

WCDEA News

NOVEMBER 2014

A Message From the Executive Committee

Greetings!

This years WACD Annual Convention, Working for the Wyoming Way of Life!, will be hosted by the Sheridan County Conservation District in Sheridan, WY.

Our WCDEA Business Meeting is set for Tuesday, November 19th from 10:00 a.m. till noon. The agenda can be found on Page 9 of this newsletter.

Please don't forget to bring your silent auction items. The funds raised are used to put on trainings, purchase longevity and Employee of the Year awards and provide scholarships to members for trainings and conferences.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- ◆ Message from the President
- ◆ District Happenings
- ◆ New Employees
- ◆ Longevity Awards
- ◆ Employees Meeting Agenda
- ◆ WCDEA Executive Committee

Outstanding Area Employees Named

Outstanding Area I Employee: Amy Doke, Program Specialist; Sheridan County CD-As the program specialist, Amy is the all-around "go to girl" for everything that needs to be done. Even when on maternity leave, she continued to coordinate and conduct special outreach activities for the District (such as Sagebrush Outdoor Lab, butter activities for AG week, and others). She oversaw the completion of a demonstration project to integrate outreach, water quality, and our need to engage the urban community through the installation of a rain garden, permeable walkway, and rain barrels. This year, she overhauled the tree program, which included coordination with two separate nurseries. In her spare time, she assisted WCDEA with initial development of a website. Amy is an invaluable asset and always performs with a professional attitude.

Outstanding Area II Employee: Kathy Cooney, Financial Coordinator; Laramie County CD -Kathy has worked for the Laramie County Conservation District as the Financial Coordinator since January 2007. Her responsibilities include tracking, budget expenditures, balancing bank accounts, paying bills, billing customers, answering the phone, assisting walk-in customers, tracking inventory, taking minutes at board meetings and just about anything else that needs done. Kathy consistently helps out before and during WACD convention with assembly of convention registration packets and clerking for the WACD auction.

Outstanding Area III Employee: Janet Hallsted, District Coordinator; South Big Horn CD-Janet is always willing to assist anyone who asks for help, giving guidance and advice without judgment. With the varied "tasks" involved with being a District Coordinator most of the day and weeks involves times going above and beyond the call of duty just as a normal day.

Outstanding Area IV Employee: Jean Runner, Office Manager/Education Coordinator; S-E-R CD - Jean goes above and beyond on a daily basis. Her duties as the Office Manager include: District budget, monthly financial reports, funding requirements, payment of bills, generating vouchers, deposits/payments, Supervisor election filings, WID Board filings, among numerous other tasks that keep the office running smoothly. She is responsible for the Upper North Platte Valley Water Users Association, Upper North Platte Valley Water Conservation Association, Hugus Water Irrigation District, Highline Irrigation District's minutes, finances, elections, advertisements and guest speakers.

Outstanding Area V Employee: Kathy Raper, Surface Water Program Manager; Sublette County CD- Kathy takes special care to stay informed of local issues involving water quality and any environmental issues that may have an effect on conservation in Sublette County. She has made an extra effort to become acquainted with the landowners where she collects water samples, thus resulting in friendships and excellent landowner relationships for the District. Many times Kathy will take her own personal time to attend informational meetings in order to stay informed of potential problems that may affect landowners in and around Sublette County.

Excerpts taken from winners nomination letters submitted to WCDEA.



Greetings,

“Working for the Wyoming Way of Life” not only is this the theme for this year’s WACD Convention, but something we as Conservation District Employees get up and do every day. It is the reason we love our jobs and put in the extra effort when times get tough. When asked the question “What exactly do you do?” I often struggle to find the words that sum up all that a Conservation District does, from water quality, range management, tree programs, youth/adult education, recycling, administration, and everything in between, but that one sentence might put it best. “I work for the Wyoming Way of Life.” What could be a better job right? To work together to improve and maintain the way of life we enjoy.



