

Rocky Mountain Conservation Times

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(719) 275-4465 x 101

Meeting Time:

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

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LINDA STONE, Vice Pres.
JOHN SANDEFUR, Sec/Treas.
RICH GREEN, Member
GARY RATKOVICH, Member
TONY TELCK, Alternate Member
VACANT, District Manager
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

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KEVIN CANNELL, Vice Pres.
EDWARD SHOBER, Sec/Treas.
ROBERT HOCKETT, Member
MARY SCHROEDER, Member
JOAN DAWSON, District Manager

CUSTER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

(719) 783-2481

Meeting Time:

8:30 a.m. 1st Thursday of each month,
USDA Service Center, Silver Cliff, CO

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BUDDY DRAPER, Vice Pres.
BOB LEE, Treasurer
GEORGE "BUTCH" RANKIN, Secretary
CHUCK POEHLEIN, Member
CAROL KUISLE-FRANTA, District Mgr.
DONALD SANCHEZ, Cons. Consultant
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

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SANDY CRUZ, Vice Pres.
BRETT MCMURRY, Sec/Treas.
NANCY ROBERTS, Member
DAVID LYNCH, Member
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MARCELLA HELTON, District Manager

MARCH 2013

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

Silver Cliff Service Center:

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

Salida Service Center:

William Gardiner, District Conservationist
Matthew Coen, Soil Conservation Tech

FSA SERVICE AGENCY

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

County FSA Committee

Charlie Newlon, Chairperson
Tony Telck, Vice Chair.
Steve Oswald, Member
Buddy Draper, Member
Tom Murphy, Member
Bridget Gay, Advisor

Upcoming Events

APRIL 18, 2013 - Lake County CD Annual Meeting

APRIL 26, 2013 - Fremont Conservation District Annual Banquet

Join us for dinner and celebrate our 67th year serving Fremont County! Tickets are available now! Cost is \$20.00 per person and reservations are required. Contact Melanie Scavarda at 719-275-4465 x 3 for more info.

APRIL 26, 2013—CoAgMet and eRAMS Irrigation Scheduling Workshop

Wendy Ryan from CSU will describe how to navigate all the different parts of the CoAgMet network and website. Allan Andales from CSU crop and soil science will describe the new eRAMS irrigation scheduling tool. Contact Jord Gertson with the Upper Ark Water Conservancy at 719-539-5425 to RSVP.

MARCH 2013 - Custer County Conservation District Spring Tree Sale

Don't forget to support Custer County this spring and buy locally grown trees for your property! Contact Carol Kuisle-Franta at 719-783-2481 for more info.

May-June, 2013 – CRMI RANGE WORKSHOP

A Colorado Resource Monitoring Initiative Workshop is planned for the Canon City area in May or June. Stay tuned to www.fremontcd.org for more info. This is an important training for anyone out there with a grazing lease, especially if you are leasing from the BLM or the USFS.

The *Colorado Resource Monitoring Initiative* is a tool that will provide measurable and standardized monitoring information that is needed to address natural resource and rangeland health decisions. For more information check out <http://www.coloradocattle.org/crmi.aspx>

2013 FSA DEADLINES - See pages 5 - 6 of this newsletter.

DISTRICT NEWS

DISTRICTS HOST CONSERVATION-THEMED MOVIE NIGHTS! **CHECK OUT WHAT IS PLAYING IN YOUR AREA!**

CUSTER COUNTY

"*WATERSHED: Exploring a New Water Ethic for the New West*", the first in a series of four winter conservation-themed movies was shown on February 5th at the Community Room of the West Custer County Library. Sustainable Ways, in conjunction with the Custer County Conservation District and the West Custer County Library, hosted the free screening of the film. The other films to be shown are...

Ingredients (3/5);
DUCK! (a duckumentary) (4/2);
Bag It! is your life too plastic? (4/23).

All of the films are shown on Tuesdays at 5 p.m. in the library community room. There is no admission charge to view the films and all are welcome. For more detailed information about any of the future documentaries scheduled for the winter series go to www.sustainableways.org or call the Conservation District office at 719-783-2481.

UPPER ARKANSAS

The "Reel to Real" film series - showcasing innovative solutions for a changing world - continues in Salida on the third Wednesday of each month through May. Please save March 20th, April 17th and May 15th on your calendar!
The theme for March will tentatively be **Water Wisdom for Dry Lands**.
After a summer break, the series will resume on September 18th, probably showing **The Economics of Happiness**.

The films take place in the basement of the Methodist Church at 4th and D Street. Showings are free, although donations are always welcome. The Upper Arkansas Conservation District co-sponsors this series, along with Transition Colorado, High Altitude Permaculture, Central Colorado Foodshed Alliance, Morgan Center for Earth Literacy, Guidestone, GARNA, Ark Valley Permaculture, and Growing Connections.

For more information, please call Sandy Cruz at 719-539-7685.

