

Rocky Mountain Conservation Times

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FREMONT CONSERVATION DISTRICT

(719) 275-4465 x 101

Meeting Time:
7:00 p.m. - 1st Wednesday of
each month, USDA Service
Center, Canon City

JOAN ADAIR, President
LINDA STONE, Vice Pres.
JOHN SANDEFUR, Sec/Treas.
RICH GREEN, Member
GARY RATKOVICH, Member
JANET BARNHART, Dist. Mgr.
DAVID HALLOCK, Farm Bill Tech
MELANIE SCAVARDA, Outreach Tech

www.fremontcd.org

LAKE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

(719) 539-7331

Meeting Time:
7:00 p.m.—3rd Thursday of each
month, 10544 Hwy 24 South, Leadville

RAY DAWSON, President
KEVIN CANNELLI, Vice Pres.
EDWARD SHOBER, Sec/Treas.
ROBERT HOCKETT, Member
MARY SCHROEDER, Member
JOAN DAWSON, Dist. Office Mgr.

CUSTER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

(719) 783-2481

Meeting Time:
10:00 am 1st Thursday of each month,
USDA Service Center

HAL JULSEN, President
BUDDY DRAPER, Vice Pres.
BOB LEE, Treasurer
GEORGE "BUTCH" RANKIN, Secretary
CHUCK POEHLEIN, Member
CAROL KUISLE-FRANTA, District Mgr.
DONALD SANCHEZ, Farm Bill Tech
BEN LENTH & ROBIN YOUNG
Members at Large

www.custercountyconservationdistrict.org

UPPER ARKANSAS CONSERVATION DISTRICT

(719) 539-7331

Meeting Time:
7:30 p.m. 1st Monday of each month,
U.S. Forest Service Building, Salida

BRADY EVERETT, President
SANDY CRUZ, Vice President
BRETT MCMURRY, Sec/Treas.
NANCY ROBERTS, Member
CASEY EVERETT, Member
DAVID LYNCH, Member
JIM CLARK, Member
MARCELLA HELTON, Dist. Mgr.

March 2012

USDA EMPLOYEES

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Canon City Service Center:

Rick Romano, District Conservationist
Nick Trainor, Rangeland Mgt. Specialist
Rob Fontaine, Civil Engineering Tech.
Patty Knupp, Soil Conservationist
Melanie Scavarda, Ultima Farm Bill Clerk

Silver Cliff Service Center:

Jim Sperry, District Conservationist
Carol Kuisle-Franta, Soil Conservation Technician

Salida Service Center:

William Gardiner, District Conservationist
Matthew Coen, Soil Conservation Technician

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

Brent Fillmore,
County Executive Director
Kathy Gaylord,
Lead Program Technician

Upcoming Events

March 10, 2012 - Come and support the Custer FFA (Future Farmers of America) at 5:30pm on the west side of Custer County Schools. They will be serving Colorado Oysters and deep fried chicken (for those that don't like oysters) with all the fixings and deserts. After dinner there will be a live auction to bid on all kinds of items and all the proceeds will go for their chapter events and competitions. So come on out to support our Custer FFA Chapter.

March 15, 2012 - *Drought or no Drought. That is the Question.* The Custer and Fremont Conservation Districts, NRCS and the CSU Extension Fremont County are sponsoring a workshop for landowners. The workshop will be held at the Fremont County Rodeo Grounds 4-H Building, 1450 South 9th Street, Canon City, Colorado. 1:00 pm to 4:30pm. Featured speakers will include Brian Bledsoe, KKTU Channel 11 Chief Meteorologist; Mage Skordahl, Acting Data Collections for Basin Outlook Reports; Dr. Stephen Koontz, Extension Specialist, Agricultural Economist, Associate Professor, CSU; and Jeffrey E. Tranel, Agricultural & Business Management Economist, CSU Extension. Cost is \$5.00 per person. Contact Carol at 783-2481 or Janet at 275-4465 x 101 to RSVP. This will be a very informative workshop for landowners. Hope to see you all there!

April 20, 2012 - Fremont Conservation District Annual Landowners Meeting. Abbey Events Center. Doors open at 6:00, dinner served at 7:00 pm. Cost is \$20.00 per person and reservations are required. Dinner will be Sirloin Steak. Contact Janet Barnhart at 719-275-4465 x 101 for your reservations.

