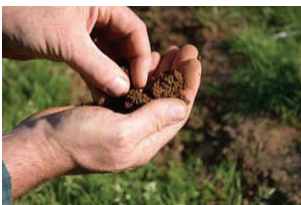


# UINTA COUNTY Connection

JULY 2010



## Rural Living Workshop ...coming in September



I know it is only July and we've been waiting for summer to get here for quite some time, but Fall will be

here before we know it and we wanted to give you a heads up on a great workshop we are planning for September. Hopefully by then we will all be ready for the cooler temps!

The workshop is planned for Thursday, September 9<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-8:30 at the Bear River Community Center by the ice ponds in Evanston. Please RSVP to the Conservation District by September 7<sup>th</sup> by calling 747-8223 or emailing [ksabey@bvea.net](mailto:ksabey@bvea.net).

### Topics:

**Soil Testing**—Whether you have a big ranching operation or a small backyard, knowing what kind of soil you have is critical when it comes to planning and making decisions about developing and sustaining your property. Kelly Belden with the Soil Testing Lab in Laramie will be here to do some hands on soil texturing and talk about how to look at the different colors of soil and where to take your soil test. She will explain how to take a soil sample and what to expect when you get your results back.

As an added incentive, the Conservation District will be offering FREE soil sample testing to Uinta County residents!

**Putting Your Yard to Bed**—Fall is the time of year you start thinking about what to do with your yard to get it ready for the winter. Barb Martinez and Leann Hutchinson, both Master Gardners, will give you some tips to help your plants make it through the winter. Topics include late fall watering, fertilizing, putting antidesiccants on your evergreen trees to prevent moisture loss and more.

All participants will be entered to win a back pack sprayer donated by the Uinta County Weed & Pest!

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## Animal Feeding Operations

Information for this article taken from the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts website [www.conservewy.com](http://www.conservewy.com)



Wyoming's livestock producers are a vital and integral part of the state's economy, culture, heritage and contribute considerably to Wyoming's wide open spaces. Keeping Wyoming's agriculture producers in business is a goal we all share. With increased attention and concern for water quality, comes increased awareness of agricultural operations and their potential affect on water quality. Traditionally, many pioneers homesteaded on or near sources of water. This made sense. However, with increased development and population have come increased demands on the water resources and the need to maintain a healthy water resource.

Wyoming state law requires the permitting of large confined animal feeding operations. There is no requirement to permit operations smaller than those that fall under state regulations. However, smaller operations could be regulated and liable for water quality problems.

As a producer, you must understand both the potential water quality problems your operations may cause and those steps you can take to protect yourself and water quality. Understanding the laws and potential liabilities producers face, will assist in determining whether there is a risk of water quality related problems and how to avoid future enforcement actions.

Just because smaller operations are not required to be permitted does not mean there is not a risk of water quality pollution problems or future regulatory enforcement actions. In fact, there are federal actions underway to step up scrutiny of smaller animal feeding operations and bringing such operations under regulatory permitting.

Contact the Uinta County Conservation District to learn more about Animal Feeding Operations and how you can be *proactive* in the process to comply with EPA's regulations. UCCD also has a cost share program available to help offset the cost of improving your operation and reducing your risk for contaminating surface water. You may also visit the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts website at [www.conservewy.com](http://www.conservewy.com) to learn more.

### Local Landowner works with UCCD to complete Animal Feeding Operation project



In an effort to be proactive and avoid regulatory action, one local producer recently completed an Animal Feeding Operation project with technical and financial assistance from the Uinta County Conservation District and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Like many of the producers in Wyoming, this producer was using a working facility that had been there for decades. However, the facility was built on the canal; and probably for a good reason, but given the increased attention on water quality, he decided to do something to reduce water pollution and soil erosion. The facility included a barn, corrals and stack yard located on a hill that sloped toward the canal. In the corrals was a water gap that allowed livestock direct access to the water. According to the producer, run-off from the facility went directly into the canal and the decades of use had significantly eroded the canal banks.

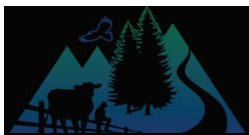
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After learning about the laws and liabilities faced by producers, he decided to be proactive and improve his operation. He worked with NRCS and UCCD to qualify for financial assistance to offset the cost of the improvements. To keep livestock from accessing the canal directly for water, he fenced off the canal and provided water further up on the hill by means of a water well and pump. Other practices included building new working corrals and a barn away from the canal to prevent waste from entering the water. "My operation is a lot better and it is much easier to work cattle than it was before. Now it is less labor intensive, I can almost do it all myself", said the local producer. When asked if the project was worth it he said "it took a lot of effort to get the project up and going, but it was definitely worth it. Working with the Conservation District was great, there was only a small amount of paperwork, the process with them was simple. Working with local organizations like the Conservation District is easier and less time consuming."

