THE

Conservation Connection

Big Horn, Rosebud & Treasure County Conservation Districts

Winter 2023

Rosebud CD Welcomes Soil Health Team Member Jaye Wells

Hello! My name is Jaye, and I am the new soil health member at Rosebud Conservation District in Forsyth, MT. I am here through Montana Conservation Corps Big Sky Watershed Program. I'm excited to get out and really be able to explore and understand Eastern Montana's environment. I recently moved here from Crawfordsville, Indiana where I was born and raised. I graduated in December of 2022 with an undergraduate degree in Geology with a minor in GIS from Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. I really enjoy being outside in any type of way possible, listening to music, and trying new hobbies. I'm currently trying to learn how to rock climb! I'm also a foodie, so I am always looking for good recipe or restaurant recommendations! I'm interested to get out into the schools to teach about earth sciences and how they can give a vast variety of job options in life. I also recently got an AR Sandbox setup for Rosebud Conservation District, so if there is any preplanned STEM event that an AR Sandbox could be helpful, I would love to come and get it setup for the kids to use for educational purposes. If you'd like to have any type of open conversation with me, reach out to me at: jayewells@macdnet.org or (765) 376-8156.

Reg Hoff Memorial Scholarship Available to Rosebud County Graduates

The Rosebud Conservation District is now accepting applications for the Reg Hoff Memorial Scholarship program. Each year $1,500 in scholarships with a minimum of $500/award, is available to selected Rosebud County Montana graduating high school seniors pursuing higher education in the field of agriculture, conservation and/or natural resources. Applicants must reside in Rosebud County, have a 2.5 GPA and submit an essay with required materials to the Rosebud Conservation District by April 1st, 2023.

The Rosebud Conservation District wishes to continue to honor Reg Hoff though this memorial scholarship. Reg is remembered for his service to the conservation district, his dedication to leadership, encouragement to think outside of the box on conventional farming and ranching along with his drive to always keep learning and sharing that knowledge with others.

Please visit the Rosebud Conservation District website for information and to apply for this scholarship opportunity at www.rosebudcd.com or you can call or email Bobbi Vannattan at 406.351.8012 bobbi.vannattan@mt.usda.gov.

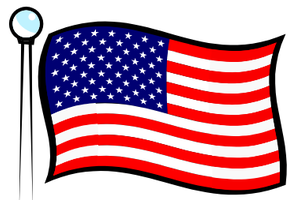
When is a 310 permit needed?

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.

Joint applications can be picked up at your local conservation district and are available on the MT DNRC website. Conservation districts are responsible for the 310 portion of the joint application. There may be additional state, federal or local permits required for a project, the applicant is responsible for all other permits.

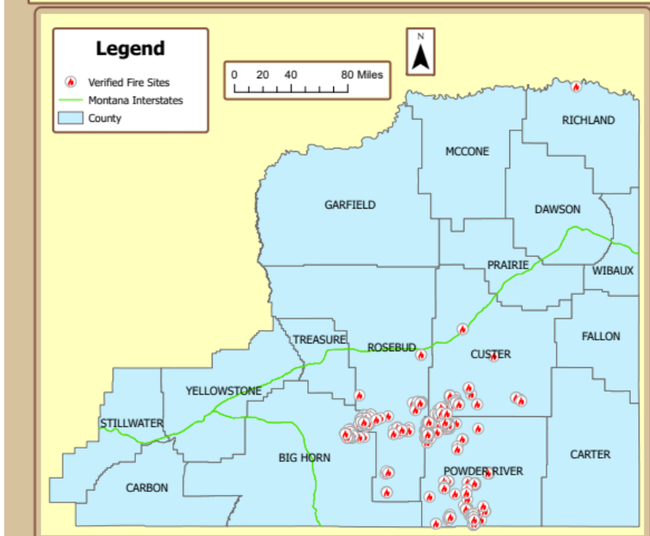
All Perennial Streams in Big Horn , Rosebud & Treasure Counties Require a 310 Permit!
If you are not sure please contact your local conservation district!

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 & Treasure County Conservation Districts proudly salute and thank our Service men and women at home and overseas.

