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Oklahoma's latest farm and ranch news

**Your Update from Ron Hays of RON for Monday April 30, 2007!  
A service of Midwest Farm Shows**

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A week ago- the CREP deal was signed by Oklahoma and USDA- and do you know where the only "private" money came from that made the deal work?

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According to one of the Commissioners on the Oklahoma Scenic Rivers Commission, the only private donation that was funneled through one of the participating groups to make the matching part of this CREP viable came from the Poultry industry. He calls the folks in the Poultry Industry the proverbial "elephant" in the room that no one wanted to admit were there.

Rick Stubblefield writes in an "op-ed" piece that he has made available to media outlets around the state that "It took an appeal from Oklahoma's scenic rivers commission for help following a rash of illegal dredging and construction in the riverbeds of Oklahoma's most precious streams to get results. The offer for donations came not from Oklahoma environmentalists, not from Oklahoma's legislature, but from the very companies and farmers who supposedly care the least about Oklahoma water quality. Even the donation of \$1.1 million by the poultry industry was reviled, by the very people who would not donate one thin dime to protect scenic streams. To their credit, the majority of Oklahoma Scenic Rivers commissioners voted to accept the gift from the poultry industry, and began the process of determining how it could have the greatest possible impact."

Stubblefield adds that "Mike Thrall with the Oklahoma Conservation Commission approached OSRC with a vision of seeing the state's first CREP program approved for landowners in the Illinois River and Spavinaw Eucha watersheds. The concept made such incredible sense OSRC pledged \$400,000 of the poultry gift to that end, with another \$400,000 anticipated to be pledged as soon as it is received. To their credit, Oklahoma's Secretary of the Environment and other state agencies worked cohesively to make the CREP a reality - the signing of the agreement by Governor Henry was perhaps the greatest water quality success story in Oklahoma's 100 years of statehood. While numerous words of appreciation were uttered during the CREP ceremonies, none were directed toward the poultry industry, whose dollars were the only private dollars included in the CREP. Sadly missing was a simple thank you to the poultry industry who when asked to help fund a specific program, said, "You bet."

Stubblefield adds simply "Regardless, on behalf of Oklahoma's scenic streams, a gracious and sincere thank you is called for to the poultry industry who helped make this CREP a reality.  
Thank you - \$1.1 million times."