



Contact James Millensifer
Telephone 785-671-1000
Cell 785-953-1139
Email ontact@kansasringneckclassic.com
Website www.kansasringneckclassic.com

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THE NORTHWEST KANSAS CONSERVATION FOUNDATION AWARDS TWO GRANTS

Oakley, Kansas, March 12, 2018- The Kansas Governor's Ringneck Classic Northwest Kansas Conservation Foundation (NWKCF) awarded \$25,000 to the Norton County Community Foundation's Secure Sebelius Lake fund and \$10,000 to Pheasants Forever in support of staffing a wildlife biologist in Oberlin, Kansas. "The grant requests made by both these organizations directly fulfill our mission to support habitat and wildlife conservation in Northwest Kansas, and the board was unanimous in their support of grant funding", said Jim Millensifer, Ringneck Classic Board President.

With time running out on an agreement between the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks & Tourism (KDWPT) and the Almena Irrigation District to ensure approximately ten feet of water to be retained in Sebelius Lake, located just west of the city of Norton, it became imperative for a local initiative to form to ensure the retention of the water level. KDWPT committed to 50% funding, and the local community committed to raising the additional 50%. The Secure Sebelius Lake Committee was formed to take on the fundraising challenge to ensure the continued and future health of the wildlife and fisheries habitat the lake provides.

Tara Vance, Executive Director of the Norton County Community Foundation and Secure Sebelius Lake Team Member, thanked the foundation saying, "The Secure Sebelius Lake team is excited about this grant opportunity and we are proud to have great partners in the Northwest Kansas Conservation Foundation. This project is important to the vitality and health of our entire region, both for economic and wildlife purposes. We appreciate the support from a group who continues to support and give back to northwest Kansas in both of these areas!"

Pheasants Forever's Farm Bill biologist program is designed to educate farmers and landowners about the benefits of conservation programs, as well as assist those landowners after programs have been implemented. Area biologists will help accelerate enrollment in

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Bill conservation programs, like the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and offer wildlife technical assistance in USDA offices to assist the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Farm Service Agency (FSA) and other conservation partners with delivering conservation programs to landowners.

"Pheasants Forever greatly appreciates the strong partnership and the shared vision that we have with the Kansas Ringneck Classic. Our collaboration has led to many successes for Northwest Kansas wildlife habitat, Northwest Kansas kids, and Northwest Kansas communities. The future is bright for Kansas wildlife habitat conservation and the Kansas upland hunting heritage thanks to the Kansas Ringneck Classic." Jordan L.K. Martincich | Director of Development Pheasants Forever, Inc. and Quail Forever

If you would like more information about the Kansas Governor's Ringneck Classic or the Northwest Kansas Conservation Foundation, contact James Millensifer at 785-953-1139 or email contact@kansasingneckclassic.com.

If you would like more information about the Secure Lake Sebelius Fund, contact Secure Sebelius Lake Field of Interest Fund, Norton County Community Foundation, Tara Vance, Executive Director at 785-874-5106 or email tara@nortoncf.org.

If you would like more information about Pheasants Forever & Quail Forever in Northwest Kansas, contact Chris Blackledge, Regional Representative, cblackledge@pheasantsforever.org.

The Kansas Governor's Ringneck Classic is committed to contributing to Northwest Kansas, the youth of our communities, habitat improvement and wildlife conservation.