

Little Arkansas River WRAPS

Spring 2022

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Little Arkansas River Watershed Refresher

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.

Little Arkansas River Watershed



Harvesting Knowledge: Little Ark's Productive Producers



How fitting for Father's Day...In this issue, we are high-lighting the work of a father and son, **Gary** and **Bryson Huxman** of Moundridge, KS! Gary Huxman started his farming career 46 years ago while helping his uncle. His son, Bryson attended college and then decided to move back home and help run the farm 11 years ago. The pair produce corn, soybeans, milo and wheat in McPherson county while running a cow/feeder calf operation in Coffey and Greenwood counties. The Huxman's have participated in the WRAPS Atrazine Program and utilized the program as a trial in reducing atrazine usage and found the program to be simple and beneficial. The Huxman's are big proponents for conservation and soil health.

The Huxman's see the importance of protecting our resources and have been implementing conservation practices for years. They completely converted to no-till nearly 10 years ago. Before that, they did some no-till between some crops but were mostly minimum tillage. Their crop rotation consists of wheat, double crop milo, corn or milo and soybeans. They have also been adding some cover crops in after corn and wheat productions. This past winter, they tried cover crops after double crop milo for the first time. The Huxman's graze almost all of their corn and milo stalks and most of the cover crop and pastures in the Flint Hills. There is currently one field where they are planting only cover crops for grazing.

When asked what their plans and aspirations were for the future, the Huxman's replied, "We would like to have every acre planted year-round in a cash crop or a cover crop. We would also like to reduce the amount of synthetic fertilizer we use and be able to get more nutrients organically from the cover crops and from better soil health."

The Huxman's had this advice to share with their fellow Little Arkansas River Watershed residents, neighbors, and friends: "If you're wanting to change, start slow, try it out on one or two pieces [of land] first. Talk with others who have done it and ask them if they had any advice on what not to do. Realize that you may not see a lot of benefits in the first year, you have to give these things time. Finally, don't give up if it does not work out the way you thought it would or get the results you wanted."

Thank you Gary and Bryson Huxman for your family's continued dedication to improving agriculture in the Little Arkansas River Watershed!

Upcoming Event: Virtual Fence Tour

The Tallgrass Legacy Alliance is excited to announce that Mushrush Ranch and The Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve are conducting a joint, both sides of the fence, Virtual Fence Tour with Kansas State University Researchers on June 23, 2022! The Mushrush Ranch is located near Elmdale, KS in Chase County.

For more information and registration, contact:

Roger Wells: (620) 340-5808 or

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2021 WRAPS Program Accomplishment Update

As the country worked to rebound from the pandemic, the Little Arkansas River WRAPS program reflected on how to improve communications and BMP implementation in the future. The WRAPS group continued to follow state protocol and not hold large face-to-face *indoor* meetings until later in 2021, so the group utilized social media, email, and the good ole U.S. postal service to keep in touch! WRAPS program made positive impacts in 2021 to include:



- **Atrazine Program:** 114 BMPs were implemented on 15,930 acres in priority areas. Thank you to the City of Wichita for their continued financial support in providing \$60,357 for these practices. Atrazine BMPs that were used in 2021 included: early application (22%), post emergent application (5%), reduced soil-applied rate (46%), split application (17%), and the utilization of no atrazine (10%). BMP implementation was predicted to reduce atrazine with a total load reduction of 699.6 lbs a.i. in targeted acres.
- **Sediment Program:** 17 BMPs were funded in 2021 on a total of 2,149 acres. These BMPs utilized WRAPS, EPA 319 funds in the amount of \$15,745. Sediment BMPs included the establishment of a buffer (6%), permanent vegetation (7%), terraces (13%), no-till (37%), and conservation crop rotations (37%).
- **Nutrient Management Program:** This is the WRAPS' newest innovative program, rolled out in the fall of 2020. Thus far, three (3) producers, representing 612 acres have signed up to make soil health and precision agriculture a priority. This program has utilized \$10,945 in WRAPS 319 funding.
- **Livestock Program:** Goering Farms continues to pave the way with this program. In addition to the 2020 implementation of cover crops, a new crossing, and a new watering system that included a storm shelter for the pressure pump, in 2021, four (4) alternative watering systems (tire tanks), affecting 50 cattle pairs on 204 acres were installed. The WRAPS program has distributed \$16,000 in WRAPS EPA 319 funds for the livestock program since 2020.
- **Education:** Even with Covid safety protocols, the Little Arkansas River Watershed was home to two major field days! In July, Goering Farms hosted a tire tank demonstration. The other was at Flickner Innovation Farms in August. It was a full-half day program covering all things water conservation and preservation to include: cover crops, mitigation of chemicals and drift, soil health, weed suppression, and more!

If you are interested in any of these programs, please use the contact information listed below and let one of us know!

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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