



Fremont Conservation District Local Work Group Meeting June 11, 2021

The Local Work Group meeting was held on June 11, 2021 at Jenkins Farms in Penrose. There were 11 in attendance: 3 landowners, 3 landowners / agency (2 District Board members), and 5 agency personnel. After introductions were made, **Greg Langer, Resource Team Leader**, went over why we have these meetings and what FCD and NRCS hopes to gain from them. **Debbie Mitchell, District Manager**, then went over the 2020 Survey results, which included some comments and other information on how landowners could participate more in conservation efforts. The Resource Concerns were left as for 2021: #1 - Water Quality / Quantity; #2 - Soil Health; #3 - Livestock & wildlife; #4 - Pasture / Rangeland Health; #5 - Forest Health; and, #6 - Energy Conservation.

Mia Cory, District Conservation Tech, gave a Soil Health presentation discussing cover crop versus no cover crop and showed how to see if your soil is healthy by placing 2 soil clods in water - one from covered, the other not - and watch the water saturation and the rate of erosion. Mia also did a water percolation test on covered and uncovered soils and the rate at which the water seeps into the soil. Mia also talked about what she does as the District Conservation Tech and what she can assist landowners with.

Kara Harders, CSU Extension / USDA-NRCS Regional Small Acreage Specialist, gave a presentation on noxious and obnoxious weeds in our area. Some of these included: kochia, Russian thistle, Canada thistle, knapweed, field bindweed, to name a few. Kara had examples of these plants from how they look when they are small and how they end up looking at the end of the season. Kara did a biological control - Canada thistle rust fungus - treatment on some thistle that was found along the irrigation ditch. She also did a tour of the weeds that were on Jenkins Farms so they could be seen as they are growing.

Kaitlyn Nafziger, Private Lands Wildlife Biologist, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, in partnership with NRCS and Colorado Parks & Wildlife, gave a presentation on nuisance large animals, such as deer and bear. Kaitlyn went over on how to keep yourself, your pets / animals and property safe while these animals are around. Handouts were available on other large animals in our area and Kaitlyn answered other questions regarding birds in our area as well.

Justin Jenkins, landowner, went over the conservation practices he uses on his property and what his farm produces. Justin also assists the District with the No-Till Drill when needed.

Greg Langer, Resource Team Leader, went over our survey for this year on NRCS Planning First program. Results are as follows: Irrigation pipe - gated (5); Flood irrigation (2); no sprinklers; Ditches - no lined / unlined (3); Field prep - tilled (1) / no-till (2); Crops - main: grass (2) / hay (2); Crops - cover: oats (1); Noxious / obnoxious weeds: Milkweed (1); Erosion - soil (1); Pinion / Juniper (2); Other tree species: Elm (2); Plans - Rotational grazing (3); Grazing plan (1); Small Acreage Management (1); Wildfire Mitigation (1); Defensible / Survivable spaces (1). Practices to apply for with the Planning 1st Program through an EQIP application: Irrigation pipe (3); Nutrient Management Plan (1); Grazing Plan (3); Soil Health Plan (2). Delay of funding for a year or more with this program was no problem.