"MY OPERATION IS A LOT BETTER AND IT IS MUCH EASIER TO WORK CATTLE THAN IT WAS BEFORE. NOW IT IS LESS LABOR INTENSIVE, I CAN ALMOST DO IT ALL MYSELF", SAID THE LOCAL PRODUCER.

If you're a producer thinking about improving your operation to avoid contaminating water, come in and visit the Uinta County Conservation District to learn more about the technical and financial assistance that is available through our program and through the Natural Resources Conservation Service.



## Gary Beach Memorial Scholarship

The Wyoming Natural Resource Foundation provides a scholarship in honor of the late Gary Beach and his work on behalf of Wyoming's natural resources. Beach worked for the Department of Environmental Quality and as Administrator of the water quality division was instrumental in working with local conservation districts to establish the local watershed planning approach to addressing Wyoming's impaired waterbodies.

University of Wyoming students focusing on natural resource management are encouraged to apply. In order to be eligible for the scholarship, the following criteria must be met: The applicant must have completed at least 59 credit hours (be enrolled at the Junior level or higher) and have a cumulative GPA of at least 2.5. The applicant must be enrolled at UW in one of the following academic majors: environment and natural resources, water resources, rangeland ecology and watershed management or a related field.

Applications for the Fall 2010 school year are being accepted through July 31, 2010. Applications can be obtained by contacting the Wyoming Natural Resource Foundation at 307-632-5716 or [www.wynaturalresourcefoundation.com](http://www.wynaturalresourcefoundation.com).

## Composting Tidbit

Earthworms are naturally attracted to compost, which provides them with food. Their tunneling is beneficial to aeration and improving soil structure because their castings are rich in plant nutrients. One pound of earthworms ingest one pound of garbage and produce one pound of rich compost on a daily basis! They can significantly reduce the time necessary to produce finished compost. Care must be taken, though, to turn the pile every week or two as the intense heat may kill them



# Education Happenings

## Adopt A Rancher Program

During the 2009-2010 school year, the Fort Bridger third grade class took part in an Adopt-A-Rancher program, through the Uinta County Conservation District. This is the first year for the program and, with the support of a great group of volunteers, teachers and students, we were able to make this program a huge success for everyone.

Richard and Carol Hamilton spent the school year exchanging letters and photographs with the Fort Bridger third grade class. The Hamilton's took the students on a

journey to learn about life on their ranch from fall to spring roundup. They exchanged letters about the history of the ranch, vaccinations, branding, calving and much much more. Through this process, the students became familiar with the Hamilton's, their ranch animals and family pets, and learned about real-life experiences of life on a ranch.

After a school year of corresponding, the students were invited to meet their adopted family and visit the ranch.

At the end of the day, the event was a huge success, with much thanks to Carol and Richard Hamilton for opening

their ranch and life to all of us. This is a wonderful program for students to obtain hands-on agricultural experience.

In the upcoming school year, the third grade classes from Ft. Bridger and Urie Elementary, and Toni Martin's fifth grade class will take part in the Adopt-A-Rancher program.

If you are interested in learning more about the Uinta County Conservation District Adopt-A-Rancher program, please give Dannette Edelmayer a call at 747-8224.

"WE HAD AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE WITH THE HAMILTONS. WE ALL LEARNED A LOT ABOUT RANCH LIFE AND THE INFORMATION THEY SHARED WITH US DIRECTLY CORRELATED WITH OUR STATE STANDARDS IN SOCIAL STUDIES".

DEBRA FISHER, FT. BRIDGER ELEMENTARY



## People and Animals Put the Work, and Happiness, into Working Land

Guest article by Amos Eno, Executive Director of Private Landowner Network

"The basic reason for moving the cattle from one place to another is to get them to the best possible source of feed and water and in the end, some of them will go to market. I think happiness for a cow is green grass, water from a mountain stream and having her calf by her side. This is ok with the calf because happiness to a calf is mother's milk."

So reads a letter from Carol Hamilton, a rancher from Uinta County, Wyoming who spent most of last year corresponding with the third graders of nearby Fort Bridger elementary school. This letter exchange between the Hamilton's and the students was part of a first-of-its-kind "Adopt-a-Rancher" program established by the Uinta County Conservation District.

