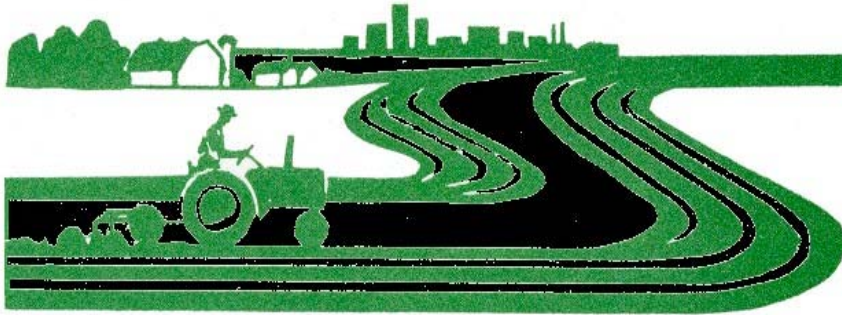


Sheridan County Conservation Notes



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Rom Hedges - Vice Chairman
Jon Bolstad - Supervisor
Tim Holte - Supervisor
Kent Nathe - Supervisor
Todd Marsh - Supervisor
Manuel Vazquez - Supervisor
Steve Hove - Associate Supervisor
Judy Benson - Administrator
Mickey McCall - Technician

NRCS

Monica Friedrich - District Conservationist
Tim Solberg - Soil Con.
Ryan W. Young - Soil Con. Tech.

Sheridan County Conservation District

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October - December, 2008

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Happy Holidays

from all of us at the Sheridan County Conservation District and NRCS: Judy, Mickey, Jeff, Rom, Jon, Kent, Tim, Todd, Manuel, Steve, Monica, Tim, and Ryan.

Sheridan County Conservation District meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month in the Conference Room of the USDA Building. The public is welcome to attend. For time and date verification, please call our office at 765-1801 ext. 101, or go to sheridan.mt.nacdnet.org

Your comments are always welcome and appreciated. Please let us know what you think. Just Drop us a note at: 119 N. Jackson Plentywood, MT 59254 or email us at judy.benson@mt.nacdnet.net



Newsletter is Now Available on the Internet

"Sheridan County Conservation Notes" is now available on the Internet. Go to the Sheridan County Conservation District Web Site at

<http://sheridan.mt.nacdnet.org> and click on "Newsletters". Then select the edition of "Sheridan County Conservation Notes" you want to see. Or, if you would like your full color, pdf newsletter emailed to you; just send your email address to: judy.benson@mt.nacdnet.net.

You can also find the Agendas and Minutes from the Sheridan County Conservation District's Board of supervisor meetings on <http://sheridan.mt.nacdnet.org>. Just click on "Minutes/Agendas" and view the agenda for the upcoming meeting of the board and the minutes from last month's meeting. Or, you can select the meeting you are interested in and peruse the minutes. So log on today.

Montana Conservation Leaders Meet to Discuss Local Accomplishments, Needs



A new water gap in Paradise Valley, Montana

Over 300 Montana conservationists attended a recently concluded series of six meetings across the state to discuss natural resource conservation issues. Conservation District Supervisors,

their staff, Legislators, personnel from Natural Resource Conservation Service, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, and the Montana Salinity Control Association, as well as representatives from several other entities, gathered in six towns. The meetings were held in Wibaux, Circle, Malta, Harlowton, Emigrant, and Hamilton.

Conservation District Supervisors are the largest collection of elected officials in Montana, with nearly 400 positions across the state. This includes Conservation Districts with urban areas, where another 2 supervisors may be appointed by town or city governments. Supervisors address a variety of natural resource conservation issues, ranging from fire rehabilitation to salinity control to stream bank protection to providing elevated nesting platforms for hawks that prey on gophers.

The Wibaux meeting included a breakout session where participants were asked to develop answers to a series of questions about natural resource conser-

(Continued on page 2)

**67th Annual
MACD Convention**

Montana Association of Conservation Districts 67th Annual Convention was held November 19 & 20 at the Hilton Garden Inn, Missoula.

