

**Oklahoma Civil Rights Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Stillwater State Office Conference Room**  
**November 13, 2007**  
**10:00 A.M**

**Roll Call**

**Present**

Stacy Riley – Chair  
Shelly Oliphant – Zone 1 Rep.  
Rattana Kittitornsup-Nantz – A/PIEPM  
Leota Burnett – NAEPM  
Thomas James – (term as Zone 4 Rep. begins January 1, 2008)  
Matt Ward – Zone 2 Rep.  
Kenneth Hitch – (term as Zone 2 Rep. begins January 1, 2008)  
Mark Habiger – Advisor  
Victor Slowik – HEPM  
David Hungerford – (term as Chair begins January 1, 2008)  
Jasper Parker - Advisor  
Paul Parham – DEPM  
Julie Adams - FWPM  
Nicholas Jones – BEPM  
Melanie Oliver – (term as NAEPM begins January 1, 2008)

**Not Present**

Brandy Pietz-Jones - Zone 3 Rep.

**Opening Remarks:** The November meeting was called to order at 10:10 by Stacy Riley, Chair. Julie Adams agreed to take minutes for the meeting. Stacy welcomed the new members that begin their terms on the Civil Rights Advisory Committee January 1, 2008: David Hungerford - Chair, Thomas James - Zone 4, Kenneth Hitch – Zone 2, Melanie Oliver – NAEPM. She noted that a performance plan and memorandum of understanding would need to be completed for each employee by their supervisor and signed by the state conservationist. David Hungerford incoming chair, asked for clarification regarding the rotation of terms between committee members. Stacy gave an explanation for members having staggered terms. Some were due to job transfers and vacancies on the committee not being filled on time. In other cases, members agreed to stay on for another term to help with vacancies left unfilled.

**Approval of minutes for September 11<sup>th</sup> 2007 meeting:** The minutes were reviewed with one suggestion from Mark Habiger, Advisor suggesting we not list persons as “not present” if they are not actual OCRAC members in the roll call list. Minutes would be corrected and forwarded to Stacy Riley. Upon review Shelly moved to accept to the minutes and Julie seconded the motion. Voted and passed with correction noted.

**SEPM/Zone representatives report:** See attached

**Added comments regarding reports:** Stacy reminded both old and new zone reps and SEPM’s that reports are due and should be emailed to the chair and recorder prior to the

meetings to be included with the official report. A copy should also be brought for each member at the meetings. It should also be noted that if you are sending out information as a SEPM statewide a copy must go to the chair and Becka Redding first. This will prevent duplication, allow editing for errors and content while keeping complaints to a minimum.

**Training and SEPM Conferences:** Stacy confirmed that Julie, Rattana, Nick, and Paul attended Roles and Responsibilities of the EEO Advisory Committee in Dallas, Texas August 29 - 30. She asked for comments regarding the course and how well it was received. All attendee's had very positive comments and felt the instructor was informative and kept the students interested in the coursework. She had good examples and they would highly recommend the course to other new members on the advisory committee. Stacy commented she had sent a letter September 12, 2007 to Ron Hilliard with the names of those who have not yet received either the EEO Roles and Responsibilities Course or SEPM (Managing a Special Emphasis Program) training. Those needing one or both training are new to the committee: Zone 3, Zone 2, Zone 4, Chairman, NAEPM, BEPM, DEPM and FWPM. The training courses will be offered through the USDA Graduate School program in many locations across the country throughout the year. The SEPM Conferences are offered in specific locations and each SEPM must complete the paperwork to attend their conference. It's also recommended that you cc: the OCRAC chair while doing so. According to Civil rights compliance review each committee member should have some type of training within 6 months of being appointed to the civil rights committee, if travel budget is available.

**Approve FY 2008 Business Plan:** Stacy covered the FY 2008 Business Plan with the committee for final review and approval.

Objective 1 Program Delivery

Action 1: Ongoing

Objective 2 Continue Medium for Civil Rights Awareness

Action 1: Webpage is continuing to be maintained

Action 2: Rattana is the lead person on this item

Action 3: Ongoing

Action 4: Ongoing with Zone 2 and 3 discussing workplace diversity on CD boards

Objective 3 Special Emphasis Programs

Action 1: Ongoing

Action 2: Completed

Objective 4: Promote Statewide Outreach Efforts

Action 1: Ongoing

Action 2: Julie had some questions on this regarding how to provide limited English proficiency materials to the field. Stacy agreed that some discussion was needed on this item and some materials may be available on DVD. We could also provide some of our services on a laminated card, which Julie agreed to laminate at the State Office. More research is needed to take care of this action item.

