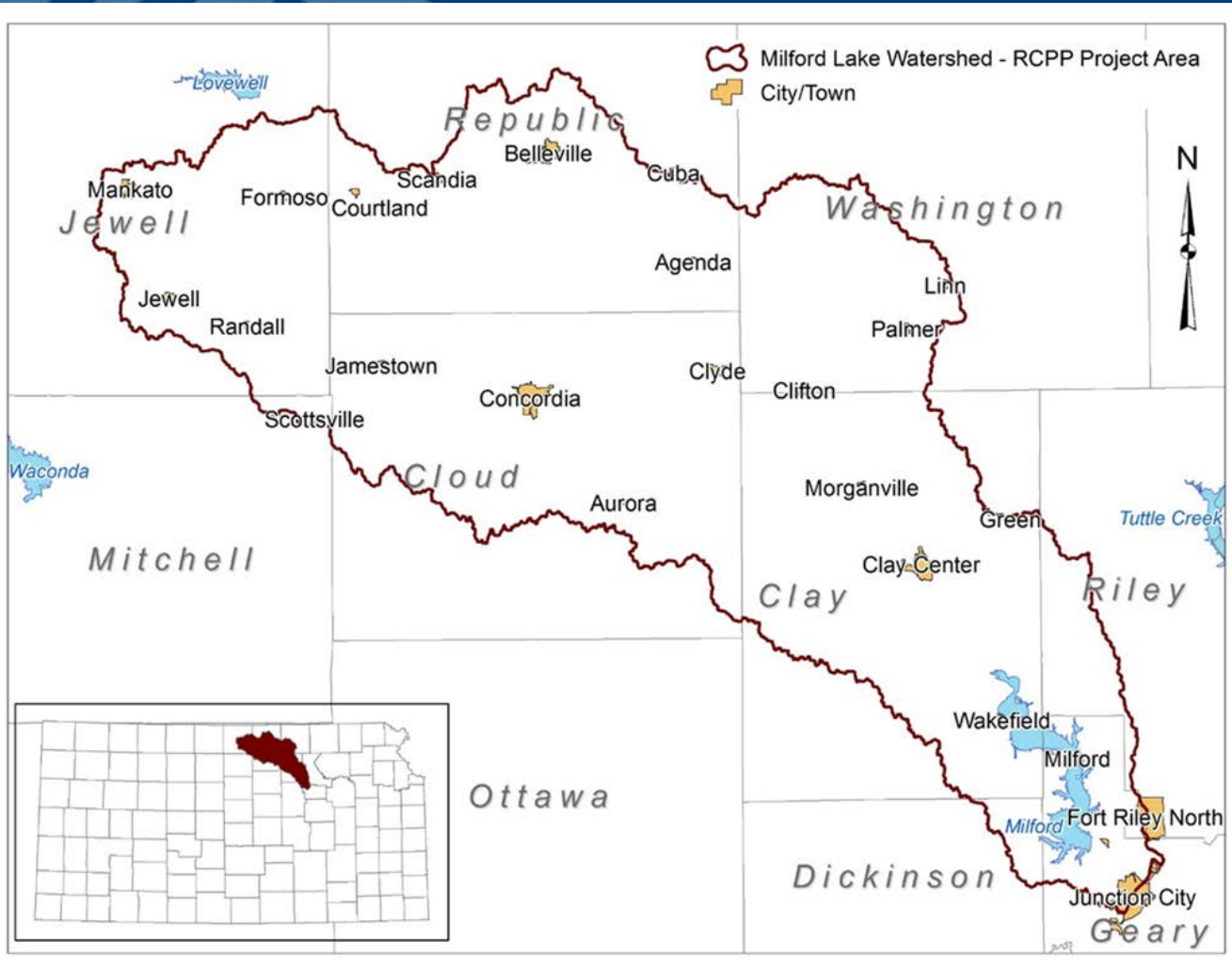


Building Local Partnerships to Implement
Collaborative Conservation Programs:
The Milford Lake Watershed
Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