Where has the time gone? A year has already passed since we gathered for Convention in Jackson, yet here we are gearing up to head to Sheridan. It hardly seems like it has been that long since you elected me to serve as your Association President, I thank you for the opportunity you gave me and hope that I have done justice to the position. This past year we have seen the beginning stages of a WCDEA website, a very successful Winter Training, 15 employees receive Longevity Awards (with their years of service ranging from 5-25 years) and 5 well deserving employees named Area Employees of the Year. I want to take a moment to thank my fellow Officers and Executive Committee members for all of their hard work and dedication to continue to grow and improve our

Employees Association. Thank You!

As we move towards convention, there are a few things I would like you to take under consideration. First, we will be holding elections for the Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer positions. The Vice President and Secretary positions will be for 2 year terms while the Treasurer position will be for 1 year term to fulfill an unexpired term. Due to circumstances beyond his control, Robb Sgroi has had to resign as Treasurer. We will miss Robb on the Executive Committee and are thankful for all of his hard work and dedication to the Association. If you are interested in any of these positions more information is provided on page 8 of the newsletter. The second thing I would like you to consider is what you as an Association would like to see the WCDEA website look like. We need to move forward with this project and need input from you. If you have comments or concerns regarding the development of the website please bring them to the meeting or e-mail them to me and I will make sure your thoughts are heard. Finally, I would like to encourage you to bring silent auction items to Convention. The funds raised from the WCDEA Silent Auction go towards funding our scholarship program, trainings, and employee awards (Longevity and Area Employees of the Year). If you have any questions or comments please don’t hesitate to call, e-mail, or track me down. I am always happy to listen, lend a hand, and will do the best I can to assist you in any way I can.

In closing, I want to say Thank You to each and every one of you for your hard work and dedication to preserve the “Wyoming Way of Life”. I look forward to seeing all of you in Sheridan.

“EVERY
ACCOMPLISHMENT
STARTS WITH THE
DECISION TO TRY.”



District Employees Receive Longevity Awards

This year 15 District Employees received Longevity Awards for their years of dedicated service to their Districts. They include:

25 Years of Service

Janet Hallsted South Big Horn CD

20 Years of Service

Glen Leavengood S-E-R CD

15 Years of Service

Kelly Brown WACD
Emily Hagedorn-Wegher Teton CD
Kathy Raper Sublette County CD
Heidi Sturman Niobrara CD

10 Years of Service

Dawn Arnell Little Snake River CD
Sno Ann Engler Sublette County CD
Dennis Hemmer Laramie County CD
Debbie Hepp Campbell County CD
Trish Penny Laramie River CD

5 Years of Service

Mark Blakely Little Snake River CD
Kelly Booth Lake DeSmet CD
Loren Racich Sublette County CD
Cathy Rosenthal WACD

“THERE IS NO
CHALLENGE TOO
GREAT FOR THOSE
WHO HAVE THE
WILL AND HEART TO
MAKE IT HAPPEN.”

Congratulations and Thank You for all that you do.

New Area Representatives Elected

We would like to welcome the new Area Representatives and Alternates that were elected at Area Meetings. They are:

Area I Alternate: Debbie Hepp, Campbell County CD

Area II Alternate: Duane Loyd, Laramie County CD

Area III Alternate: Steffen Cornell

Area IV Representative: Joan McGraw, Medicine Bow CD

Alternate: Ali Johnson, Dubois-Crowheart CD

Thank you for being willing to serve and we look forward to working with you. We also want to take this time to thank those Area Representatives who will be terming out/leaving their positions following this years convention. Thank you for your time and dedication to the Employees Association.



Free Money for Weed Control!

