

## Employee Vignette

**Featured Customer/Employee:** Sharla Schwien

**Location:** Ness City, Kansas

**Farm Operation/Employee Job Title:** District Conservationist

**Date:** January 2008



*Schwien and landowner sit in mobile office developing conservation plan.*

### Sharla Schwien Likes One-on-One Planning with Mobile Office

Sharla Schwien, district conservationist in the Ness City (Kansas) Field Office, began as a student trainee in 1994. She is always up for a challenge whether implementing the Mobile Office Pilot Project in her county, maintaining her Red Card Certification with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or sparking kids' interest in conservation.

When Sharla drives the NRCS pickup equipped with a computer, scanner, printer and other equipment to the field to meet a producer, she knows she's ready to develop a conservation plan. She enjoys the satisfaction she sees on the producer's face when she hands him/her the plan on the spot. She likes the idea of doing the plan in the field, one on one.

Sharla prides herself in being Red Card Certified allowing her to write burn plans. She expects this training to come in handy when 100,000 acres enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program will require maintenance burning from 2009-2014. The local conservation district board is sponsoring Cooperative Burn meetings for producers to help them learn about burn plans and safety in burning in windy western Kansas.

Using a stream trailer is one way Sharla helps kids learn how buffers and land treatment help with water quality in the county. According to Sharla, kids pick up information about conservation quickly and she encourages them to go home and talk to their parents about conservation, such as water quality, water quantity, and soil health.

Sharla loves to work on the land with farmers and ranchers and her greatest reward is seeing them implement the conservation plans they have developed.



*Sharla Schwien (back center) provides conservation education by using stream trailer.*

**“I like the idea of doing the plan in the field, one on one,” says Sharla Schwien**