Matt Unruh
Chief of Policy & Communications
Kansas Water Office
Topeka, Kansas



Milford Lake and Watershed



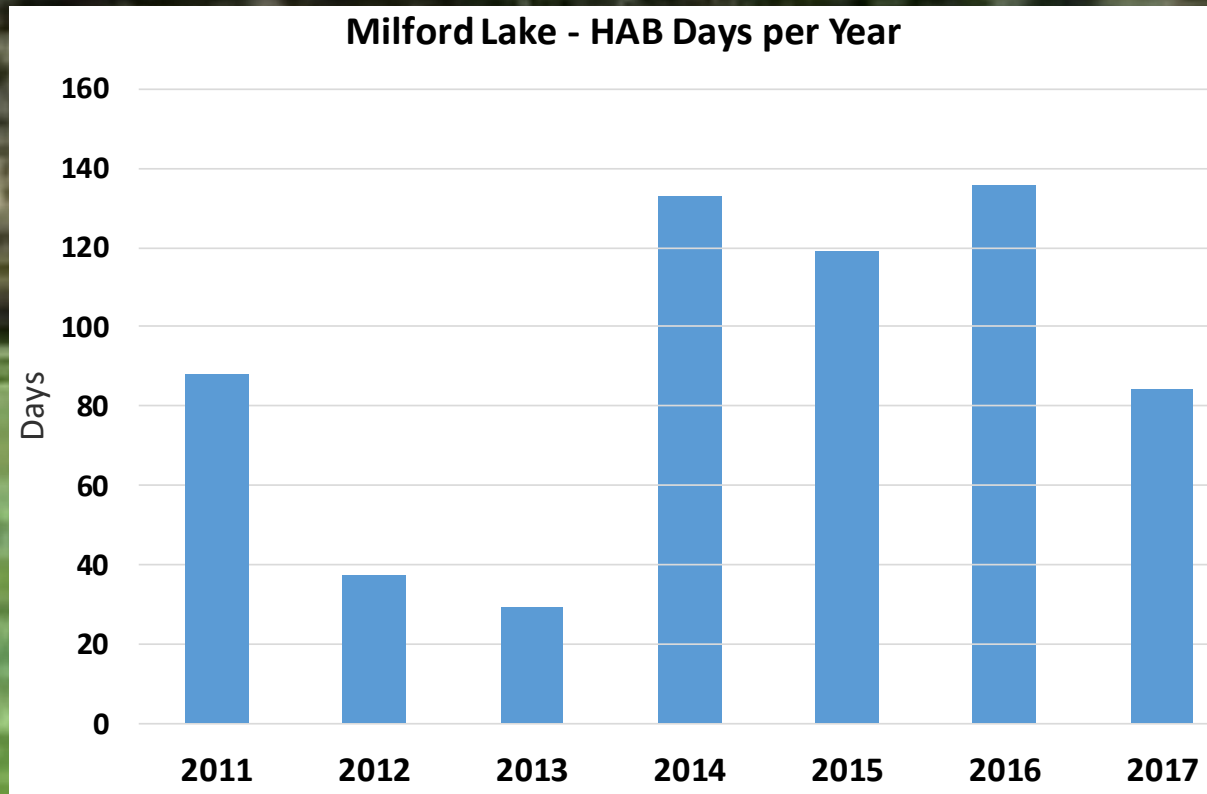
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Reservoir
- Federally Authorized Purposes:
 - Flood Control
 - Water Quality
 - Water Supply
 - Navigation (Missouri R.)
 - Recreation
 - Fish & Wildlife
- Estimated Current Capacity: ~370,000 af
- 15,700 surface acres
 - Largest Lake in KS
- Popular Fishing and Boating Lake in Kansas

Watershed:
1.25 million ac in size

Watershed largely rural
~ 50% Cropland
~ 37% Grassland

The Issue at Milford Lake

Harmful Algal Blooms



Water Quality Impairments

- Milford Lake
 - Eutrophication
 - Low DO
- Lower Republican River Watershed
 - Fecal Coliform Bacteria
 - Low DO
 - Total Phosphorus
 - TSS

- On KDHE Public Health Advisory List every year since 2011 (program started in 2010)
- HAB Days ranged from 29 (2013) to 136 (2016)
- Zero HAB Days in 2010 and 2018, 2019
- Releases during HAB events can impact downstream public water supplies

