

Lake DeSmet Conservation District

MISSION STATEMENT

The Lake DeSmet Conservation District is dedicated to the development and implementation of programs to provide leadership and technical assistance for the conservation of Johnson County's natural resources, agricultural heritage and resource base, to promote the control of soil erosion, to promote and protect the quality and quantity of Wyoming's water and all other natural resources, to preserve and enhance wildlife habitat, to protect the tax base and to promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the residents of this County through responsible conservation planning.

Fiscal Year 2016/2017 Budget

It's budget time again and with the devaluation of Johnson County the Board of Supervisors for LDCD has been looking at numerous draft proposals to determine what mill amount they will request from the County Commissioners. It has been determined that LDCD will request ¼ mill from the Commissioners rather than a full mill. The Board of Supervisors made this decision based on a belief that when times are tight LDCD will also tighten the belt and not place any additional burden on tax payers of the County. Additionally, if need be LDCD has established an Emergency Reserve Fund that can be used to cover any expenditures not covered by funds that LDCD has on hand.

Lake DeSmet Conservation District Natural Resource Cost Share Applications Available

The Lake Desmet Conservation District (LDCD) is once again offering their *Natural Resource Conservation Cost Share* program. This program is available to financially assist producers and residents of Northern Johnson County in addressing natural resource concerns that will make a positive difference on the land and benefit multiple users. The focus of the program is to implement priorities identified by a local workgroup and that meet the LDCD Mission Statement, these priorities include:

- 1) **Watersheds:** Improve lands associated with LDCD's watershed planning efforts to enhance their Long Range Plan (LRP) and Annual Plan of Work (APW) goals;
- 2) **Rangelands:** Assist in rangeland improvement by developing dependable livestock water systems that will enhance or implement grazing systems,
- 3) **Irrigated lands:** Increase efficiency of water conveyance and control or reduce soils erosion on Highly Erodible Land (HEL) soils and associated lands showing evidence of soil erosion,
- 4) **Regulatory Compliance:** Assist landowners in complying with state and environmental federal laws such as, species at risk, AFO/CAFO, etc.
- 5) **Integrated Pest Management:** Assist in the implementation of Integrated Pest Management plans in coordination with grazing plans to address noxious weeds, invasive species, and pests.

Applications are due August 1st, 2016!!

Please visit our web page, www.ldcd.org for a full application and further information or stop by our office at 621 West Fetterman to pick-up an application.

Wyoming Ag In the Classroom Agriculture and Natural Resource Science Institute

Each summer, WAIC offers a “teacher’s institute” for not only teachers in school districts but like minded individuals to attend. This year Amanda was able to attend. As part of LDCD’s goals, educating our community is a high priority. Amanda went to Hulett and learned how small towns use their natural resources. Touring a working guest ranch, two sawmills, the school farm, Devil’s tower as well as the famous Campstool Ranch kept her running. Also doing lessons for what is soon to be the Wyoming Stewardship Program, helped her learn and get excited to show each grade level in our school district different sides of natural resources and agriculture. Also presented were ideas on how to get more involved in our community and what resources are available for us to use as well as offer the residents of Johnson County. We are always welcome to input and ideas for opportunities as to what we can to help our residents! If you have questions or comments, please feel free to call or come visit us at the office. We enjoy the company and conversation.

HAZARDOUS HOME WASTE DAY NUMBERS

Thanks to EVERYONE who participated in the Lake DeSmet Conservation District 2016 Home Hazardous Waste Day!!!

We hosted another successful day at the Johnson County Fairgrounds, just check out some of the numbers below!!!

- 262 vehicles came though
- 760 gallons of motor oil
- 550 gallons of latex paint
- 385 gallons of oil based paint/stains
- 230 gallons of flammable liquids (gasoline, acetone, etc)
- 125 gallons of pesticides
- 119.3 cubic yards of tires which is equivalent to roughly 360 standard car tires
- Roughly 10 car batteries
- 1 jar of mercury

Next year: Saturday, June 3, 2017

Lake DeSmet Conservation District has Rain Barrels and Composters!!



