC&D provided planning assistance and actual labor for a green home project in Goodland. The project involved college-aged students who completely remodeled a donated house as part of their school class curriculum. The house will be sold to support future class projects.



Eric Banks (left), NRCS state conservationist, presented the award to Sandy Rodgers, Sherman County Conservation District Manager and president of Western Prairie, and vice president Greg Nemechek of the Western Prairie

Congratulations!



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We congratulate all Conservation winners!
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