

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

## INSIDE this issue

Kim Harms Joins RTK Board of Directors **2**  
2018 RTK Donors **3 & 4**  
Kansas Leopold Award and 2018 Farm Bill **5**

## Photo Contest Stationery Cards



The 2018 RTK Photo Contest stationery cards are for sale at \$20 per 10 card set. These beautiful cards feature 10 winning photos. All photos were taken in Kansas and express Kansas' ranching heritage and open spaces. Printed on premium cardstock, the cards are blank inside and come with white envelopes.



## Congratulations, Kansas Secretary of Agriculture Mike Beam!



The Kansas Senate confirmed Mike Beam as Kansas agriculture secretary on April 5. Prior to the vote by the full Senate, the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee unanimously recommended Beam's confirmation. In his role as secretary, the former KLA senior vice president and RTK executive director is leading the Kansas Department of Agriculture and the more than 300 employees who work for the agency. Congratulations, Mike!

Mike will be recognized for his 15 years of volunteer leadership dedicated to RTK at the Pre-Symphony in the Flint Hills on June 15.

## Lynn Gentine Named Executive Director

By Samantha Weishaar, RTK Associate Director

Ranchland Trust of Kansas (RTK), a non-profit affiliate of the Kansas Livestock Association, recently named Lynn Gentine as executive director. She is a Kansas native from Little River, but has pursued many career opportunities across the U.S., including Las Vegas, Detroit and Montana. Her passion for Kansas landscapes and agriculture has brought her back to her home state. Her previous roles will bring 20 years of experience in grant writing and project start-up, promotion and marketing to RTK. Leading many other organizations to success, Gentine has seven years of experience in personnel evaluation, supervision and management. She has a B.A. in anthropology from the University of Kansas.

"We are extremely excited to have Lynn on our team as our very first full-time executive director. She brings a wealth of experience in the areas of development, leadership and relationship building – all the things we need to take RTK to the next level," said Cade Rensink, RTK Board Chairman.

At RTK Gentine will be responsible for professional leadership, management and growth of the organization. She will provide overall leadership for fundraising, strategic planning, organizational development, administration of conservation projects and financial oversight.

"Conservation of agricultural landscapes is an intersection of heritage, environmental, economic and cultural priorities. Previous roles in cultural resource management and preservation, combined with creating outdoor opportunities for the state parks of Kansas, have deepened my appreciation for the need to protect Kansas' sense of place, environment and culture," Gentine said.

Gentine will lead RTK's voluntary land conservation programs. She is excited to start working with landowners and staff to conserve special working landscapes in Kansas. She recognizes the importance of conservation for future generations of farmers and ranchers.

"Change is inevitable. Neglecting to respect our heritage and reconcile the needs of the future is not. I feel it is more important than ever to dedicate a collective effort to protect Kansas' working and agricultural landscapes," Gentine said.

She is looking forward to discovering new things at RTK. She is especially looking forward to discovering strengths of staff and board members and building on those strengths.

"I am most excited about getting to know the people, working together to accomplish goals and see projects come to fruition," she said.

RTK's success will depend greatly on moving forward with RTK's brand new strategic plan, which was revised in 2018. Her goals this year include putting RTK in a strong position to advance the strategic plan and mission of the organization by providing momentum, structure and persistence.

According to Gentine, a team needs to focus by consistently communicating and evaluating the status of various responsibilities to advance project goals

in unison and on target. "Plan to work and work the plan," she said.

Her management and leadership style is fun and unique, which will greatly benefit the RTK team.

"One of my favorite things to say to a team member is, 'That's a great idea. How can I help you?' If a team member has a skill or interest that happens to fill a project void, plus benefits the outcomes, let their passion and vision elevate the project," Gentine said.

Other than work, she enjoys being outdoors, kayaking on the Kansas River, attending ball games and working in the yard. She likes to stay active by jogging, hiking or occasionally shooting clays. She also became a big hockey fan while living in Detroit.

Gentine resides in Topeka with her husband of 29 years and three children, all of whom will be attending Kansas State University next fall.

Rensink said, "Lynn has an impressive set of credentials and an inspiring personality. The board is confident in the direction she will take RTK and the staff is eager to pool their talents to grow the organization. We are all very grateful to have Lynn Gentine as executive director."

Please join us in congratulating her as she begins her new journey with the RTK team. Her first day is Monday, April 22.



