



# Conservation CONNECTION

Rosebud and Big Horn Conservation Districts

ROSEBUD CONSERVATION DISTRICT: 270 S. Prospect • P.O. Box 1200 • Forsyth, MT 59327

BIG HORN CONSERVATION DISTRICT: 724 West 3rd Street • Hardin, MT 59034

ROSEBUD CD: Meetings: 1st Thursday • 406-346-7333 ext. 101 • Fax/Phone: 406-346-7479 | BIG HORN CD: Meetings: 1st Thursday • 406-665-3442

NRCS FORSYTH FIELD OFFICE: 406-346-7333 | HARDIN FIELD OFFICE: 406-665-3442 | LAME DEER FIELD OFFICE: 406-477-6494 | CROW AGENCY FIELD OFFICE: 406-638-9102

## Rosebud and Treasure County Conservation Districts' Soil Health Workshop A Success

Rosebud and Treasure County Conservation Districts held their second "Soil Health and What it Means to You" workshop on November 30 and December 1, 2016 at the Rosebud Treasure County Fairgrounds. The workshop featured six wonderful speakers including, Brendon Rockey, Jill Clapperton, Rebecca Larsen, Jimmy Emmons, Gregg Simmonds, and the event emcee, Jay Fuhrer.

The soil health workshop was well received as many local producers were very interested in hearing new ideas and also some tried and true methods. The main focus of the speakers was soil health, but that did not stop the sharing of knowledge in other agriculture areas as well.

The workshop was made possible through the generosity of our wonderful sponsors as well as Rosebud Conservation District and Treasure County Conservation District



Soil Health Workshop speaker, Jill Clapperton

[www.rosebudcd.com](http://www.rosebudcd.com)

# When do you need a 310 permit?

A 310 permit is REQUIRED if you are planning ANY project that physically alters or modifies the bed or banks of a stream. The purpose of the permit is to minimize soil erosion and sedimentation, protect and preserve streams and rivers in their natural or existing state and to prevent damage to the lands and property immediately adjacent to streams and rivers.

The application process is pretty simple. You can pick one up at your local conservation district office. Upon completion it is returned to the conservation district. An inspection of the proposed project is sometimes necessary. After the inspection, the Board of Supervisors make their decision. Keep in mind that sometimes additional permits are required and it is up to the producer to make sure that all the permits have been secured before beginning the project.

## Rosebud County

- ◆ Yellowstone River
- ◆ Tongue River
- ◆ Rosebud Creek
- ◆ Lame Deer Creek
- ◆ Otter Creek

*All Perennial Streams in  
Big Horn and  
Rosebud County  
Require a 310 Permit!  
If you are not sure please  
contact your local  
conservation district!*

## Big Horn County

- ◆ In addition to the Tongue River Reservoir there are more than 30 perennial streams in Big Horn County. Please contact the conservation district to clarify if your project requires a 310 permit.



[www.rosebudcd.com](http://www.rosebudcd.com)



Evan Van Order, USDA-NRCS Soil Conservationist, speaks to the crowd.



The attendees of the workshop listen as the speaker talks about soil health.

## Soil Health Workshop Held December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016 in Hardin

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Big Horn Conservation District held an educational workshop about soil health on Tuesday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016, at the MSU Extension Office in Hardin. About seventeen producers were in attendance to learn about soil health, soybeans, and soil moisture. Several speakers at this workshop included: Marlon Winger, USDA-NRCS Regional Soil Health Specialist, Ken Kephart, MSU Southern Agricultural Research Center Agronomist, and Evan Van Order, USDA-NRCS Soil Conservationist.

This Soil Health Workshop was made possible through the Big Horn Conservation District's 223 Soil Health Grant, which is providing cost share for cover crops in Big Horn County, as well as funding for educational workshops and field tours through March 2018.

**Livestock and Grain Futures Trading Seminar**  
**February 23 – 9:00 AM**  
**Miles City Livestock Commission – Miles City, MT**

Come join us to participate in a discussion about the various aspects of livestock and grain futures trading and the strategies involved. The panel includes some of the industry's most knowledgeable in these areas.

Tony Drake, who is the Senior Director, Agricultural Products at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange will present CME updates on Live Cattle and Feeder Cattle future trading at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange.

