

# CONSERVATION Showcase

## Necessity Is Mother of Invention

What would you expect of an outstanding conservationist like Kent Carter, who is helping conserve a wildlife playa and experimenting with no-till on his land? You might not be surprised if he invented his own plow to lay down a weed barrier for a new windbreak – and that is exactly what he did.

New Mexico’s conservationists are many, and varied – and some, like Carter, have become inventors in their pursuit of doing the right thing. And, when it came to laying down two rows of weed barriers that were 1,738 feet long, it just made sense to build a better mousetrap.

Carter’s invention worked very well as it plowed a six-foot wide strip at the same time it stretched the weed barrier and rolled four inches of soil over the edges to hold the barrier down.

There are many windbreaks in the Tucumcari area, and Carter needed one to help protect the wheat and milo fields on his farm near Wheatland, New Mexico. But the need also offered an opportunity to enhance wildlife habitat, of which he took full advantage.

The windbreak Carter installed made use of Eastern red cedar and Rocky Mountain juniper, and features



a wildlife drinker that uses a solar system to pump water. The species that are being encouraged include quail and dove.

So from the need to reduce wind erosion came an opportunity not only to conserve the soil, but also wildlife – which in turn led to an invention that facilitates the installation of weed barriers. All of which can be attributed to one of our outstanding conservationists who is working in concert with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Farm Bill to enhance New Mexico’s natural resources.