



Earth Team Volunteer Newsletter

January 2009



*Tulsa County Conservation District
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Tulsa County Blue Thumb*

Good Food and Good Company at Annual Volunteer Appreciation Christmas Party

TCCD packed the OSU extension once again as around 70 people attended this year's Volunteer Appreciation Christmas party held on Dec 5th at the OSU Extension office at the fairgrounds. To start the evening off, we had Brian Jackson AKA Elvis singing some familiar Christmas songs. After that, we began eating while we were waiting for those who had not arrived yet. We had turkey and ham prepared by Chelle's mom, Donna Burks, which was fantastic. All of the side dishes and desserts were either brought or prepared by other volunteers and included green bean casserole, potato salad, rice pilaf, ribs, pecan pie, blackberry cobbler, spice cake, and some others I was not fortunate enough to get a taste of. After we were finished eating, we gave out awards to some of our volunteers who had gone above and beyond what was requested of them. Our list included Graham Brannin, Walter Jobe, Kathryn Spencer, Heather Crain, Loyce Dubuc, Debbie and Justin Eagle, Greg Lohrke, Nan Ray, and John Beasley and students. Graham was given a plaque for 10 years of Blue Thumb service for monitoring Crow Creek. Walt was also given a plaque for monitoring numerous creeks for over 10 years. After the awards were given out Walter Eskridge, Curator of Education from the Oklahoma Museum of History gave a presentation in character about Roughnecks. These were the men in the 1920s and 30s that worked on the oil platforms performing perilous work. They had very dangerous jobs, but for the time were rewarded very well. The \$1 per hour they earned was twice as much as a farm hand could make. After Walter's very interesting presentation, we played White Elephant/Dirty Santa which is always fun. After all the presents had been distributed, we began to clean up and pack up. Thanks to everyone who could make it to the party this year and we look forward to next year's party where we will hopefully see you all again!



Message from Oklahoma Blue Thumb

Tulsa Area Volunteers Have New Role!

2007 was an important year for the Tulsa area's Blue Thumb streams. Fish collections were made, and now the data from these efforts have been sent to the Oklahoma Blue Thumb Headquarters in Bristow. Quality Assurance Officer Jean Lemmon said "We are setting up times for you to review your data with us and learn how your creek is doing. We'll help you understand the value of the work you have accomplished gathering information on your streams over the months and years."

Volunteers are asked to come in to the Tulsa County Conservation District office during the first couple of weeks of February to review their data with Jean Lemmon and/or Kim Shaw. Once the data has been reviewed, the actual writing of the report begins.

If you monitor one of these streams listed, please contact Jean Lemmon at 521-9535 or jean.lemmon@conservation.ok.gov or Kim Shaw at 405-522-4738 or kim.shaw@conservation.ok.gov to set up a time to review data and start your report. Once the report is completed, the next step is getting information to the public.

Coal **Crow** **Flat Rock** **Fred** **Haikey**
Mingo **Posey** **Little Joe** **Ranch** **Spunky**

Editor's Note:

To see examples of volunteer completed data reports, please go to:

- www.conservation.ok.gov.
- Click the Water Quality Division tab on the left.
- Text will appear, and then click Water Quality Division in the upper body of the text.
- Then on the left, hit WQ Blue Thumb. At that point, go to the BT Volunteer Monitoring page.

At the bottom of this page, click **Read Our Volunteer Written Data Reports!** After January 1, there will be additional reports listed.



Join us for our January volunteer meeting/ QA on the 8th!

Our next quarterly volunteer meeting will be held on January 8th from 10 AM-12 PM and 6 PM - 8 PM. The first hour will be at Water on the Run at 8125 E 51st St Ste C Tulsa, OK 74145 Phone: (918) 280-9283. We will be touring the WOTR facilities, learning more about water purification and bottled water. After that, we will come back to the TCCD office for the Blue Thumb QA portion of our meeting. It is extremely important that the new monitors attend this QA session. We hope to see you guys at the meeting and QA session. Have a Happy Holidays and a safe New Year!

Tulsa County Conservation District Gains New Board Member

Michael Patton is director of a Tulsa based non-profit known as the Metropolitan Environmental Trust (The M.e.t.). He has been involved in a variety of unusual promotions including crowning a local champion for Best Compost, sponsoring a "Grow your own Bat Night at the Ballpark" and convincing elected officials to do a press conference in a storm pipe. Michael is a proud organizer and helper on litter cleanups, recycle lobbying, and hazardous waste collections. He volunteers on many community boards, especially for tree and arts activities in Tulsa.