Verified Coal-Seam Fires Within Eastern Montana (2022)



Chief Fire Fighter Cory Cheguis of Custer County along with his colleagues did a series of flights to use heat mapping to try and identify burning coal seams within eastern Montana. The product they got, ended up with points across the landscape of abnormally high temperatures. They then took the coordinates for each spot and went out into the field to verify if they were burning coal seams. The map above shows all the verified coal seams. Do note that this isn't all the original temperature anomalies just what has been verified.

Map by: Jaye Wells
Data: Cory Cheguis
Images: CM Thermal

Rosebud Conservation District

MONTANA ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS · MONTANA WATERSHED COORDINATION COUNCIL · DEQ · AmeriCorps

NOW HIRING

WATERCRAFT INSPECTOR

Big Horn County Conservation District

The Big Horn County Conservation District is seeking self-motivated individuals to provide watercraft inspections and outreach to help prevent the spread of undesirable evasive Aquatic Species (AIS) not only throughout Big Horn County waters, but our great Country also! Take advantage of the opportunity to live and play along our Big Horn River and Yellowtail Dam while helping protect our waters!

The Big Horn County Conservation District will be operating Stations daily at both Saint Xavier and the Hardin Rest Area. The daily shifts will vary anywhere from 6 – 16 hours, and the Stations will operate mid-April thru mid-October during daylight hours.

Applications are available through the Conservation District contact Kylie via email bighorn@macdnet.org or call (406) 629-3229.

BIG HORN CONSERVATION DISTRICT

- Flexible Hours
- Paid mileage
- Training provided
- Offering up to 36 hours a week – Seasonal/Part Time Employment Only
- Starts at $16/hour
- Locations: Saint Xavier, MT and Rest Area between Billings & Hardin

BIG HORN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
205 13th Street West
Hardin, MT 59034
(406) 629-3229
Website

~For Sale or Rent~

Rosebud Conservation District
270 Prospect Forsyth, MT 406-351-8012

For Sale:
*Wildlife Ramp~ $20.00
*Gate Latch~ $20.00
*Marking Flags (5"x8")~ $10.00/bundle
For Rent:
*Track Filler~ $100.00/day or $200.00/week
*No Till Drill~ $10.00/acre (200 acre maximum)
Books For Sale:
*Range Plants of Montana~ $15.00
*Rosebud County Land Ownership Map Books $28.00/small or $40.00/large $38.00/small aerial view or $50.00/large aerial view

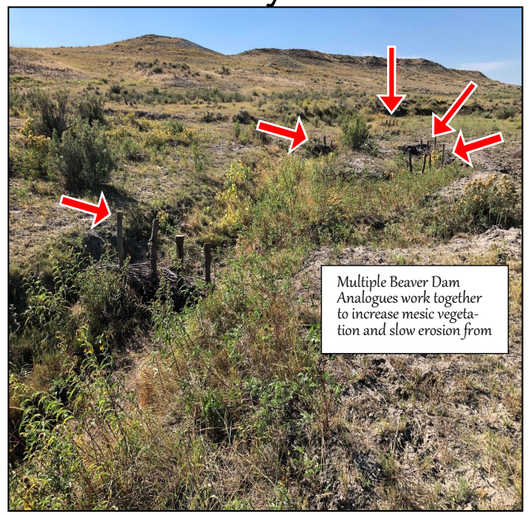
Treasure County Conservation District
211 Elliot Avenue Hysham, MT 59038
406-342-5510 ext. 102
For Sale:
*Marking Flags (5"x8")~ $10.00/bundle
*Wildlife Ramp~ $20.00
For Rent:
*Great Plains Native Grass Drill~ $7.00/acre (200 acre maximum)
Books For Sale:
*Treasure County Land Ownership Map Books~ $16.00 small or $20.00/large

Big Horn Conservation District
205 13th Street West. Hardin, MT 59034 406-665-3442

For Sale:
*Moisture Probe~ $65.00
*Wildlife Ramp~ $25.00
*Hydro source Plant Gel~ $7.00/pint
For Rent:
*Tree Planter~ $.10/tree ($30.00 min)
*Fabric Layer~ $.10/tree ($30.00 min w/o fabric purchase) or $.05/tree + fabric cost (w/ fabric purchase)

Low Tech Process -Based Restoration– Shalaine Watson– Forsyth NRCS

1-Example Beaver Dam Analogue in a series below a reservoir on BLM land in Petroleum County. Photo by Shalaine Watson 9/23/22



2-Series of Beaver Dam Analogues on private land to restore wetland soils and vegetation upland of a reservoir used for irrigation. Installation by Montana Conservation Corp in summer 2022 Photo by Shalaine Watson 9/23/22

You may have heard them called Beaver Dam Analogues, Zeedyk structures, one rock dam, or zuni bowls, but these are all terms that can be used to describe a technique that I was fortunate enough to learn about at a workshop put on by the Winnett ACES group. Regardless of what you call it, the idea is to restore mesic or wet areas on seasonal waterways or tributary type drainages that may only have water for part of the year. There is immense potential for benefiting grass production as well as provide wildlife habitat for sage grouse chicks who rely on mesic forbs and bugs for survival after hatching.

