



**Collaborate | Educate | Implement**

This is a quarterly newsletter from Kansas Association of Conservation Districts.

Encourage others to [sign up!](#)

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## **KDA Employee Spotlight**



### **Cathy Thompson Program Consultant**

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Cathy Thompson works for the Kansas Department of Agriculture, the Division of Conservation. She is the Program Consultant, providing approval for all of the state cash funding for the 105 counties in the state of Kansas.

Cathy started her civil service career with the State of Kansas on January 4, 1982, with the Department of Administration, Division of Purchases. She worked in many different divisions within the Department of Administration until October 1997 when she then went to work with the State Conservation Commission, which in 2012 became the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Division of Conservation.

She has been in her current position as a Program Consultant since 2014 maintaining the Cost-Share Information Management System (CSIMS) database and administering the State Water Plan Funds to taxpayers through each County Conservation Districts Water Resource and Non-Point Source Pollution Programs in CSIMS.

[Read the full article.](#)

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**2023 Kansas Leopold Conservation  
Award Winner**

## Ray and Susan Flickner

### [The Leopold Conservation Award](#)

[Program](#) recognizes agricultural landowners actively committed to a land ethic. Ray and Susan Flickners' continuous efforts have earned them the 2023 Kansas Leopold Conservation Award.

The Flickners have channeled their education and experience into innovation on their Kansas farmland and see conservation as critical to its environmental and economic resilience.

Ray and Susan have turned their conservation ethic to 320 acres of Hodgeman County farmland, and in addition to redesigning its terraces, the farm features two playas. They are also coordinating with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to rehabilitate these important High Plains aquifer features best.



**Sand Co. Foundation  
Article About the  
Flickners**

**Ray & Susan's Story on  
YouTube**

## 79th Annual Convention Recap



Conservation leaders from across Kansas recently gathered for the 79th Annual Convention of the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts (KACD). The annual convention was held in Wichita and drew over 360 attendees to the three-day event, according to Dan Meyerhoff, executive director for KACD.

Each year, the KACD convention offers breakout sessions and keynote speakers aimed at providing members with timely education and information and this year was no different.

The theme for the 2023 convention was "Quality Water, Quality Life" and the agenda was full of topics encompassing this message, reminding attendees how important the work they do in conservation is to the lives of all Kansans.

According to KACD Board of Directors, President William Simshauser, thanks to the robust agenda and quality speakers "people left the convention with a renewed enthusiasm to conserve and manage our natural resources and to work together to achieve those goals." [Continue reading...](#)

# Addressing Water Quality & Quantity



During the recent KACD convention attendees were given the opportunity to attend the conservation symposium titled Quality Water, Quality Life, addressing water quantity and quality concerns in Kansas.

Kansas is blessed with rich agricultural heritage and vibrant economy deeply rooted in farming and industry. However, this prosperity has always been linked to a stable and sustainable water supply.

With a complex web of streams, surface water reservoirs, underground aquifers and a diverse climate, Kansas faces unique challenges in balancing the competing demands of agriculture, community development, industry, and environmental conservation.

A panel of experts, policy makers and stakeholders who are deeply engaged in addressing the multifaceted issues surrounding water quantity and quality resources in Kansas came together for the conservation symposium at the 79th Annual KACD Convention.

To continue reading this article visit the [KACD website](#).

**Natural Water  
Resource  
Concerns**

**Water Quality  
Technical  
Assistance**

**Water Quantity  
Technical  
Assistance**

## KACD Youth Contests

Congratulations to every single one of the talented Contest winners at KACD's 79th Annual Convention!

I cannot express how impressed I was, not only by the confidence and poise of the Speech Contest participants, but also, the incredible creativity and knowledge of conservation expressed in the Limerick, Photo and Poster contests!



Every Kansan should visit [KACD Youth Speech Contest Winners](#) and watch the 2023 Speech Contest videos, as well as, see the [2023 Youth Contest Winners](#) in the Limerick, Photo and Poster contests to see how our Kansas kids shine!

The KACD Conservation Education and Youth Committee is an integral part of providing educational opportunities for the youth of Kansas. District managers do an excellent job facilitating annual conservation contests with their local conservation district where contests include:

- Posters

- Limericks
- Essays
- Speech
- Photography

Local winners from each conservation district represent their county in the statewide contest with winners recognized every November at the KACD Annual Convention. State winners in some categories go on to compete at the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) contests, with national winners announced each February at the NACD Annual Meeting.

Entering your child or student in any of the contests is easy! Just contact your local conservation district to get started or attend the annual meeting of your local conservation district in January or February!