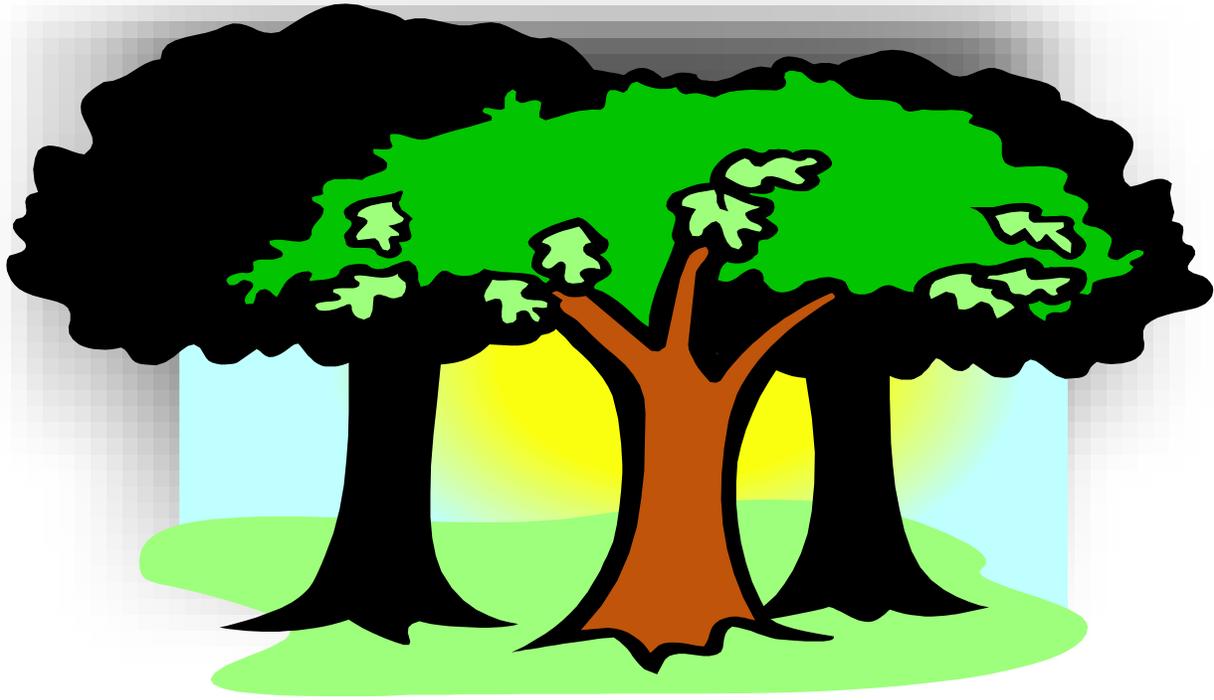
Steve Erdman, who is the President of EFG Group, LLC in Chicago, will give an outlook on the markets and give strategies on hedging.

Scott Thompson or Ken Schmidt of First Avenue Trading will also be present to answer your trading questions.

Lunch will be provided.  
Please RSVP to [mclc@midrivers.com](mailto:mclc@midrivers.com).  
*(Past performance of actual trades or strategies cited herein is not necessarily indicative of future performance)*







## **2017 Rosebud Conservation District Tree Sales**

Once again the Rosebud Conservation District is conducting tree sales. We offer a wide variety of trees and shrub species in a variety of sizes. NEW native grasses, perennials and garden perennials. We take orders until early April. A 50% deposit is required on all orders when they are placed. Delivery is late April to early May of 2017, weather dependent.

Pricing and ordering information available at the Forsyth USDA Center located at 270 South Prospect, in Forsyth, on the Conservation District website: [www.rosebudcd.com](http://www.rosebudcd.com); or call or email Bobbi Vannattan at 406-346-7333 ext. 101, [bobbi.vannattan@mt.usda.gov](mailto:bobbi.vannattan@mt.usda.gov) or Monica Boyer at 406-346-7333 ext. 112, [monica.boyer@mt.usda.gov](mailto:monica.boyer@mt.usda.gov).

## **Conservation Trees again available at Big Horn Conservation District**

It's time to consider which trees or shrubs to plant in the spring, as right now is when the best selection is available. Most of the plants need to be ordered in lots of 25, so if you feel you need fewer than that, see if you can find someone to share with in the spring.

Please stop by the conservation district office and pick up an order form, or give the district a call at 665-3442, ext. 112, to have a form mailed.

# Grazing Planning and Coming Up with Contingency Plans

**Seanna Torske, District Conservationist, Hardin NRCS Field Office**

It feels like we've been through a roller coaster year in 2016 with drought, rain, drought again, and rain again. Because of this, some of our pastures may be looking a little worse for the wear. Looking back at the past year, are there any management decisions you wish you would have done differently?