Lynn Gentine, RTK Executive Director



## OUR MISSION

To preserve Kansas' ranching heritage and open spaces for future generations through the conservation of working landscapes.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

6031 SW 37th Street  
Topeka, KS 66614  
(785) 273-5115  
[www.ranchlandtrustofkansas.org](http://www.ranchlandtrustofkansas.org)

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cade Rensink  
Chair of the Board  
Minneapolis, KS

Raymond Sproul  
Vice Chair of the Board  
Sedan, KS

Carrie Allison  
Secretary/Treasurer  
Eureka, KS

Ryan Arndt  
Emporia, KS

Mike Collinge  
Hamilton, KS

Tim Connell  
El Dorado, KS

Barth Crouch  
Salina, KS

Bill Eastman  
Topeka, KS

Chelsea Good  
Leawood, KS

Kim Harms  
Lincolnvill, KS

Tanja Harrison  
Lawrence, KS

## STAFF

Lynn Gentine  
Executive Director

Samantha Weishaar  
Associate Director  
[samantha@kla.org](mailto:samantha@kla.org)

Stephanie Manes  
Smoky Hills Coordinator  
[stephmanes@gmail.com](mailto:stephmanes@gmail.com)



- Sound Finances
- Ethical Conduct
- Responsible Governance
- Lasting Stewardship

## Kim Harms Joins RTK Board of Directors

By Samantha Weishaar, RTK Associate Director

Kim Harms of Lincolnvill joined the Ranchland Trust of Kansas (RTK) Board of Directors in early 2019. Kim and her husband Mark own and operate Harms Plainview Ranch, which is located on land that has been in Kim's family for five generations. Their ranch was home-steaded in 1885 on the edge of the Flint Hills in Marion County. It is now an Angus, Red Angus and Charolais seedstock operation marketing 250 bulls annually. Mark and Kim are first generation seed-stock providers.

Kim went to high school at Centre High School and college at Kansas State University (KSU). She has a Bachelor of Science in animal science and industry and a Master of Science in student counseling and personnel services. Kim and Mark married after meeting in the animal science and industry department. When Kim's parents decided to retire and sell the ranch, Mark realized his dream of starting a seedstock operation and purchased the ranch.

"Taking care of our resources and providing an opportunity for future generations is central to nearly every daily management decision we make. It is very important to us to grow a progressive ranching business while honoring the legacy of the land and the generations that came before us," Kim said.

RTK's mission statement rings true to Kim. Preserving family heritage, legacy and future generations are important to their family.

"Mark and I are proud to have played a part in preserving my family's ranching heritage and the land that has been in my family for five generations. We always envision what we can do to make our ranch viable and progressive for the next generation," she said. "I am honored to serve on this organization whose mission is to do the same on a larger scale."

Kim is interested in conservation because of the love and respect she has for the land and the legacy her family preserved and passed down for her and her children.

"It is important to me to research and

explore all options to ensure I do my part to make sure our ranch is still alive and well for the next five generations," Kim said.

Mark and Kim have three children. Their daughter, Taylor Minihan, has a Bachelor of Science in family studies from KSU with minors in animal science and leadership. She and her husband, Chase Minihan, also met in the animal sciences and industry department at KSU. Chase has a Bachelor of Science in animal science and industry and Taylor is finishing her master's in student counseling. Taylor is the counselor at Marion High School. Their son, Cade, is a sophomore at KSU majoring in mechanical engineering with an emphasis in nuclear engineering. He is currently a College of Engineering Ambassador. Their son, Payton, is a freshman at KSU majoring in the business option of animal science and industry.



Mark & Kim Harms

His love for the outdoors led him to spend his high school years developing food plots and habitat to enhance wildlife on the ranch.

Mark and Kim are involved with industry organizations such as the Kansas Livestock Association and National Cattleman's Beef Association, which is how they choose to spend any spare time.

"We both feel it is important to give back and to serve the industry in which we conduct our business," Kim said.

Kim serves on the Livestock and Meat Industry Council Board of Directors, Kansas FFA Foundation Board of Trustees, Kansas Junior Livestock Scholarship Committee, Red Angus Association of America Registration Committee and has served on the KSU Dean of Veterinary Medicine Search Committee. She taught catechism classes and Sunday school classes at St. John's Lutheran Church in Lincolnvill, served on the Marion High School FFA Advisory Council and was the beef leader and community leader for a local 4-H club.

Kim said, "It truly is an honor for me to serve on this board and become active in RTK. This organization holds a special place in my heart."