Submitted by: Rachel Daluge, Teton CD

The Teton Conservation Districts (TCD) Noxious Weed Cost Share Program is now in its 10th year of reimbursing Teton County, WY landowners for the control of noxious weeds. In 2013, the program reimbursed a total of \$108,156 to 291 property owners on over 28,000 acres. Over the last 9 years, 770 properties have applied for this program, and over \$1.4 million has been reimbursed. Throughout the lifetime of this exceptional program, over 38,000 acres in Teton County, WY have been mapped for weeds and weed management plans created. When participant acreage is compared to total privately owned acreage in the county, 49.5% of the land has been impacted by this program. Many private landowners appreciate the program, one woman who owns property in Jackson, WY said, "I feel this is a very important program for weed awareness... This has been a good program to get my neighbors involved with weed control who were unaware of the problem."



Treated vs. Untreated Oxyeye
Photo provided by M. Daluge 2014

This season looks to be another banner year for participation with over 40 new applicants and reimbursement requests already flowing in. Through an agreement with TCD, Teton County Weed & Pest District performs all landowner correspondence, property visits, creation of weed maps, and weed management plans. For more information about this program, please visit www.tetonconservation.org, www.tcweed.org, or contact Mark Daluge at the phone number (307) 733- 8419 or email address mdaluge@tcweed.org.

Arbor Day

Submitted by: Anita Bartlett, Powder River CD

This year Kaycee's official Arbor Day Celebration occurred on Wednesday, May 14th, when Mayor Tom Knapp and kids from the Boys and Girls Club of the Big Horns-Kaycee Branch joined PRCD District Manager Anita Bartlett and Kelly Norris with State Forestry to plant 5 Colorado Blue Spruce trees and listen to Mayor Knapp read the Arbor Day proclamation. Following the reading of the



proclamation Mayor Knapp was presented with an award for the Town of Kaycee as they have completed 8 years as a Tree City USA Town. The PRCD would like to send out their Thanks to the following people: Town of Kaycee, Russell Cohee, Mike Dolbar, Dean Koch, and the Boys and Girls Club for all of their help, support and efforts on this project. It is because of community member like you we are able to do projects like this to help continually improve our community. Thank You.

Conservation: We're All In!

Submitted by: Anita Bartlett, Powder River CD

Area youth gathered once again at Mallo Camp north of Newcastle, WY to participate in the Black Hills Natural Resource Youth Camp June 11-13th. The purpose of this camp is to give youth the opportunity to experience a wide variety of activities and educational sessions teaching them about the natural world and its resources. Other activities included fishing, the Wildman Hike teaches kids about predators and prey relationships, a talent show, a presentation on astrology, and various games.

Each child participated in six educational sessions they included: "Bird Banding", "Trivia", "All About Trees", "Casting for Food", "Rain, Rain, Rain" and "Target Practice".

"Bird Banding", presented by Jacelyn Downey with the Audubon Rockies taught campers how birds are captured, what data is taken when they are captured, how they are banded and released back into nature. The youth at camp had the opportunity to see bird capturing in action as Jacelyn set up her bird nets and captured birds at camp.



Lindsay Wood with Wyoming Ag in the Classroom presented "Trivia" where campers learned about beef nutrition, by products, animal facts, and safe animal handling.

"All About Trees" with Jesse Halverson, from Project Learning Tree explained to kids the importance of trees to our communities and ecosystems, what trees can be harvested for, and types of hazards to trees (disease, fire, bugs, and humans/wildlife).

Campbell County Conservation District Technician Kevin Quick and Todd Caltrider, Habitat Biologist with WY Game and Fish taught campers all about "Casting for Food". This activity taught campers how to cast, fish, and properly care for caught fish. Campers were allowed to practice their casting skills and catch fish.



"Rain, Rain, Rain" presented by Tim Kellogg, Campbell County District Conservationist, and Cameron Clark, Area Resource Soil Scientist with the Wyoming NRCS. Their rainfall simulator showed the effects of rain on different types of vegetation/soil types. Each type of vegetation/soil showed erosion in some way and this evidence is detected by collection the runoff in containers and examining the color and quality of the water and the amount of sediment

that was displaced into each container.

Finally, Bill Kohlbrand with WY State Forestry and Brad Jones with Cambria Bowhunters of WY, had "Target Practice". They taught youth how the correct way to shoot a bow and arrow, safety while shooting and let the kids do a little "target practice".

