

February 28, 2011

Kevin Newkirk
CK Processing
3490 Swamp Angel Road
Manhattan, KS 66502

Representative Larry Powel, Chair
House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee

Dear Chairman Powel and House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee Members:

I am writing in support of SB 122. Conservation projects within Kansas' navigable waterways are currently prohibited because no State agency is authorized to grant easements allowing construction within the waterways. It is vitally important that conservation projects be allowed in and along navigable waterways. Ironically, conservation projects were permitted along Kansas' navigable waterways until only recently. Please pass SB 122 so conservation projects can resume.

Farmland is one of Kansas' most valuable resources. Streambank erosion causes soil loss, which then becomes pollution in Kansas streams and rivers. Brock Emmert of The Watershed Institute recently estimated that our farm lost over 17 acres of prime farmland along the Kansas River at two specific sites between 1991 and 2008. 396,099 cubic yards of soil was lost, which equals nearly 26,000 semi truck loads of soil. Brock estimated the streambank erosion rate at 9.1 feet per year at one site and 6.1 feet at the other site.

Streambank stabilization projects are effective methods of preventing soil loss and establishing stable, environmentally beneficial streambanks. Three such projects have either been completed or are in the process of being completed on our farm. Partial funding for those projects came from National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). This program combines expertise from NRCS, The Watershed Institute and experienced contractors to design and implement streambank saving measures. The resulting streambanks are stable and covered with wildlife friendly vegetation. Riparian and grass buffer strips along rivers and streams hold soil in place and filter fertilizer and other agricultural chemicals out of water so it never enters the stream resulting in cleaner water from reduced sedimentation and chemical pollution.

Please call me at 785-776-9269 or email at kevnew@gmail.com if you have questions or comments. I am eager to provide additional information regarding this important bill.

Sincerely,



Kevin Newkirk
Manager, CK Processing

House Ag & Natural Resources
March 7, 2011
Attachment 7