



# Central National Technology Support Center Annual Report

October 2011

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## Director's Message



*As we complete fiscal year 2011, it has been my distinct privilege to serve as the Acting Director for the Central National Technology Support Center (CNTSC). We have survived serious budget uncertainties, made necessary adjustments, postponed some conference travel, and delayed a few procurements. But we have still been able to respond to calls for assistance with no delay.*

*We are making good use of the new National Video Teleconferencing equipment, and find it effective and timely.*

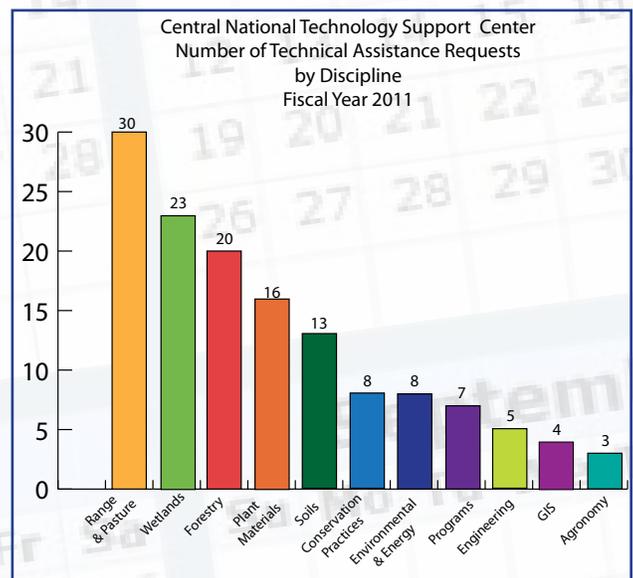
*Wetland delineations, salinity, wind erosion, plant materials, giant Miscanthus, soil interpretations, Ecological Site Descriptions, and drainage engineering are some of the topics that fill our days. Also, nearly two thirds of the CNTSC technical staff have involved with the Conservation Delivery Streamlining Initiative.*

*Several employees have retired, taking years of knowledge and expertise with them. But new and exciting times are ahead of us, and we look forward to fielding the challenges with our conservation partners and new additions to our staff.*

*Our first priority is always to serve our States in the best way we can, so please let us know how we can do that better.*

*Emil Horvath,  
CNTSC Director (Acting)*

*Graph 1.1 - FY 2011 Number of requests by discipline.*



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## Biomass Study

Joel Douglas, plant materials specialist, and Steve Brady, wildlife team leader, are working with the Booneville, Arkansas Plant Materials Center (PMC) and the Agriculture Research Service in Booneville, Arkansas to develop efficient and accurate methods for predicting switchgrass yield without sampling quadrates to determine actual yield.



Steve Brady (left) and Randy King, Booneville PMC manager, measure visual obstruction of switchgrass growth.

The purpose of non-destructive sampling is to quickly assess biomass yield at the field-scale with limited labor requirements. Plant measurements were collected from plots of upland and lowland switchgrass cultivars and selections at the Booneville PMC. Measurements included plant heights (absolute and to the highest leaf), stem density and stem size, and Robel pole measurements for visual obstruction. These plant measurements will be used to model the relationship between the plant components measured and dry matter yield. Preliminary analyses of the data show the best correlation for predicting yield was obtained with the Robel pole measurement and stem diameter.

For additional information, contact Joel Douglas at 817-509-3419 or [joel.douglas@ftw.usda.gov](mailto:joel.douglas@ftw.usda.gov).



## A Tool for Measuring Percent Porosity of Vegetative Structures

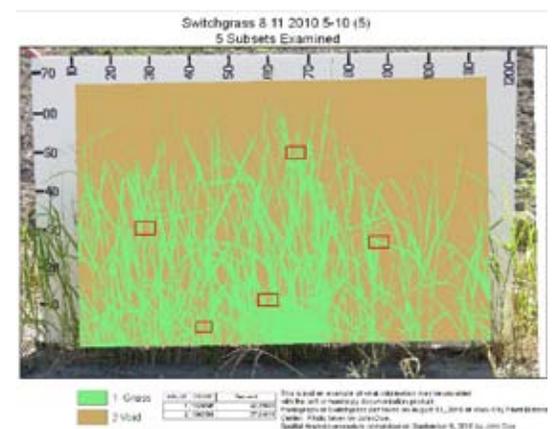
Herbaceous and woody plants are often established along field edges in single or multiple rows to create windbreaks, and grasses planted in narrow, parallel strips or on the contour in cropland fields to control wind erosion. A plant's physical shape and structure provides the right combination of percent porosity and density, to effectively trap and filter air-borne sediment. Herbaceous wind barriers, cross-wind trap strips and windbreak practices require a minimum porosity percentage to function effectively in protecting the growing crop during critical erosion periods. For example, barriers established in the field for wind erosion control must have a porosity of 40-50%.

