



Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Oklahoma Newsletter - September 2022

Oklahoma

Natural Resources Conservation Service



- [A Message from the State Conservationist](#)
- [Farewell for now...](#)
- [Conservation Practice of the Month](#)
- [Management and Strategy | Job Postings](#)
- [Photo of the Month](#)
- [Dates to Remember](#)
- [USDA Announces First Three Lenders for Heirs' Property Relending Program](#)

A Message from the State Conservationist

Hello Oklahoma! I am Brandon Bishop, the Acting State Conservationist for Oklahoma. As some of you are aware, Gary O'Neill retired and I am honored and humbled to have this opportunity to serve in this role. I am originally from Arizona but have called Oklahoma home for about eight years now.

NRCS is adopting a new approach, the Great Plains Grassland Initiative (GPGI) to address woody plant encroachment. This threat of plant encroachment puts pressure on working rangelands by decreasing livestock production and increasing wildfire risk as well as harming grassland biodiversity and increasing threat to animal species living in this biome. The initiative is part of the NRCS Working Lands for Wildlife (WLFW) framework calling to conserve the last remaining iconic grassland regions in the Great Plains.



Producers in targeted rangelands are eligible to receive Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funding related to addressing woody plant encroachment. Please contact your local NRCS office for assistance on this initiative and others that assist on your operation.

Brandon Bishop, Acting State Conservationist

Farewell for now...



Gary O'Neill retired from NRCS on August 31st after almost 40 years of service. He served as the Oklahoma State Conservationist for more than nine years. He enjoyed the collaboration, partnership and friendship. Through these partnerships he has built on the great conservation legacy that Oklahoma has been known for over the last 85 years. One of the great things about our Oklahoma conservation/agriculture partnerships is the willingness to work together and support each other's initiatives and activities in order to assist our producers or improve our resources and environment.

Oklahoma has always been recognized as a national leader when it comes to conservation. This is greatly due to our successful partnerships and willingness to work together to support our farmers and ranchers. Private lands conservation has been extremely successful in Oklahoma because of our strong stewardship and conservation ethics of farmers and ranchers in our state. These successes go back to the Dust Bowl and how producers addressed the catastrophic erosion from this event and have included over time our upstream watershed program success, our water quality improvement success, and most recently our successes in the area of soil health advancements. All of the Oklahoma successes have been the result of producers investing in private lands conservation and working to address their resource concerns on their land. Non regulatory incentive based assistance has been the successful model for more than 85 years in Oklahoma and will continue to show success into the future.

Thank you for your service to Oklahoma and the country Gary, your knowledge and leadership will be missed.

Conservation Practice of the Month

Conservation Cover (327)



Photo by Ryan Jones. Producers in Tillman County Oklahoma have taken to utilizing conservation practice **Conservation Cover (327)** for the purpose of enhancing wildlife, pollinator and beneficial organism habitat. Pictured is an example of a planting for Conservation Cover implemented in 2020 that was also in combination with a Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) enhancement targeting Monarch butterfly habitat. In addition to providing habitat for Monarchs, producers have also noted a beneficial impact to other native wildlife, such as game birds, being abundant in these plantings. The Fall migration for Monarchs typically happens in Oklahoma August – November, so this is a timely part of the year that the plantings will be providing considerable conservation benefit.

The Oklahoma Standards and Specifications information: [click here.](#)

Management and Strategy | Job Postings

Upcoming Vacancy Announcements:

- Construction Inspector, GS-5/6/7/8 - Stillwater Watershed Office
- Design Engineer, GS-12 - Stillwater State Office, Engineering Section
- Soil Conservationist, GS-5/7/9 - Marietta

The best way to stay updated on job postings is to check [USA Jobs](#) often and sign up for notifications for job announcements.

All jobs with NRCS are listed and posted on USAJobs.

Photo of the Month



Photo by Madeline Alewine, Waynoka, OK. To enter a photo in this month's contest, email the full resolution photo to NRCSinfo-OK@usda.gov

Dates to Remember

These are events that NRCS and FSA will have representatives at the meeting if you have questions or want to visit.

September

- September 22 [OSU Career Fair](#) in Stillwater
- September 27 Langston Career Fair in Langston
- September 30 [OSU Extension Beginning Farmer and Rancher Meeting](#) in Ardmore

October

- October [Ag Programs for Veteran workshop](#) in Ardmore, Vinita, Enid, Ponca City, Oklahoma City, Lawton, Tulsa and McAlester. (Please click on link for dates)

- October 12 [Oklahoma Local Ag Collaborative](#) in Norman

November

- November 7-9 [Oklahoma Ag Expo](#) in Norman
- November 13-15 [National Farmer Veteran National Meeting](#) in Midwest City

USDA Announces First Three Lenders for Heirs' Property Relending Program

USDA is announcing that Shared Capital Cooperative, Akiptan, Inc. and the Cherokee Nation Economic Development Trust Authority (CNEDTA), have been approved or conditionally approved as intermediary lenders through the Heirs' Property Relending Program (HPRP). Once HPRP loans with these lenders close, these lenders will help agricultural producers and landowners resolve heirs' land ownership and succession issues. Additionally, USDA encourages more intermediary lenders, including cooperatives, credit unions and nonprofit organizations to apply. More information is at farmers.gov/heirs/relending.

Heirs may apply directly to the intermediary lenders for loans to resolve land ownership and succession issues.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).



USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

www.nrcs.usda.gov | [contact us](#)



SUBSCRIBER SERVICES:
[Manage Subscriptions](#) | [Help](#)