DISTRICT NEWS

Custer County News

TREES AND MORE TREES

Custer Conservation District will again will be providing 2 foot potted and 4 foot to 6 foot trees for sale. The District will soon provide a list of species, sizes, and cost of trees for this year's spring sale. For questions feel free to contact Carol Franta, District Manager at 719-783-2481 or email carol.kuisle-franta@co.usda.gov.

Custer County Weed Tour - This year's Custer County Weed Tour will take place around the last two weeks of June in conjunction with the Custer County Weed Advisory Board and Pulling for Colorado. More information and a tentative date will be available after March 31st, 2012. So if interested please watch for our ad in the local newspaper or flyers around town, or if you like give us a call in mid May to find out more from either Robin Young CSU Ext Agent at 719-783-2514 or James Sperry NRCS District Conservationist at 719-783-2481.

Forestry Workshop - Custer Conservation District is planning a forestry workshop this June. Some of what will be discussed is: Insect/Diseases, Defensible Space/Fire Wise, Windbreaks/Living Snow Fences, Program Assistance, and others. More information and a tentative date will be available after May 16th, 2012. So if interested please watch for our ad in the local newspaper or flyers around town, or if you like give us a call in mid May to find out more at 719-783-2481

News from Lake County Conservation District

The Lake County Conservation District held a District poster contest with the 6th grade students at the Intermediate School. Three prizes were given. 1st Place winner received \$25.00, 2nd place winner received \$20.00, and third place winner received \$15.00. There were 3 Honorable mentions.

UARRP report: (Upper Arkansas River Restoration Project).

Work began on the 11 mile reach of the Arkansas River last fall. Some work was done on Dr. Bernard Smith's property, and will resume in the spring of 2012.

Fremont Conservation District News

Garden Park Project a Success!

The Fremont Conservation District, 37 landowners and the Canon City NRCS Field Office, along with invaluable partners the Colorado State Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Colorado Division of Wildlife, wrapped up the field work portion of the Garden Park Project on December 23rd, 2011. Officially known as the "Colorado Partnership Program –Upper Arkansas Watershed – Pinyon-Juniper Project", it consisted of planning Hand Thinning and Mechanical Thinning of pinyon pine and one-seed junipers (P-J) on 1,189 acres in the Garden Park area. The purpose was to reduce the populations of P-J where they were crowding out grasses and forbs on areas that should have been rangeland. In doing so, the benefits would be in improved wildlife habitat, fire mitigation, forest health, improved forage production and a reduction in soil erosion. In the end 954 acres were treated. This area has seen an increase in P-J over the last 50 years to the detriment of the grasses and forbs that should normally be growing on these soils. Stem counts by the BLM recorded 700 to 800 stems (trees) per acre on sites that would normally only have 100 to 125 stems per acre. This competition for nutrients not only crowded out the grasses, which reduced wildlife habitat, but eventually made the trees, weakened by the dry conditions of the last 10 years, susceptible to pest infestations. This area, like others in Fremont County saw the beginning of a huge die off due to an invasion of the Ips beetle. All these dead trees also increased the possibility of wildfires.

..Continued on page 6..

DISTRICT NEWS

News from the Upper Arkansas Conservation District (UACD)
from Vice President, Sandy Cruz

"REEL TO REAL" FILM SERIES

A free monthly film series will begin on February 15th and continue on the third Wednesday of every month in downtown Salida. "Reel to Real" will focus on innovative solutions for living in a changing world, including new approaches to producing food and regenerating resources. The showings are free of charge, though donations are welcome at the door.

In addition to the UACD, the film series is sponsored by the Central Colorado Foodshed Alliance, High Altitude Permaculture, the Morgan Center for Earth Literacy, Guidestone Colorado, Ark Valley Permaculture, Chaffee Citizens for Sustainability, the Greater Arkansas Nature Association and Transition Colorado.

The Salida program may be able to lend films to nearby communities who want to piggyback onto the series with their own local showings.

PERMACULTURE EVENTS AND CLASSES

Permaculture is the art of creating living ecosystems that imitate Nature to provide food, fuel and shelter. Through observation and analysis, permaculturists have identified basic principles that underlie healthy, productive natural systems. By mimicking these principles, we can learn to create integrated communities of plants, critters, people and structures, thereby enhancing the places we live.