Methods for measuring percent porosity are largely determined by visually estimating the open canopy or examining photographs of known porosity and matching it to the porosity of interest. Joel Douglas, plant materials specialist, Ray Stoner, forester, and Dwain Daniels, GIS specialist, at the CNTSC developed a procedure to quantify percent porosity within a sample area of a windbreak or vegetative barriers/strips using digital photographs and ArcGIS software. The process begins with a digital photograph of the vegetative barrier where contrasting colors are present for separating the areas of plant and those void of plant material. Geospatial processing functions in the ArcGIS Spatial Analyst extension such as the RECLASSIFY tool, enable the user to derive a calculated percent porosity within the selected extent of the area photographed.

A step-by-step procedure to enable those with intermediate GIS skills to perform this analysis, has been developed. For more information on this technique contact Dwain Daniels at 817-509-3358 or [dwain.daniels@ftw.usda.gov](mailto:dwain.daniels@ftw.usda.gov).



Switchgrass used for porosity determination at the Knox City, Texas, Plant Materials Center.



Result of porosity analysis of switchgrass at the Knox City Texas, Plant Materials Center.

## Collecting Plant Attribute Data for Conservation Planning Tools

Working with the Agricultural Research Service, CNTSC plant materials specialist and agronomists developed a series of plant measurement protocols for collecting plant architectural data to fill critical voids in databases used in the Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation 2 (RUSLE 2) and the Wind Erosion Prediction System (WEPS), and to improve the responsiveness of these models for conservation planning. Joel Douglas, Bill Kuenstler, and Mike Sporcic developed the plant collection protocols to guide Plant Materials Centers (PMC) in measuring plant architecture of several warm-season, perennial grass species used in NRCS conservation practices and as a biofuel feedstock. For example, a protocol was developed to collect giant miscanthus (*Miscanthus giganteus*) first year's growth from a new planting and from a well established planting at the Elsberry, Missouri PMC. The data will become part of the vegetation files in RUSLE 2 for predicting soil erosion in production fields of giant miscanthus as part of the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP).



*Measuring plant attributes of giant miscanthus at the Elsberry, Missouri, Plant Materials Center.*

The following protocols have been prepared and plant data collection efforts are in progress at several PMCs in the central region.

- Stubble and residual surface biomass collection procedure (RUSLE 2)
- Developing a growth curve for warm-season grasses (RUSLE 2; WEPS)
- Sampling protocol for established and newly planted perennial grass for vegetative barriers (WEPS)
- Collecting plant attributes of miscanthus during the establishment year and from a mature stand (RUSLE 2)

For additional information, contact Mike Sporcic at 817-509-3213 or [michael.sporcic@ftw.usda.gov](mailto:michael.sporcic@ftw.usda.gov).



## Conservation Delivery Streamlining Initiative Project

Ed Griffin, CNTSC Soils Scientist, provided technical soils information for the 25 Soil Attributes/Properties for the NRCS Ranking Mart needed for the CDSI Pilot activities in seven States. The tool is being used for a pilot in Alabama, Kentucky, Oregon, California, Utah, Kansas, and Indiana to test integrating technical soils information into conservation planning, along with other data layers. This should improve time management and increase the technical credibility of the financial assistance (FA) application ranking process. Griffin provided soil properties values, ratings and proposed FA ranking classes that were needed for the Ranking Mart. When the tool is implemented it will aid all States in meeting the agency strategic goals and initiatives.



## Economic Impact Assessment

CNTSC Economist, David Buland helped South Dakota and Missouri State staff complete an assessment of economic impact of conservation programs for their States. The Missouri study concentrated on the impacts from the Mississippi River Basin Initiative (MRBI) programs, and was also presented to Ducks Unlimited. Buland also provided an "economic impact" presentation to the California State staff on the impact of \$44.2 million in payments for on-farm air quality improvements to help San Joaquin Valley farmers meet new air quality regulations. He also assisted Texas, Rhode Island, and South Dakota in updating new TSP Payment Rates on the TechReg website, and reviewed the economics of scale curves for the newer practices to be used in the TSP Payment Rate application.