During the course of the two days there were several breakout sessions for CDs to collect new ideas and share ideas from their own districts.

One of the keynote speakers included supervisor training specialist Ray Ledgerwood. Mr. Ledgerwood is nationally recognized as a renowned CD trainer. Having worked with CDs in over 40 states, his presentation brought practical information and experience to all attending.

The MACD Executive Committee and the MACD Board of Directors met November 18 prior to the opening day of the Convention.

More information on the Convention is available at the MACD website: <http://www.macdnet.org>.

Those attending from the Sheridan County Conservation District were Jeff Wivholm, SCCD Board Chairman and Area I Director; Mickey McCall, District Technician and Judy Benson, District Administrator.

Landowner Maps

The Conservation District now has new, updated Sheridan County Landowner Maps available. The maps were updated this summer and come in booklet form or wall maps. The booklets contain one township per page and sell for \$30. The wall maps are 36" x 36" and cost \$20. Stop by the office in the USDA building in Plentywood and pick one up for all your friends.

(Continued from page 1)

vation. The questions covered a wide variety of conservation issues, reflecting the diversity of issues that Conservation Districts deal with at the monthly meetings. The questions addressed topics such as: Do you think the Russian olive tree should be classified as a noxious weed? Should there be a change in who determines endangered species and how they should be handled? Is greenhouse warming real? How should the wild horse problem be addressed?

The second meeting was in Circle, and included discussions about ways for smaller communities to fund the necessary wind data research that would allow them to recruit wind generation farms. Wind power companies are interested in Montana, and they know that many areas in the state are ideal locations. However, specific site data is needed to draw the firms to these rural areas for a closer look. These smaller communities need help to develop the tools necessary to capture new businesses.

A resolution asking the Montana Association of Conservation Districts to encourage state and federal water quality agencies to work closer with local Conservation Districts was approved at this meeting. In addition, there was considerable discussion about ways for Conservation Districts to more fully participate in the major planning process currently underway at the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge.

At the Malta meeting two resolutions were approved. These addressed funding for Conservation Districts, and the brucellosis issue currently facing the state. The group received an update about the issues facing the St. Mary Rehabilitation Working Group and the Milk River Watershed Alliance. They have a tremendous challenge to address the complicated issues surrounding the aging St. Mary diversion facilities, the Milk River Watershed, and the 125,000 acres irrigated by water from the Milk River. The group received an update on the activities of the Rancher's Stewardship Alliance, including the Grassbank program and future plans.

In Harlowton the group heard about draft legislation being prepared to address in a comprehensive manner the problems poised with invasive species. The act would provide policy direction, planning, and authority to combat invasive species infestations throughout the state. In addition, the prevention of new introductions would be a major responsibility. The act would set up a new committee that oversees and coordinates Montana's response to these problems. Conservation Districts were asked to be the front line defenders against Zebra Mussels, Quagga Mussels, and Eurasian Water-Milfoil. The mussels have not yet been seen in Montana.

In Emigrant participants agreed to a resolution that would assess an inspection fee for permits issued under the Natural Streambed and Land Preservation Act, more commonly referred to as the 310 permits. In addition, agreement was found on a resolution to seek biological control of Houndstongue. Houndstongue (*Cynoglossum officinale*) is a noxious weed that easily spreads into remote riparian areas. It is also known by the name Beggar's Lice.

The group toured a new and innovative water gap that provides stream access for cattle. The structure was partially funded by the USDA Natu-

(Continued on page 3)

Equipment for Rent

The Sheridan County Conservation District has equipment you can rent or buy.

You can purchase:

- Location flags for \$10.00 per 100.
- Paul Brown Moisture probes for \$40.00 each.

You can renovate your rangeland with the 15' Aerway Range Renovator. Or rent the 12' John Deere Grass Drill.

The renovator rents for \$5/acre with a \$250 deposit; and the drill for \$4/acre, and \$25 per day with a \$250 deposit.

Contact our office for information at 765-1801, stop in at 119 N. Jackson in Plentywood or email judy.benson@mt.nacdnet.net.