## Kansas Leopold Award Seeks Nominees

News Release Provided by Sand County Foundation

Ranchland Trust of Kansas (RTK), Sand County Foundation, and the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts (KACD) are accepting applications until June 1 for the 2019 Kansas Leopold Conservation Award. The \$10,000 award honors Kansas farmers, ranchers and other private landowners who voluntarily demonstrate outstanding stewardship, conservation and management of natural resources. Sand County Foundation presents the Leopold Conservation Award in 14 states.

Given in honor of renowned conservationist Aldo Leopold, the award recognizes those who inspire others with their dedication to land, water and wildlife habitat management on private, working land.

In his influential 1949 book, "A Sand County Almanac," Leopold called for an ethical relationship between people and the land they own and manage.

"The Leopold Conservation Award Program provides a valuable opportunity to recognize the outstanding accomplishments of Kansas agricultural landowners who are committed to strong conservation practices and effective stewardship," said Dan Meyerhoff, Executive Director of the Kansas Association of Conservation Districts.

"RTK is a proud supporter of the Leopold Conservation



Award in Kansas. It is an honor to help recognize those conservationists who go above and beyond in the stewardship of our natural resources," said Cade Rensink, Chair of the Board of Ranchland Trust of Kansas.

All Kansas applications must be postmarked by June 1, 2019, and mailed to KACD c/o Dan Meyerhoff, 414 Autumn Lane, Hays KS 67601. Nominations may be submitted on behalf of a landowner, or landowners may nominate themselves.

The award will be presented in November at the KACD Annual Convention in Wichita.

The Leopold Conservation Award Program in Kansas is made possible thanks to the generous support of Kansas Association of Conservation Districts, Ranchland Trust of Kan-

sas, Sand County Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, ITC Great Plains, Westar Energy, Farm Credit Associations of Kansas, The Nature Conservancy in Kansas, Clean Line Energy Partners, Kansas Forest Service, Kansas Department of Agriculture's Division of Conservation, Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, McDonald's and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Please visit [www.leopoldconservationaward.org](http://www.leopoldconservationaward.org) for application information.

## The 2018 Farm Bill - A Conservation Victory for Land Trusts

By Stephanie Manes, RTK Conservation Easement Coordinator

"When there is a strong coalition with common goals, there is almost no limit to what you can accomplish." - Mike Beam

On December 20, 2018, while most Americans were pre-occupied with the holidays, a looming government shutdown and travel weather, the Land Trust Alliance and its powerful coalition of land trusts celebrated the 2018 Farm Bill being signed into law. This legislation enacted major changes to the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) that RTK and other members of the Partnership for Rangeland Trusts (PORT) had been advocating for many years, including nearly doubling the program budget from \$250 million to \$450 million annually.

While the significance of the \$450 million annual ACEP funding increase cannot be overstated, congressional removal of the cash match requirement for land trusts and landowners is monumental. Eliminating this financial barrier has been the single most important strategic priority for RTK because, unlike many states, there are no state or local matching funds for conservation easement acquisition in Kansas. Allowing landowners to use their partially donated easement value and major transactional expenses to satisfy the 25% to 50% match requirement is a game changer for RTK and landowners that want to permanently protect their farm or ranch from fragmentation and development.

Mike Beam, former executive director of RTK and now secretary of the Kansas Department of Agriculture, advo-

cated heavily for land trusts during the development of this Farm Bill. Beam said, "We unified around some key changes early on and were able to provide those to the congressional staff at least a year before the Farm Bill was passed."

In addition to removing the cash match and securing the \$450 million annual funding commitment for ACEP, the legislation adopted many of RTK's other priorities, including:

- Removal of the Agriculture Land Easement (ALE) Plan Requirement - The ALE plan proved to be much more onerous than a traditional conservation plan, and caused many families to reconsider or drop out of a purchased easement contract with RTK and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).
- Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) Limitation - By granting the secretary authority to waive the AGI limitation for participation in the ACEP program, this Farm Bill recognizes that, unlike financial assistance payments, the purchase of a conservation easement is not a subsidy payment, but a conveyance of a private real property right through which the landowner is giving up development rights.

With these changes, the new Farm Bill makes the ACEP program more accessible, effective and efficient. Most importantly, it enables RTK to conserve more Kansas farms and ranches. We are grateful to Mike Beam, our state and federal representatives, and many other partners for their dedication to the conservation of working lands through this important piece of legislation.