Various materials can be used to accomplish creating beaver dam analogues. The idea is to use locally available materials like rocks, wood and even sod. No heavy equipment is required, just some labor and the ability to 'think like water'. The purpose is not to impound water but just allow it to saturate and support green vegetation longer in the year that it does after a gully washer type storm. These structures are intended to be low risk, with also little consequence if a big rain event does cause them to fail.

I am just learning about these myself, but I think they can be really exciting on a ranch as well as on a watershed scale if neighbors are interested in the same kinds of goals.

NRCS does have a practice (643) *Restoration of Rare or Declining Natural Communities* and a financial assistance program through EQIP-Sage Grouse Initiative that can help support the implementation of low tech, process-based restoration.

If you are interested in learning more, having a site visit or going on a field trip next summer please reach out to your local NRCS professional.

By Ray Bannister, Wibaux Conservation District Supervisor and Local Producer

"I want sustainable production," states producer Ray Banister of Wibaux County. "I want production when it's dry. I want production when it's wet. When it's cold and when it's hot because I don't want to get rid of any beef cows at any time."

Ray's no-nonsense attitude came from a forward-looking family who believed in and practiced good land management since their arrival in Montana in 1952. Since the early 70's, they incorporated high intensity grass management, adding rotational grazing a decade later. "We've been interested in conservation all of our lives," continues Ray. "Both of my parents came through the Dust Bowl. Dad was always big on locking that soil down."

With a double major in Chemistry and Zoology, Ray's main goal is to understand natural systems; allowing everything to work together with minimal inputs to achieve maximum sustainable production. "I'm a systems thinker," states Ray. "I don't say the soil's most important, or the land is the most important, or the cattle is most important. The whole thing is important; it's kind of a holistic thing."

Boom or Bust

Ray originally started with a standard rotational grazing system. "But the cattle started going into the riparian zone and eating that down to nothing every year and leaving the hilltops," says Ray. NRCS worked with Ray to move toward a more intense grazing system which he then customized. "It takes three years for a cow to modify her diet so she'll eat the stuff you want her to," states Ray. "So, when you start a new grazing plan you better be prepared to stick with it for three years to get the cow to eat what you want. The other important thing is to start small and start building into it."

Rotating between 37 pastures, Ray has trained his 175-head of cattle to eat or trample most every plant on the ground. These intense grazing periods range from two weeks to two months followed by long periods of rest for each pasture. Ray practices what he terms a 'boom or bust' grazing system; so phrased to suggest a management practice that eliminates booms and busts in production. This system is based on complete recovery of desirable plant species followed by severe grazing. "An area that has been grazed once, you want to leave it," states NRCS Area Resource Conservationist Mark Henning. "If you graze again, you stress the root system over time and you will have more bare ground and less grass."

Less ground cover affects how much water goes into the soil, which in turn affects how much production you get long term. Leaving roughly 60% - 70% of biomass on a pasture provides not only a solar panel but also prevents rain runoff. Litter slows water down, giving it time to infiltrate. Ray adds, "Two inches of rain with 70% ground cover, you get 10% runoff; with 10% ground cover you get 70% runoff. Water will not run off this stuff." He continues, "Four out of ten years in this country there's a drought, so you better plan for it and your rain system better be able to take it. I don't feel the impacts of drought. Sustainable production. That's what we go after."

NRCS's Henning continues, "Most hay fields you see bare dirt because it's hayed every year. This stresses the system and you get exposed ground. Then you have to reseed. Ray's fields have not been reseeded since the 50's."

Long periods of rest result in vigorous, diverse vegetation. Fields of sweet clover, legumes and forbs grow in abundance across rested fields. "Sweet clover can produce up to 70 pounds an acre of nitrogen for next year's grass crop," Ray says referring to his pastures at rest. "Grass during rest is getting fed and the next year's grasses will choke out the legumes and forbs."

