

Dialog on Sustainability Summary
July 17, 2008

On July 17, 2008, the Consortium for Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability (CESAS), K-State Director of Sustainability, and partners hosted the *Third Annual Dialog on Sustainability* to disseminate information on current sustainability related activities, groups and resources; and to explore opportunities for further collaboration and future funding. The focus was on Students, Classes and Curriculum, Operations, Research, and Engagement (SCORE).

Topics and panel presenters included:

Wind energy for communities

Trudy Forsyth, National Renewable Energy Laboratory; Dan Nagengast, Kansas Rural Center; Rep. Tom Hawk, Kansas House of Representatives; Rep. Ronnie Metsker, Kansas House of Representatives; and Ruth Miller, Wind Energy Applications Center, K-State

Community development & sustainability

Lee Skabelund, Landscape Architecture and Regional/Community Planning, K-State; Lorn Clement, Landscape Architecture and Regional/Community Planning K-State; and Monty Wedel, Riley County

Energy policy for communities & State of Kansas

Bruce Snead, Industrial Extension Service, K-State; Maril Hazlett, Climate and Energy Project, The Land Institute; Tom Gross, KDHE; and Rep. Ronnie Metsker, Kansas House of Representatives

Sustainability initiatives & opportunities at K-State (K-State SCORE Panel)

Ben Champion, Director of Sustainability; Michael Bell, Student Director of Sustainability; Barbara Anderson, Apparel, Textiles, and Interior Design; David Procter, Center for Engagement and Community Development

Following the formal program a number of field tours were offered.

K-State Rain Garden – International Student Center, K-State Campus

The rain garden highlights ways to reduce storm-water runoff and improve the water quality of local streams

UFM Solar Addition, UFM Community Learning Center, 1221 Thurston Street, Manhattan

The UFM solar addition was designed as a multipurpose facility providing a highly visible, publicly accessible demonstration of low cost, effective ways to use renewable energy sources for space heating and food production in a realistic setting.

- K-State Willow Lake Student Farm

Willow Lake Student Farm is a 5-acre plot of land located next to Tuttle Creek Reservoir about five miles from Manhattan. Student interns organically grow more than 30 different vegetables, fruits and herbs to sell within the K-State and Manhattan communities.

Elaine & Bob Mohr's Garden, Manhattan

The Mohr's wonderful garden includes a high tunnel which allows for growing vegetables in the winter without fossil fuel heat, several fruit trees and includes crops not often grown in Kansas such as hardy kiwi and figs.

Potluck Dinner

A potluck dinner was held in Long Park following the day's events, which included a facilitated discussion of local foods, which was led by Rhonda Janke.

Discussions

Facilitated exercises were conducted at the opening and closing of the program. In the morning, participants reflected upon and discussed what they had done in the past year to promote sustainability in their personal lives and their communities. Responses included:

- Reduce auto speed for better fuel efficiency
- Local gardening/food, student farm, organic production
- Vegetative storm water management
- Teaching sustainability as part of geology courses
- Various perspectives: design, study, application of green technology
- Reduce footprint, energy efficiency/conservation, and lifestyle adjustments
- Electricity and wind energy
- Telecommuting/working from home
- Increased walking and biking
- Installed small wind turbines
- Consumer behaviors, purchasing mindfully
- Kansas Riverkeeper, www.KansasRiver.org, what you can do and non-point source pollution
- Changing personal habits, composting, taking reusable bags to grocery stores
- Recycling committee, www.KSU.edu/recycling, desk side throughout campus
- Utilize leadership and incorporate sustainable subjects, Student Sustainability Coalition, Student Director and Admin Director of Sustainability, changing student perspective and value of green
- Kansas Center for Sustainable Agriculture - local foods, county level outreach, preparing fresh foods and safety, reasons and benefits to buying local, extension and expertise referrals, organic certification and resources, transitions, and marketing, reduce non-renewable inputs, and prices, www.KansasSustainableAg.org, farmer markets, and info dissemination

In the afternoon, participants were asked what commitments they would make toward sustainability in the coming year. Responses included:

- On July 31, a 2025 meeting will be held at Riley Co. annex on 4th Street, 7:00 p.m.
- Grant writing to advance sustainability efforts and strategies to engage communities will continue. To be involved talk to Lee and Larry.
- EPA participants noted the need to take good things from Greensburg to Chapman. KSU could be good asset there. EPA is developing a mechanism for calculating carbon footprints for its staff. They plan to add fuel and food to the evaluation. They would like faculty/student input to improve and expand it. Also planning Sustainable Educators conference continuation.
- Initiative to connect people to Kaw River – explore new projects to develop a public outreach campaign to educate on how everyday actions affects the river, including recreation activities.
- KSU Sustainability Report Card Grade – evaluate grade and bump up by a grade or two by student actions. Aiming for a grade of “A”
- A solar project through a Haskell summer exchange program started a new networking organization, ‘Futures without Poverty,’ for communities who need water, food, etc. (futureswithoutpoverty.org). A representative from this group would like to learn about water pasteurization and return to a community in Mexico to extend the solar project to water issues.
- Next semester topics for discussion – develop a storm water project for Lawrence. A four lane highway will be going through the wetland, erosion problems may be a cause for home loss.