## Drainage Water Management Project

Ed Griffin assisted the National Drainage Water Management (DWM) Group to determine where DWM is feasible within States. He used soils technology to evaluate soil drainage reports relative to subsurface drainage, and selected soils rules and criteria for compiling a NASIS query for soil information. This query provided soil information that will work with other data layers to generate a report and map of Agricultural Land Suitable for Drainage Water Management with total acres for a pilot in Illinois. After the pilot, this criteria and method can be used by NRCS for all States with DWM concerns. This will aid States with improving water quality and enhance water resources.

For additional information, contact Ed Griffin at 817-509-3304 or [edward.l.griffin@ftw.usda.gov](mailto:edward.l.griffin@ftw.usda.gov).

## GIS Activities

Dwain Daniels, CNTSC GIS specialist, led the NSSC web-delivered Soil Data Viewer training session, which had 11 participants.

Daniels serviced requests from the Central Service Area and National Centers, including:

- WI - Assistance processing LiDAR elevation data;
- TX - High Plains Playa Watershed Study;
- CDSI - Reviewed and commented (w/o much effect) on Mobile Device recommendations document from IT architecture;
- MI - Remote Sensing of Soil Phosphorus by the Blue Water Satellite Company;
- ERSI – GIS assistance, processing plant point data in Alaska;
- NSSC - continued work on the National FSA RUSLE/WEPS project;
- Provided assistance to OK, MI, TX, and CA on the State Resource Analyses project;
- Completed and delivered the report to MI on using LANDSAT data for an “automated” Phosphate index.

Dwain also developed a geoprocessing model that allows the user to exclude specific areas from digital elevation raster datasets before creating terrain derivatives. The model was tested and added to the Digital Soil Mapping Job Aides SharePoint site.



*Maine Soil Scientists evaluating elevation data and terrain derivatives provisioned using the ArcServer geoprocessing service*

## Missouri Basin Baseline Analysis

Dwain Daniels, GIS Specialist, and David Buland, CNTSC Economist, worked on the Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan, Social/Economic Team in Denver for the second meeting to develop the social/economic/cultural resources of the Missouri Basin baseline analysis.

## NTSC Training Library Developed

The CNTSC and ENTSC recorded a brief net conference preview of the NTSC Training Library and training materials developed by the National Technology Support Centers. The short webinar (45min) includes completing the Training – New Item form and the appropriate information and link for training materials. Click: [Preview-NTSC Library “How to Upload Training Materials,”](#) for the web replay demonstrating how to upload training webinars, presentations, and workshop materials to the new NTSC Library.

