

## CONSERVATION PROGRAMS FROM THE GROUND UP

By Gerry Cherry  
Staff Writer

■(GIT) After years of working with individual farmers and ranchers in Oklahoma and throughout the Great Plains, the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture realizes that conservation programs are no better than the local landowners who utilize them.

In the 1950s, the Great Plains Conservation Program signed up farmers and ranchers in western Oklahoma who wanted to save their soil from erosion. This and other highly successful programs resulted in more than one million erosion-prone acres being returned to grassland.

Now, a new USDA program, called EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program), is hoping to continue to keep Oklahoma land from blowing south or north, as well as working to restore water quality in other parts of the state.

Nine high-priority areas in Oklahoma have been targeted for restoration, according to Dwain Phillips, public affairs specialist with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, (NRCS) formerly the Soil Conservation Service.

Each of the nine areas involves multiple counties and individual holdings. Plans for conservation were drawn up at the local

level, by the farmers and ranchers wanting to put long-range conservation programs into effect on their lands.

Funding will be shared, nationwide, among more than 600 target areas, Phillips said, and Oklahomans will divvy up the state's share among the nine areas.

Of the high-priority areas, the high plains area in Oklahoma's panhandle was rated number one, and a water quality conservation program in eastern Oklahoma was second on the list.

"We have conservation needs statewide," Phillips said, "problems with aquifers going down and irrigation. We're always working on wind erosion," he added.

Only 18 Oklahoma counties did not fall into one of the nine priority areas, but 25 percent of the funds can be spent outside a priority area, Phillips said. The NRCS will administer the funds, which will be set back for individual use over the five to ten year term of the contract. "The whole concept is to work with individuals to solve conservation problems over a long period," Phillips said.

Identifying the nine high-priority areas was a long process, Phillips said. A team of 40-50 specialists came up with priority areas, then the team went to individuals in the areas to see if they were interested in a long term conservation program.

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Dwain Phillips  
USDA Natural Resources  
Conservation Service

Nationally, the program is funded at \$200 million per year through the year 2002. Next week, a group will meet to examine the 600 U.S. applications and decide which are most important.

Oklahoma farmers and ranchers wait on the word. "We always have more applications for contracts than we can fund," Phillips said.

## WOMEN MILITARY VETERANS NOT RESPONDING

From Okla. Division of Veterans Affairs

■(OKLAHOMA CITY) As of this week, only 1,000 women military veterans have responded to the call from the Oklahoma Division of Veterans Affairs to find and honor Oklahoma's women veterans.

*"Whether you served many years ago or are serving today, your military history deserves a place in this national memorial."*

The Women in Military Service for American Memorial Foundation, Inc. broke ground at Arlington National Cemetery, June 22, 1995. The memorial honors the two million women who served in our nation's defense, beginning with the American Revolution and continuing through today.

Construction continues, and plans call for the dedication on October 18, 1997. The drive to locate and register women veterans and active duty servicewomen intensifies.

The registration drive is to document the stories of military women and their deeds, sacrifices and service. Each registration includes the photo, military history and personal memories of a servicewoman. The stories will be displayed through the memorial's computerized database, accessible to the public.

There are approximately 14,400 women veterans in Oklahoma, according to the Veterans Affairs Division. Director Richard Heuckendorf said, "we urge women from across the state and nation to help in this effort to document women's history in the military."

"Whether you served many years ago or are serving today, your military history deserves a place in this national memorial."

Any woman who served in the military, or anyone who knows a woman veteran is urged to respond so the veteran can be registered. Call 1-800-4-SALUTE (472-5883) or write The Women's Memorial, Dept. 560, Washington, DC 20042-0560.

## DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF OFFICE OF AVIATION RESEARCH NAMED

From Federal Aviation Administration

■(WASHINGTON) Dr. George Donohue, Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) associate administrator for research and acquisitions, on Thursday announced that Dr. Jan Brecht-Clark will become deputy director of the FAA's office of aviation research.

Brecht-Clark joined the FAA almost 6 years ago. Her most recent position was technical assistant to the director of aviation research. She also has served as technical assistant to the deputy administrator, headquarters liaison for the Civil Aeromedical Institute and special assistant to the federal air surgeon.

In addition to her new job, Brecht-Clark will continue to serve as acting chief scientist for human factors. In this position, she directs the FAA's applied scientific and technological human factors research efforts.

"Jan brings to the office of aviation research more than 20 years experience with industry, and local, state and Federal government in human factors research, performance analysis, performance prediction, training and development and training system design," said Donohue. "Her diverse scientific and managerial background makes her a tremendous addition to further the progress of the FAA's continuing efforts in aviation research."

The office of aviation research manages, directs and coordinates the FAA's research and development (R&D) program. The director and deputy director establish the FAA's R&D policy and serve as the agency's R&D liaison with the aviation community.