Action 3: Ongoing Stacy working on this

Action 4: Ongoing

Objective 5: Training/Recruitment

Action 1: Stacy sent letter to Ron Hilliard requesting training for new members.

Action 2: Nick, Debbie Ruark, Leota and Julie (for a short time) attend Career Day at OSU.

Action 3: Stacy discussed the CIP mentor program and how it has been working and possibilities for improvement.

Action 4: Julie has been working on the mentor program and has a power point presentation to show along with a hand-out and discussion.

Approval of the FY2008 Business plan moved to accept by Shelly Oliphant. The motion was seconded by Nick Jones. Motion was passed.

**December Meeting Training:** Stacy discussed the formal/informal December training. Typically the Zone Reps would be the lead in the field. In some cases the SEPM's will assist this year. Dates are scheduled as follows:

December 3 – Zone 4 – Lead Paul Parham, DEPM (Tom James will assist)

December 13 – Zone 1 – Lead Shelly Oliphant

December 18 – Zone 3 – Lead Stacy Riley (replacing Brandy Pietz-Jones)

December 19 – Zone 2 – Lead Matt Ward

It was discussed by the members whether to have a Quiz, Jeopardy or power point training format. Shelly had skit ideas for the group as new idea that has worked well in the past. We have just a short amount of time to get organized on the training so there isn't much time for delay. Leaders were asked to pick up the "NRCS Koozie's" which were in boxes in the human resources section. 80 – 100 would be used as prizes for the winners of the training this year.

**Mentoring:** Julie Adams has been working with 2 members of the Temple, Texas staff on their mentoring program. It has been successful in Texas and recognized at the national level. She gave a power point presentation to the group and discussed the pros and cons on mentoring from the mentor and mentee angle. She gave everyone a hand-out and led a discussion on the feasibility of such a program in Oklahoma. She also agreed to contact other states with successful mentor programs if the group felt it was a good idea for us to pursue. It was positively received and Melanie Oliver offered to help with pursuing the possibilities. David Hungerford also felt it would be good for Oklahoma. It's designed for early, mid or late career positions.

**Old Business:** Paul Parham asked if each SEPM needed a business plan and separate budget. He mentioned that he had heard from other states some had separate business plans and wondered if he should be developing one. Mark and Jasper agreed that SEPM's are not required to develop a separate plan.

**New Business:** David Hungerford asked how our meetings were set for the upcoming year. Stacy explained they were set for the complete year at this meeting. They are as follows:

### **Meeting Dates for 2008**

<b>February 7, 2008</b>	<b>10:00 a.m.</b>
<b>May 1, 2008</b>	<b>10:00 a.m.</b>
<b>August 7, 2008</b>	<b>10:00 a.m.</b>
<b>November 6, 2008</b>	<b>10:00 a.m.</b>

Meeting adjourned: Paul made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. Leota seconded the motion. Motion passed Meeting adjourned.

**Representative Reports Attached:**

DEPM/VEPM Report  
Nov 2007

1. Wrote and e-mailed article to all OK NRCS employees regarding October being Disability Awareness Month.
2. Attended "Roles and Responsibilities training in Dallas, TX.
3. Provided assistance to new landowner preparing ranch for under-privileged kids to experience camping, hunting and fishing.
4. Heavily involved with the Disabled American Veterans as a State Officer and tell the NRCS story whenever possible.
5. Will attend the "2007 Perspectives on Employment of Persons with Disabilities Conference in Bethesda, MD., Dec 4-7. We will also have a one day USDA/NRCS training forum to discuss issues specifically related to DEPMs.
6. Attended the USDA's Disability Employment Program Manager's Annual Training Forum n December 4, 2007 in Washington D.C. The forum provided a good overview of the disability program and responsibilities as DEPM's.