- First generation Wind Erosion Prediction System (WEPS) software database revisions were sent out to States. Eleven of 13 western States have completed their field office training for WEPS.
- Jerry Walker, hydraulic engineer, provided training and technical assistance to new Nebraska State water management engineer and provided two presentations at a workshop for 15 CET and SCTs.
- Alley Cropping, Silvopasture Establishment, and Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment standards were updated with energy/biomass purpose statements.
- The CNTSC and the National Plant Data Team are cooperating with Kansas State University in the development of a “Phytoremediation Database” to facilitate the selection of plant materials for phytoremediation of inorganic and organic contaminants in the soil, sediments, surface waters and ground waters.
- CNTSC Specialists Joel Douglas, Bill Hohman, Steve Brady and Cheryl Simmons, along with NHQ’s Liz Crane and Central States, discussed biomass production and the BCAP program with the Central Region SRC Workgroup. Information shared on the conference call is located at: <https://nracs.sc.egov.usda.gov/st/CNTSC/SRCs/>. Thirty state specialists participated in the one-hour meeting.
- Tony Funderburk, CNTSC agricultural engineer, is finalizing report specifications for the Pipeline Design Tool (designing livestock and irrigation pipelines for the field office use). He is also starting report specs for the NRCS Hydrology Tool for field office runoff computations. All are to be in the Engineering Field Tools (EFT) part of CDSI.
- Dennis Neffendorf, CNTSC agronomist (retired), and the Salinity Management Workgroup prepared and delivered the Salinity Management for Soil & Water course in May, 2011. Participants included conservationists from 17 States, primarily from the West and Central regions. Salinity affects 20% of cropland world-wide. In the U.S. alone, more than 50 million acres of cropland are considered saline or sodic, adversely affecting the future of agricultural production.
- Bill Kuentzler, CNTSC agronomist and Cheryl Simmons, CNTSC technology specialist, participated in a panel discussion with organic producers. Topics included the timing of sign up, communication, and working with conservation partners.
- CNTSC Agronomists held weekly LiveMeetings to work on vegetation data and management scenarios for RUSLE2Graze for the Upper Midwest and Midwest Forage Management Zones. Work on the Upper Midwest data should be complete in 2-3 weeks and for the Midwest Zone within 4-5 weeks. The new version of RUSLE2 should be available in 2012.
- Chad Ellis, CNTSC rangeland management specialist, delivered a CSP Enhancement Assessment Review on pasture/range/grazing to Terrell Erickson, director, Ecological Science Division at Chief Whites’s request.
- Matthew Judy, CNTSC ecologist, continues coordination/development efforts with the Conservation Delivery Streamlining Initiative (CDSI). He initiated development/reformatting of environmental compliance materials, and conducted a test run on endangered and threatened species screening and basic assessment. He also completed a draft of Public Health and Safety guide sheet and coordinated easement infrastructure training with EPD.
- Tony G. Funderburk, CNTSC engineer, and Bill Kuentzler, CNTSC agronomist, participated in an O&E Payment Schedule Review. The review includes nine states with a sampling of about 54 payment schedules and interviews with all nine states. Team has completed seven State reviews, with two more still scheduled. The objective is to review for technical adequacy of the scenarios to meet practice standards, avoid bundling of practices or stand alone components and prepare recommendations/suggestions to improve the FY12 process.



*Cheryl Simmons (below right) participated in the Missouri Organic Producer Workshop, with a new farmer (top left) who earns a living on six acres of organically grown produce and a CSA.*



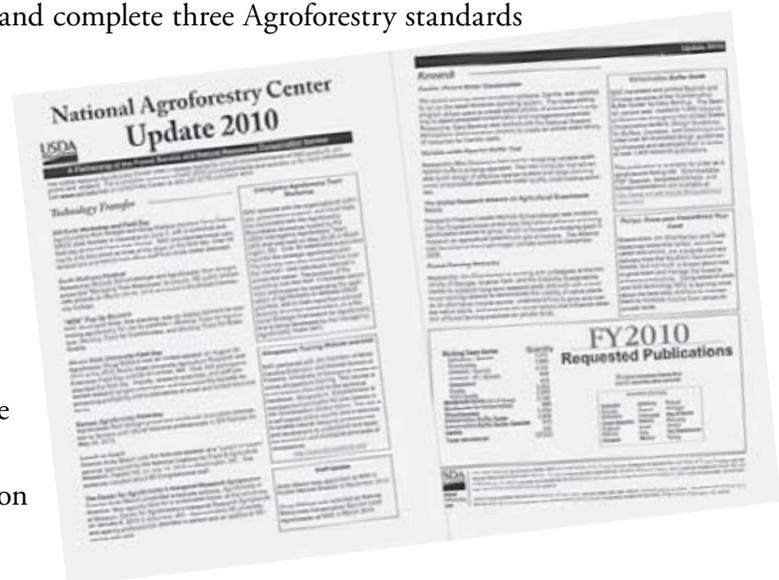
## Activities Summary (continued)

- Bill Kuenstler is involved in updating two of the four NRCS Energy Estimators. For the Energy Estimator: Nitrogen, the cost data for nitrogen fertilizer products will be updated, and any broken/outdated links to Land Grant University nutrient management information will be fixed. For the Energy Estimator: Tillage, all of the RUSLE2 management files developed for the original estimator will be reviewed and updated, and management files requested by users will be added.
- Lyn Kirschner, Bill Boyer, Stefanie Aschmann and Joel Douglas, finalized the agenda for the SWCS Symposium on Bioenergy Production, “Can Bioenergy Grow Our Energy Independence? A Policy to Production.” This symposium is designed to advance the development of perennial herbaceous biomass-based bioenergy.



