



Kansas Association of Conservation Districts

Representing Local Conservation Districts

**Executive Directors Report
SCC Spring Workshops**

Status of Dues Paid

83 Counties have paid dues
27 Maximum Club dues paid
22 Counties still need to pay

Account Balances

KACD Business Account - \$50,285.69
KACD Endowment MM - \$2,609.26
Endowment Annuity - \$135,464.73 Interest only available - \$205.24 monthly

Legislative Updates

Currently 170 Bills in Senate not including those already passed
Currently 201 Bills in House not including those already passed

I thought I should share that your KACD board and executive director have been busy in Topeka this legislative session. Bill Simshauser, President KACD, testified at the House Ag Committee along with the full KACD board in attendance. They have made numerous contacts with Chairman Tom Sloan of the House Water and Environment Committee and other representatives and senators. Chairman Sloan has been looking at numerous ideas to help fund conservation and the Governor's water vision. Chairman Sloan and the House Water and Environment Committee spent a great deal of time learning about water issues and explored several funding options including the Blue Ribbon Funding Task Force recommendations. There will likely be additional funding discussions during the second half of the Session including a consideration to restore the State General Fund and Economic Development Initiatives Fund transfers to the State Water Plan Fund. Attached is a letter from the Kansas Water Office suggesting how the additional funds should be spent if they are approved. We need to be supportive of this to protect the conservation dollars that go through KDA DOC. There are other state agencies, without pointing fingers, who would like all of that additional funding to be funneled through mainly 4 WRAPS projects. Now is the time to contact Representative Sloan and the other members of his committee and voice your concerns.

Senate Bill 46 and Senate Bill 48 are water bills that have now passed the Senate. SB 46 would amend law that relates to water conservation areas (WCAs). The Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA) is required to post all complete applications and orders issued by the Division of Water Resources regarding WCAs on its official website.

SB 48 would require any person with a valid water right to first exhaust the administrative remedies available before seeking a court-ordered injunction to stop the impairment.

HB 2095 would raise the legal limits on six axle trucks to 90,000 lbs on non-interstate roads, an increase from the current maximum gross weight of 85,000. This would bring Kansas in line with neighboring states standards.

HB 2032 Increase fees credited to the state water plan fund.

Leopold Press Release went out. Nominations due by June 6, 2017 to me.

Bills In Committee

HB2032 - Increasing fees credited to the state water plan fund.

HB2189 - Protecting surface owners' property rights.

HB2241 - Creating the surface water protection fee and the irrigation water use fee and depositing such fees in the state water plan fund.

HB2311 - Maintenance requirements for streambank stabilization and water quality protection projects.

Resolutions In Committee

HCR5008 - Proposition to amend article 11 of the constitution of the state of Kansas concerning the state water plan fund.

Sponsored Bills

HB2032 - Increasing fees credited to the state water plan fund.

HB2066 - Public wholesale water supply districts and highway right-of-way.

HB2079 - Water district vehicle registration.

HB2080 - Reinstatement of forfeited benefit units of rural water districts.

HB2189 - Protecting surface owners' property rights.

HB2241 - Creating the surface water protection fee and the irrigation water use fee and depositing such fees in the state water plan fund.

HB2272 - Substitute for HB 2272 by Committee on Water and Environment – Establishing the Kansas water authority science and research subcommittee.

HB2311 - Maintenance requirements for streambank stabilization and water quality protection projects.

HB2312 - Amending the administrative hearing process for the department of agriculture.

Sponsored Resolutions - 2017 Legislative Session

HCR5008 - Proposition to amend article 11 of the constitution of the state of Kansas concerning the state water plan fund.

Bills In Committee

SB46 - Water conservation area findings, notice and management plans.

SB47 - Amending the Kansas pet animal act.

SB48 - Remedies for the impairment of a valid water right or permit to divert and use water.

SB61 - Relating to fees for dairy businesses and the processing of paper documents by the Kansas secretary of agriculture.

HB2097 - Amending the Kansas pet animal act.

HB2134 - Relating to certain department of agriculture fees.

HB2135 - Relating to fees for dairy businesses and the processing of paper documents by the Kansas secretary of agriculture.

HB2193 - Requiring the completion of a boater safety education course.

HB2207 - Substitute for HB2207 by Committee on Agriculture – Relating to the pursuit of wounded animals onto private land.

HB2208 - Relating to the transferability of deer permits.

HB2209 - Creating a program to research the use of industrial hemp.

HB2246 - Amendments to the Kansas noxious weed law.

Sponsored Bills

SB60 - Substitute for SB 60 by Committee on Agriculture – Extending the sunset of certain agricultural fees and authorizing the Kansas secretary of agriculture to collect a fee for processing paper documents.

HB2097 - Amending the Kansas pet animal act.

HB2098 - Naming the mined land wildlife area bison herd.

HB2099 - Relating to remedies for the impairment of a valid water right or permit to divert and use water.

HB2100 - Relating to water conservation areas.

HB2134 - Relating to certain department of agriculture fees.

HB2135 - Relating to fees for dairy businesses and the processing of paper documents by the Kansas secretary of agriculture.

HB2136 - Updating provisions relating to weights and measures.



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2016 Resolutions Considered

Resolution #1 – Failed at KACD Convention

NRCS Policy Change and Land Use for High Tunnels

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts recommend to the Natural Resources Conservation Service that they amend policy so high tunnels can be used on suitable urban or rural land.

