

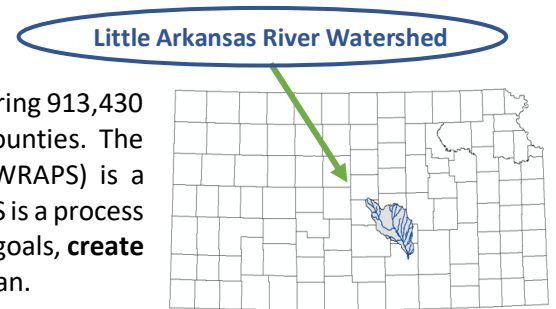
Little Arkansas River WRAPS

Fall 2020

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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 Little Arkansas River Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategy (WRAPS) is a planning and management framework built to engage local citizens. WRAPS is a process used to **identify** restoration and protection needs, **establish** management goals, **create** an action plan to achieve those goals, and finally, **implement** the action plan.



Harvesting Knowledge: Little Ark's Productive Producers

In this issue we are high-lighting the work of **Mr. Kendel Koehn and Jesse Koehn**. Kendel grew up on their farm in Harvey County and has been farming on his own for over 30 years. Several years ago, his son Jesse joined him in this endeavor.

Kendel and Jesse produce corn, wheat, soybeans, milo and pasture raised layers. They also allow livestock producers in the area to graze their cover crop ground. They use no-till practices primarily, with some strip-till ahead of corn. The Koehns say, "We are enthused about building soil health with the use of cover crops, minimal tillage, rotational livestock grazing, and using compost and manures when economically possible. We work with Heartland Soil Services and feel that grid soil sampling in order to place nutrients responsibly is a must for the best economic return!" They used the Hagie-Montag interseeder on several fields and are very happy with the results that they are seeing on their irrigated acres. They add that, "on our dryland it has just been too dry to get a decent stand this year, but it is something we will definitely want to do more of in the future."

Their goals for their farm are "to increase organic matter, water infiltration, water holding capacity, fight compaction, and become less dependent on large amounts of inputs to grow a crop. We want to work more with nature and the biology in the soil instead of controlling everything with inputs, that in some cases may potentially harm our soil...but we have to stay profitable on the farm at the same time, which means we have to find a balance in all this." When asked what advice they could share with other producers, they replied, "I don't know, I think we need their advice instead! I guess one thing would be: Keep an open mind and be willing to learn and try something new that may go against your previous understanding. Try things out in a small way to gain a certain amount of comfort with it so you don't make an expensive mistake, and communicate with those around you about what has worked for them. It seems the more we learn, the more we realize that we know so little about how everything in nature works." Those are some wise words from your neighbors! **Thank you Koehn family for your continued dedication to improving agriculture on your farm and for looking toward the future in promoting soil health in our watershed!**

Working During the Pandemic

KCARE and K-State Extension have never been about a single location, office or event. For more than 20 years, our KCARE team has focused on the big picture: science, research, and education supporting our state's agricultural potential and protecting natural resources across Kansas. While COVID-19 might have changed *how* we're organizing our day-to-day functions, it has not changed our goals or our commitment to the KCARE Mission. Recently, KCARE co-sponsored virtual training opportunities on water quality. This workshop series provided overviews on a variety of key issues related to livestock operations and pond management. Although this training series was geared toward extension agents, these training sessions **are available to you, free of charge**. For more information and access to these free digital resources, visit our Virtual Training site at: https://www.kcare.k-state.edu/training_events/virtual_training_home.html.

Get Paid to Change the Way You Apply Nutrients

The Little Arkansas River WRAPS group is excited to announce a new opportunity for producers to participate in our NEW nutrient management program! The goal of this program is to promote and improve **soil health**. Soil health is the proper management of soils, keeping nutrients at an optimum level to increase production and limit nutrient loss. This program will have (2) program levels that will allow for most producers in the Turkey Creek Watershed to participate.

Level 1: Basic Nutrient Management (NM) program

The Basic NM program is for eligible producers who have not done intensive soil sampling and variable rate application on a piece of ground that they farm. The Basic NM program will ask producers to provide a 2.5-acre grid sample analysis from the soil lab. This report should include, at a minimum, analyses of the following: Organic Matter (OM), pH, Buffer pH, Phosphate (P), and Potassium (K). This part of the program pays producers up to \$10.00 per acre. Producers will be asked to apply lime to achieve a 5.8 pH level based on grid sample results. This part of the program pays producers up to \$8.00 per ton of lime applied. Producers will also need to address P and K needs, using variable rate application. Utilizing the grid sample analysis, producers must follow K-State Research and Extension's most recent fertilizer recommendations for P and K application, currently publication MF 2586. This part of the program will pay producers up to \$8.00 per acre. The Basic NMP program will be a 1-year program, then the producer may be eligible for the Advanced NM program.

Level 2: Advanced Nutrient Management (NM) program

The Advanced NM program is for those producers who have already done intensive soil sampling and variable rate application on their cropland. The Advanced NM program will provide producers with assistance in taking calibrated yield data and utilize GIS software to plug in P and K nutrient removal numbers to determine the rate of application required. This will give the producer a variable rate map for nutrient application during the growing season. Producers will be eligible for up to \$8.00 per acre for variable rate application along with up to \$2.00 per acre for yield data map processing and creation of the variable rate map. This will be a 3-year program with participants eligible to receive payment each year.

To participate in the program, contact Rick Schlender at 620-200-4496 or at rschlen2@ksu.edu. Funds are limited and sign up is required. There is a \$6,000.00 ceiling per producer. Eligibility will be determined by the Agronomist during your producer consultation. Riparian areas along the Turkey Creek tributaries will have a higher payment potential.

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!

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For more information, visit our website at www.kcare.k-state.edu. We are on social media, too!
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