FREMONT COUNTY

Can't make it to one of the counties showing conservation films? Rent (*for free*) several award-winning conservation movies from the Fremont Conservation District.

We have some great titles available for this spring-summer!

DIRT! The Movie

Black Blizzard - As shown on the History Channel

The Dustbowl by Ken Burns - As shown on PBS

These are perfect for classrooms and other group showing events!
Give us a call at 719-275-4465 ext 3 to check out one of our DVDs.

DISTRICT NEWS

Upper Arkansas Conservation District Annual Banquet Success

The Upper Arkansas Conservation District held their 69th Annual banquet on November 16th at the Chaffee County Fairgrounds. This year marked a new milestone as the District invited the local food producers network, the Central Colorado Foodshed Alliance, to join the longstanding ranchers and farmers of the valley for this annual event. An award was presented to CCFA cofounders, David and Suzanne Ward, who have championed the local food movement.

Additionally, Frank McMurry was honored by the District board as conservationist of the year; Frank and his family have been diligently implementing holistic management grazing practices on their ranch in Nathrop. One of the highlights of the evening was a grazing panel presentation with local ranchers Brady Everett, Brett McMurry and Bruce Cogan. Byron Shelton, holistic management specialist and instructor, facilitated a lively discussion with the audience.

The event was marked by foods provided by local producers and prepared by Ploughboy, a local food market in the area. The evening concluded with music by local artist Andrea Coen who led a rousing time of contra dancing. Many thanks to Nancy Roberts and Sandy Cruz for all their work to organize the banquet.

The District board members were encouraged by the excellent attendance and look forward to expanding participation in this annual celebration. Please mark your calendars for next year's dinner event on Saturday November 16th at the Chaffee County fairgrounds.

Custer Holds Fracking Forum

On January 22, 2013, conservation organizations and the West Custer County Library co-sponsored a community forum that addressed the potential for oil & gas and mineral extraction in Custer County.

The main intent of the forum was to provide an overview of the related issues in an educational manner rather than an opportunity to debate the pros and cons of the current "fracking" process or the desirability of local oil & gas development. Speakers included archaeologist Gary Zeigler, executive director of San Isabel Land Protection Trust, Ben Lenth, paleontologist and retired exploration geologist & manager in the petroleum industry, as well as retired USGS hydrologist Doug Cain.

The forum was well received by a packed house. It was determined that, due to the geology of Custer County, it is unlikely, except in the northeast portion, that oil & gas exploration will become a major concern in the county. The forum raised awareness of the issues surrounding this type of exploration, the methods used, landowners' property rights in regard to surface and underground mineral rights and information on how to find out who owns those rights. The forum also sparked interest in the attendees as to how the local and state government are handling these issues and responding to their constituents' concerns. Due to the high level of interest in this forum, it is very likely that follow-up forums will be presented in the near future.

The sponsoring groups for the forum were CSU Extension, Custer County Conservation District, Great Old Broads for Wilderness, San Isabel Land Protection Trust, Sustainable Ways, and the West Custer County Library.

The presentation may be viewed at...

<http://www.custercountyconservationdistrict.org/workshopsprograms.html>.

DISTRICT NEWS

ALL COUNTY - Drought Workshop Series

We would like to inform ranchers of the webinar series entitled “Managing Drought Risk on the Ranch”.

This Professional Development Webinar Series is sponsored by the National Drought Mitigation Center and was developed with the support of the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program. These webinar sessions are free and open to the public and are conducted the last Wednesday of each month, January – May, at 9 a.m. Mountain Time.

Each session includes a briefing on current drought status, followed by a session on a specific topic or tool related to drought planning. This is an easy and free way for any livestock or hay producer to gain valuable planning information. The following five topics will be covered:

January - “Managing Drought Risk on the Ranch: The Planning Process”

February - “Avoiding Analysis Paralysis: Monitoring and Setting Critical Dates for Decision Making During Drought”

March - “The New Cumulative Forage Reduction Index: Assessing Drought Impacts and Planning a Grazing Strategy”

April - “Using a Drought Calculator to Assist Stocking Decisions”

May - “Economic Factors to Weigh in Making Decisions during Drought”.

A drought planning guide is also available at this website. Registration is required to receive the Adobe Connect webinar link. Register at <http://go.unl.edu/uwk>.

If you wish to watch any session at a later date visit the following website where each session is archived: <http://drought.unl.edu/ranchplan/Overview.aspx>.

If you are unable to connect to the internet, have slow internet speed, or just wish to join others for discussion of the information covered in the webinars, please feel free to join us at any of the Conservation District offices. Please call ahead to the office in your area so that we have plenty of time to set up computers.

Lake County Conservation District - UPDATES

Lake County Conservation District held their Annual Poster Contest for 6th grade students in November 2012. There was a 1st place winner – Diana Martinez, 2nd place – Andrea Olave, and 3rd place – Ariel Benney. There were also 5 honorable mentions. The 1st place winner received \$25.00, 2nd place \$20.00, and 3rd place \$15.00. The 1st place winner and parents will be honored at our Annual Meeting.