## Agroforestry Center Highlights

- On April 12, 2011, the USDA National Agroforestry Center (NAC) and the Nebraska Forest Service provided training for the Nebraska Air and Army Guard’s Agriculture Deployment Team (ADT) that is being deployed to Afghanistan. The ADT will be deployed to Afghanistan from July 2011 to May 2012 to work with local government, university, and NGO personnel to improve agricultural and forestry extension efforts. Rich Straight (NAC Agroforester) from the USFS, Nancy Young (Arkansas State Resource Conservationist) and Doug Wallace (NAC Agroforester) from NRCS, and Dennis Adams from the Nebraska State Forestry Service discussed tree care, planting, and agroforestry design guidelines and will provide additional educational resources and reach back assistance once the Nebraska Guard ADT is in Afghanistan.
- Doug Wallace assisted with the development of the draft USDA Strategic Agroforestry Plan and with its rewrite and update.
- Doug Wallace finalized the new National Agroforestry Center Agroforestry Note – A “Fresh” Tool to Mitigate Odors from Livestock Production Facilities.
- The latest edition of Inside Agroforestry (volume 19 issue1) titled “Riparian forest buffer ‘apps’ for your smart farm” has just been released to NRCS and District offices. This Agroforestry newsletter, produced by the USDA National Agroforestry Center, a partnership of FS and NRCS, goes out to nearly 7000 offices, resource professionals, and individuals every issue.
- Doug Wallace worked with Bruce Wight to finalize and complete three Agroforestry standards with energy purposes for Federal Register review:
  - \* Silvopasture Establishment (381)
  - \* Alley Cropping (311).
  - \* Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment (380)
- Provided editing, rewriting, and review for draft guidebook that is being developed by the 1890 Agroforestry Consortium.
- Worked on program for Nebraska National Guard ADT that will deal with tree care, tree handling, tree planting, and practice design.
- Developed a new newsletter, “Conservation Innovation Grants,” for the upcoming national review process.



For additional information about NAC activities, contact Doug Wallace, CNTSC agroforester at 402-437-5178 x4036, or [doug.wallace@ftw.usda.gov](mailto:doug.wallace@ftw.usda.gov).

## Interagency Ecological Site Handbook for Rangelands

Bureau of Land Management (BLM), US Forest Service (USFS), and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) manage or provide conservation assistance for the majority of the nation's rangeland. Each agency has utilized different methods to stratify rangeland ecosystems into units for planning, analysis, and decisionmaking. Since private and public lands under these agencies' jurisdictions are intermingled throughout much of the United States, a standardized system to define and describe rangeland ecological sites is more efficient and defensible.



In May of 2005, leadership of the three agencies signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) committing to the joint development of a standardized system to be utilized by each agency. The first product of the MOU was the Rangeland Interagency Ecological Site Manual that was signed by the three agencies in June of 2010. The manual defined the interagency policy to cooperatively identify and define rangeland ecological sites.

Since release of the manual, an interagency team has been working to develop an Interagency Ecological Site Handbook for Rangelands. The handbook is being developed to implement the policy identified in the manual by providing a standardized method to be utilized by the three agencies to define, delineate, and describe ecological sites on rangeland. An initial draft of the handbook was released by each agency for review and comments. At the present time, the interagency team is reviewing all of the comments and making appropriate revisions to the handbook. Once this task is completed, the handbook should be ready for release.

For additional information, contact Homer Sanchez, rangeland management specialist at 817-509-3227 or [homer.sanchez@ftw.usda.gov](mailto:homer.sanchez@ftw.usda.gov).

## A Tool to Assist in Ecological Site Development

A substantial amount of data is involved in developing ecological sites (ESs) and forage suitability groups (FSGs). Aside from organizing pertinent climatic, physiographic, soil, production, growth curve, hydrology, and management information, ESs and FSGs must represent distinct groupings within a Major Land Resource Area (MLRA). Ecological sites are grouped on the basis of distinct climatic, physical, and vegetative relationships. Forage Suitability Groups represent soil groupings that have similar physical and chemical characteristics that support adapted forage plants. When developing ESs or FSGs, hundreds of soil map unit components must be evaluated and grouped. For example, a data set of 350 soil map unit components with 25 variables such as slope, texture, pH, texture, drainage, flooding, available water holding capacity must be analyzed. That is a data matrix of 8,750 pieces of information.