It Is Time to Think About Tree Orders

With the snow on the ground and subzero temperatures, it seems a little early to be thinking of planting trees; but this is the time to plan your plantings for Spring 2009. Early ordering will guarantee the species that you want as nursery supplies are limited. Conifers are very limited, especially the potted varieties so if you are interested, do so as soon as possible. Contact the Conservation District to place an order or need planning assistance. Keep in mind that we can order weed barrier and have a tree planter available. Stop by the office at 119 N. Jackson in Plentywood or you can call or email at 765-1801, ext. 101 or judy.benson@mt.nacdnet.net.

Weather Stations



Sheridan County Conservation District is in the process of developing a project to monitor the weather in Sheridan County.

The District has located a very accurate, reasonably priced weather station that can be deployed at any location with reasonable access.

The weather stations are manufactured and distributed by Spectrum Technologies of Plainfield, IL. And are sold under the brand name of Watchdog Weather Stations.

These weather stations can record a myriad of parameters including wind speed & direction, rainfall, temperature, humidity, soil moisture, dew point, relative humidity, and even solar radiation.

A grant application is being prepared to fund the purchase of several of these weather stations and the District is seeking individuals who would like to participate in this project.

The stations cost between \$300 and \$2,000 each, depending on how many sensors are desired. The cost to a participant would be approximately 20% of the cost of the station.

If you are interested in taking part in this project, contact the District at 765-1801, ext. 118, stop at the office at 119 N. Jackson in Plentywood or email: mickey.mccall@mt.nacdnet.net.

Visit Us on the Internet

Logon to the Sheridan County Conservation District web site at <http://sheridan.mt.nacdnet.org/index.html>

(Continued from page 2)

ral Resource Conservation Service. Local ranchers reported good results, with less erosion, easy access, and low maintenance.

The Hamilton meeting brought the participants together to discuss the Natural Streambed and Land Preservation Act. There are wide variety of 310 permit issues that are particular to Western Montana, given the diversity and number of perennial streams. The group heard updates from the Resource Conservation and Development program concerning their work with hazardous fuels reduction, fuels for schools, and woody biomass projects.

Steve Hedstrom, President of the Montana Association of Conservation Districts, attended all six meetings. He said: "Bringing conservationists together to share success stories helps us do a better job protecting Montana. We see farmers and ranchers working with all 58 Montana Conservation Districts to take steps to make their land models for good conservation. Add in the cooperative approaches from both state and federal agencies, and I think we are making good progress to address Montana's environmental issues. We have a ways to go, but I remain optimistic about the future of conservation in Montana."

HAPPY HOLIDAYS



Sheridan County Conservation District

CONSERVATION DATES

Oct.	11	Columbus Day
	22	Eastern Plains RC&D quarterly meeting - Culbertson
	31	Halloween
Nov.	2	Daylight Savings Time ends
	11	Veteran's Day— Office Closed
	12	SCCD Board Meeting ~ 9:00 AM
	18-20	MACD Convention - Missoula
	27	Thanksgiving Day—Office Closed
Dec.	9	SCCD Board Meeting ~ 9:00 AM
	22	First Day of Fall
	24	Christmas Eve
	25	Christmas Day—Office Closed
	31	New Year's Eve

Visit Sheridan County Conservation

District's Web Site at:

<http://sheridan.mt.nacdn.net>

Our services and programs are provided without regard to race, national origin, sex, age, handicap, or religious affiliation.

NOTICE

NO PERSON MAY COMMENCE CONSTRUCTION ON ANY PROJECT FACILITIES OR APPROPRIATE WATER PRIOR TO APPROVAL OF THE PROJECT BY THE DISTRICT AND RECEIPT OF A RESERVED WATER USE AUTHORIZATION. THIS IS TO PROTECT THE POTENTIAL IRRIGATOR FROM INVESTING MONEY IN A SYSTEM FOR WHICH LEGAL USE OF THE WATER CAN NOT BE APPROVED AND THUS CAN NOT BE USED



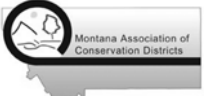



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