

## Walker Receives 2019 NRCS Early Career Rangeland and Pastureland Conservationist Award

Ethan Walker, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Rangeland Management Specialist, Independence, Kansas received the 2019 NRCS Early Career Rangeland and Pastureland Conservationist of the Year Award at the Society of Range Management (SRM) Annual Meeting in Minneapolis, Minnesota recently.

Ethan is located in the NRCS management unit (MU) that makes up Chautauqua, Elk, and Montgomery counties in Kansas. The MU is comprised of approximately 1.2 million acres and 793,000 acres is rangeland. During the last three years, Ethan has inventoried 25,457 acres or 3% of the grasslands in the MU.

Prior to Ethan's career as a NRCS Rangeland Management Specialist, he was the Wilson County Conservation District Technician. The experience Ethan was able to bring with him is an asset to the MU and NRCS. Ethan has authored several articles that have been published in local newspapers and organization newsletters and is a regular speaker at grazing events in the area.

As a Rangeland Management Specialist, Ethan keeps MU field office staff up-to-date on emerging issues and abreast of the latest technology and scientific knowledge related to conservation, soil health, range, and pastureland. He keeps producers informed by watching webinars, requesting to attend additional training, workshops, and conferences. He has been recognized by customers and coworkers at the start of his career for understanding the needs of livestock producers and possessing an intrinsic knowledge of his job.

Ethan created a "Wildflower Wednesday" Facebook page during wildflower season. He posts a photo and provides interesting information about a wildflower that is in bloom.

Ethan and his wife, Kate, purchased property and named it E & K Heritage Farm. They are implementing and incorporating sound conservation practices on their property. Ethan proclaims himself as an agroecologist that is practicing holistic, regenerative agriculture through biodynamic principles.

