

## Kansas Highlights

October 2001

### PUTTING THE WIND TO WORK

Alternative energy production has come to rural Kansas. The state ranks third nationally for wind energy potential. Montezuma is home for the state's largest wind farm that is scheduled to be on-line by 2002. FPL Energy will construct 170 wind turbines capable of generating 110 megawatts or enough electricity to power 33,000 homes in Kansas and Missouri.

The turbines will have three blades and sit on a 207 foot tall tower. Total weight of the turbine and tower will be 147,000 pounds.



*Rebecca Aistrup Gerber/Dodge City Daily Globe*

Finishing touches are made to towers at the Gray County Wind Farm.



*Michael Schweitzer/Dodge City Daily Globe*

Two Gray County Wind Farm workers sit inside a generator at the top of a tower preparing to guide the nose cone and blade assembly into place.

At a wind speed of seven mph, the 77-foot long blades start turning and will begin to produce electricity at a wind speed of nine mph. They will be at full power at 33 mph, will cut out at 56 mph and can withstand a sustained wind speed of 134 mph. Cimarron will be one of the Kansas towns receiving electricity from the wind farm. More Kansas locations are being considered for wind farms.

*Submitted by Michael Kinsey, District Conservationist, Cimarron FO*

### COVER YOUR ACRES NO-TILL FIELD DAY

The Northwest Kansas Crop Residue Management Alliance hosted its fourth annual "Cover Your Acres" No-till Field Day south of WaKeeney, Kansas, on August 2, 2001.

Information on education of no-till crops and practices highlighted this event. Despite the hot temperature, participants numbering around 275 from northwest Kansas came to review plots of herbicide treatments on corn, sorghum, soybeans, and wheat stubble.



They also viewed methods and amounts of fertilizer application, as well as populations and row spacing on corn, sorghum, soybeans, and on forage sorghum hybrids and different forms of seed treatment. Those participating also witnessed the rainfall simulator, a sprayer demonstration, soybean variety trials, sunflower hybrids, no-till equipment, and booths. *Submitted by Ken Urban, District Conservationist, Hays FO*

## TALKING TRASH

Americans throw away enough office and writing paper annually to build a wall 12-feet high stretching from Los Angeles to New York City.

How fast is an empty box by your printer and copier going to fill up with all those “junk” emails and bad copies until they are recycled? A box under your desk is a great source for scratch paper.

Although America’s National Recycle Day is observed on **November 15**, people need to make it a habit to recycle every day. More people every day are seeing what recycling is doing for nature, the environment, and the economy.

Every Sunday, the USA wastes about 90 percent of recyclable newspapers. That wastes about 500,000 trees. If everyone in the United States recycled just one-tenth of their newsprint, we would save an estimated equivalent of about 25 million trees a year. One tree can filter up to 60 pounds of pollutants from the air each year.



Americans throw away enough aluminum every three months to rebuild our entire commercial air fleet. You can make 20 cans out of recycled material with the same amount of energy it takes to make one new can. Here is something that we can throw into a box in the corner, get paid cash, and start a break room improvement fund. Paper, aluminum, cardboard, glass, plastic, the list of recyclable materials goes on and on.

We generate an average of 4.4 pounds of trash per day per person. Not all can be recycled, but a lot can. We are the “conservation experts.” I challenge all field, area, and state offices to start an organized recycling effort today. For information on America’s Recycle Day, check the following website: <http://www.americarecyclesday.org/> *Submitted by Mark Religa, Soil Conservation Technician, Newton FO*

## SPRING DEVELOPMENT SITES VISITED

On August 14, Ken Kuiper, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State Biologist; Marty Soffran, Hydraulic Engineer, NRCS, Cimarron; and Areas 1 and 3 personnel, traveled to Rooks County to view several spring development sites. Representatives from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks were also present for this review.

Several spring development sites were inspected to ensure that they met the National Food Security Act Wetland Policy and to provide consistency between areas. The group agreed that spring developments, when properly designed, can improve wildlife habitat and water quality, and can meet the Food Security Act requirements. *Submitted by Bob Tricks, Soil Scientist, Hays AO.*



## KANSAS WETLAND AND RIPARIAN AREAS ALLIANCE COMES TO SOUTHWEST KANSAS

A group of individuals from the southwestern part of the state with varied interests, met last June to discuss forming a local alliance for wetland and riparian projects and opportunities in the Upper Arkansas River Basin. Representatives from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Conservation Districts, Santa Fe Trail RC&D, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, Kansas Forest Service, Extension Service and other interested parties, met with Tim Christian of the Kansas Wetland and Riparian Areas Alliance (KWRAA) and determined that due to the diversity within the Upper Arkansas River Basin, two separate seminars should be conducted.

These seminars were held in August with one targeting Edwards, Ford, Hodgeman, Pawnee, and Stafford counties held at Spearville and the other, targeting Finney, Gray, Greeley, Hamilton, Kearny, Scott, and Wichita counties held at Garden City. Various agencies, groups, private businesses, and individuals that have a stake in wetland and riparian areas attended the meetings.

The seminars began with presentations in the morning and concluded with a tour in the afternoon. Topics addressed in the morning included the function and value of wetlands and riparian areas, as well as planning and design considerations for these areas. The afternoon tour highlighted wetland and riparian area projects that have been completed, as well as opportunities for future projects. At the conclusion of each seminar participants were given an opportunity to discuss the potential interest in forming local alliances. *Submitted by Amanda Shaw, District Conservationist, Garden City FO*

## GLACIAL HILLS MEETING

The Glacial Hills Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council hosted the fifth Annual Conference and Meeting of the State Association of Kansas RC&D Councils on August 8-10, 2001, at Hiawatha, Kansas.

Approximately eighty-five people from the eight RC&D areas and other organizations were in attendance. Highlights of the first day's meeting included speakers on Alternative Ag Marketing; Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry Program; Helping Small Town Grocery Stores to Survive; and the Future of Kansas Tourism. The second day included a tour of the Glacial Hills Region and some of the projects assisted by the Glacial Hills RC&D Council. The final day included the Association's business meeting and committee reports. *Submitted by Gary Satter, RC&D Coordinator, Valley Falls*

## UPCOMING CONSERVATION EVENTS

**November 18 - 21** – Kansas Association of Conservation Districts Annual Convention, Wichita Airport Hilton, Wichita, Kansas. This year's theme is "Serving All Communities"

**January 7 – 8, 2002** – The Farmers Agriculture, Conservation and Technology (The F.A.C.T.) Conference, Liberal, Kansas

**January 21 – 22** – No-Till on the Plains Conference, BiCentennial Center, Salina, Kansas

♦ Kansas Highlights is issued bi-monthly. For more information on how to submit a story, comments about Kansas Highlights, contact Sheila Forrester, NRCS Visual Information Specialist, at 785-823-4572, or at [sheila.forrester@ks.nrcs.usda.gov](mailto:sheila.forrester@ks.nrcs.usda.gov).

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.