

PORTNEUF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

July/August 2010

District Grant Updates

The District's Marsh Creek Watershed Project was recently augmented by a grant from the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) §319 water quality non-point source grant program. This Phase 3 grant will continue to allow the District to assist landowners in the Marsh Creek watershed in implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs) to improve water quality. This grant includes assistance to landowners in the Middle Portneuf River watershed as well. The Phase 1 §319 water quality grant has been underway in the Marsh Creek watershed since 2007; the District also initiated an intensive water quality monitoring program in Marsh Creek along with the start of the Phase 2 §319 grant in 2009.

The support we receive from the cities, Bannock County, and from our partner agencies has been instrumental in receiving and administering these grants. Of course we would not be able to implement any of these projects without the outstanding landowners and producers in Bannock County, so thanks to all of you for your commitment to improving the water quality in the Marsh Creek and Portneuf watersheds! Call the District office at 237-4628, ext. 111 for more information or if you are interested in participating in this project.

Conservation Stewardship Program

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) is a newer NRCS program that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to maintain existing conservation activities and adopt additional conservation practices on their operation. The next sign up for CSP is anticipated this fall; if you think you are interested in this program you need to start the process as soon as possible. There is a self-screening checklist to help you decide if CSP is right for your operation. If it looks like a program that will be beneficial, you need to schedule a meeting soon with your NRCS representative to discuss the next steps in the process, as it can take quite a bit of time to complete the application. For more information call the NRCS office at 237-4628.

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All Portneuf SWCD and NRCS programs are offered on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Portneuf SWCD Board Meetings

August 18, 2010
7 pm, Pocatello
NRCS office

September 8, 2010
TBA

Other Events

August 11, 2010
Idaho Soil and
Water Conservation
Commission Meet-
ing, 8 am, Rigby, ID

FFA Soil and Land
Judging Event,
September 23,
Pocatello

Erosion Control BMPs

With the possibility of many acres of cropland in Bannock County coming out of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) over the next several years, it's a good time to review some of the most recommended erosion control practices.

Erosion=Water Pollution

Sediment from eroding croplands is the largest nonpoint source pollutant in Idaho's surface water (rivers, lakes, streams, reservoirs). Some facts:

- Idaho has about 6.5 million acres of cropland producing over 27 million tons of sheet and rill erosion per year.
- Sediment from this eroding cropland is the largest nonpoint source pollutant in Idaho's surface water.
- **Not all eroding soil ends up in Idaho's surface water.** The average sediment delivery rate is about 20 percent, or about 5 million tons per year.
- Sediment from cropland has nutrients attached to the eroding soil particles. Each ton of sediment contains about 3 pounds of nitrogen and 2.8 pounds of phosphorus.
- Based on sediment delivery rates, about 9,000 tons of nitrogen and 8,500 tons of phosphorus are delivered into Idaho's surface waters each year.

Solutions to Erosion and Water Pollution

To reduce erosion and protect surface waters we should use best management practices (BMPs). Best management practices can be defined as implemented strategies that reduce pollution and at the same time maintain farm profitability. Idaho has a full compliment of BMPs farmers can use to reduce soil erosion and nonpoint source pollution. BMPs are most effective when applied in combinations that work together for erosion control and reducing sediment. Use of a single BMP will seldom solve all conservation problems.

Specific types of BMPs for erosion control that should be employed in many areas of Idaho include:

1. Conservation Cropping Sequence
2. Crop Residue Management and Conservation Tillage
3. Contour and Cross-Slope Farming
4. Contour Strip Cropping and Divided Slopes
5. Deep Chiseling and Subsoiling
6. Cover Crops
7. Grassed Waterways
8. Vegetative Filter Strips
9. Terraces
10. Water and Sediment Control Basins
11. Mulching

Remember the cardinal rule for reducing erosion: keep the land covered

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Erosion Control BMPs cont.

Description of Recommended BMPs:

Conservation Cropping Sequence

Use to reduce soil erosion by 40 to 50 percent.

Crop Residue Management and Conservation Tillage

Use to reduce soil erosion by 60 to 70 percent and prevent surface runoff. *Crop residue management* is any tillage system leaving 30 percent or greater of the soil surface covered with crop residue after planting

- Use **crop residue management** to protect the soil not covered by a growing crop.
- **Crop residue management** begins with selection of high residue-producing crops.
- Use **conservation tillage** systems such as **no-till** and **mulch till** to plant crops while maintaining crop residue on the soil surface.
- **No-till** uses a one-pass drill with openers that places seed and fertilizer in narrow bands without disturbing the area and residue between the drill rows. **Mulch tillage** uses equipment that disturbs the full soil surface but does not invert the soil or bury excessive amounts of crop residue.

Contour and Cross-Slope Farming

Use to reduce erosion 30 to 40 percent, depending upon size of ridges and closeness to contour

Contour Strip Cropping and Divided Slopes

Use to reduce soil erosion 50 to 60 percent.