Paul Parham  
Disability Emphasis Program Manager

**OKLAHOMA OCRAC**  
**AAPI/SEPM**  
**November 2007**  
Rattana Kittitornsup-Nantz

- Submitted 4<sup>th</sup> quarterly report to National AAPI/SEPM
- Sent out information to colleges and universities about internship opportunities for other states and the Basu scholarship

AI/AN SEPM Quarterly Report  
September, October & November  
Leota Burnett

1. Attended a Career Fair at OSU with Debra Ruark, HR and Heath Sand, Design Engineer. Had fair turnout.
2. My sister and I were invited to do the Lord's Prayer in sign language at Eudora, Kansas during their 150<sup>th</sup> year celebration of the town of Eudora. We did the Prayer just before the unveiling and dedication of a life like bronze statue of our Shawnee Chief ancestor, Paschal Fish and his daughter Eudora whom the town was named after. There were over 400 people present during the ceremonies including 10 living descendents of Paschal and Eudora.
3. Participated in the AIANEA National Council teleconferences in October & November.
4. Attended workshop and tours that the Shawnee tribe held with our assistance. There were 6 tribes represented and 15 participants.
5. Sent emails to local tribal offices on a consistent basis when information they are interested in comes across the wire. Ongoing.
6. Emailed scholarship opportunity out to our local tribes and SC regional SEPM's to pass on to their contacts.
7. Emailed tribes to see if they would like copies of this year Heritage Month Poster. I have had good response so will get copies to them.
8. Currently sending out emails to all Oklahoma employees for the month of November for Heritage Month upcoming activities.
9. Participated on Elders Teleconference.

# **Black Emphasis Program Manager Report**

Nick Jones

**November 13, 2007**

I helped out with OSU career fair

We had an outreach meeting in Drumright, for the Bristow Field Office

Finalized year in review report for National BEPM. He puts together a book that he gives out to all of us at our annual meeting/training

We had another outreach meeting in Creek County in Oilton on November the 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Federal Women's Program Manager Report**  
**Julie Adams**  
**November 13, 2007**

I spent September 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> working on the Statewide Women in Agriculture Conference which was a great success at the Moore/Norman Technology Center in Oklahoma City. Our 14 booth mini-mall vendors did well and the ladies that won the smoker/cooker went home happy with their prize! I've attached a few pictures that I took of the day. We had both the speakers and attendee's fill out a questionnaire on ways to improve next year's conference and we've have met to go over the responses. We'll work to implement their suggestions for 2008 if possible.



Facilitator Jenifer Reynolds, Host of Discover Oklahoma



Steve Owens, Host of Oklahoma Gardening



Made in Oklahoma Vendors at the Women in Agriculture State Conference

I've received the mentor program information from NHQ on the Texas mentor program and spoke with Ronnie Skala, Hydraulic Engineer, NRCS State Office Temple, Texas on the success of the program implementation throughout their state. I'll show a power point presentation and provide handouts for discussion at the November CRAC meeting and discuss how we might want to proceed from here. We may want to discuss it's feasibility in Oklahoma and determine interest with state leadership. I have an upcoming NHQ-FWP teleconference and will request mentor ideas and suggestions from other states.

I attended the career fair at Oklahoma State University for just a brief time but Nick Jones, Debbie Ruark, and Leota Burnett had things well under control at the booth so I came back over to the state office to work. They were doing a great job and didn't need more help covering the booth.

**Civil Rights Advisory Committee**  
**Zone 2 Report**  
**November 2007**

Outreach

- Zone 2 DC meeting in Jenks
- Field Office visits to Pryor, Stillwater, Muskogee, Stillwell, Wagoner, Bristow and Chandler.
- Programs Mediation at the Chandler Field Office

Future Events

- Zone meeting on December 19th.
- Outreach meeting on December 18<sup>th</sup> in Pryor

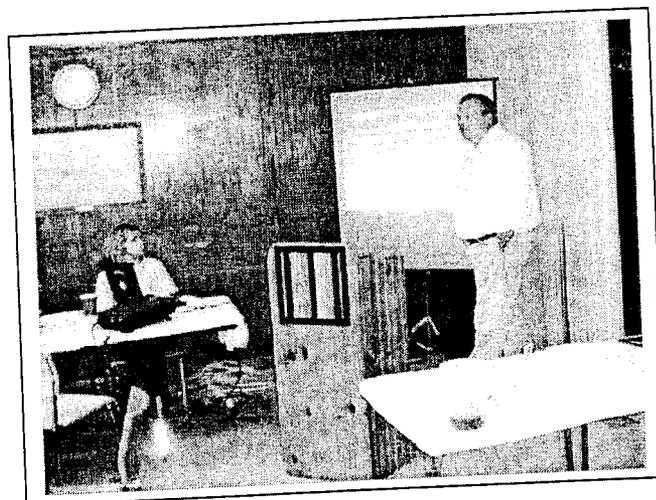
Matt Ward  
Zone 2 Representative  
918-341-3222 ext. 121