Lake County Conservation District will award two \$500.00 Scholarships to two deserving Lake County High School seniors graduating with the class of 2013. Also the District is planning to send three students to Camp Rocky this summer.

Work is continuing on the Upper Arkansas River Restoration project (UARRP).

Check out our new signs! The District will be putting up 4’x5’ signs that will read entering Lake County Conservation District on U.S. Highway 24 and Colorado Highway 91 entrances.

Farm Service Agency (FSA)

COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTION RESULTS

Congratulations to Stephen D. Oswald! Steve was re-elected to represent farmers from LAA1, which is the area that extends from the western Fremont County line to the west side of Skyline Drive. Steve was elected to his third consecutive term. The election results for Local Administrative Area #1 are:

Stephen D Oswald — Elected to the county committee (COC)
Paul Garrett — 1st alternate to COC.

FSA appreciates all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation.

An important change to the COC is that Herb Smyth has resigned from the Committee. We extend a heartfelt thanks to Herb for his excellent service to the agricultural producers of Fremont, Chaffee, Custer and Lake Counties.

Tom Murphy is the elected alternate for LAA 5 and will take over as regular voting Committee-person.

The COC organizational meeting was held in January. The COC lineup is as follows:

Charlie Newlon, Chairperson	Tony Telck as Vice-Chairperson
Steve Oswald, Member	Buddy Draper, Member
Tom Murphy, Member	Bridget Gay, Advisor

DCP/ACRE 2013 SIGN-UP

The Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program (DCP) and the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program are being offered for the 2013 crop year under the 2008 Farm Bill Extension.

DCP and ACRE sign-up for 2013 crops will begin on February 19, 2013. The DCP sign-up period will end on August 2, 2013 and ACRE sign-up will end on June 3, 2013.

The only program change from 2012 to 2013 is that all eligible participants in 2013 may choose to enroll in either DCP or ACRE for the 2013 crop year. This means that eligible producers who were enrolled in ACRE in 2012 may elect to enroll in DCP in 2013 or may re-enroll in ACRE in 2013 (and vice versa).

****FSA Staff in the Canon City Office will advise those eligible producers by postcard, as to the workday for the DCP Program sign up.**

Farming Operation Changes

Producers who have bought or sold land, or added or dropped rented land from their operation must report those changes to the FSA office as soon as possible. A copy of the deed or recorded land contract for purchase property is needed to maintain accurate records with FSA. Failure to do so can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. While making record updates, be sure to update signature authorizations. Making record changes now will save time in the spring.

****REMEMBER to report changes in direct deposit information!**

Farm Service Agency (FSA)

2011 SUPPLEMENTAL REVENUE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) will continue to accept SURE applications for 2011 crop losses through June 7, 2013. Under the 2008 Farm Bill, SURE authorizes assistance to farmers and ranchers who suffered crop losses caused by natural disasters occurring through Sept. 30, 2011.

During 2011, 49 Colorado counties received a Secretarial Disaster Designation, whether primary or contiguous, and producers are eligible to apply for SURE benefits if they experienced at least a 10 percent production loss that affects one crop of economic significance. To meet program eligibility requirements, producers must have obtained a policy or plan of insurance through the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation or obtained Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for all economically significant crops. Eligible farmers and ranchers who meet the definition of a socially disadvantaged, limited resource or beginning farmer or rancher do not have to meet this requirement. Forage crops intended for grazing are not eligible for SURE benefits.

****All of the worksheets have been completed and if you were eligible for a payment, the Office has already contacted you. If you have questions please call the FSA Office.**

NONINSURED CROP DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (NAP)

The noninsured crop disaster assistance program (NAP) is a federally funded program that helps producers reduce their risk when growing food and fiber crops, specialty crops and crops for livestock feed. These benefits are only available for crops for which the catastrophic level of crop insurance is not available. Application for coverage must be filed by the applicable crop's application closing date. Production records for all crops must be reported to FSA no later than the acreage reporting date for the crop for the following year. FSA requires that any production reported in a loss year be verifiable according to Agency specifications.

NAP Losses must be reported within 15 days of the date the loss becomes apparent.

Other News

Fruit Tree Workshop a Success

The Colorado State University - Extension and the Fremont Conservation District would like to thank Dan Fernandez (retired CSU - Extension County Director in Dolores County) for an engaging and educational presentation on fruit trees in Fremont County on February 28th.

Landowners who attended the full day workshop learned all about pruning, pest management, and best practices for maximum production.

If you are interested in attending future workshops, please visit www.fremontcd.org to periodically check the current events announcements.

We would also like to thank Justin Jenkins (owner of Jenkins' Farms at 448 K Street in Penrose.) He graciously offered us the use of his barn and his apple orchard for the classroom and outdoor portions of our workshop.

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