You may also find more information about each youth contest here:

[Annual Local District Contests](#)

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## USDA NRCS News Releases

[USDA NRCS Announces Financial Assistance to Cheyenne County Landowners Along the South Fork Republican River](#)

[USDA Increases Minimum Annual Payment for Conservation Stewardship Program](#)

[USDA NRCS News Release: ACT NOW Inflation Reduction Act Funding](#)

[USDA Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry Fact Sheet](#)

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## Upcoming Events to Note

[Soil Health U](#) will be in Salina, KS, at the Tony's Event Center on January 17-18, 2024. This event reflects land as a resource that, when treated with care, can continue to provide for farmers and ranchers even when times are tough. With Soil Health U, attendees will learn how to unleash the power of healthy soil. Past attendees include: Farmers and ranchers of all acreages, agribusiness professionals, agronomists, landowners, and students.



[No-Till on the Plains Winter Conference](#) will be held on January 22nd-24th, 2024, at the Wichita Marriott.



[Registration](#) for this event is open and needs to be completed by January 18th, 2024.

**Conservation Day at the Capitol** is February 6th, 2024. This is a great opportunity to take a trip to Topeka to show your interest in Kansas Conservation.



**[The 17th Kansas Natural Resources Conference](#)** (KNRC) is at the Hilton Garden Inn on February 8-9, 2024, in Manhattan, KS. The convention theme this year is Water on the Plains: Conservation, Innovation, and Equity.

This conference is a collaboration of the following professional societies:

- Kansas Chapter of the Wildlife Society
- Kansas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society
- Great Plains Society of American Foresters
- Kansas Section of the Society for Range Management
- Kansas Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society

[Registration](#) is currently open.

**[Women Managing the Farm Conference](#)** will be held February 14-16, 2024, at the Hilton Garden Inn and Conference Center in Manhattan, Kansas.



Featuring Keynote Speakers Mark Mayfield and Kim Bremmer, along with an action-packed list of breakout session speakers.

Conference speakers and sessions are selected and designed to keep women thriving within their rural communities and informed on the latest advancements in agriculture. Early [registration](#) ends on January 18th, 2024. There is special early bird pricing, student pricing, and scholarships available.

**[The 2024 Statewide Women in Agriculture Event](#)** will be on March 2nd, 2024, in Corning, KS. Attendees will have a FREE fun-filled day with guest speakers Jolene Brown, Karen Eddington, and Keith Koch.

Registration begins on January 18th, 2024, and

ends at 250 registrants or March 1, 2024.



## State Cost Share

State Cost Share sign-up is coming up soon! Reach out to your local conservation district today with your conservation concerns and learn about ways the State Cost Share can help you!

Top things you didn't know a conservation district can help with:

- Septic tank or wastewater lagoon
- Well plugging
- Brush management
- Terraces
- Grassed Waterways

[Get Help](#)



## Farmer-to-Farmer Meetings

All local farmers, ranchers, and producers are encouraged to attend these regular Farmer-to-Farmer meetings focused on the conservation and preservation of our state's natural resources. Learn more about your local Farmer-to-Farmer meetings by contacting your [local conservation district](#).

### Farmer-to-Farmer Discussion

Collaborate & Discuss with Others!



# UPCOMING EVENTS

- >> Jan. 16-17: [Cover Your Acres Winter Conference](#)
- >> Jan. 17-18: [Soil Health U](#)
- >> Jan. 25: [Developing Low Input/High Efficiency Production Systems](#)
- >> Jan. 26-27: [Desert Farmer Meet Up](#)
- >> Jan. 22-24: [No-Till on the Plains Winter Conference](#)
- >> Jan. 29: [Smoky Hills Prescribed Burn Association Annual Meeting](#)
- >> Feb. 6: [Conservation Day at the Capitol](#)
- >> Feb. 8-9: [Kansas Natural Resources Conference](#)
- >> Feb. 14-16: [Women Managing the Farm Conference](#)
- >> Mar. 2: [2024 Statewide Women in Agriculture Event](#)
- >> Mar. 11-12: [Soil Matters](#)

Kansas Soil Health Alliance provides a list of many of the [soil health events](#). If you are hosting a soil health event, please submit it to Jennifer at Kansas Soil Health Alliance!

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## Connect With Us!

Follow along with us on our Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, and website for information about upcoming events, program details, available resources, news and more!



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Kansas Association of Conservation Districts

*"Providing local leadership to protect and improve Kansas Natural Resources through collaboration, education and implementation"*

**Visit KACD Website**



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