## --ZONE NEWS--

### ZONE 1 (Reported by Jamey Wood)

#### Team 1

**Beaver County** - The Beaver County Conservation District and the Beaver Field Office held a Locally Led Meeting for producers, county wide on August 21, 2007. The purpose of this meeting was to gather ideas and concerns for natural resources from county producers. There were 45 producers in attendance. Each producer was given a Conservation Needs Assessment to complete as a source to voice their concerns. After a catered meal, Carri Manley, District Conservationist, gave a PowerPoint presentation over previous local resource concerns, state resource concerns, available programs, and past funding. Following a question and answer session, Dr. Curtis Bensch, (professor at Oklahoma Panhandle State University), gave a presentation to the local producers about Musk Thistle. Mr. Bensch discussed ways of identifying musk thistle from other types of thistles, along with various ways of controlling the thistles. He provided several handouts on musk thistle identification and control methods to those in attendance at the meeting.



*Presentations provided by Carri Manley, District Conservationist (left) and Dr. Curtis Bensch, OPSU professor (right)*

#### Team 3

**Oklahoma County** - The newest employees of NRCS spent one of the "Orientation for New Employees Course" class days in Oklahoma County. It began with a visit to the Deer Creek Outdoor Classroom. Debbie Straughn District Board Member and Principal of the Elementary School, shared how she partnered with OCCD, NRCS, and others to get the wetlands developed along with the extensive herbaceous plantings she requires her teachers and students to utilize in the classroom curriculum. Rod Shaw, DC, Oklahoma City, and OCCD Manager, Don Bartolina, took the class for a tour of Eagle Ridge Camp and District Director, Rick Godfrey, made a presentation on the district's involvement and the partnership with NRCS and others. Soil Scientist, Steven Alspach, provided soil training to the class of about 20 employees. (See photos on next page.)



Becky Inmon, District Secretary, Rick Godfrey, District Board member and Don Bartolina, District Manager, plus ONE Course Members to the right.



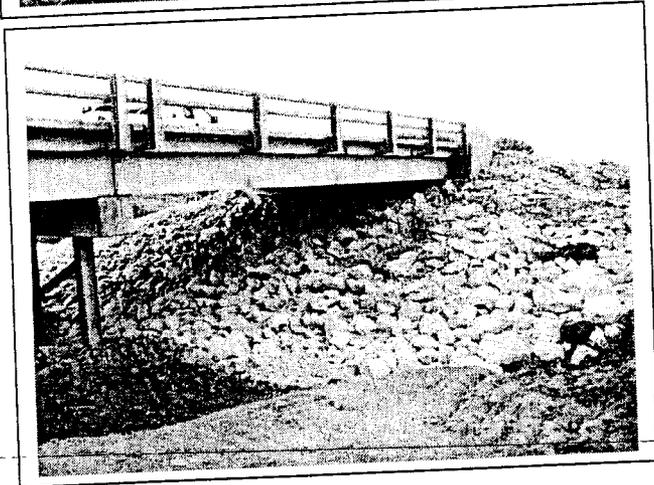
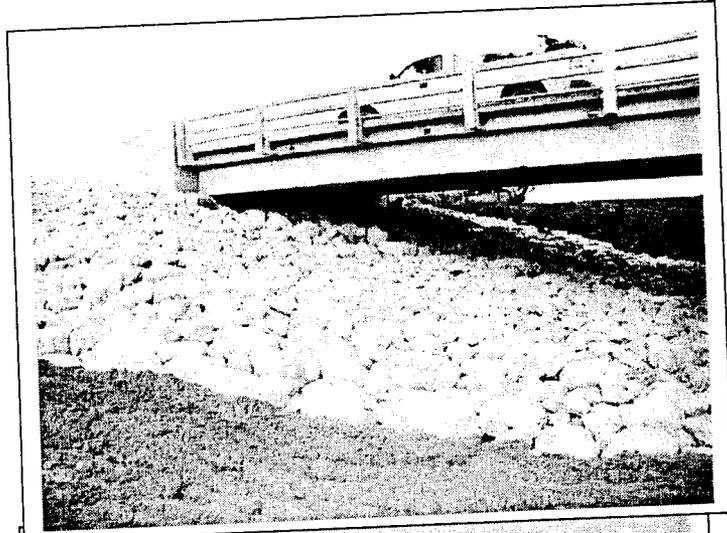
Resource Soil Scientist Steven Alspach presentation on soils.