Winter is an excellent time to pause and reflect on the previous year, and to make plans for the upcoming year on your ranching operation. This same idea applies to your rangeland and how it is managed. The Natural Resources Conservation Service has always been a promoter of good grazing management on your rangeland, and stresses the importance of developing a good grazing plan that helps you to rotate the time of year each pasture is grazed, and to allow for adequate plant residues to be left over at the end of the grazing season. A helpful tool to have in your rangeland management toolbox is a contingency grazing plan.

A contingency grazing plan provides some grazing options for you to consider in case of an emergency such as fire, grasshoppers, drought, hail, flood, etc., that significantly affects the amount of forage available for your livestock. Some options may include adjusting the pasture rotation to allow a damaged pasture to rest; securing additional forage; aftermath grazing on crop fallow; culling back some cattle; etc. Having a "Plan B" in place on your grazing operation can help you make more educated decisions on your ranch instead of making a quick decision, regretting it later, and dealing with the damage that may be caused on your grazing land. Keep in mind that implementing a good prescribed grazing plan on your ranching operation is the first step in making your ranch more resilient against negative weather events, such as a drought.

Your local USDA-NRCS Field office can assist you in completing a range inventory on your ranching operation, creating a prescribed grazing plan, as well as developing a contingency plan for your range in case of an emergency. You can go to: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/site/mt/home/>, to find the NRCS Field Office nearest to you.



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# Zero Interest



## ***NO-Interest Loan Program***

The Rosebud Conservation District no-interest loan program was created in 1982 in order to encourage people to install conservation practices and utilize the money that was available to the district. The District's no-interest loan is available to area producers for the development of conservation practices and systems as a part of a conservation plan to benefit agricultural land within the Rosebud Conservation District. Conservation program loans can be applied in a number of different practices including; storage tanks, stream bank stabilization, pumps, irrigation pipelines, grass seeding, water-spreading, fencing, reservoirs, dams, stock tanks, pipelines, pivots and sagebrush clearing.

The Rosebud Conservation District loan program is an excellent tool to help you achieve your conservation goals. Loans are available up to \$50,000 with a 0% interest rate. There is an administrative fee of three percent. Applicants apply through the Rosebud Conservation District Board of Supervisors, applications are accepted and reviewed at the regular meeting. Loan Payments will begin on December 15, not less than 6 months after the loan date. Applicants are encouraged to become cooperators of the District. Loans will NOT be allowed for reseeding Capability Class 6, 7 & 8 lands that have been converted after January 1, 1983.

For more information or an application, for the No-Interest Loan Program, contact Bobbi Vannattan at the Rosebud Conservation District office at 406-346-7333 ext. 101 or email: [bobbi.vannattan@mt.usda.gov](mailto:bobbi.vannattan@mt.usda.gov) or check out our website at [www.rosebudcd.com](http://www.rosebudcd.com).



*"A drop of water, if it could write its own history, would explain the universe to us."*

Lucy Larcom

*"There can be no life without soil and no soil without life; they have evolved together."*

Charles Kellogg

**Rosebud CD**

**270 S. Prospect  
Forsyth, MT 59327  
406-346-7333 ext. 101**



**RCD FOR SALE:**

4"x5" Marking Flags -\$10/bundle  
Soil Probe————-\$65.00  
Wildlife Ramps: \$20 each  
Gate Latches: \$20 each



**RCD FOR RENT:**

**Track Filler**                    \$100 per day  
    \$200 per week

**1590 No-Till Drill**-\$7/acre; minimum of \$200 and maximum of 200 acres per use-Rosebud County Producers only at this time.

**Books:**

Weeds of the West—\$40  
Range Plants of Montana—\$20  
Irrigator's Guide—free  
Rosebud County Land Ownership Map Book-\$28-small and \$40-large  
Aerial View-\$38-small \$50-large

**Big Horn County CD**

**724 W 3rd St  
Hardin, MT 59034  
406-665-3442 x 112**

**BHCD FOR SALE:**

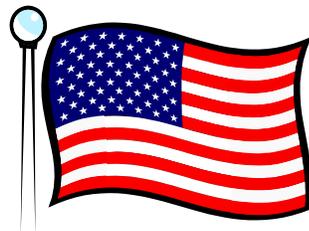
Moisture Probe—\$40 each  
Hydrosorce (plant gel)—\$5 pint  
Wildlife Ramps—\$25 each

**BHCD FOR RENT:**

Tree Planter - .10/tree , \$30 minimum  
Fabric Laying Machine—  
.10 per tree,\$30 minimum without  
fabric purchase or  
.05 per foot (plus cost of fabric)  
with fabric purchase



*Views expressed by individual columnists in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the Rosebud & Big Horn Conservation Districts.*



The Big Horn & Rosebud Conservation Districts proudly salute and thank our Service men and women at home and overseas.



