THE VANISHING PRAIRIE
A discussion of natural prairie protection and how government programs impact that protection.
By Clay Ogg

SEEING THE TREES ALONG THE STREAMSIDE
Forested streamside management zones have many benefits, but suggestions differ on the width and uses of the zones. This article describes research that shows that even at a relatively small width, the effectiveness of protecting water quality is just as great as wider streamside zones.
By William A. Lakel, III, W. Michael Aust and C. Andrew Dolloff

WHAT WE DON'T KNOW CAN HURT US
A look at the barriers farmers and ranchers have to adopting sound manure management strategies.
By Laura M.J. McCann, Jennifer Twyman Nunez, and Peter Nowak

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HOMEFRONT—Looking forward
Column by the Soil and Water Conservation Society’s Executive Director, Craig A. Cox.

RAISE YOUR VOICE
Letters to the Editor

VIEWPOINT—Waters importance in the future
Tom Pick, president of the SWCS Montana Chapter

NOTEBOOK
Conservation News You Can Use

EDITOR’S CHOICE—Synopsis of applied research in this issue.
Debra Happe, JSWC Editor and SWCS Communications Director

CONSERVOGRAM
The Soil and Water Conservation Society in Action
### RESEARCH

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GREEN PAYMENTS DISCUSSION CONTINUES

The March–April viewpoint article by Clay Ogg, points out a problem with green payment programs. If budgets are limited, which they are, then paying one type of farmer or rancher to implement one practice—such as enrolling grasslands—comes at the opportunity cost for other practices such as the enrolling of cropland in the CRP. Furthermore, grassland reserves may be great for, say, improving the nesting success of gamebirds, but cropland enrollment will improve water quality.

Also, paying farmers who are already engaging in the desired practice (aka good stewards can be labeled as “fair” and perhaps such rewards provides motivations to others to become good stewards. This rationale is behind the current “Reward the Best to Motivate the Rest” program slogan of CSP.

But pursuing fairness comes at the expense of cost-effectiveness. Paying farmers to continue to do what they have already been doing—whether it is growing grass or conservation tillage—is a redistribution of taxpayer dollars. Unless the motivation factor is huge, little will change with on the ground environmental quality or wildlife habitat.” —Sandra Batie

— Deb Happe, editor