

The Mountain Meadow

July 2023

Sublette County
Conservation District

HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE

*SCCD - What We've Been
Up To*

*NRCS Update - Additional
Funding and a Fond
Farewell*

*SCCD - An Educated Mind
Can Teach Many*

*WDA Update - Protein &
Moisture Meter Inspections*

*SCCD - Blazing Bistort!
Spring Has Finally Sprung!*

*UW Extension Ag. & Natural
Resources Extension
Educator - Grass Tetany:
Causes, Treatment, and
Prevention*

SCCD - SCCD's Newest



SCCD Showcases projects for Wyoming Conservation District Employees Association (WCDEA) Annual Training

A quarterly publication from the Sublette
County Conservation District.

"By Working with local people who
understand local problems, the best
conservation measures can be
accomplished."



(307)367-2364

sccd@sublettecd.com

sublettecd.com

What We've Been Up To From the District Manager's Chair

Sublette County was the host of the Wyoming Conservation District Employee Association (WCDEA) training on May 16-18. Employees from around Wyoming converged on Sublette County to the annual training session, learning about district operations, funding opportunities, and natural resource practices. This year, SCCD was able to set up a tour of projects around the County for the employees to see what SCCD has collaborated and worked with landowners, land managers, and agency partners on. This was the only day that it didn't rain on us, and the sun shined making it an exception to the spring so far! The group visited projects from mesic structure work outside of Cora to water development work down in LaBarge. It was a 9-hour day packed highlighting what Sublette County has to offer as well as showcasing the partnerships and relationships that occur in our County. The final day of the meetings were updates from state and federal partners on legislative efforts and organizational updates. After that, the 35 participants were able to take what they learned in Sublette County back home and try to implement them in their own District.





NRCS Update

New Hire and Plant Materials Center

Jason LeVan, Range Management Specialist



Jason LeVan recently joined the Pinedale NRCS Field Office as a Rangeland Management Specialist. Prior to starting his new position in May, he held a contracted partner position in Lander where he was a Range and Wildlife Conservationist for Pheasants Forever, Inc. for nearly 3 years. Jason worked with NRCS in his previous position, so he is excited to build on his knowledge of NRCS and work with various agencies, organizations, and members of the public and ranching community in Sublette County.

Since starting his position, Jason has been busy learning the county, meeting natural resource professionals in the area, familiarizing himself with NRCS field office responsibilities, and attending trainings. He recently attended a tour of the Bridger Plant Materials Center (PMC) in Bridger, Montana which services both Wyoming and Montana's diverse ecosystems. The PMC is an on-farm experimental research station that focuses to address natural resource concerns relating to native plant communities, pollinator habitat, forage production, and soil health, to name a few. While at the training, some of the topics Jason learned about included how the PMC manages various herbaceous and woody species test plots, the standards for cleaning seed, and the process of calibrating a no-till seed drill. Jason hopes to apply this knowledge to his work in Sublette County.

To learn more about the PMC, search for the research center online or visit <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/plant-materials/mtpmc> and <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/conservation-by-state/montana/plant-materials-montana-and-wyoming> for more information."

An Educated Mind Can Teach Many



Traci Berg, SCCD Administrative Coordinator

Sublette County Conservation District (SCCD) wants to share this year's education events with you. All of us here at the District enjoy getting to unleash our more youthful side every now and then, especially while educating Sublette County's youth.



Pictured: Nate Wilson with Pinedale 3rd grade class planting a Canadian Red Flowering Tree. Photo Credit: Traci Berg

Each year we participate and lead events that get us in schools and educate children about conservation and natural resources. This year we participated in Arbor Day, where SCCD supplied seedling Caragana to Pinedale, Big Piney, LaBarge, and Bondurant students. We teamed up with the Town and Nate Wilson, the Assistant District Forester with Wyoming State Forestry Division. Together we held three different Arbor Day events where students learned what Arbor Day is and why trees are important.

