

Little Arkansas River WRAPS

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About Our Watershed

The Little Arkansas River Watershed is located in south central Kansas covering 913,430 acres in Reno, Harvey, Sedgwick, McPherson, Rice, Marion and Ellsworth counties. The headwaters of the Little Arkansas River originate near the town of Geneseo, and the river travels southeast approximately 80 miles, draining numerous tributaries before emptying into the Arkansas River at Wichita. Cropland (68%) and grassland (21%) make up the majority of our watershed and contribute non-point source pollutants to our river and water supply.



What is a Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy (WRAPS)?

WRAPS is a planning and management framework built to engage local citizen-stakeholders within a particular watershed. It is a process used to **identify** restoration and protection needs, to **establish** management goals for the watershed community, to **create** an action plan to achieve those goals, and to **implement** the action plan. The Little Arkansas River Watershed WRAPS action plan was written and approved in 2010 and has since been in the implementation phase.

Our Programs

The **Little Arkansas River WRAPS Program** is a collaborative project between the *Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE)*, *Watershed Management Section* and *Kansas State University*. The program is funded by the State Water Plan, facilitated by *KDHE*. The program has recently been reorganized to include new strategies and goals. The program offers incentive payments to producers to implement nutrient and sediment best management practices (BMPs) that will improve water quality conditions in the watershed by reducing the amount of nutrients (namely phosphorus and nitrogen) and sediment leaving crop fields and entering nearby water segments during runoff and erosion events. Nutrient Management will be a large focus of the program, targeting both cropland and livestock areas for BMP implementation, specifically those in areas located near riparian areas.

The **Atrazine BMP Program** is a nationally known project first developed right here, between the *Little Arkansas River WRAPS Program* and the *City of Wichita*. Atrazine is not only a harmful pollutant but is costly to remove from the water. Each year the *City* funded program is facilitated by the WRAPS program. How does it work? Producers are paid as an incentive to voluntarily sign up to change the way they apply atrazine to their crop fields. There is an assortment of atrazine BMPs that can be implemented and technical assistance in choosing the right BMP for your field is provided! The goal is to reduce the amount of atrazine entering our streams and ultimately, the Little Arkansas River.

The **Offsite BMP Program** is a collaboration between the *City of Wichita's Stormwater Advisory Board*, *City Council*, *KDHE* and *Kansas State University*. The offsite program is designed to remove at least twice the amount of sediment as would be achieved by onsite BMPs, which benefits water quality in the Arkansas River. Urban developers realize significant economic benefits by choosing to participate in the Offsite BMP program as they have the option to pay an annual fee of \$19/acre in lieu of their usual and quite pricey hydrodynamic separators (HDS) installation. To date, the *City of Wichita* reported a total of 127 developments, comprising 509 acres participating in the Offsite BMP program. These acres would produce an estimated 204 tons of sediment. To offset these development acres, 496.7 acres of upstream farmland was converted to no-till. As of July 2019, offsite sediment load was reduced by an estimated 1,589 tons. As a result of this program, developers in Wichita have been able to avoid installing HDS units, for a savings of approximately \$2.8 million.

Success of these programs hinge on participation by farmers in the Little Arkansas River Watershed, located upstream from Wichita. If interested in any of these programs, please contact us! Contact information is listed on the back.

New Funding Available and We Need You!

The Little Arkansas River WRAPs group just received new funding for a 3-year project! We are looking for participants to sign up for our locally-driven, volunteer-based, incentive programs. Minimal paperwork is involved. If you have cropland and/or manage livestock in Reno, Harvey, Sedgwick, McPherson, Rice, Marion or Ellsworth counties, you may be eligible to receive financial assistance toward the implementation of BMPs. Those in riparian areas are of special interest to the group. Please contact Mr. Ron Graber or Mr. Rick Schlender for more information and an on-farm assessment!

Register Today!

FLICKNER INNOVATION FARM FIELD DAY FRIDAY, AUGUST 23RD

You are invited to join us for a field day hosted by The Little Arkansas River WRAPs group and Flickner Innovation Farm! This event includes lunch and covers the following topics: Utilizing Aerial Imagery to Identify Crop Conditions, Utilizing Cover Crops as a Method of Weed Control, a tour of the Moundridge Wastewater Treatment Facility, and Methods of Healing Gullies. If you wish to attend or receive more information regarding this event, please contact us (see below).

Registration deadline: Friday, August 16th!

Prefer to Receive Our Newsletter by Email?

If you or your neighbor are interested in receiving this newsletter, news of upcoming events, and program updates by email, please contact Amanda Schielke at aschielk@ksu.edu. She will be happy to add you to our email list!

Contacts

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For more information about these projects, as well as other water projects can be found at www.kcare.k-state.edu, or you can follow us on Twitter, @KStateKCARE.