The ability of the human mind to conceptualize this much data is limited. A multivariate approach that has the power to organize data for evaluation is needed. Cluster analysis and ordination techniques are available in software packages such as PC-ORD (Personal Computer Ordination). This program has the ability to organize soil and vegetative data into groups, which can then be analyzed and used to develop ESs and FSGs. Technical assistance has been provided to several States (Florida, Idaho, Louisiana, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Texas, and Utah) utilizing PC-ORD to analyze and group soils and vegetative data.

For more information on utilizing these types of analysis techniques, contact Dr. Ken Spaeth, rangeland management specialist at 817-509-3574 or [Ken.spaeth@ftw.usda.gov](mailto:Ken.spaeth@ftw.usda.gov).

## Grazing Lands Team Highlights

- Assisted Resource Assessment Division with the rangeland section of the Resources Conservation Act Appraisal.
- Made two presentations on Ecological Sites at an Ecological Site Workshop conducted at the 2011 International Society for Range Management Annual Meeting.
- Met with new Soil Ecology Team at National Soil Survey Center to discuss cooperative efforts in accelerating development of ecological site descriptions. An action plan of activities was developed.

## Wetlands Team Activities

### Activities Summary

- Norman Melvin, Ph.D., Wetlands Team Leader, spent three months on detail to the ENTSC as the Acting Team Leader for the National Plant Data Team. During this time he worked with the newly-hired staff to assess plant data, execute existing contracts, and prepare for an Alaska taxonomic and distribution update to the PLANTS Database. A temporary library intern from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro was hired to organize and catalogue approximately 1000 botanical references and floras maintained in the Plant Teams reference library.
- A revision to the National Wetland Plant List is progressing. Following a 74-day public review and comment period on the draft plant list, comments and data received are passed to the Regional Plant Panels for review and adjustment of wetland plant indicators, prior to posting as Final in the Federal Register
- Richard Weber, wetland hydrologist, spent time in Nebraska training members of the National Guard preparing for deployment to Afghanistan, working with the US Fish & Wildlife Service to provide an interagency Wetland Restoration & Enhancement training course to South Dakota, and assisted Wyoming with training on wetland planning. Richard is also preparing a revision to the EFM-Chapter 19, and presenting a paper to the ASABE titled, “Soil Data Preparation for Determination of Drainage Lateral Effects Using the Rosetta Software” which is being followed up with a technical note on the topic.
- Lee Davis, wetland biologist, filled the Regional Biologist position on the CNTSC staff effective March 29, 2011. Lee has been instrumental in developing a Wetland Identification and Delineation course for NRCS and has assisted the Wetland Team in many other ways for the past several years
- Lee Davis, CNTSC wetland biologist, worked with the NRCS top wetland delineators to develop wetland identification methods to better meet the needs of USDA program participants.
- Bill Hohman and Rich Weber provided assistance to the Missouri River Coordinator (Verlon Barnes) through their participation on teleconferences and technical reviews of the draft Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan and EIS baseline assessment (<http://www.moriverrecovery.org/mrrp/f?p=136:11:789849056209032> ).
- Draft manuscript (“Opportunities and Challenges to Implementing Bird Conservation on Private lands”) co-authored by Bill Hohman was submitted for peer review.
- Norman Melvin developed Issue Paper and Issue Response documents at the request of the S&T Deputy Area, regarding wetland impacts and the construction of nitrogen treatment ponds in Iowa. Investigated legal requirements outlined in the National Food Security Act for mitigating wetland impacts and formally responded to questions generated from discussions with IDALS, the Iowa STC, and S&T.
- Norman is also working with the O&E staff on an issue with ND, SD, MN, and IA pertaining to the lack of uniformity in conducting Certified Wetland Determinations leading to uniformity in these States. Differences relate to paperwork “triggers” that request Certified Determinations and unrevised State Wetland Mapping Conventions when compared to current policy.