To get out the word about this unique approach to gardening, farming and ranching, Sandy Cruz will offer several free "Introductions to Permaculture" during the spring of 2012. Please contact Sandy to schedule a free 2-hour evening or weekend presentation for your community.

In addition, Sandy will offer a "Garden Design and Planning a la Permaculture" workshop on Saturday, April 7th in Salida, and a "Solar Greenhouse Design Weekend" in Colorado Springs on April 28th-29th.

Local permaculturists Sandy Cruz, Denise Ackert and Merry Cox will also offer an 8-month "Permaculture through the Seasons!" Design Course in Chaffee County on the first weekend of each month from October 2012 through May 2013, with certification. Co-sponsored by the UACD. UACD members will receive a \$50 discount on course tuition. The District will also offer a half-scholarship for the program.

LAND-LINK PROGRAM

This spring, David Lynch of Guidestone Colorado will offer a free 2-hour presentation on the Land-Link Program, which matches new farmers and ranchers with land owners.

FARMHANDS PROGRAM

The UACD will once again sponsor Guidestone Colorado's Farmhands Program in 2012. This award-winning summer series provides elementary school children and their families opportunities for hands-on engagement in the farm/ranch environment, teaching such skills as growing food, animal husbandry and traditional homesteading arts.

HOLISTIC MANAGEMENT SEMINAR: FARMING FOR PROFIT

Late in 2012, the UACD will sponsor a multi-day workshop on Alan Savory's system of Holistic Financial Planning. More details available soon.

MORE INFORMATION

To find out more about any of these events, or to join an e-mail list for detailed announcements, please contact Sandy Cruz at sandy@hialtpc.org or call her at (719) 539-7685.

FARM SERVICE AGENCY (FSA)

COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTION RESULTS

Congratulations to new Committee Member, Walter (Buddy) Draper and re-elected Committee Member, Tony Telck! Buddy Draper will represent those producers in LAA4 which consists of all of Custer County and Tony will continue to represent those producers in LAA2, which includes all of the 4-Mile Drainage area, the Canon City, Florence, Rockvale, Williamsburg and Coal Creek areas.

The 2012 Committee is made up of:

LAA3 Chairperson, Charlie Newlon,
LAA2 Vice Chairperson, Tony Telck
LAA1 Member, Steve Oswald
LAA5 Member, Herb Smyth
LAA4 Member Buddy Draper



County Committee Meetings are scheduled to be held on the first Tuesday of the month starting at 10:00 am at the FSA Office in Canon City.

ANSWERING MACHINE

There may be times that when you call the Office, you will get the answering machine. **PLEASE** leave a message. The answering machine is a tool that assists us in providing you with the best service possible. A short message about the purpose of the call will help us to know what files will be needed to answer your question. **Also, please make sure to include your phone number in the message.**

BANKING INFORMATION

If you have changes in your banking information please contact the FSA Office **immediately** to file a new direct deposit form. Sometimes it is really difficult to find payments that end up in "cyber-space"!

FARM RECORD CHANGES

If you have changes in your farming operation, the sale or purchase of land you operate, contact the Office so that updates can be made. Records must be current before any action on program matters may be completed. Leases must be on file with the office before any changes of operator will be made.



IMPORTANT!!

Call the Office and make an appointment **BEFORE** you come in so that you can be assured of prompt and efficient service.

FARM SERVICE AGENCY (FSA)



UP AND COMING PROGRAM SIGNUPS

2012 DCP SIGNUP

For those with eligible bases on their farm the FSA Office will soon be contacting you to sign up for the 2012 DCP Program. There will be no advance payments for this final year of the DCP Program; however the deadline for the 2012 DCP Program is June 1, 2012.

2010 SURE SIGNUP

Signup for the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments Program for 2010 crop loss will begin soon. This program is for those producers that had 2010NAP coverage. FSA Staff will enter information into the software and determine if you are eligible for a payment. If you are eligible for a payment, the Office will contact you to set up an appointment so that you can file an application. For our remote counties, we hope to have in-county workdays so that we come to you instead of you making the trip to Canon City.