On another field that rested last year Ray remarks, "This naturally reseeds itself. It was seeded in 1956 and has been hayed ever since with production at about a ton and quarter per acre. Minerals are being broken down at the same rate they are being used. So, when you rest it, you get a double shot of nutrients which really helps with the increase in production."

It's a matter of science.

It is not just visual, above-ground results that prove the effectiveness of good land management. "How you're managing the above ground world affects the below ground world," states NRCS's Henning. To test the results of Ray' system, his property is part of a dynamic soil properties study conducted by NRCS. "Dynamic properties are those things that change over time and are a reflection of the management on that piece of ground," states NRCS Henning. The study compares water holding capacity, organic matter, soil structure, and aggregate stability; those things that are affected by what is or what is not done to the land. One of the things looked at is the amount of carbon dioxide (CO_2) that the soil releases. Carbon dioxide soil release is an indication of microbial activity.

A comparison was made of Ray's soil under an intense rotational grazing system and that of his fence line neighbor's ground that experiences season-long grazing. The results indicated 140 parts per million of CO_2 soil release on Ray's side compared to 66 parts per million across the fence, indicating an active community of microbes in Ray's soils as a result of his management decisions.

"We don't get enough CO_2 from the air to grow the crops we grow," states Ray. "It's got to come from the soil here. CO_2 is heavier than air and it stays right down on the ground for the plant to absorb. More plants and litter on the hillside will help keep CO_2 from sliding down the hillside into the valleys; litter holds CO_2 and gives it time for the plants to absorb it. Plants need CO_2 for photosynthesis. Without CO_2 you've got a dead plant." Ray's land received high praise. "The soil expert stated Ray's land is the best soil on native rangeland he has ever seen," states NRCS's Henning.

Adaptive land management

Ray started no-till farming around 10 years ago using a disk drill and crop rotations. "And I will never go back," he says. "I was never happy with my farming until I went to no-till. Now I'm just tickled to death with my farming. The soil is anchored now, no dust. A lot of times, people just hang on to old systems too long."

"My whole goal in life is understanding. I want to understand everything. Not necessarily know everything but understand how things work and make sustainable production and keep low inputs," Ray concludes.

NRCS's Henning states, "Ray's property is very low input, very simple; not a lot of money was spent to make this happen. This is probably the lowest input system I've seen in terms of labor. If there were more ranches like this, I think you'd see more cattle and more families back on the land. There are healthy rangelands in the West but they pivot back to the same principles, rest period and hard grazing; rest and recover. It all boils down to how you manage that land, how you treat the soil. It's really a systems approach. This is a special place. If more people did this in Montana, it would be a different place in many respects."

Rosebud Conservation District
Soil Health Incentive

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

Incentive- $20 per acre with a max of 20 acres

The purpose of the soil health 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 nutrients, and be used for haying and/ or grazing. RCD will pay the actual seed and seeding cost up to $20 an acre up to 20 acres or $400 per producer in the conservation district boundaries. Individuals are eligible to apply once per calendar year. Responsibilities of the producer are to prepare a weed free seed bed, note all important observations, agree to tours and news article, if applicable, and provide information regarding fertilizer techniques. A requirement of the cost share agreement is that seed mixtures consist of at least three species of seed in the cover crop planting.

Contact Rosebud Conservation District at 406.351.8012 or visit our website at www.rosebudcd.com