## Activities Summary

- Steve Brady, Wildlife Team Leader, and Bill Hohman, wildlife biologist, participated in a teleconference with FSA, Environ, and Aloterra Energy discussing the Environmental Assessment that FSA & Environ are preparing for the Biofuels Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) proposal with Aloterra Energy.
- Steve Brady and Bill Hohman reviewed and edited documentation for the Lesser Prairie Chicken Initiative Conference Opinion with US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS).
- Steve Brady and Reggie Blackwell, CNTSC rangeland management specialist, assisted in the review of narratives for Conservation Practices to be included in the Lesser Prairie Chicken Initiative and to be addressed in the Conference Opinion being developed with the FWS for the Initiative.
- Organized or coordinated six Biology Net Meeting training events led by prominent biologists from academia or other federal agencies and NGOs.
- Distributed 10 comprehensive literature surveys to the States, Initiative Coordinators, Regional and National staff with many targeted technical references. Feedback from recipients indicates this service is greatly appreciated.
- Developed and submitted a Business Investment Proposal on habitat assessment for NHQ funding in support of the Conservation Delivery Streamlining Initiative (CDSI).
- Provided consultative assistance and peer review of the: National Easement Assessment Program, FS Resources Planning Act Assessment, NRCS's potential role in control of feral hogs, salt-cedar/beetle controversy, draft Senate bill on use of monies received from the Gulf Oil Spill to restore wetlands and coastal ecosystems, Payment Schedule updates for two wildlife practices across 15 regions, participated on or led teams to update 3 National Conservation Practice Standards (399, 644, & 645).
- Conducted extensive analysis of wetland trends from the 2007 NRI data for use in the RCA, NRI Special Report, and a technical presentation at a professional meeting.
- Actively participated in the Patch-burn Grazing working group & field day, IUCN Bumble Bee Conservation Strategy and Plan development, coordinated a symposium & round table discussion at The Wildlife Society's Annual Meeting: "Wildlife Conservation Planning, Implementation, and Monitoring at Multiple Scale."



*Lesser Prairie Chicken*



*Migratory Bird Habitat Initiative in Mississippi - reflooding catfish ponds for shorebirds.*



*WRP in Ohio .*

- Represented NRCS on interagency team developing the National Fish, Wildlife, and Plants Climate Adaptation Strategy (led by F&WS).
- Provided technical leadership for the interagency Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan and EIS and provided technical guidance for States working with Great Lakes Conservation Initiative Coordinator and the Lake Superior Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Plan.



## Personnel News

### Walker Wins Federal Engineer of the Year

Congratulations to Jerry Walker, agricultural engineer (water management), for being selected to represent NRCS in the FY 2011 Federal Engineer of the Year Award (FEYA) competition sponsored by the Professional Engineers in Government section of the National Society of Professional Engineers.

FEYA nominees are recognized for their professional and civic accomplishments. Nominees from over 25 agencies, were honored at the FEYA luncheon in February 2011 in Washington, DC, where Walker was announced Federal Engineer of the Year.



*Jerry Walker*

### Ellis Receives SRM Award



*Chad Ellis*

Chad Ellis, CNTSC rangeland management specialist received the Outstanding Young Range Professional Award from the Texas Section of the Society for Range Management.

The Outstanding Young Range Professional Award is presented to an individual member who has demonstrated extraordinary potential and promise as a range management professional. This award is presented as an encouragement for outstanding performance by young men and women entering the profession of range management.

### Neffendorf & Norman Retire

Dennis Neffendorf, CNTSC agronomist retired in July 2011 with over 39 years of service in Texas, Colorado and Minnesota, as SCR and National GLCI Coordinator. Dennis also served in Afghanistan as an agricultural irrigation advisor. He retired to Fredricksburg, Texas, to operate a peach orchard and family business.



*Dennis Neffendorf*



*Arnold Norman*

Arnold Norman, CNTSC rangeland management specialist, retired in December 2010 with 35 years of service. Arnold worked as a rangeland specialist in Texas, New Mexico, and Montana. He also served as an agricultural advisor for the agency in Afghanistan and is currently a contracted agricultural consultant in Afghanistan.

### Wallace to Retire

Douglas Wallace, forester in the National Agroforestry Center in Lincoln, Nebraska, is retiring October 28, 2011, with more than 31 years experience with NRCS. Before joining the CNTSC, Doug served as the State forester in Missouri, and also served as both area resource conservationist and district conservationist in Illinois.

### Barbour is New Wildlife Biologist

Philip Barbour has been selected as the new wildlife biologist on the CNTSC core team. Philip has BS and MS degrees from LSU and earned his Ph.D. in Wildlife Ecology from Mississippi State University and is a Certified Wildlife Biologist with the Wildlife Society. Philip most recently served as a wildlife biologist with the Ecological Sciences Service Unit in Madison, Mississippi. Philip is also an astute botanist, having discovered numerous species of plants new to science from Peru, South America, of which seven species are named in his honor. Philip's first day with the CNTSC will be Monday, November 7, 2011.

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