60 Gallon Rain Barrel- \$47.70 per barrel



Composter- \$84.80 per barrel

These items are available at the District office at a 50% cost share price, come purchase yours before they're all gone!!!

2017 is just around the corner... let NRCS help you with your conservation planning needs.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) uses a nine step planning process whenever it begins a project. The purpose of the steps is to develop and implement plans that protect, conserve, and enhance natural resources within a social and economic perspective.

The Nine-Step Conservation Planning Process:

1 - Identify Problems and Opportunities

Everyone needs a reason to plan. Planning can start with a problem, an opportunity, shared concerns, or a perceived threat. Initial opportunities and problems are first identified based on readily available information provided by the client(s).

2 - Determine Objectives

During this step, the stakeholders identify their objectives. A conservationist guides the process so that it includes both the stakeholder needs and values and the resource uses and on-site and off-site ecological protection. Objectives may need to be revised and modified as new information is learned later in the inventory and analysis stages. Objectives may not be finalized until Step 4 of the planning process.

3 - Inventory Resources

In this step, appropriate natural resource, economic and social information for the planning area is collected (this has to be completed before the applicant is eligible for cost-share programs). The information will be used to further define the problems and opportunities. It will also be used throughout the entire process to define alternatives and to evaluate the plan. It is important that as much information as possible can be collected so that the plan will fit both the needs of the landowner and the natural resources.

4 - Analyze Resource Data

Study the resource data and clearly define existing conditions for all of the natural resources, including limitations and potential for the desired use. This step is crucial to developing plans that will work for a landowner and their land. It also provides a clear understanding of the baseline conditions will help to judge how effective a project is after it has been put into place.



5 - Formulate Alternatives

The purpose of this step is to achieve the goals for the land, by solving all identified problems, taking advantage of opportunities, and meeting the social, economic, and environmental needs of the planning project. With NRCS conservation planning, we often can help landowners formulate alternatives based on **cost-sharing programs** that help offset the financial expense of implementing conservation practices.

6 - Evaluate Alternatives

Evaluate the alternatives to determine their effectiveness in addressing the client's problems, opportunities and objectives. Attention must be given to those ecological values protected by law or executive order.

7 - Make Decisions

At this point the landowner chooses which project or plan will work best for their situation. The planner prepares the documentation.

8 - Implement the Plan

Technical assistance is provided to help with the installation of adequate and properly-designed conservation practices. At this point in NRCS conservation planning, our conservation engineers step in and make designs based on our technical standards. Also, assistance is given in obtaining permits, land rights, surveys, final designs, and inspections for structural practices.

9 - Evaluate the Plan

Conservation planning is an ongoing process that continues long after the implementation of a conservation practice. By evaluating the effectiveness of a conservation plan or a practice within a plan, stakeholders can decide whether to continue with other aspects of an overall areawide plan.

NRCS provides voluntary, incentive-based conservation to landowners in Johnson County. NRCS helps landowners develop conservation plans to implement conservation practices that clean the air we breathe, conserve and clean the water we drink, prevent soil erosion and create and protect wildlife habitat. Please call 684-2526 or stop by and visit with Allison McKenzie or Kassie Bales in the Buffalo Field Office or Katie Schade in the Kaycee Field Office at 738-2321.

Helping People Help the Land

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Lake DeSmet to Sponsor Wyoming Conservation Corp in Russian Olive Removal Project

Beginning July 11, 2016 a group of college students from the University of Wyoming will converge on Buffalo High School to begin what will be a multi-year, multi-phase large scale Russian Olive removal project. Through projects focused on improving Wyoming's public lands, the Wyoming Conservation Corps (WCC) provides young adults important personal and technical skills and experience in natural resource and environmental career fields. Each summer, volunteer crew members and leaders gain experience working in Wyoming's complex landscape, building real world skills and a deeper appreciation for the state's environmental challenges and riches. These partnerships support WCC in its efforts to advance understanding of complex environmental challenges, inspire young adults to become stewards of our natural resources, benefit Wyoming public lands and provide collaborative service learning opportunities.