### The True Value of Adopt-a-Ranch

Written as if she were talking to one of her grandkids, Carol Hamilton's letters are an extraordinary paean to life on a ranch. She believes the real value in this program is that by the end of the year, there were 64 kids with a personal relationship to the ranch. When they're grown, she says, if people try to manipulate their perceptions about ranching, they'll have some experience against which to judge that message. She laments that ranchers have been experiencing a negative perception problem since the early 1970s, which in her experience is largely based on ignorance.

This echoes my own thoughts. Last year I made a speech to the Public Lands Council and emphasized the need to develop a public relations campaign that restores ranchers to their rightful position as our premier rural stewards of the American west.

That's a tall order, since, as Carol has noted, ranchers are generally perceived as modern day ecological villains and landscape abusers. How do we turn today's "Black Hats" into resuscitated White Hats, resurrecting the public image of Shane, Bonanza, and the Lone Ranger? Our answer at PLN is to empower individuals with intelligent information, cutting out the middlemen whenever possible.

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## Guest article continued:



### Turning Ranchers into “White Hats”

Our website, Ranchbook, currently in development, will tout the ecological benefits of working ranches in America’s rangelands. It will be a web-based compendium of peer-reviewed rancher conservation success stories. That information, publicly available online, will show the diverse and rewarding nature of ranch stewardship through hundreds of individual stories, like that of Carol’s own ranch. She and her husband, Richard, have been working with BLM and other ranchers using Cooperative Resource Management since 1994. They’ve used deferred rotation grazing, sagebrush manipulation, and created new upland reservoirs to achieve outstanding health of the range and support wildlife such as antelope, elk, and sage grouse.

Adopt-a-Rancher culminated this past spring with a ranch visit for more than 60 kids. With the help of 22 neighbors, Carol organized introductions to the Hamilton’s own menagerie, as well as ewes, lambs, mares, colts, goats, and jackasses from neighboring ranches. The kids learned about cattle identification, cow by-products, and western wear, and they got to ride saddle horses and backhoes.

As Carol said in one of her letters about the end of fall roundup, “Someone always brings good hot food and dessert. This is the best part of the day. Everyone has put in a long hard day and spent the last few hours looking forward to relaxing and eating and visiting.” Sounds to me like happiness for a human.

*If you would like to read more, below is the link to the PLN blog, by Amos Eno, <http://www.privateandownernetwork.org/plnBlog/post.aspx?id=19>*

## More Education Happenings



**Grab your muck boots and join the Wyoming Stream Team at the river!** This workshop is available to educators, youth group leaders, residents of Wyoming and residents of watersheds in neighboring states. The program focuses on hands-on training in water quality monitoring and stream ecology. Participants will build the foundation to initiate monitoring projects in their home communities.

**Uinta County Conservation District will host the Wyoming Stream Team workshop on July 27-28, 2010.** The workshop will be based at the Bear Community Center in Evanston. The workshop will focus on field-based stream monitoring and delve into water-related issues specific to southwestern Wyoming.

**Attend the workshop for your chance to win a monitoring equipment kit valued at \$650, and other fun give-a-ways!!!**

**\$30 registration fee (refundable upon workshop completion)**

Educators are eligible for one U.W. graduate credit or one CEU through the PTSB.

Lunch, snacks, refreshments provided

Call 307-747-8224 for registration information

We have had a very busy season this spring. Activities ranged from celebrating Earth Day, Arbor Day and National Stewardship Week to meet the rancher day. We also took part in the Bear River Fest, Lyman 8th grade outdoor education day, Young women’s hike and we will be at 4H camp in July.



UINTA COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
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*Stop by our booth at the Uinta County Fair!*

*Contact Us:*

VISIT US ON THE WEB! [WWW.UINTACOUNTYCD.COM](http://WWW.UINTACOUNTYCD.COM)

Uinta County Conservation District Staff

**Kerri Sabey, District Manager**  
Email: [ksabey@bvea.net](mailto:ksabey@bvea.net)  
(307) 747-UCCD (8223)

**Dannette Edelmayer, Education Coordinator**  
Email: [dedelmayer@bvea.net](mailto:dedelmayer@bvea.net)  
(307) 747-8224



Uinta County Conservation District Board of Supervisors

Shaun Sims, Chairman ● Kelly Guild, Vice-Chairman ● Spencer Eyre, Secretary / Treasurer  
Kevin Condos, Member ● Dennis Cornelison, Member ● Carol Hamilton, Associate Member

Attend a board meeting — Meetings are held the third Thursday of each month at the Lyman Town Hall  
8:00 p.m. during daylight savings time — 7:00 p.m. (November-March)

**Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Staff**

Jeff Lewis; District Conservationist — Kevin Fackrell; Soil Conservation Technician — NRCS phone: (307) 787-3211