District Board Member Debbie Straughn with Sign language interpreter and Don Bartolina at the Outdoor classroom where Debbie Straughn is the Elementary Principal.

### Kingfisher County

Working under a short, 10-day timeframe and inclement weather conditions, the sites considered as exigencies in Kingfisher County were completed on schedule on Friday, September 21. In the photos, note a before and after shot of one bridge that has been protected and a roadside erosion area that has been stabilized.



### Garfield County

On September 7, the Garfield County Conservation District and the NRCS employees in Enid helped present the Farmer for a Day Program at the Garfield County Fair. Approximately 300 adults and children attended the tour, which consisted of 15-10 minute sessions for each station. Some of the stations included apples, wheat, chick ens, potatoes, cows, horses, and goats. At each station, the children learned how these products are raised and processed into food.

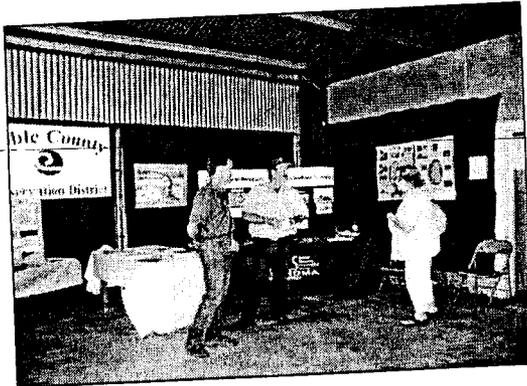


*Jay Betchan, SCT, explains soil and how potatoes are planted in it.*

Also, for the week of September 10-14, the Garfield County Conservation District presented the Stream Trailer to FFA classes in Garfield County. This trailer demonstrated how watershed dams work and function. D'Ann Peterson, Soil Conservationist, assisted with this presentation at the Drummond School.

**Noble County** - Noble County Conservation District and the Perry field office shared a booth at the Noble County Fair the week of September 10-14.

Those attending took time to share the life bracelet with two second grade classes from Frontier School system. This provided an opportunity to meet county producers and discuss the services that are available through the office.



The following week, September 21, Noble County Conservation District and NRCS hosted an Outdoor Classroom at the Perry CCC Lake for the Perry third grade class. There were five stations and among the highlights were Everett Taylor who discussed honey bees, Mike Barrick, NRCS Forester, discussed trees and forestry, Greg Scott, Soil Scientist, and staff discussing soil issues, Jolene Sparks, Wade Warren, Chad Webb, and Dev in Lolles putting together a life bracelet. Dennis Brorsen and Rusty Peterson demonstrated how soil erosion occurs. Others assisting in the outdoor classroom were Derek Thralls and Michael Henry, helping with photos and directing groups to the stations. (See photos on following page.)

local sponsors are still dealing with clean-up and infrastructure repairs from the one or more flood events that affected their respective counties.

### **FY2008 Funded Works of Protection**

Congress has partially funded the January 12, 2007, Ice and Flood (FEMA Codes 3272 and 1678) that predominantly affected the eastern section of Oklahoma. The total works of protection amount is \$6.7 million for the event, with \$4.8 million Federal assistance and \$1.9 million in local assistance. The funding level was for 70% of the requested Federal assistance.

The NRCS and local districts are working with sponsors to perform erosion protection of infrastructure during the month of December. Additional work will follow in the early spring with debris removal as necessary to protect downstream infrastructure from additional damage.

## **--ZONE NEWS--**

### **ZONE 1 (Reported by Jamey Wood)**

Michael Sheik is the new District Conservationist for Garfield County. He served as the DC in Kingfisher County for the previous five years.