The project will focus on mechanical removal of Russian Olive, a tree species designated as a “noxious weed” in the state of Wyoming between Buffalo High School and Interstate I-25. For the first year of this project pre-selected priority areas will be removed and the stumps will have an herbicide applied to them so that no suckers

will sprout from the cut tree. During future phases of this project native tree specieses will be planted back into areas where the invasive Russian Olive has been removed. Theses trees will come from LDCD’s annual Tree Program, State grants, and trees grown by students at Buffalo High School in an onsite greenhouse. Additionally, future plans consist of the area becoming an interpretative trail where residents can learn about the importance of invasive weed/tree management and conservation of native landscapes at a local scale. Once complete the project area could also be utilized as an outdoor classroom where local students of all ages can learn about conservation of natural resources. Once down, the trees will be chipped and bucked and the mulch and bucked trees will be made available to the public for firewood and landscaping material. For more information on the project please call Lake DeSmet Conservation District at 684-2526.

Prevent your property in the event of Wildfire!!

It is Fire Season, we have already had many fires in Northeastern Wyoming this year and the traditional time of fire season is just beginning. This makes it all the more important to do what YOU can to protect your property, yourselves and the firefighters who would come to protect in the event of a Wildfire. Experience has shown that the landscape around your home or cabin is one of the most important factors in its survival. These are general guidelines for the defensible space, the area approximately 100 feet directly around structures that are to be protected, remember that the primary goal is fuel reduction. Create defensible space around your home. Aggressive defensible space and fuels reduction can greatly increase your home's chance of survivability in a wildfire without decreasing the aesthetic value. Here are some simple things you can do to help protect.

Defensible Space (0-100 Feet from Residence)

(0-5 feet from residence)

- Removed trees and/or shrubs. No vegetation of any kind should be present
- Clean all combustible material away from home and from under decks
- Branches within 10 feet of the roof should be pruned back
- Consider placing decorative rock or gravel around structures with weed barrier to prevent grass and weeds from encroaching on the residence

(5-100 feet from residence)

- Don't stack firewood or other combustibles next to structures or within 30 feet
- Thin trees to a minimum spacing of 8-10 feet between crowns, this spacing can be decreased as your distance grows
- Prune trees so that the lowest branches are 8-10 feet above the ground for the first 30 feet and 4-6 feet beyond that
- Remove all dead shrubs, bushes, standing dead and dead topped trees
- Thin shrubs & bushes to a spacing of 6 feet decreasing the spacing as you move further for structures
- Dispose of all slash and dead, down woody debris away from buildings
- Mow grasses and weeds to keep them low, a maximum of 4 inches high

Structures (to help protect) Keep rain gutters clean; enclose the deck so debris does not blow under them; Don't store building material under the deck; Stack no more than one day's supply of firewood on the deck.

These are standard practices and may be refined for specific properties do to slope and conditions, discussion with the Fuel Mitigation Coordinator can clarify which guidelines to use and where. Contact Craig Beckner Johnson County Fuels Mitigation Coordinator, 307-746-5316 or at craigb955@gmail.com.

Additional resource information on the internet;

<http://www.uwyo.edu/barnbackyard/resources/wildfire.html>

<http://www.wildlandfirersg.org/>

<http://www.firewise.org/>



Lake DeSmet Conservation District
621 West Fetterman
Buffalo, WY 82834-2340



Phone: (307) 684-2526

E-Mail: zach.byram@ldcd.org or amanda.hulet@ldcd.org

Meet the Board and Staff

Lake DeSmet Conservation District Board of Supervisors

Ryan Fieldgrove: Chair
Luke Todd: Vice Chair
Travis Rule: Secretary/Treasurer
Virgie Watt: Member
Priscilla Welles: Member

District Staff

Zach Byram: District Manager

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Staff

Allison McKenzie: District Conservationist
Kassie Bales: Range Conservationist
NRCS Phone: 684-2526 ext. 3