Sublette Pal Day is another one of SCCD's education events that we look forward to each year. This entails Pinedale's 1st grade classes participating in a pen-pal program with local participants in natural resources. This year we were able to teach our youth about ranching from Faith Hamlin & Kade Greer from the Little Jennie Ranch, sheep ranching from Laurie and Taylor Thoman, fighting forest fires from Kendra Jackson, engine captain with the Forest Service in Pinedale, and all about wolves from Kenneth Mills, the large carnivore biologist with Wyoming Game and Fish. After writing back and forth for 4 months we coordinate a field day with all the "pals" to come to the school. Everyone brings hands on items including fire trucks, bum lambs, bum calves, wolf pelts and even a sheep camp! The kiddos this year had so much fun (even with the interruption of a brief hailstorm!) and the pals enjoy the energy and imagination of the students.

Contd. From Previous Page



Pictured: Traci Berg (SCCD) with Pinedale 1st grade class learning about Stewart (bum calf) from Little Jennie ranch hand Faith Hamlin. Photo Credit: Kamryn Kozisek

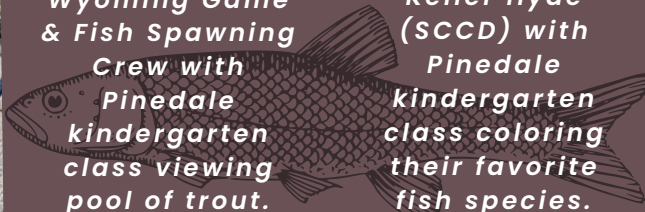


Pictured: Kenneth Mills (WG&F) with Pinedale 1st grade class learning about wolves and modeling furs. Photo Credit: Traci Berg

The last event that took place this year for the district was the Kindergarten Boulder Rearing Station Field Day. This event provides a morning of outdoor education to Pinedale's Kindergarten classes. SCCD partners with the teachers as well as game and fish to provide 4 booths that are teaching fun lessons about natural resources. Fish biologists and technicians provided each group with a tour of the fish hatchery, and SCCD provided three booths that included learning about animal food chains led by me, native and invasive species of fish and their impacts with coloring activity led by Keller Hyde, and the life cycle of a plant given by Justice Miller.



Pictured: Wyoming Game & Fish Spawning Crew with Pinedale kindergarten class viewing pool of trout. Photo Credit: Traci Berg



Pictured: Keller Hyde (SCCD) with Pinedale kindergarten class coloring their favorite fish species. Photo Credit: Traci Berg



*If you are a teacher and want to incorporate fun events like this for your class, please give us a call or email us at:
Sublette County Conservation District
(307)367-2364
sccd@sublettecd.com*

WDCA - Technical Services Protein & Moisture Meter Inspections

Written by Dale Heggem, Wyoming Department of Agriculture
Submitted by Justin Caudill, Wyoming Department of Agriculture



For several years now, the Wyoming Department of Agriculture's Technical Services Division has been checking grain moisture meters and protein meters across Wyoming. This is done to ensure that the grower is not being unfairly docked in price for the grain they deliver and also so that the company is confident that any grain they receive is dry enough to safely store or of not high enough quality to be able to sell.

Here is an explanation of why it is important for these devices to be checked.

Every year the WDA drives around the state making sure that a 120,000 lb scale is within 60 lbs or so of what it should be. A standard semi-trailer hauls about 800 bushels of wheat and assuming that a bushel of wheat is worth \$5 the grower may lose out on around \$5 (one bushel of wheat weighs 60 pounds) for the entire load if the scale is off by the allowable limits.

Most places that receive grain use some type of a moisture discount chart that discounts the growers based on moisture.

While these vary some a typical dockage chart will dock a grower 1% for every ½% of moisture over the allowed level. So if a grower brings in the same semi load of wheat and it checks ½% above the limit the entire load will be shrunk by 1%. So, 1% of 800 is equal to 8 bushels, times the \$5 per bushel price means that the grower will lose \$40 on the load.