## Rosebud Conservation District Reserved Water

Montana's water reservation law provides an opportunity to legally allocate water for future consumptive uses as well as to maintain in-stream flows to protect water rights, aquatic life and water quality.

The conservation district water reservations are for agricultural irrigation and in some districts for stock watering. Districts rely on land users within the basin to develop the water resource and put the reserved water to use. Districts encourage land users and resource managers to apply for reserved water for new or supplemental irrigation projects.

A reservation is subject to protection under the Montana Water Use Act and is an appropriate water right protected by law. In the case of the conservation district, the right is held by the district on behalf of the individual users. Individuals will apply to the district when they have plans to put the water to use. A water user receives an authorization or permit from the district for the right to use a portion of the district's reserved water. Legally, this is the same as when an individual obtains a permit from the Department of Natural Resources & Conservation (DNRC) to use water.

The Rosebud Conservation District, as a water reservation holder, is responsible for apportioning the reservation in an equitable manner. The district is also responsible for administering the use of its reserved water and in accordance with the "Board of Natural Resources Board Order Establishing Water Reservations".

Rosebud Conservation District holds a water reservation of 87,003 acre-feet per year with a maximum flow rate of 540.7 cubic feet per second from the main stem of the Yellowstone River which has a priority date of December 15, 1978 (4:18 P.M.)

**Currently the Rosebud Conservation District has 83,249.40 acre-feet and a flow rate of 466.07 cubic feet per second available.**

If you are in need of reserved water and would like more information or an application, contact Bobbi Vannattan at the Rosebud Conservation District Office or contact her via phone or email at: 406.346.7333 ext. 101 bobbi.vannattan@mt.usda.gov or visit our website: [www.rosebudcd.com](http://www.rosebudcd.com) for forms and reports.

*"I believe in beauty. I believe in stones and water, air and soil, people and their future and their fate." Ansel Adams*

*"It's not the soil itself it's the soil life that is the most important element." Geoff Lawton*

## **Big Horn Conservation District Cover Crop Cost Share Available**

With 2017 knocking at the door, it's time to think about utilizing a cover crop in no-till cropping systems next year. In order to encourage producers to learn the benefits of cover crops, the Big Horn Conservation District has initiated a program to pay the actual cover crop seed costs up to \$20 per acre on a maximum of 40 acres per producer.

Producer responsibilities to participate in this program are to prepare a weed-free seedbed, use a minimum of three varieties of seed in the cover crop mixture, and agree to tours and news-letter articles concerning the experience.

Contact the Big Horn Conservation District for an application form at 406-665-3442, ext. 112.

**“When we reconnect with nature, we restore ourselves.”**

Lailah Gifty Akita

## **Sign up now for the Rosebud Conservation District Cover Crop Cost Share 2017**

The Rosebud Conservation District is looking for producers who are seeking diversity in no-till cropping systems.

***Incentive- \$20/acre up to 20 acres up to \$400!***

The purpose of this incentive is to encourage the utilization of cover crops in no-till cropping systems. The proper cover crop can economically control erosion, reduce runoff, increase organic matter, break up crop disease patterns, cycle deep nutrient and be used for haying and/or grazing. The Rosebud Conservation District will pay the actual seed and seeding cost up to \$20 per acre up to 20 acres or \$400 per producer in the conservation district boundaries. Funds have been made available for 8 projects. Responsibilities of the producer are to prepare a weed free seed bed, note all important observations, agree to tours and news article and provide information regarding fertilizer techniques. A requirement of the cost share agreement is that seed mixtures consist of at least three varieties of seed in the cover crop planting.

Contact Bobbi L Vannattan at the Conservation District Office to sign up and for more information. Phone: 406.346.7333 ext. 101 or email [bobbi.vannattan@mt.usda.gov](mailto:bobbi.vannattan@mt.usda.gov), or stop by the office located at 270 South Prospect in Forsyth.

## USDA PROGRAMS OUTREACH MEETINGS

March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017

1:30-3:30pm

Little Big Horn College  
Library Program Room  
Crow Agency, MT

March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017

1:30-3:30pm

MSU Extension Office  
317 N Custer Ave  
Hardin, MT



### USDA Agencies Include:

- **Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**
  - Hardin and Crow Agency Field Offices
- **Farm Service Agency (FSA)**
  - Big Horn County Office
  - Farm Loan

Come and listen to the USDA Agencies that provide services to the Crow Reservation and Big Horn County. Bring your questions and enjoy some light refreshments.

There is no cost to attend. If you are interested in attending, or have any questions, please contact Seannca Torske by calling: (406) 629-3220.