Water Supply Importance of Milford Lake



Building a Collaborative Partnership Team

- Identify a Resource Concern to Unite Behind
- Identify Potential Partners Impacted by Resource Concern
- Identify Potential Partners Interested in Collaborative Positive Action to Address Resource Concern
- Identify Resources Available for Collaborative Action

Building a Partnership Team



Partners

Lead Partner: Kansas Water Office

Collaborating Partners:

- Kansas Department of Agriculture- DOC
- Kansas Department of Health and Environment
- Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism
- Kansas Farm Bureau
- City of Wakefield
- Kansas Corn Growers Association
- Kansas Forest Service
- Water District No. 1 of Johnson County
- Clay County, Kansas
- City of Topeka
- City of Olathe
- City of Lawrence
- Friends of the KAW
- The Nature Conservancy
- Kansas Biological Survey
- Kansas Alliance for Wetlands and Streams
- Clay County Conservation District
- Republic County Conservation District
- EcoPractices
- Jewell County Conservation District
- Cloud County Conservation District
- Kansas Soybean Commission
- Geary County Conservation District
- Washington County Conservation District
- Acorns Resort at Milford Lake
- Riley County Conservation District
- Clay County Economic Development Group
- National Sorghum Producers
- Cloud County Economic Development Corporation
- Thunderbird Marina & RV Resort
- Flagstop Resort & RV Park at Milford Lake
- Sustainable Environmental Consultants
- NRCS

NRCS RCPP Program

Coming Together for Conservation: New Approach, More Partners

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

1



Regional Conservation Partnership Program is a new program that mobilizes partnerships to multiply investments and reach common conservation goals.

2

More Partners bring innovation, new ideas, resources and local expertise to solve problems.



Priority Conservation Projects



3 RCPP Funding Options



4 USDA plans to invest up to **\$1.2 billion**

USDA Goal:
Partners
match
investment
to equal —

\$2.4 billion
for conservation
through 2018

more: nrcs.usda.gov/FarmBill



Regional Conservation Partnership Program

- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Program
- Implemented through existing NRCS programs:
 - Agriculture Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)
 - Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
 - Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
 - Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP)
 - Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
 - PL 83-566 Watershed Program
- EQIP targeted for Milford RCPP
 - Cropland and Livestock focus