Deep Chiseling and Subsoiling

Use to reduce surface runoff and soil erosion by about 20 percent

Cover Crops

Use to provide emergency or short-term soil protection

Grassed Waterways

Use to reduce soil erosion 60 to 80 percent from the flow area

Vegetative Filter Strips

Use to reduce sediment 30 to 50 percent

Terraces

Use to reduce gully erosion and trap sediment.

Water and Sediment Control Basins

Use to reduce suspended solids in runoff by 40 to 60 percent

Mulching

Use to reduce soil loss by 60 to 70 percent

This information has been condensed from “**BMPs for Erosion Control**” WQ-27, a cooperative publication from University of Idaho Extension and USDA/NRCS, revised 2003. <http://www.uiweb.uidaho.edu/wq/wqbr/wqbr27.html>. See publication for more in-depth information, or contact the NRCS office. These and other practices can assist in erosion control; contact your local NRCS office for more information and to find out what USDA and local programs are available for assistance with erosion control efforts.



Spotted Knapweed

Centaurea stoebe

Background: Spotted knapweed, native to Europe, has thoroughly established itself in North America. In Idaho the weed is widely spread and has moderate shade tolerance. Each plant produces up to 25,000 seeds that are dispersed by wind, animals, and people. Seeds may remain viable for 8 years.

Description: Spotted knapweed is a biennial or short live perennial. Cotyledons are spatulate to oval, about one inch long. Young leaves are covered with soft hairs and slightly lobed, becoming pinnately lobed in older leaves. Mature plants may be 3 feet in height and are much branched. The weed forms a basal rosette the first year with leaves up to six inches long. Both basal and stem leaves are pinnately divided. Flower heads are abundant, ½ inch wide, and generally solitary on branch tips. Flowers are pink to purple, or occasionally white, and appear from midsummer to fall. Each stiff flower head bract has a dark comb-like fringe resembling a black spot at the tip. Seeds are dark brown to tan and are tipped by plumes that fall off at maturity.

Habitat: Rangelands, dry meadows, pastures, upland rocky areas, roadsides, and the sandy or gravelly floodplains of streams and rivers.

Distribution: Spotted knapweed is found in the Northeast and north central U.S. as well as along the Pacific Coast and east through Montana.

Chemical Control:

Herbicide: Tordon (picloram)

Description: Apply 0.25 to 0.50 lb ae/A picloram

Timing: Spring before bolting

Herbicide: Curtail (clopyralid +24-D)

Description: Apply 2 to 4 Qt./A Curtail

Higher rates may result in persistence into the field season.

Timing: After rosettes form in spring, before bolting

Bio-Control:

Insect:

Seedhead Fly, Root Boring Moth, Seed-head weevil, Root-boring beetle, Root weevil.

For more information call your Bannock County Weed Control Supervisor David Hallinan at 251-0049. Information submitted by Bannock County Weed Board.

BANNOCK COUNTY FSA NEWS

As we get into the busy summer season with haying and grain harvest, we at FSA would like to remind our producers of a couple of items. First of all, the deadline to submit a crop report for the 2010 crop year was June 30th. However, our office is able to take late-filed crop reports but a small fee is required. Please call the office if you missed this deadline and would like more information. Accurate crop reports are necessary for participation for all FSA programs.

We continue to receive complaints about weeds and unauthorized grazing on CRP acres. As a CRP contract holder it is your responsibility to spray/control weeds, as well as to make sure all cattle are fenced out. Dave Hallinan, Bannock County Weed Supervisor is an expert on weeds and what it takes to control them. He can assist you as to the timing for spraying certain weed varieties. His number is 208-251-0049.

As many of you know, CRP land in every county is limited to 25% of the total cropland of the respective county. To date, Bannock County has been granted waivers to this limit. Currently we have approximately 40% of our total cropland enrolled. The new farm bill requires that each county adhere to that 25% limitation. However, recently we have received word that under special circumstances a waiver may be granted. Without knowing for certain whether our county would fit into this "special circumstances" category, the Bannock County Committee has decided to apply for a waiver equal to the amount of acres we have currently enrolled. If granted, this would mean that all acres expiring this fall, (approximately 30,000 acres) would be eligible for a general sign-up. **A general sign-up has been announced, and will run from August 2 to August 27, 2010.** If the waiver is denied, Bannock County will still be eligible to participate in a general sign-up, however, we would have only approximately 3500 acres available for enrollment. We will keep you posted as we are informed from the state and national offices.


We are currently accepting nominations for the upcoming county committee elections this fall. The area involved this year is the Pocatello/Inkom area. The deadline for nominations to be received in the county office is August 2nd. Please take time to become involved in this process.


Finally, please remember to contact our office with any farm changes. Changes may include sale of land, change of operator, and changes to your partnership or corporation. It is imperative that our records are up to date with any and all changes to ensure that payments are made timely. Also, please keep track of your grain and hay production each year, by year. This is necessary for participation in disaster programs. As always, please call the office if you have any questions regarding any of the above items. Our number is 208-237-3435 ext 2.

We wish you all a very successful and productive harvest for 2010.

Steve Myler
County Executive Director
Bannock County FSA


**The Voice of Agriculture
in Bannock County**



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Call 233-9442

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