



For Immediate Release: March 21, 2006

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## **Conservation Group Seeks Farmer and Rancher Opinions on Natural Resources**

Starting this week, 1,800 farmers and ranchers across the southern High Plains will be receiving a survey in the mail asking for their opinions about the Ogallala Aquifer, wetlands, and other natural resources in the region. The questionnaire - entitled the "High Plains Landowner Survey" - is being conducted by the Playa Lakes Joint Venture (PLJV), a non-profit partnership of wildlife and agriculture agencies, corporations and conservation groups and landowners dedicated to conserving wildlife habitat in the Ogallala Aquifer region. The survey aims to assess agricultural producers' experience with and willingness to conduct natural resource conservation. The data collected will help resource managers create future and modify existing conservation programs to better serve producers' needs.

"Private landowners and land managers are key to our country's agricultural productivity and natural resource conservation. Their opinions count tremendously in the development of programs and incentives to maintain sustainable working lands and wildlife habitat." said PLJV Communications Team Leader Debbie Slobe. "That is why we are seeking their opinions, and we urge every farmer and rancher who receives a survey to please fill it out and send it back."

The survey covers 21 questions and takes about 15 minutes to complete. If it is more convenient, the survey can also be completed online at: [www.playasurvey.com](http://www.playasurvey.com). In return for completing the survey, the PLJV will send participants a free 30-minute DVD or VHS copy of the newly-released film "Playas - Reflections of Life on the Plains," which explores the ecological and economic values of playa wetlands, which are the primary source of recharge for the Ogallala Aquifer.

PLJV partners include: the Colorado Division of Wildlife, ConocoPhillips Corporation, Ducks Unlimited, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, Pheasants Forever, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, The Nature Conservancy, USDA Farm Service Agency, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Oklahoma Wildlife and Prairie Heritage Alliance, Nebraska Partnership for All-Bird Conservation, Kansas Alliance For Wetlands and Streams, Ogallala Commons, Texas Prairie Rivers Region, and the South Platte River and Prairie and Wetlands Focus Area Committees in Colorado, and hundreds of private landowners.

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