Michael started with the M.e.t. as a volunteer and as part of his job when he was the City of Tulsa recycling coordinator twenty years ago. He was forced to apply for the M.e.t. Executive Director position and is starting his fifteenth year this month. Mr Patton wants to help the TCCD build some new partnerships and relationships that promote the goals of conservation while also adding outside funding to the mission. As to why he chose a seat on the TCCD board, Michael responded, "I was asked to be a part of it by a number of people. Members of the staff and the board both approached me and wouldn't take no for an answer. Frankly, I am a little afraid of them all.

That fear will motivate me to do a good job." He finds conservation issues to be important because he has, "... been an earthling all of my life. I care about the environment because I know that good planets are hard to find. Don't believe NASA. It would be hard to save the whales here in Oklahoma."

Michael is inspired by the fact that are doing quite well in Oklahoma. "In just three generations we have gone from the dust bowl to green country. We have the same challenges as do other communities; protect our natural resources while leading a sustainable and comfortable life." Michael's wife, Anna America, is also doing her part to help conservation in Oklahoma – she is the Executive Director of Up with Trees. Their children are Braden and Eva. "I have been blessed that people are willing to help me work on environmental issues in Tulsa." Well the TCCD board and its staff are definitely willing to work with someone who has the reputation and dedication of a great conservationist such as Michael Patton.



TCCD Vice-Chair Scott VanLoo Receives 10 Years Service Award

Scott VanLoo, Vice Chairman of the Tulsa County Conservation District Board, recently received an Award of Recognition from Oklahoma Conservation Commission Executive Director Mike Thralls and Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts President Scotty Herriman for his "unselfish devotion to the cause of conservation demonstrated by 10 years of service in conservation work." Mr. VanLoo has been the Chairman of the District Board and has been an active member on the Tulsa Area Conservation Foundation board since 1997. He currently works for the City of Tulsa Public Works Department. Scott was raised with a love for the outdoors and an appreciation for all that makes up the outdoors. Conserving our natural resources are important to him. Scott and his wife Lori have one daughter named Elyssa and a son named Logan. They all enjoy outdoor activities and work to protect the natural resources. When Scott met Cheryl Cheadle and Sue Gray (both very active with the conservation district), they both persuaded him to run for the vacant board member position. It is very important to Scott to reduce misuse of the natural resources and increase awareness of the importance of conservation. Scott stated that in these challenging times, our natural resources are sometimes a low priority. As stewards of our natural resources, we need to remember this and take it into account before we act. We all need to strive to reduce negative impacts we have on the environment not only for today, but for our future generations. Scott believes two of the most critical environmental issues in Tulsa County are water quality and soil conservation. Changing peoples attitudes and values towards the environment is vital. As our communities grow, leaders need to carefully control growth to ensure it is done in a manner that protects the environment.



Conservation Funding Available For local Land Owners

Tulsa County Conservation District has funds available to assist landowners with certain practices benefiting soil and water conservation. The State of Oklahoma has provided limited funds to our conservation districts to help landowners implement measures that protect soil and water resources.

“With the continual cutback of federal funds for conservation programs, state funded conservation programs are needed more than ever to help protect the quality of our water and the productivity of our soil”, said Pat Baker, Cost Share recipient and Former board member of the Tulsa County Conservation District Board. Mr. Baker said, “Many landowners and land managers in Tulsa County have benefited from the State Conservation Cost Share Program over the past 9 years, and good conservation practices are now on the ground to protect Tulsa County’s natural resources.”

Conservation practices available for cost-share assistance this year include:

Brush Management: Removal, reduction, or manipulation of non-herbaceous plants such as eastern red cedar, Ashe juniper, redberry juniper, oneseed juniper, and rocky mountain red cedar.

Critical Area Planting: Planting vegetation on highly erodible or critically eroding areas.

Pasture & Hay land Planting: establishing native or introduced forage plants to reduce soil erosion by wind and/or water

Pond: A water impoundment made by constructing a dam or an embankment or by excavating a pit or dugout.

Grade Stabilization Structure: A structure used to control the grade and head cutting in natural or artificial channels.

Grassed Waterway: A natural or constructed channel that is shaped or graded to required dimensions and established in suitable vegetation for the stable conveyance of runoff.

Pipeline: Installed for conveying water for livestock or for recreation.

Terrace: An earth embankment, a channel, or a combination ridge and channel constructed across the slope.

Water Well: A well constructed or improved to provide water for irrigation, livestock, wildlife or recreation.

Watering Facility: A trough or tank, with needed devices for water control and water disposal installed to provide drinking water for livestock.

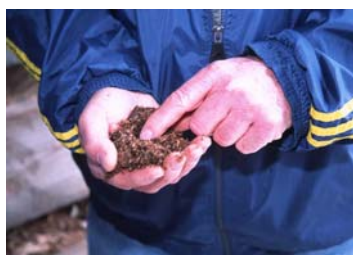
Nutrient Management: Managing the amount, form, placement, and timing of applications of plant nutrients.

