

PORTNEUF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

October 2010

District Updates

The Marsh Creek §319 water quality grant projects are going well. There are currently 19 contracts in the Marsh Creek watershed for a variety of water quality improvement projects including improving animal feeding operations, riparian habitat improvements, stream bank protection, fencing, and off-site water. The next phase of the Marsh Creek project also includes funding for sections of the Portneuf Watershed, and contracting is starting in those areas. There has been a great deal of interest and cooperation from other agencies and landowners in the area; if you are interested in participating or would like more information, contact the District at 237-4628, x111 or Chris Banks, Project Manager, at 221-5681. There have been several tours recently of the area for EPA and DEQ folks; they have been very impressed with the work that is being accomplished and the cooperation and enthusiasm of the project participants; and the cooperative efforts of the agencies and organizations assisting with the projects and the monitoring. Thanks to all for helping improve water quality in our county!

Sweep Plow, circa 1951



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From the Archives

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.

Portneuf SWCD is an equal opportunity employer

www.pswcd.org

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**Portneuf SWCD
Board Meetings
are normally held
the second
Wednesday of
every month. Call
office for location
and time as
changes do
sometimes occur**

Other Events

**IASCD Div V fall
meeting October 27
Malad, ID**

**Election Day
November 2**

**Annual IASCD
Conference
November 17-20
Burley Inn, Burley,
Idaho**

FSA NEWS

The past few months have been very busy here at FSA. The summer months always bring with them a flurry of activity, including crop reports, harvest, etc. This year also brought with it a CRP sign-up during the month of August. Bannock County was NOT granted a waiver, which would have allowed us to exceed our 25% cap of cropland available for CRP enrollment. Because of this, we were only allowed to accept approximately 4000 acres into the program during this sign-up. With the acres already enrolled, this puts our county at just over 53,000 acres in CRP. This is a drastic change from the approximate 90,000 acres we had prior to this year's expiring contracts (about 35,000 acres). For those of you who did not score high enough for re-enrollment, please contact our office as there are other programs that you may now qualify for.

We are in the process of making CRP payments for the 2010 fiscal year, as well as final DCP (Direct/Counter Cyclical) payments too. Hopefully, the bulk of these payments will be out by the middle of this month. If you have not received your payments by the end of October, please contact our office. Like last year, all payments are web-based and will be paid via direct deposit from Kansas City. If you have not completed the necessary paperwork, your payment will not be released.

As always, please notify the office of any farm changes. This includes but is not limited to purchases and/or sales of land, changes in operator or owner, land taken out of agriculture uses, and any modifications for partnerships/corporations/LLCs, etc. Keeping your records up to date will ensure that payments can be made in a timely manner.

If there are any questions you have regarding farm programs, please contact our office at 237-3435 extension 2. Our office hours are 8 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday.

All the best!

Steve Myler
County Executive Director
Bannock County FSA

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) through the NRCS is still available for participation, another cutoff for applications is anticipated in January. Contact the NRCS office at 237-4628 for more information or see the NRCS website at www.nrcs.usda.gov.

Ag Days

Bannock County Farm Bureau and the District, with the help of Highland High School FFA, sponsored the Ag Days field trip for all 4th grade students in the Pocatello School District. Swore Farms hosted the activity for around 1000 4th grade students during the three day event. Students watched potato digger at work and each student picked a bag of potatoes to take home. Students toured a corn maze, saw farm animals, tried their hand at roping, and learned about wheat production. They discussed where food comes from and how it is produced. Rocky Mtn. Power presented a farm electrical safety demo, and noxious weeds, watershed awareness, and the benefits of worms were discussed. For some classes this is their only field trip due to budget issues, so many thanks to the Bannock County Farm Bureau for paying for the bussing. Thanks so much to all involved for promoting agriculture in our area and providing a hands on experience for our area 4th graders!



Kelsey Flandro, representing IASCD and the District, demonstrates the effects of rain falling on the watershed during the 2010 Ag Days

Student Events

Soil Judging

The FFA 2010 regional land and soil judging event was held in Pocatello in September. Around 120 FFA students from SE Idaho attended the event hosted by Highland High School FFA, and organized by the NRCS. The students tested their knowledge of soil types, land uses for different soil types, and soil nutrients. The range students had to judge a range site. Winners will go on to the finals in Burley. The District provided snacks for the students and assisted with the event. The Bannock County Farm Bureau provided lunch for all in attendance.

FFA students from SE Idaho head out to test their skills in soil, land and range judging northeast of Pocatello.



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Jointed goatgrass *Aegilops cylindrica*

Jointed goatgrass is a native of southern Europe and western Asia. This noxious weed competes with winter wheat for nutrients and water; they are so closely related that they can interbreed. Jointed goatgrass grows best in cultivated fields, but it can invade grasslands, rangelands, and roadsides. It is a winter annual, although 5 % can be a spring annual, and it spreads exclusively by seed. Seedlings look similar to wheat but have regularly spaced hairs along leaf blade margin, short membranous ligules, and auricles that are short and hairy. The first leaf is often reddish green. The spikelets enclose one to three seeds, giving an appearance of a cylindrical joint. After germination, seedlings remain attached to spikelet; upon removing soil from around the seedling this characteristic can help identify the weed. Goatgrass seeds can remain viable up to five years, but tend to rapidly become less viable compared to other weed seeds, so cultivation and rotation of crops can be effective as part of a control effort. Because jointed goatgrass is so competitive it can be very difficult to control, and the seeds are difficult to clean from wheat, resulting in a lower value crop. The seeds are also very light, and will blow off uncovered trucks during transport resulting in dispersal to other areas. The seeds may shatter sooner than wheat, so the weed seeds will be in the ground before the wheat is even harvested. For more in-depth information see www.uiweb.uidaho.edu/weeds or www.idahoweedawareness.net. www.jointedgoatgrass.org has a lot of really helpful management ideas and information from Washington State University. Contact the Bannock County weed department at 234-4139 for assistance in identifying and controlling this weed. More pictures on page 5.



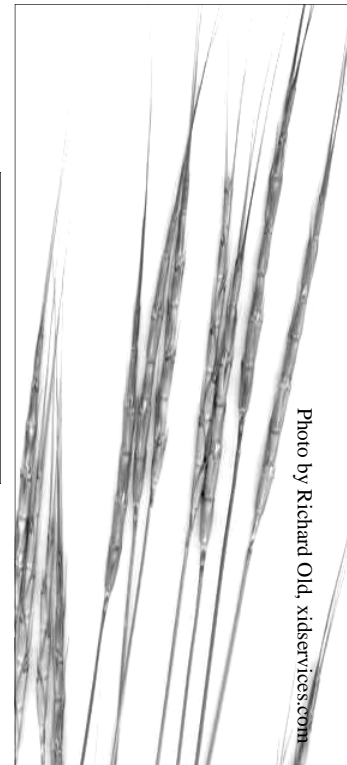
Jointed goatgrass spikelets mixed in with wheat. It can be very difficult to separate these weed seeds from the wheat.

Goatgrass, cont.

Wheat on left, jointed goatgrass on right



Jointed
goatgrass
seedheads
have a
distinctive
jointed
appearance





From the PSWCD/SCS Archives

Lava Hot Springs, 1951. Looking West to East on Main Street




**The Voice of Agriculture
in Bannock County**




 **Bannock County
Farm Bureau**
Call 233-9442

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