Contd. From Previous Page

Protein meters are essential to the business of malt barley and wheat as there is a very small range of protein in which the brewing companies and flour mills like to use for making their products. Barley that falls above or below this range could be heavily docked or rejected entirely by the brewing company thus turning a crop with good income potential into a feed stock with a much lower value in price. Protein levels in wheat can either cause the grower to be docked in price (for low protein) or to receive a premium (for high protein) both of which can greatly affect a grower's bottom line.



Blazing Bistort! Spring Has Finally Sprung!

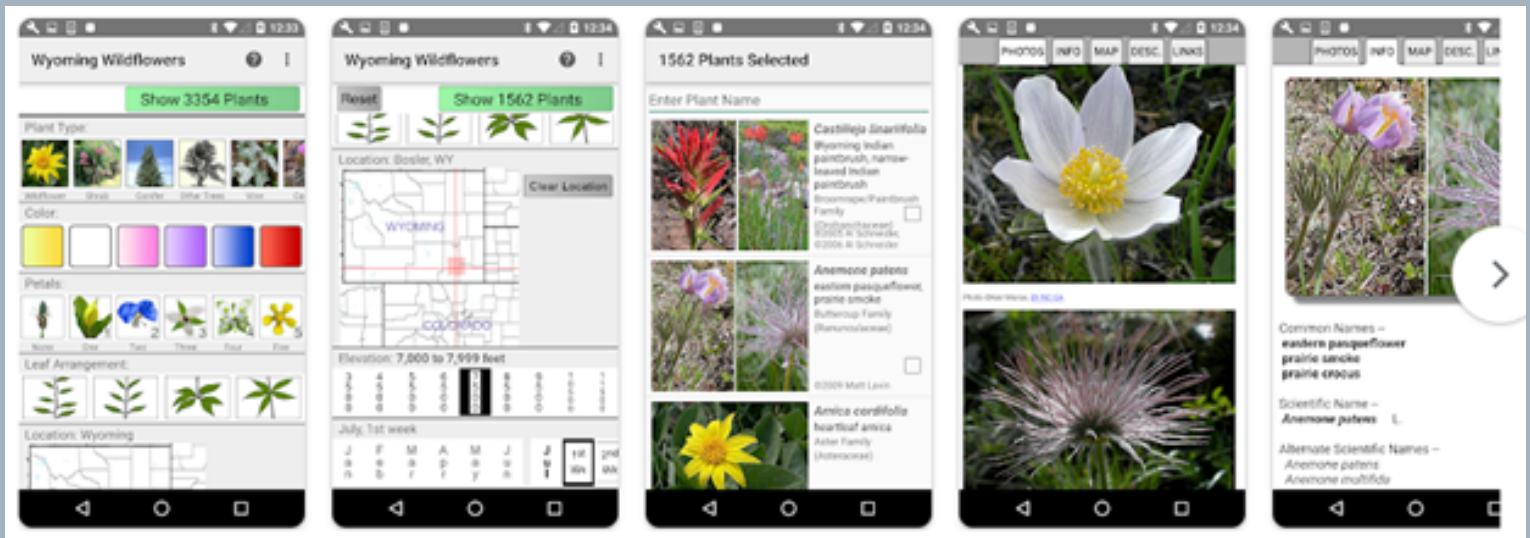
Shari Meeks, Range Program Manager

We could all use a little sunshine, but the rains have brought about an amazing display of spring colors across our Sublette County rangelands! Like in the photo, wet meadows are showing off their iris', American bistort, blazing star, and of course, dandelions. As we drove across the County, however, I couldn't help but notice the color variations of Hood's phlox, cutleaf balsamroot, stenotus, wallflowers and penstemon!



While there are a handful of phone applications that can clue you in on the plant you desire to know, the Wyoming Wildflower app is my personal favorite.

The home page allows you to minimize your search of over 2,500 species, by choosing the plant type, color, petals, leaf arrangement, location in Wyoming, Habitat, elevation and what week you are making the observation. Plants that meet your search criteria are then displayed for you to peruse through. Once you have found the potential plant and click on it, you are taken to another page where you can look at more photos, read more information about the plant, see where it's been observed, read a detailed description. In addition, this application also provides you with links to further information about the species of plant you are looking into.