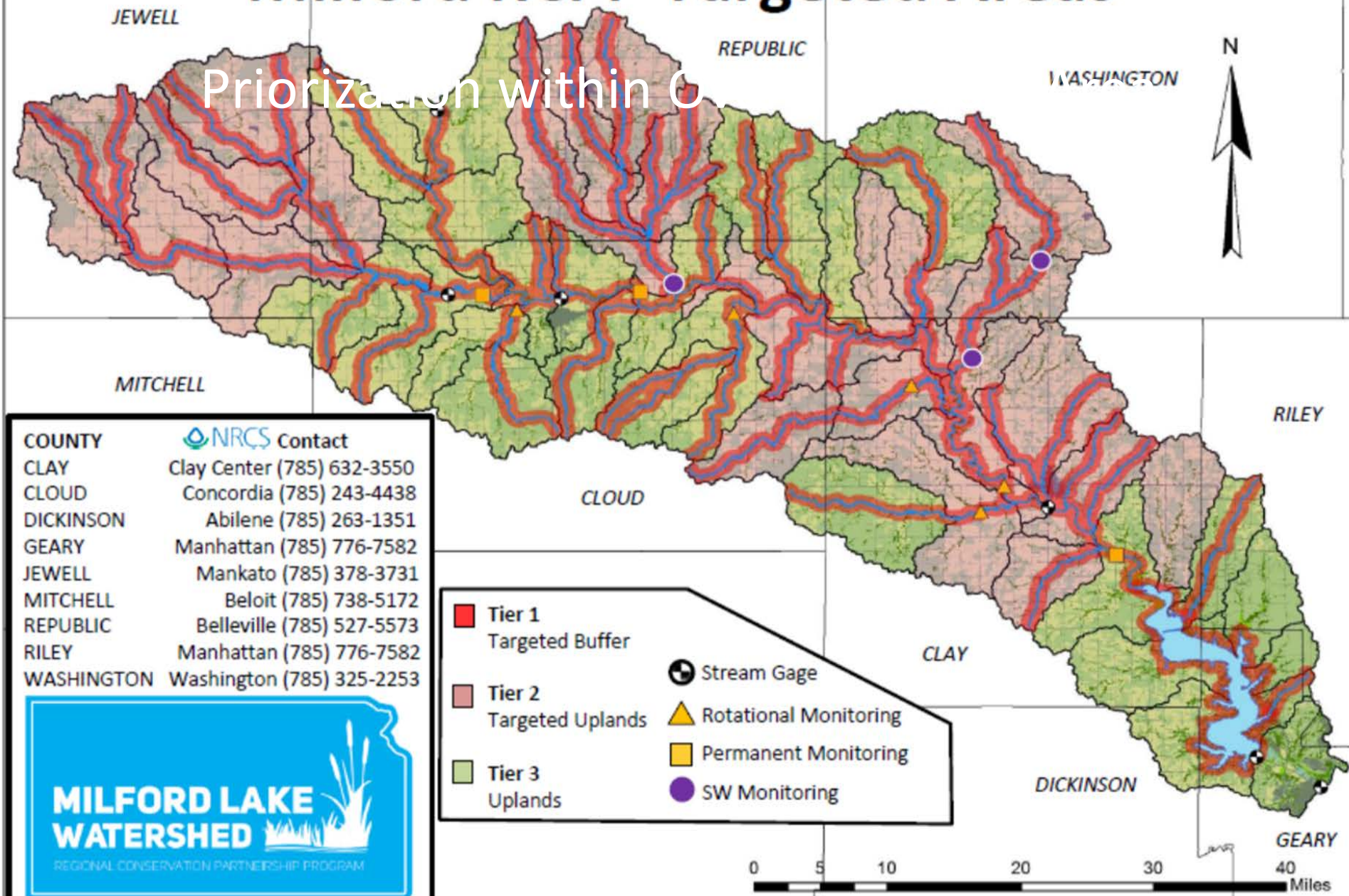
Milford Lake Watershed RCPP

- Project Goal: Reduce watershed phosphorus loading by 31,000 lbs/yr contributing to the formation of HABs in Milford Lake.
 - Target based on reductions noted for Milford WRAPS Watershed Plan
- EQIP Funding for Eligible Practices
 - Cropland and Livestock focus
 - Core Practices (90% Program Payment Rate)
 - Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan
 - Nutrient Management Plan
 - Nutrient Management
 - Fence
 - Cover Crop
 - Access Control
 - Watering Facility
 - Heavy Use Area
 - Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced Till or No-Till
 - Other Eligible Practices – 75% Program Payment Rate in Year 1
- Signup incentive payments possible as well for wildlife habitat creating practices through KDWPT Habitat First Program



Milford RCPP Targeted Areas

Prioritization within C



COUNTY	NRCS Contact
CLAY	Clay Center (785) 632-3550
CLOUD	Concordia (785) 243-4438
DICKINSON	Abilene (785) 263-1351
GEARY	Manhattan (785) 776-7582
JEWELL	Mankato (785) 378-3731
MITCHELL	Beloit (785) 738-5172
REPUBLIC	Belleville (785) 527-5573
RILEY	Manhattan (785) 776-7582
WASHINGTON	Washington (785) 325-2253



Building Legislative Support for Implementation



- NRCS Funding Commitment
 - \$2.88 Million
 - \$2,159,992 FA
 - \$720,008 TA
- Partner Contribution Commitment
 - ~ \$3 Million
- KWO Funding approved by Kansas Legislature
 - \$200,000 SFY18
 - \$200,000 SFY19
 - \$200,000 SFY20
 - Future Funding?

Official Partner



**MILFORD LAKE
WATERSHED**
REGIONAL CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

- Project Duration: 5 Years
- Initial Producer Signup Period: Fall 2018
- Currently have over half of the NRCS available FA obligated for current duration of project

- Signup Incentive Payments for wildlife habitat-related practices through KDWPT
 - Cover Crop
 - Contour Buffer Strips
 - Filter Strips
 - Riparian Forest Buffer
 - Grass Waterway
 - Fencing
 - Range Planting
 - Wetland Restoration
 - Wetland Creation
 - Conservation Crop Rotation

HELP FIGHT TOXIC ALGAE IN KANSAS

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE MILFORD WATERSHED RCPP

Thank You!

Matt Unruh

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