Sponsors for the Black Hills Natural Resource Youth Camp were Weston County Natural Resource Districts, Niobrara, Campbell, and Powder River Conservation Districts, the WY Department of Agriculture, and BKS Environmental.



5th Annual Northern Rockies Tree School

Submitted by: SnoAnn Engler, Sublette County CD

District employees from Natrona, Campbell, Converse, Sublette, Lake DeSmet, Sweetwater and Medicine Bow attended the 5th Annual Northern Rockies Tree Workshop in Cody October 8-9th;



Wednesday's session began at noon with Dr. Robert Vanderhoof, Regional Forester for Rocky Mountain Power. He spoke about the secret life of the tree, and the important jobs that each part plays in the life of a tree. Dr Vanderhoof also educated us about power lines and why trees are topped and trimmed. The right tree in the right place comes to mind. Dr. Vanderhoof also gave us a clear and understanding view of tree trimming & removal near under & around power lines. We all went home with a better understanding of why tall trees should

NEVER be planted under or next to a power line. Just think.....Perhaps we might remember that a few years ago 1 tree fell on a power line which resulted in 2.5 million people without power. Many things go into consideration when it comes to trees & power lines. For instance the sag & sway of a power line in extreme heat, ice buildup on the lines or high winds all make distance from power lines and tree trimming a tough job!



Vince Urbina has been a Certified Arborist since 1999. In 2013 he became a qualified tree risk assessor. We did a field tour to an area in which a dead cottonwood tree was assessed for risk to the neighborhood. Three issues are addressed before determining whether the tree should be



removed or trimmed. Is it a danger to people? Is personal property in jeopardy? Is there a potential for disruption of service? If each of these scored low then the tree would likely be left in place.

Any medium to high scoring would probably result in complete tree removal. Trees really can be dangerous when they fall, and even "if no one is in the (urban) forest when they fall" and they may not be heard they will definitely be seen, possibly on someone's roof or vehicle!

We also heard from Dr. Richard Thureau who the owner & director of a geospatial technology company, Plan It Geo, LLC. With more than 10 years of experience working in both urban and traditional forestry.

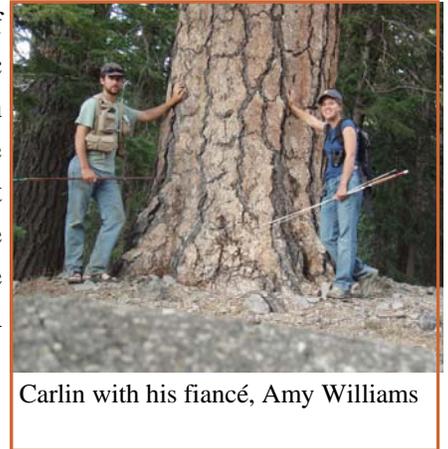
Some of his specialties include tree planting prioritization, ecosystem service evaluation, and tree inventory. He is a world of knowledge regarding tree applications (app's) for phones & tablets that could be useful in the future.

New Employees Join the WCDEA Family

The Wyoming Conservation District Employees Association would like to welcome all of our new employees to the WCDEA Family. We wish you all the best of luck in your new positions!

Carlin Gerard; Water Resource Specialist, Teton CD

Carlin Girard was hired at the Teton Conservation District as the Water Resource Specialist in July, 2014. He is coming from the University of Wyoming in Laramie, where he is completing his master's degree in Aquatic Ecosystem Management. Prior to beginning his advanced degree, Carlin worked and lived in Jackson, Wyoming for about 6 years. During this time he worked for Wyoming Game and Fish, with the Fisheries Management and Aquatic Habitat Biologists, and conducting wildlife disease surveillance and vaccination. Carlin also gained fisheries experience working for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. There is nowhere Carlin would rather live than Western Wyoming, and nothing he would rather be doing there than working to protect and improve the natural resources of the region.