Range Planting: Establishing adapted plants by seeding on native grazing land to prevent excessive soil and water loss and improve water quality.

To be eligible participants must have or establish a conservation plan with the district, must need one of the above conservation practices, and must own or operate 20 acres of land in Tulsa County from which more that \$1000.00 of soil dependent products (i.e. hay, livestock, etc.) are sold annually. Cost share percentage will be up to 75% of cost of practice installed, but will not exceed \$5000.00. Due to limited funds, recipients will be chosen using water quality improvement and erosion control criteria.

Application for these funds will be accepted beginning on Dec. 19, 2008. Applications may be obtained from the Tulsa County Conservation District office located at 5401 S. Sheridan Rd., Suite 201, Tulsa, OK. Our office hours are Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm. If you have any questions, call (918) 280-1595.

CONTACT: Michelle Ragge, Tulsa County Conservation District at 918-280-1595.



Calendar of Events

New Year's Day

Office closed

Macroinvertebrate Collections

We will be collecting bugs from creeks in our area. If you would like to help out on the following dates, please let us know.

January 6-9th, 16th

tulsaccd@conservation.ok.gov

Outreach Education at Disney Elementary

Sewer-in-a-suitcase presentation

January 12th-14th from 12:30-2:30

Disney Elementary 11702 E 25th St

Martin Luther King, Jr Day

Office will be closed

Environmental Education Expo

Oklahoma Environmental Education Expo will be held at the Rosser Conservation Education Center and the OKC Zoo Friday January 30 8 AM – 3:30 PM

Tulsa Home and Garden Show

Come check out new home appliances and the like

March 12th-15th

Tulsa State Fairgrounds

Going Green Kickoff

Saturday, March 21, 2009 1:00-4:00 p.m. Herman & Kate Kaiser Library located inside LaFortune Park (5202 S. Hudson Ave., Tulsa)

Conservation Day at the Capitol

Day to meet with legislators to tell them about conservation issues in OK

March 25th 9 AM – 2 PM

Resource Management Conference

Come and hear presentation about many green topics including recycled building supplies, low impact development, and green development techniques

April 1st 8 AM—6 PM

Tulsa Home Builders Assc.

11545 E 43rd St Tulsa, OK 74146

Tulsa County Free Fair

Join 4-H for this free fair in the summer

July 22-24

Tulsa State Fairgrounds

15th Annual Creek Clean Up and Water Festival

The morning will begin with a run followed by the typical creek cleanup. Then a fair-like water festival with food vendors, a kids zone, an art show, earth friendly products and much more.

September 12th

Tulsa Riverparks from 21st to 41st

Tentatively scheduled from 7 AM—7 PM

Blue Thumb Training

Become a certified Blue Thumb monitor

September 26th-27th

TCCD Offices

5401 S Sheridan Tulsa, OK 74135

Fish protection rule slithers out of cost reins

<http://www.newsok.com/fish-protection-rule-slithers-out-of-cost-reins/article/3327204>

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BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



WASHINGTON — The Bush administration asked the Supreme Court on Tuesday to let the nation's older power plants draw in billions of gallons of water for cooling without installing technology to protect aquatic organisms. Lawyers for the government and electricity producers urged the justices to overturn a lower court ruling that says the Clean Water Act does not allow the government to pit the cost of upgrading power plants against benefits of protecting organisms when limiting water use.

They argued that for the last 30 years the Environmental Protection Agency has weighed the costs of controlling power plant withdrawals from rivers, streams and other waterways against the benefits of saving more aquatic wildlife in setting technology requirements. The law already allows such cost-benefit analyses to be performed when facilities discharge pollutants into waterways that could affect human health, the attorneys said. Environmentalists want the decision upheld.

Richard Lazarus, an attorney representing environmental groups, told the court that the "EPA has no authority in any circumstance to decide that fish aren't worth a certain amount of cost." The outcome could determine whether existing power plants need to make costly upgrades to reduce the number of fish and aquatic organisms trapped in their cooling systems. The nation's power plants use billions of gallons of water from rivers and other waterways each year to cool their facilities.

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!!!!

Are you interested in being on a specialized planning committee? We need help with the 2009 Water Festival sub-committees. We have Events, Media, Finance, and Volunteer Manpower committees that need your help. We also need volunteers to work at the 2009 Home and Garden Show AND THE Free Fair. Please let us know if you are interested. WE NEED YOUR HELP!!!

The Earth Team Newsletter Blue Thumb Prints is published by Tulsa County Conservation District, 5401 S. Sheridan Rd., Suite 201, Tulsa, OK, Phone: (918) 280-1595. [Tulsaccd@conservation.ok.gov](mailto:tulsaccd@conservation.ok.gov) Tulsa County Conservation District and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service are equal opportunity providers and employers. Visit the web site at www.tulsacountyconservationdistrict.org