2012 CROP CERTIFICATION

Crop certification will begin very soon. Nearly every FSA Program requires that producers report all crops. **Crop certification must be done either 15 days before harvest or before July 15th whichever is earlier.** The final report date for Honey is January 2, of the current crop year.

2012 NON-INSURED CROP DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (2012NAP)

The 2012NAP Program is in full swing. We have several new participants to the program. Just a few reminders that will help keep you in compliance for NAP. There are 5 important steps to the NAP Program.

Buy Coverage by the final Purchase Date.

Certify Acres with the Office.

If you have a weather event that causes a loss, report the loss by signing a form CCC-576 at the FSA Office **within 15 days** of the date of noticing the loss.

REMEMBER: If the result of the loss is so severe that you expect to be unable to harvest you **MUST** advise the Office of this. This is especially important for those producers that have a hay crop that is so damaged that they want to graze.....you **MUST** contact the FSA Office before you change the use from harvesting to grazing. Failure to do so could result in a reduced or no payment.

Once harvest is done, you should report production. The production record must be in an easy to read format and contain the total amount of production, disposition of the crop and your signature. Production is not considered filed with the Office until the record has been stamped by the FSA Office and the original returned to you. Reporting production is required even if you do not file a notice of loss.

Finally, if a loss was filed, you must sign page 2 of the CCC-576 requesting payment and the Actual Production History document for each crop.

If you are new to the NAP program please call the Office to make sure that all prior year documentation is on file.

If you have any questions about the requirements for this program, please do not hesitate to contact the FSA Office at 719-275-4465 x2.

Fremont Conservation District News

Students Win Big for Putting Puzzles Together

by Carrie Canterbury, Canon City Daily Record

Learning about conservation can be fun and interesting for lots of students. And with the recent kick off of the Fremont Conservation District's "Prizes for Puzzles" campaign, youth have the opportunity to earn some cool prizes in addition to learning about conservation.

Fremont County students in grades first through eighth simply log on to www.fremontcd.org and print the featured puzzle each month and learn about conservation. Students then drop off completed puzzles to the Conservation District office at 248 Dozier Ave.

"We are trying to meet more of the school kids," Scavarda said. "We do the poster contest with the sixth-graders, but we started noticing nobody knows what we really do, so we wanted to start at the earliest age that we could and get them to feel comfortable with coming in and talking with us."

Scavarda said each student earns a prize for submitting completed puzzles, and then their names are entered into a drawing for a monthly grand prizes including a Sony DVD player, an MP3 player, a bicycle, a full-sized basketball arcade game and more. "Businesses have been very supportive," Scavarda said.

Madison Exploratory School third-grader Madison Boone-Wallis is the program's first official monthly winner. She was presented with an MP5 player, gourmet popcorn and a bouquet of helium balloons Wednesday at her school.

"I got a card for three free bowling games when I turned in my puzzle," she said.

Her parents, Joshua and Kimberly Boone-Wallis, said the program is a great way to introduce children to the Conservation District. "I just think it's awesome," Kimberly said.

"It's a great program," Joshua said. "It works their brain and gives them an opportunity to bring their school work out of the school and actually into everyday life."

Madison Exploratory School Administrator Beth Gaffney said the school always is pleased to make community connections. "We just try to support all of our local agencies and organizations," she said. "This is a way that everybody wins -- kids get to learn about it and get to do fun things in the process."

The other winner for January is Washington Elementary School second-grader Haley Suter, who won a \$40 Walmart gift card and \$15 iTunes card.

Students enrolled in Fremont County schools or home school are eligible to participate in "Prizes for Puzzles." For more information, call the Conservation District office at 275-4465, ext. 101.

Garden Park Project a Success!

..Continued from page 2..

This project was the result of a locally led process that came to the Fremont Conservation District with a project that the district was able to sponsor through NRCS funding. The amazing thing is that from time of the first landowner meeting, through funding and ending with the completion of all field work was just over twelve months. AND, the paperwork was essentially painless through this whole process.

This project represents the kind of small watershed project that the NRCS is looking to fund. Namely, a project with landowner support, focusing on one watershed and on one resource issue. So if you have any project, be it irrigation, rangeland, or forestry oriented, please come into your local USDA Service Center.

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**U.S.D.A Service Center**

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