Carlin with his fiancé, Amy Williams

Don Zimmerer; Tree Technician, Goshen County CD's

My name is Don Zimmerer and I am the new Tree Technician for North Platte Valley, Lingle/Ft. Laramie, and South Goshen Conservation Districts. I was born and raised in the Huntley Area, and went to school at Huntley, Eastern Wyoming College, and the University of Wyoming. I farmed most of my life, but also taught school, did construction, and worked in retail. I have a family which includes my wife, Tammy and our children- Mallory, Mackenzie, and Zaccary. I like this area and think it is a wonderful place to live and raise a family.



Ginny Davis; District Clerk, Meeteetse CD

The Meeteetse Conservation District welcomes our new District Clerk, Ginny Davis. Her first day was Monday, March 31st and she brings 40+ years of office knowledge and experience to the District. Feel free to introduce yourself and let her know how your piece fits into the larger puzzle.





Farewell

After 23 years of dedicated service to the Lake DeSmet Conservation District in Buffalo, Nikki Lohse is retiring. She came on as a part-time employee in 1991 and soon became an asset to the district. Because of her experience growing up on a sheep ranch and becoming a cattle rancher with her husband, Nikki brought a working knowledge of ranchers and ranching. Growing up in Buffalo, she also knew most of the community. Her previous work experience brought administration and people skills and money management to the district. Her professionalism always shines through and everyone who walks through the office doors is met with a smile and friendly greeting and a willingness to help no matter what their question. If she herself cannot answer the question, she will find the information needed and get back to them as soon as possible.



The ability to bring people together for the greater good of conservation is one of her many strengths and has brought partnerships with multiple agencies and organizations to complete projects by working together. Just some of the partnerships she and the many board members she has worked closely with are; the BLM, USFS, Johnson County Weed and Pest, Commissioners, Fire Department, the Buffalo Trail Board, the City of Buffalo, Trout Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, Wyoming Game and Fish, State Forestry and the Oil and Gas Commission, just to list a few. The trust she has earned from these entities and the local land users and community has created an ability to get conservation on the ground. For nearly 20 years she worked closely with District Conservationist Phil Gonzales and was able to talk to ranchers and producers about the NRCS programs. She was well informed on the practices and how they could benefit the land and resources and still increase the bottom line. The main goal being the ability to make a living and still protect and improve the conditions of the land and open spaces for generations to come. Under her management, she saw the need for more funding for bigger and better projects. Over the years she wrote and managed many grants and campaigned for a mill levy for the district which was successful. This enabled the board to provide for more education and create their own cost-share program to reach even more large and small conservation projects and have emergency reserve fund for unexpected events such as fires or floods. It also made possible to fund a large sage grouse habitat improvement project, enabling concerned ranchers with leks and sage grouse habitat to keep grazing with management plans and increasing the dwindling sage grouse population at the same time.

Nikki has a thirst for knowledge and continues to learn about natural resource conservation practices. She has attended and held countless trainings and workshops over the past 23 years in able to help both rural and urban residents with conservation. Because of Nikki's desire to serve all aspects of conservation, she has found ways for the district to provide items not readily available in a small town such as seedling and mature conservation trees, wildlife escape ramps, rain barrels, composters and recycling bins at reasonable prices to those also wanting to participate in conservation. She has worked closely with the Buffalo Recycling Center, the Buffalo Trail Board with their trails, fire mitigation, removal of Russian olives and tree plantings, started the LDCD Pesticide and Hazardous Waste Collection Day, and is an advisor to the Buffalo Tree Board to mention a few.

Like all Conservation District Managers, Nikki has had to be a Jack-of-All-Trades. But with her passion for her work and love for people, Nikki has become of Master of those trades as well. She is leaving behind a "legacy of conservation" as the LDCD board stated when she announced her retirement. She will be missed at the office and in the field by the board, co-workers and those she serves on a daily basis but the work she has done will last for many years and generations to come. Whatever lies ahead for Nikki, she will do it with professionalism, dedication and near perfection like she has done for the Lake DeSmet Conservation District because that's the person that Nikki Lohse is. We wish her well on her future endeavors.