Contd. From Previous Page

It's really hip these days to take a picture of the plant and the phone directly identifies it. But beware! These are not always accurate!!

Additionally, use caution when relying on applications to do your identifying. If you are really into plants, it may just be better to learn how to key out your plants and learn them for yourself. The Native Plant Society – Sublette Chapter (find them on Facebook at SubletteNativePlants) hosts plant walks throughout the summer. The folks that lead this walk can help you identify plants and gain greater understanding of keying out species in various locations around Sublette County.

We hope that your summer gets off to a good start! Enjoy the spectacular color of our rangelands in a year when color is abundant...we certainly don't get blessed with this every year!



UNW Extension Office - Sublette County

Grass Tetany: Causes, Treatment, and Prevention

Dagan Montgomery, Agriculture & Natural Resources Extension Educator

Summer is here in Wyoming. Despite the relief the changing weather brings, especially after this winter, all ranchers know each season comes with its own set of challenges. With calving behind us and branding done, many are turning out onto range or other pasture. With our great precipitation the passed couple weeks, this means cattle are coming off hay and dormant forage after a long winter and grazing fresh growth. As exciting as this is, there are a few important factors to be aware of. One issue we see in cattle grazing lush grass is a condition known as grass tetany.

Grass tetany, known technically as hypomagnesemia, may also be called "wheat pasture poisoning" or "grass staggers". Grass tetany is a metabolic disorder caused by low blood magnesium (Mg) due to low levels in the diet and/or inadequate absorption. Magnesium is critical for nerve impulses and muscle control. That is why we see affected animals staggering, twitching, and collapsing. Tetany is caused by livestock grazing lush, vegetative grasses that haven't yet accumulated sufficient Mg or have high levels of potassium (K), which interferes with Mg absorption.

Grass tetany is often seen in cattle but can also affect horses and sheep. Older cows that are nursing calves are at the highest risk for grass tetany. They're most vulnerable two to three months post-calving when lactation peaks. Producing milk is extremely demanding of the cow as milk requires significant amounts of Mg and calcium (Ca). However, growing cattle can also suffer from grass tetany, as Mg is also critical for bone development. Cattle cannot store Mg long-term like other minerals, so they must consume it regularly.



Contd. From Previous Page

Several cool-season forages are more likely to cause grass tetany, especially in irrigated meadows. Small grains, such as wheat, oats, barley, rye, and triticale are frequent culprits. However, range grasses such as ryegrasses, bromes, and crested wheatgrass can also lead to grass tetany when K content is too high and/or Mg too low during periods of rapid growth. Although tetany is far more common in the spring and early summer, it can also be seen in the fall when cool season grasses are once again sending up fresh growth.

Prevention is the best treatment for grass tetany. Ideally, lactating cows should not be turned out onto vegetative pasture until grass is at least 4 to 6 inches tall, allowing Mg to accumulate. It is best to avoid grazing pastures that were previously overgrazed the year before, especially with mature cows. Fertilizing with ammonia at high rates has been linked with increased grass tetany, as this leads to rapid growth and ammonia can interfere with Mg absorption. Soil sampling helps determine the minimal required fertilizer without endangering cattle.

By far, the most important aspect of avoiding tetany is ensuring the animal receives enough Mg via feed or supplementation. Most ranches cannot afford to delay turn-out to wait for grass to mature, so supplements can be a great way to keep Mg levels sufficient. There are numerous options for supplementing Mg, including high-Mg lick tubs, mineral blocks, or other free-choice mineral mixes. Magnesium oxide can be bitter and unpalatable to cattle, so premixed supplements that include salt or molasses are a good option to ensure intake.



Contd. From Previous Page

Pregnant cows need roughly 0.12% Mg (dry matter basis) whereas lactating cows need 0.2% Mg. If a supplement contains 10-12% Mg, and the cow consumes the expected 2 to 4 oz of mineral supplement, this will provide roughly half of the average cow's daily needs. If possible, supplementation should start at least a month before being turned out onto grass. Including legumes such as alfalfa in the diet by inter-seeding or feeding hay can also help curtail grass tetany, as legumes typically have good Mg content.