Resolution #2 – Failed at KACD Convention

Cost Share for Xeriscape

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kansas Association of the Conservation Districts recommends to the Kansas Department of Agriculture Division of Conservation to implement cost share for xeriscaping.

Resolution #3 – Adopted at KACD Convention

Policy Change for Equitable Renewal and Rental Rates on CRP

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts ask the National Association of Conservation Districts lobby the United States Department of Agriculture-Farm Service Agency to change the payment structure so that applications with higher Erodibility Index receive higher rental rate and ranking consideration with renewal contracts be given priority.

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED, that wind and water erosion be given equal consideration in comparison to priority wildlife areas.

Action taken: Presented to NACD – Passed and is part of NACD negotiations with USDA.

Resolution # 4 - Adopted

Increasing Nationwide Caps on CRP Acreage

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Kansas Association of Conservation District ask the National Association of Conservation Districts urge the United States Department of Agriculture and Congress to increase the acreage cap to 36 million acres in the Conservation Reserve Program.

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED, this increased acreage has priority as Native Grassland Plantings.

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED, the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts urge the Kansas Congressional delegation to support the increase of acreage cap on the Conservation Reserve Program.

Action Taken – Presented to NACD. Resolution failed because NACD already has a policy to increase CRP cap to over 40 million acres.

Resolution #5 – Tabled at KACD Convention

Windbreak Practice Eligibility

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts encourages all federal and state agencies to use the same windbreak practice eligibility criteria so that windbreaks can be planted on any land use in order to protect cropland and livestock.

Resolution #6 - Adopted

KACD Support for Governor's Water Vision, or KACD Support for Governor's Vision 50

Therefore, be it resolved, the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts encourage the Kansas legislature to utilize the effective mechanism of the county conservation districts and the Kansas Department of Agriculture Division of Conservation as the agency to distribute and implement the local on land practices of the Vision 50 plan.

Further, be it also resolved, the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts will continue to educate and promote the successes that conservation districts have had in putting cost share monies into completed projects on locally privately held lands.

Action taken – Visited with State legislative staff and legislatures about the plan to show KACD support.

Resolution #7 - Adopted

District Annual Audit Requirement

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts work with the State Conservation Commission and the Kansas Department of Agriculture Division of Conservation to assist conservation districts to implement comprehensive and cost effective audit procedures.

Action taken – This item has been discussed with DOC and SCC. They are willing to look at more cost efficient and comprehensive audit procedures. They are looking to the districts for input on ideas how to do so.

Resolution #8 - Adopted

Protection of County Cost Share Funds

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts lead a special initiative to encourage membership to develop a plan to educate decision makers at the county, state and federal level of the benefits of conservation funding and conservation districts to their constituents.

Action taken - The brochure was the first step. Next step will be training at the fall meetings.

Resolution #9 – Adopted at KACD Convention

Relax Crop Insurance Rules for Companion Cover Crops

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts will ask the United States Department of Agriculture-Risk Management Agency to allow companion cropping in Kansas.

Action taken – Presented at NACD where the resolution passed. NACD will now negotiate with USDA Risk Management.

Resolution #10 – Failed at KACD Convention

Change State Cost Share Rates to Flat Rates

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts ask the Kansas Department of Agriculture Division of Conservation to amend Kansas State Statute 2-1915 to change state cost share rates to county flat rates per State of Kansas fiscal year.

Resolution #11 - Adopted

Lagoon Added to Practice 110A (Elimination of Abandoned On-Site Wastewater System)

Therefore, be it resolved, that the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts encourage the Kansas Department of Agriculture Division of Conservation to add “Lagoon” to practice 110A (Elimination of Abandoned On-Site Wastewater System).

Action taken – DOC is willing to add this to the cost-share document and will review at the SCC Spring Meetings

Resolution #12 - Adopted

Water Transfer Accountability

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts request from the Kansas Division of Water Resources an explanation of the conversion formula used to convert uses.

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED, that the explanation include how the chief engineer figured water right conversions for previous applicants to ensure fairness and consistency, and as the water transfer law is in place to protect sustainability and longevity of the water source and to protect adjacent water right holders, the explanation should include how the interpretation of the formula and the change of use acre feet uphold the law.

Action taken – The KACD Executive Director has reviewed this document with Lane Latourneau at DWR. Lane is working on a response. Once the response is shared it will be emailed to the conservation districts. The KACD ED did not act on this one until recently which explains for not hearing back from DWR at this time.

Resolution #13 - Adopted

Fiscal Year 2018 and Fiscal Year 2019 Division of Conservation Budget

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts supports the Division of Conservation’s FY 2018 and FY 2019 budget request as described below, and in addition, supports the Division’s request for appropriation language allowing the carryover of funds from the current fiscal year to FY 2018, as well as the carryover of funds from FY 2018 to FY 2019, as follows:

SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET REQUEST FOR FY 2018 and FY 2019:

THEREFORE, the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts requests enhanced funding of the State Aid to Conservation Districts program to meet county conservation district budget needs according to the county certified amounts as per K.S.A. 2-1907c up to \$2,625,000. The amount necessary to adequately fund the State Aid to Conservation Districts program for FY2018 is \$2,410,912 – an additional amount of \$410,912 over what is currently budgeted.

Action taken – KACD Visited with State legislative staff and legislatures about the budget to show KACD support.