Apply Now for the Conservation Innovation Grants Classic Program

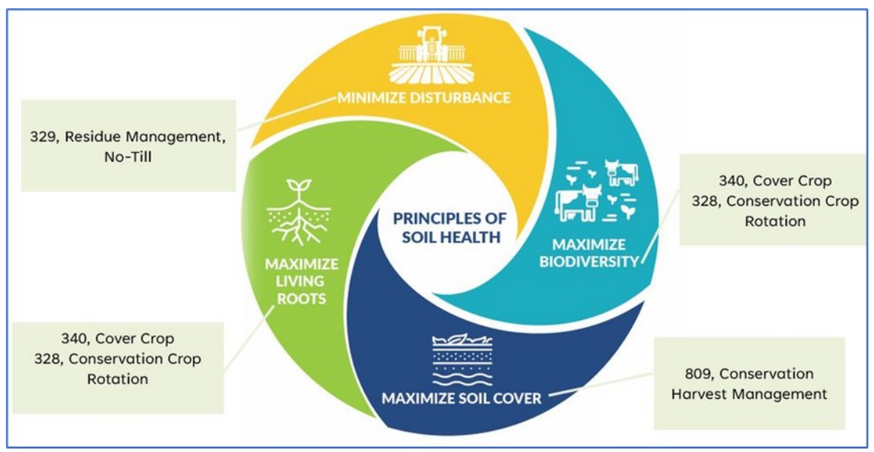
Deadline: October 11

USDA will invest $15 million this year for the Conservation Innovation Grants Classic program. Through CIG, grantees work to address our nation's water quality, water quantity, air quality, soil health and wildlife habitat challenges, all while supporting agricultural production. This year's funding priorities are climate-smart agriculture, addressing invasive species and conservation in urban agricultural systems.

NRCS Offers up to $86 an Acre for Implementation of a Soil Health Management System

Allison Milodragovich, NRCS Area Agronomist

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offices in Big Horn, Broadwater, Carbon, Gallatin, Golden Valley, Meagher, Musselshell, Park, Rosebud, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Treasure, Wheatland, and Yellowstone counties are accepting applications for Rooting for Soil Health. Application ranking date for the first round of fiscal year 2023 Rooting for Soil Health project funding is not yet set, but is likely to be in October of 2022.



What is Rooting for Soil Health? Rooting for Soil Health is a resource concern-focused conservation strategy with investment available through the NRCS's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). What does that mean? NRCS used local input about priority concerns across the area to develop this strategy to address the root of those concerns. Rooting for Soil Health will incentivize implementation of a majority of the give soil health principles: 1) maximize soil cover, 2) minimize soil disturbance, 3) maximize diversity, and 4) maximize a living root. The integration of livestock is the fifth principle and is outside of the scope of this project.

NRCS envisions the use of multiple conservation practices on specific fields implemented for up to three years. The first two steps to addressing a soil health management system on cropland is to armor (or cover) your soil and reduce disturbance. To provide additional options for maximizing soil cover, NRCS now provides a payment rate to implement conservation harvest management. This practice requires tall, standing residue to remain through the winter after a grain harvest. This standing residue results in slower decomposition, greater soil shading, and reduced wind speed over the soil surface which decreases soil moisture loss through evaporation. Standing residue will lead to increased soil moisture retention that is critical for drought mitigation and agricultural production across Montana. Participation in the Rooting for Soil Health initiative will require the implementation of no-till planting. This practice reduces soil disturbance, allows for no tillage, and in most scenarios requires the use of a disk drill.

NRCS will also encourage a diverse, continuous cropping system that utilizes multiple crop types to address the third and fourth the soil health principles, maximize living roots and maximize biodiversity. The crop types are cool season grass (small grains), cool season broadleaves (lentils, peas, flax.), warm season grasses (sorghum, sudangrass, millet, etc.), and warm season broadleaves (sunflower, safflower). If a participating farmer does not plant a crop type in their commodity rotation, such as a warm season grass, NRCS will encourage the use of a multi-species diverse cover crop to address the missing crop type.

Through the Rooting for Soil Health initiative, the NRCS, Pheasants Forever, and Conservation Districts will support local, experienced soil health-oriented producers in conducting workshops on their practical experience in implementing soil health management systems in the fall of 2022. Please email allison.milodragovich@usda.gov to receive more information on dates and specific locations as those are developing.

Contact your local NRCS field office to get more information about the Rooting for Soil Health initiative and begin the application process. You can find contact information for each office at farmers.gov/contact

Rosebud County Local Working Group Survey

Please take the time for fill out this survey and return it to the Forsyth USDA Office by March 15th. Completed surveys will influence this years conservation efforts at the Forsyth NRCS office. *T*

**Treasure County Conservation District is mailing out surveys in the coming weeks. Big Horn CD has already completed their local working group meetings.*

Name:_____Address:_____

Phone:_____Email:_____

1. Are you interested in committing time, money, or other resources to address any of the conservation issues below? Yes NO

Please rank your top 5 concerns (or less) with 1 being the most important to you.