When grass tetany does occur, the symptoms can appear rapidly. Often times cattle are simply found dead, possibly with evidence of struggle such as pawed up ground. It can be easy to mistake for nitrate poisoning or other causes. If you suspect a cow has tetany, it is possible to treat with an IV Mg-Ca dextrose solution. This must be done soon after symptoms arise, so it is best to have this on hand for quick use. If a cow does recover, she will be more likely to develop tetany again, so be sure to move her to better pasture if possible and provide Mg supplement.

Though tough to treat, grass tetany can be relatively straightforward to prevent in your herd by understanding the cause, knowing when and where cattle are most vulnerable, and taking the right steps before and during placement on fresh vegetative pasture. For those interested, be sure to check out UW Extension's "Grass Tetany: UW Taming Toxic Plants" on YouTube.



SCCD's Newest

Kamryn Kozisek, Natural Resource Technician Senior



I joined Sublette County Conservation District about halfway through May as the senior natural resource technician. I am originally from the Johnson County area, living in both Buffalo and Kaycee. I graduated from Chadron State College in May with a degree in Rangeland Management with emphasis in Wildlife and Livestock, I also minored in Journalism. During previous field seasons I have worked for the Hilo, Hawaii NRCS as a soil science intern and Grouse Mountain Environmental Consultants as a rangeland technician.

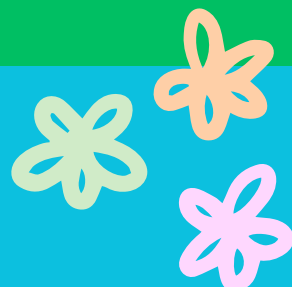
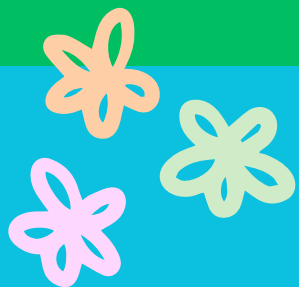


Contd. From Previous Page

I enjoy field work and love working in such a beautiful area. I also have a passion for education, I have worked a lot with kids in the past. I enjoy helping teach people about natural resources. During college I was an editor for the student newspaper, focusing on providing information on agriculture and range related topics.