WCDEA Officer Positions

Are you interested in serving on the WCDEA Officer Team? If so here is some important information for you. This year during the WACD Convention at the WCDEA meeting three Officer Positions are up for election. However, there are some things you should consider if you choose to run for a WCDEA Office. First, will your Board of Supervisors support your decision? Second, do you have time to commit to the position? Lastly, do you know what you are making a commitment to do?

Below are the duties for the WCDEA Officer Positions up for election at this year's Convention. These duty descriptions are taken from the WCDEA By-laws.

Vice President: In the absence of the President or in the event of the inability or refusal to act, the Vice President shall perform the duties of the President, and when so acting, shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the President. The Vice President shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the President or by the Executive Committee.

Treasurer: The Treasurer shall have custody of all Association funds and securities and shall keep a full and accurate account of all receipts and disbursements and shall deposit all moneys, securities and other valuable effects in the name of the Association in such depositories as may be designated for that purpose by the Executive Committee. In general the Treasurer shall perform all the duties incident to the office of Treasurer and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the President or by the Executive Committee.

Secretary: The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the all meetings and in general perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned by the President or by the Executive Committee. (**Creating the Annual Report & the Annual Newsletter fall within the Secretarial duties**)

“Don't be afraid to give your best to what seemingly are small jobs. Every time you conquer one it makes you that much stronger. If you do the little jobs well, the big ones will tend to take care of themselves.”

~Dale Carnegie

WCDEA Employee's Meeting Agenda



**WCDEA
Annual Convention Meeting
November 18, 2014
Sheridan, WY
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**



- **Call to Order**
- **Minutes**
 - 2013 Convention & 2014 Winter Training Meetings
- **Financials**
 - Budget
- **Partners Report**
 - WACD
 - WDA
 - NRCS
- **BCBS Insurance Program Changes**
- **Committee Reports**
 - Scholarship Committee
 - Training Committee
 - Website Committee
- **Old Business**
 - By-Law Changes
- **New Business**
 - Election of Officers
 - Secretary
 - Vice-President
 - Treasurer
 - Emerald Ash Bore
 - Any Other Business
- **Adjournment of the Business Meeting**



Who Is Your WCDEA Executive Committee?

President: Anita Bartlett; Powder River CD

Vice President: Crystal Kellebrew; Campbell County CD

Treasurer: Robb Sgroi; Teton CD

Secretary: Michelle Huntington; Converse County CD

Area I Representatives:

Sarah Anderson Crook County NRD

Jennifer Hinkhouse; Weston County NRD

Area II Representatives:

Heidi Sturman; Niobrara CD

Tony Hoch; Laramie Rivers CD

Area III Representatives:

Carla Thomas; Hot Springs CD

Victoria Dietz, Washakie County CD

Area IV Representatives:

Joan McGraw; Medicine Bow CD

Diana Olson; Popo Agie CD

Area V Representatives:

Dawn Arnell; Little Snake River CD

Karen Pecheny; Sweetwater County CD

WACD Liaison: Jeri Trebelcock; Popo Agie CD

If you have any questions or comments regarding employee issues please feel free to contact any one of us.

“THE COURAGE OF
LEADERSHIP IS
GIVING OTHERS THE
CHANCE TO
SUCCEED EVEN
THOUGH YOU BEAR
THE RESPONSIBILITY
FOR GETTING THINGS
DONE.”

Committees:

Scholarship Committee
Joan McGraw
Jennifer Hinkhouse
Tony Hoch
Karen Pecheny
Tori Dietz

Website Committee
Robb Sgroi (Chair)
Diana Olson
Joan McGraw
Amy Doke

Training Committee
Diana Olson (Chair)
Sarah Anderson
Carla Thomas
Heidi Sturman
Dawn Arnell