

Kansas Technical Assistance Partnership

2010 NASCA Annual Meeting



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Identifying the Need

- Kansas identified a shortage of technical assistance (TA) in high workload areas.
- NRCS and the State Conservation Commission (SCC) conducted a TA Needs Evaluation in 2009.
- Evaluated all funding sources and program needs statewide that implement BMP's:

Technical Assistance Evaluation

- NRCS included SCC and KDHE WRAPS workload information into their workload analysis to determine statewide T/A needs
- Workload analysis was completed on a management unit basis
- Positions identified in workload analysis
 - 22 Conservation Technician positions in 14 of the 34 NRCS management units
- The workload analysis will be completed at regular intervals to determine where T/A is needed.

Big Change for Conservation Districts

- SCC in 2009 had:
 - 42 Buffer Coordinators
 - 34 Water Quality Coordinators
- SCC in 2010 has:
 - 7 buffer coordinators
 - 0 Water Quality Coordinators
- The savings from these SCC funded positions were redirected to the NRCS Contribution Agreement.

Kansas Partners and Programs

- NRCS: EQIP
- SCC: State cost-share Programs
- Kansas Department of Health and Environment: Watershed Restoration and Protection; EPA 319
- Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks: Wildlife TA for habitat enhancement
- Pheasants Forever: Biologists for wildlife habitat enhancement
- Wild Turkey Federation: Wildlife TA for habitat enhancement
- Playa Lakes Joint Venture: Biologists for wildlife habitat enhancement

Kansas Technical Assistance Partnership Positions

§ 10 NRCS management units are in the process of filling 10 Soil Conservation Technician positions.

§ Most positions will start in August.

§ Pheasants Forever will hire 8 Wildlife Biologist/Conservation Technician positions to work in 8 NRCS management units.

§ 7 NRCS management units will receive funding for Buffer Coordinators.

T/A Partnership

- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to be signed by all partners
- Cooperative Agreement language with funding partners, 50 -50 match
- NRCS would provide the following in the Cooperative Agreement
 - Office space and computer
 - Equipment
 - Vehicle for use within the management unit
 - Training
 - Daily assignment of duties and workload management within the management unit
 - Possible funding

Management Unit Concept

- All partners agree that the most efficient way to deliver T/A is within the management unit concept
 - Strengths of different employees can be shared within the management unit
 - Workload within the management unit can be addressed on a more timely basis
 - Goals within the management unit can be developed and more T/A resources available to meet such goals
 - Allows multiple county implementation to maximize T/A efficiency

SCC Funded Positions

- Funds would be provided to a conservation district in the management unit that provides KPERS to fund the position(s)
- Limited funds would be provided to the host conservation district for administrative expenses
- Funds would be provided to the employee towards the purchase of health insurance
- SCC would provide supervisory oversight of employee
- SCC & NRCS would provide training on all conservation programs

Conclusion

- Kansas has a shortage of technical assistance to landowners in some management units
- The T/A Partnership will improve the timeliness of technical assistance to landowners in these management units
- The employees funded under the T/A partnership will hopefully be long-term employees
- All partners will increase the efficiency of program implementation.