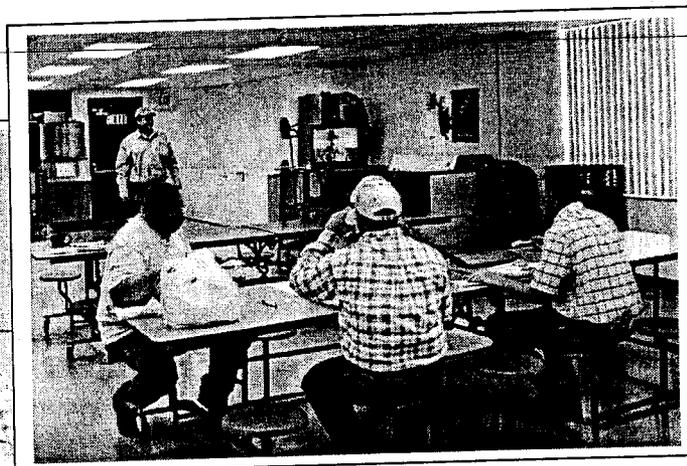
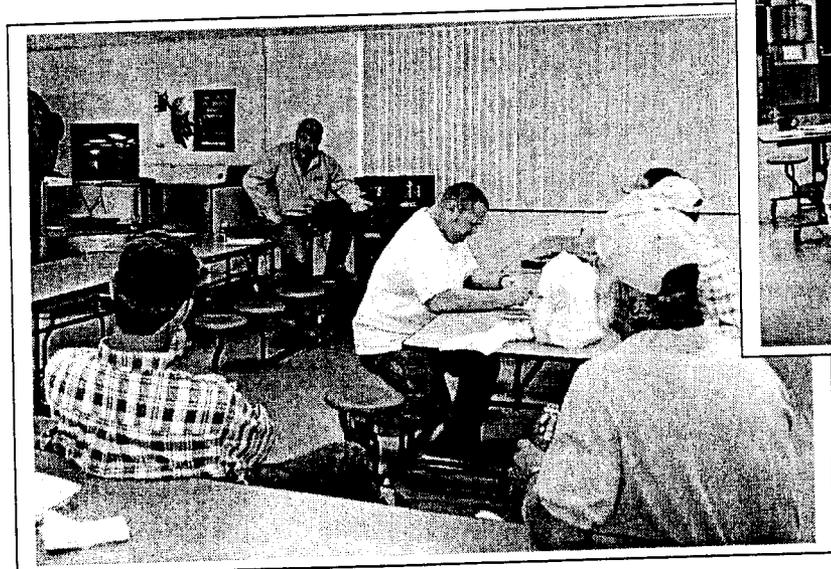
LatreCIA Cunningham, Soil Conservationist in Oklahoma City, will serve as the Acting DC in Kingfisher County.

Devin Lolles, Soil Conservationist at Guthrie, has recently transferred and is the new Soil Conservationist in Watonga.

### **Team 2**

### **Woods County**

The Alva FO and Woods County Conservation District sponsored a Prescribed Burning Outreach and Association meeting at Freedom School Cafeteria on October 2. Brian Ringels (pictured) was the guest speaker for the evening, and shared the new burn video by OSU extension and NRCS. Brian encouraged participants to start now and allow plenty of time to get ready for next spring's burn.



### Team 3

**Grant County** - The Grant County Conservation District recently held their annual speech, poster, and essay contests. Robert Cambron, NRCS technician, and Heath Herje, NRCS soil conservationist, assisted with judging the speech contest. Retired SCS District Conservationist, Bob Smith, judged the essay contest.

Speech winners:

Division I – 1<sup>st</sup> place – Emily Hawkins, Medford  
2<sup>nd</sup> place – Elliot Muegge, Deer Creek-Lamont

Division II – 1<sup>st</sup> place – Crystal Reynolds, Deer Creek-Lamont  
2<sup>nd</sup> place – Abbey Kilian, Medford

Essay winners:

Division I – 1<sup>st</sup> place - Rachel Hopkins, Pond Creek-Hunter  
2<sup>nd</sup> place – Clint Tolle, Deer Creek-Lamont  
3<sup>rd</sup> place – Katherine Muegge, Deer Creek-Lamont

Division II – 1<sup>st</sup> place – Austin Cole, Pond Creek-Hunter

Rachel and Austin both won second place in the Area I essay contest

In addition, 141 posters were entered in the local poster contest. Sara Taylor from Pond Creek-Hunter was second place in the Area I contest. All participants will be honored in March at the Grant County Conservation District's annual Conservation Fair.



Crystal Reynolds, Deer Creek-Lamont



Elliot Muegge, Deer Creek-Lamont

### ZONE 2 (Reported by Mark Habiger)

**Team 6 – Sequoyah County** - The Sequoyah County Conservation District and the Sallisaw FO, assisted by Robert Toole and Larry Caldwell, hosted a Watershed Tour and Luncheon on September 20. The purpose of the event was to inform and educate state and Federal legislators on the importance of flood retarding structures in Oklahoma.