USDA provides reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities to participate in USDA programs and activities. If you require special accommodations, please contact the Hardin USDA-NRCS Field Office at: (406) 629-3220 by March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017.

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### \*\*Interesting Facts\*\*

- 70,000 Different types of soil in the U.S.
- 1 Tablespoon of soil has more organisms in it than there are people on earth
- 500 Minimum years it takes to form one inch of topsoil
- 5,000 Different types of bacteria in one gram of soil
- .01 Percent of the earth's water held in soil
- 15 Tons of dry soil per acre that pass through one earthworm each year
- 1,400,000 Earthworms that can be found in an acre of cropland
- 20,000 Pounds of total living matter in the top six inches of an acre of soil
- 10 Percent of the world's carbon dioxide emissions stored in soil

## Miles City Rangeland Specialist Receives National Conservation Award

Kami Kilwine, rangeland management specialist for the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in Miles City, Mont., was recognized by NRCS as the Early Career Rangeland / Pastureland Conservationist for 2016 during the NRCS Family Meeting held at the Society for Range Management 70th Annual Meeting in St. George, Utah, in early February.

The purpose of the award is to recognize NRCS employees who have exemplified outstanding service to NRCS and their customers through implementation of sound technology transfer on rangeland and pastureland resources. This award is presented as an encouragement for outstanding performance by men and women entering the grazing lands profession. One award is given annually.

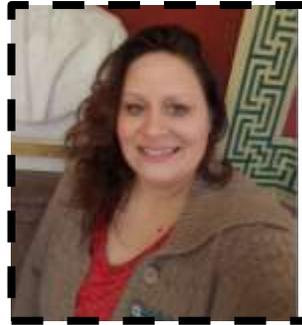
Award winners have less than 10 years of Federal service and demonstrate extraordinary potential and promise as a future leader for rangeland or pastureland conservation issues. After a successful internship, Kilwine began her fulltime career as a rangeland management specialist in Baker, Mont., in 2009. Shortly after that, she was selected as the Sage Grouse Initiative rangeland management specialist in Forsyth. She is currently the NRCS area rangeland management specialist in Miles City.



Kami Kilwine, David Pratt, left, former NRCS assistant state conservationist, Miles City, Mont., and Sid Brantley, right, NRCS national range conservationist, Washington, D.C



Rosebud Conservation District Supervisor , Don Youngbauer, advocates for Montana Conservation Districts and also the Yellowstone River Conservation Districts Council, to the (H) Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Natural Resources and Transportation.



Rosebud Conservation District Administrator, Bobbi Vannattan, represented the Montana Association of Conservation Districts' Employee Organization, in Helena, in January. Bobbi helped raise awareness about Conservation Districts in Montana.



Rosebud Conservation District set up in the Rotunda at the capital in Helena, in January. This was a great opportunity to speak with Montana's legislature.

# Upcoming Statewide Events

## 2017 Organic Agriculture Webinar Series

ConservationWebinars.net

April 4, 2017

For more information: [Organic Webinar Series](#)

## Earth Day 2017

April 22, 2017

For more information: [Earthday.org](#)

## Montana Envirothon

Lewistown, Montana

April 24-25, 2017

For more information: Shonny Nordlund 406-538-7401 ext 101 or [Envirothon](#)

## Arbor Day 2017

April 28, 2017

For more information: [Arborday.org](#)

## NACD Stewardship Week 2017

Theme: "Health Soils are full of life"

April 30– May 7, 2017

For more information: [Nacdnet.org](#)

## 2017 Organic Agriculture Webinar Series

ConservationWebinars.net

June 6, 2017

For more information: [Organic Webinar Series](#)

## Montana Range Days

Red Lodge, Montana

June 19-21, 2017

For more information: Darlene Schwend 406-962-3641 ext. 105 or [Range Days](#)

## Montana Youth Range Camp

Great Falls, Montana

July 10-14, 2017

For more information: Cascade Conservation District 406-727-3606 ext. 125 or [Youth Range Camp](#)



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## Don't forget to order your trees!

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665-3442 ext. 112

\*Rosebud Conservation District  
346-7333 ext. 101 or ext. 112



A Special **"Thank You"** to the sponsors of our  
"Soil Health & What it Means to You" workshop!

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- \*Mid Yellowstone Electric
- \*First State Bank of Forsyth
- \*Horizon Implement
- \*Art's Tires
- \*Forsyth Feed & Ag Supply
- \*Frontier Stockyards
- \*Miles City Livestock Commission
- \*Talen Energy Montana
- \*Torgerson's LLC
- \*Big Sky Irrigation
- \*CHS Farmers Elevator/Ag Partners LLC
- \*Bonnie Prince
- \*Doug McRae