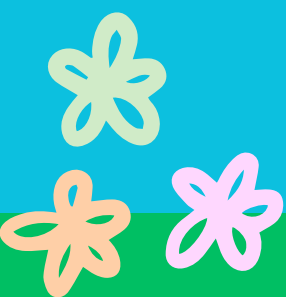
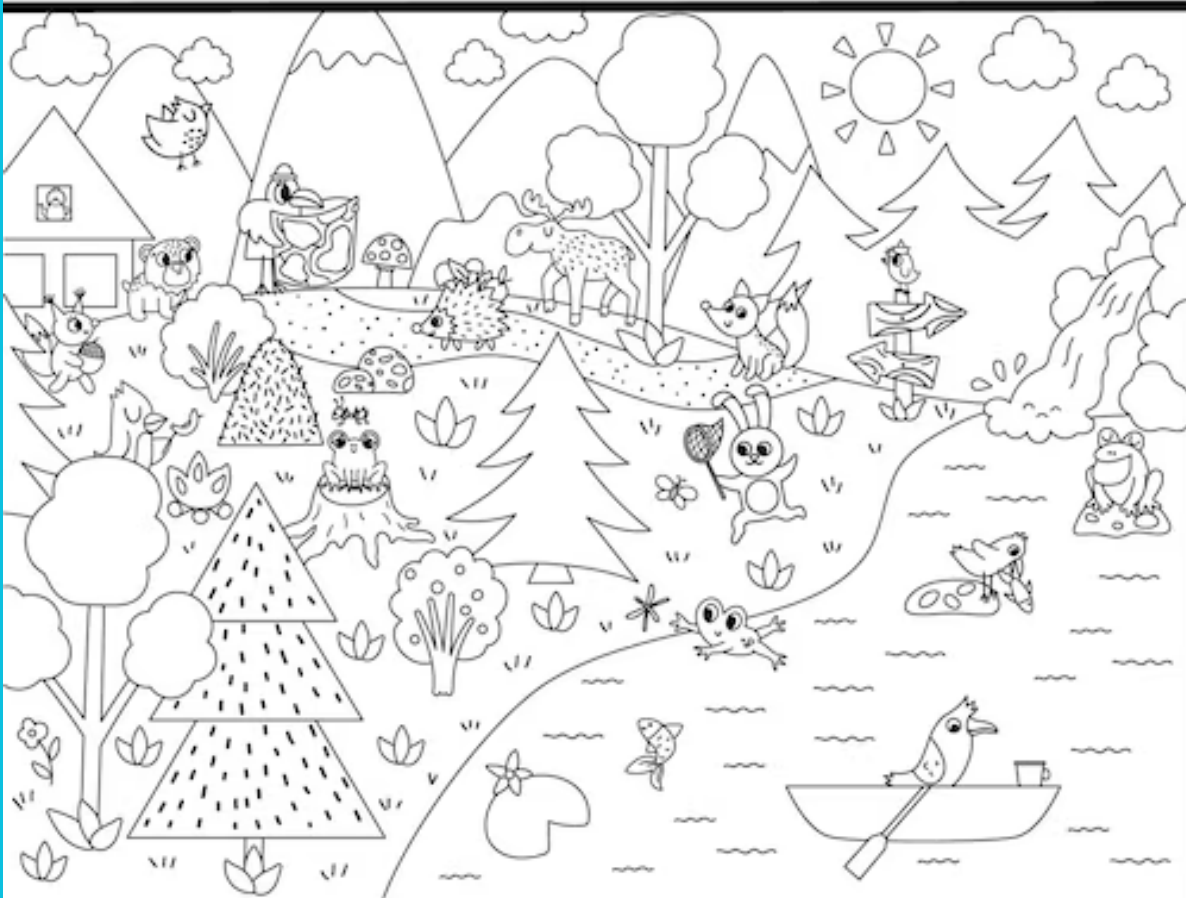
I grew up spending time camping, hunting, fishing and hiking with my family most summers. My dad is a hunting guide, which fostered my interest in wildlife and natural resources. I come from a large family, having eight younger siblings. My siblings have inspired my passion for education. In my free time I enjoy paddleboarding, hiking, reading and camping and photography.





Kid's Corner

PUZZLE TIME **CAMPING SEEK AND FIND**
find the objects in the picture



Who Are We?

Sublette County Conservation District Board of Supervisors

Coke Landers - Chairman
Darrell Walker - Vice Chairman
Dave Pape - Sec/Treasurer
Meghann Smith
Milford Lockwood



Sublette County Conservation District Staff

Michael Henn, District Manager
Traci Berg, Administrative Coordinator
Melanie Purcell, Wildlife & Habitat Program Manager
Shari Meeks, Range Program Manager
Adrienne Kirkwood, Water Resource Specialist
Justice Miller, Rangeland Specialist
Keller Hyde, Rangeland Technician
Kamryn Kozisek, Natural Resource Technician Senior
Zane Hayward, Natural Resource Technician

Partners: USDA/NRCS Staff

Karen Clause, Multi-County Range Management Specialist
Jason LeVan, Rangeland Management Specialist
Joey Galanti, Ecological Site Specialist
Dillon Gray, Autumn Boxum, Taylor Kepley, Jenna Platt-Soil Survey Team

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's Target Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. The USDA is an Equal Opportunity Provider, Employer and Lender.



217 Country Club Ln. / P.O. Box 647 Pinedale, WY 82941
Phone; 307-367-2364 Email: sccd@sublettecd.com Website: sublettecd.com
sccd@sublettecd.com www.sublettecd.com