__Wildlife hazards	___Forest health	_water pollution	_livestock shelter	——-weeds
_livestock water	___flooding	___soil fertility	___wetlands	___loss of Ag Lands
___drifted snow	___wildlife habitat	___Ag sustainability	____petroleum pollution	___Ag odors
___Ag productivity	___Biological diversity	___augitic habitat	____streambank erosion	___riparian corridors
___grazing land health	___sediment in surface water	___soil erosion	____salt affected soils	____irrigation water use
____low soil organic matter	____soil compaction	_____nutrient pollution	____water quality	____wind erosion
____pesticide pollution	____storm water management	_____seasonal high water table_	___food production & availability	
____wildlife populations	____pollinator habitat			

2. What do you think the solution to your highest priority conservation issue?

3. What types of resources could you contribute to addressing these conservation issues?

____equipment	____money	____labor	____land access	____community organization	____trainer
___videos	____pictures	____pictures	____support letters	____event participant	

4. Do you want or need assistance so that you can effectively address this resource? What type of assistance would you find helpful? Please rank your preferred mode of assistance with 1 being the most preferred.

____equipment	____money_	___labor	___help videos	____community support	____in-person seminar
____personal technical assistance		___help articles	___support letters	____treatment design	_list of best management practices

5. Would you seek help from other partners to treat prioritized conservation issues? Who would you partner with? Examples: neighbors, irrigation districts, conservation districts , industry groups, state or federal agencies.

6. What current conservation or agricultural idea has you the most excited today?

Please mail your survey to **Rosebud CD, PO Box 1200, Forsyth MT, 59327** or email: bobbi.vannattan@mt.nacdnet.net or Daniel.pratt@usda.gov by March 15th. You will also find a copy of this survey on the Rosebud Cd website www.rosebudcd.com. Feel free to call 406.346.7333, or email our office with any questions.

Spring Planting Plans

By Evan Van Order (Tribal Conservationist, Hardin/Crow FO)

Winter is here but spring is just around the corner, now is the time for landowners to be contemplating making plans for spring tree and shrub planting. Whether your goals are to improve wildlife habitat on your property, attract more song birds and butterflies to your backyard, create a windbreak or privacy hedge or just simply plant a tree because you like trees, now is the time to make plans. Through your local NRCS and Conservation District office there are great resources available to help accomplish your goals. If you would like technical assistance with figuring out what species of trees & shrubs would best suit your goals and the site conditions of your property, visit your local NRCS office. The NRCS employees there would be glad to assist you in developing a planting plan to increase the likelihood of your new planting being a success and meeting your goals.

If you are planning to improve wildlife habitat or establish a windbreak there are certain species of trees and shrubs that will best suit your plan along with selecting the right species that will grow the best in the type of soil you have and the site specific limitations you may have on your property.

If you are planning on doing a large planting, the districts have a tree planter available that makes planting hundreds or even thousands of trees an enjoyable job. Most districts also have a fabric layer available that will lay weed barrier fabric over your new planting which can greatly reduce weed competition around your new seedlings, increasing the survival of the trees you just worked so hard to plant. Both implements are designed to be used as a 3-point attachment on a tractor and make quick work out of large, linear plantings.

If you are planning to do small clump plantings of trees and shrubs for wildlife, hand planting is the most practical means to get the job done. In this situation a great way to quickly get the trees planted is by the old adage, "many hands make light work". Getting family and friends together to dig holes and plant trees is a great way to make memories and gives all that are involved satisfaction in watching the trees grow over the coming years. Clump plantings can be a highly effective way to "tune" the landscape by increasing wildlife cover and food sources on your property.

For further information about planting trees and shrubs and to pick up an order form for the upcoming tree sale, stop on in at your local NRCS office and we would be glad to assist you. You can reach the Hardin NRCS field office at 406-665-3442 ext. 3 or stop on by at 205 13th Street West, Hardin MT 59034.

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 once 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.)

Rosebud Conservation District has 82,196.40 acre-feet and a flow rate of 462.38 cubic feet per second available.

If you are in need of reserved water and would like more information or an application contact Rosebud Conservation District's Administrator Bobbi Vannattan at 406-351-8012 or visit our website.

NRCS is Accepting Applications for the Community Agriculture Initiative

NRCS Montana is accepting applications for the Community Agriculture Initiative. NRCS accepts applications year-round, but applications for the current funding cycle must be submitted by Feb. 14, 2023.

BOZEMAN, Montana, January 12, 2023 – The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is accepting applications for the Community Agriculture Initiative. This initiative supports the conservation efforts of Montana's farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners from small acreage to large. NRCS accepts applications year-round, but applications for the current funding cycle must be submitted by Feb. 14, 2023.

"Agricultural producers of all sizes provide local, nutritious food to their communities. Through this initiative, NRCS is prioritizing assistance to first foods efforts, farm to table projects, and many other types of community agriculture," said Tom Watson, NRCS State Conservationist for Montana. "This includes an expanded set of conservation practices tailored to the conservation needs of small-scale ag producers."

The small acreage activities make traditional conservation practices used at a large scale more applicable to operations of all sizes. For example, some payment rates are now based on square feet rather than acres of implementation for practices like grazing management, irrigation water management, pest management, and cover crops. In addition, some new practices have been added including low tunnel management and compost or compost plus biochar in small areas.

The Community Agriculture Initiative is funded through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and builds on the previous high tunnel initiative. Find information about community agriculture on the NRCS Montana website at nrcs.usda.gov/montana under State Programs and Initiatives.

USDA Announces Grants and Public Meeting for Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production

USDA is making available up to $7.5 million for grants through its Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production (OUAIP). The competitive grants will support the development of urban agriculture and innovative production projects through two categories, Planning Projects and Implementation Projects.

The competitive grants will support the development of urban agriculture and innovative production projects through two categories, Planning Projects and Implementation Projects. **USDA will accept applications on Grants.gov until 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on March 27, 2023.**

Planning Projects

Planning Projects initiate or expand efforts of farmers, gardeners, citizens, government officials, schools and other stakeholders in urban areas and suburbs. Projects may target areas of food access, education, business and start-up costs for new farmers and the development of plans related to zoning and other needs of urban production. For example, the Texas Coalition of Rural Landowners used 2022 awarded funds to conduct a feasibility study and develop a business plan to establish a cooperative for small-scale agricultural producers serving low food access markets in Harris County, Texas.

Implementation Projects

Implementation Projects accelerate existing and emerging models of urban, indoor and other agricultural practices that serve farmers and communities. Projects may improve local food access, include collaboration with partner organizations, and support infrastructure needs, emerging technologies, and educational endeavors. For example, the Moka Urban Agriculture Initiative used 2022 awarded funds for a project to increase local food access and provide culturally relevant options that create economic opportunities for urban farmers. The project will help to reduce food insecurity, improve health and establish outdoor spaces for food production in Missouri.

Forsyth USDA NRCS Office– 270 Prospect Street Forsyth MT 59327 406.351.8054
Hysham USDA NRCS Office-211 Elliot Avenue, Hysham MT 59038 406.352.5510 ext. 101
Hardin USDA Office –205 13th Street West, Hardin MT 59034 406.629.3220
Lame Deer USDA NRCS Office-19 West Chiefs Street, Lame Deer MT 59043 406.477.6494

like us on facebook

Find us on Face Book under these names:
Rosebud Conservation District & Rocky Rosebud
Treasure County Conservation District

Rosebud Conservation District·270 Prospect·PO Box 1200·Forsyth, MT 59327·406.351.8012·Meetings 1st Thursday
www.rosebudcd.com

Big Horn Conservation District·250 13th Street West· Hardin, MT 59028·406.629.3229·Meetings 1st Thursday
www.bighorncd.org

Treasure County Conservation District·211 Elliot Avenue, Hysham, MT 59038·406.342.5510 ext. 102·Meetings 2nd Tuesday

2023 Tree Sales

Big Horn County

Kylie Martin is accepting orders through March 5, 2023. You can reach her at the BigHorn Conservation District Office located in the Hardin USDA Office at 205W 13th Street. All tree information and order forms can be found on the Big Horn CD website at www.bighorncd.org . You can also contact Kylie by calling 406.629.3229, or email bighorn@macdnet.org.

Rosebud and Treasure Counties

Angela Stahl with the Treasure County Conservation District is taking tree orders for Rosebud & Treasure counties. The deadline to order is March 27, 2023. You can reach her at the Treasure County Conservation District office located in the Hysham USDA Office at 211 Elliot Avenue, call at 406.342.5510 ext. 102 or email at angela.stahl@mt.nacdnet.net. Information is also available on the Rosebud Cd website www.rosebudcd.com