



BUTTE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Board and Staff Recognized for Service at Annual Meeting

Walt Johnson – 30 years of service

Walt Johnson was recognized for thirty years of service as a board supervisor. Walt has represented the ranching interests in the District and has been an advocate for water conservation and range improvements. Walt also participated for many years as a presenter at the District's 6th grade natural resources tour.



Walt Johnson and Chairman Randy Purser

Mindy Hawley – 5 years of service

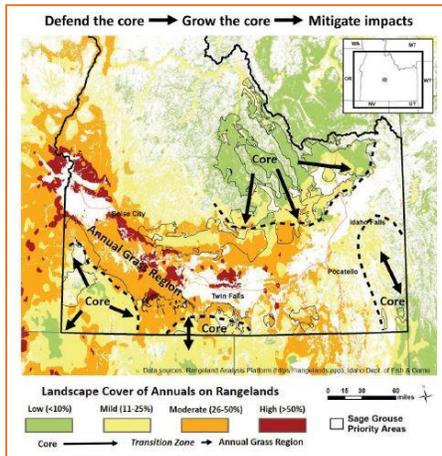


Mindy Hawley was recognized for five years of service as a District employee. Mindy is responsible for organizing the District youth outreach activities every year including the 6th grade natural resources tour, stewardship week, the annual poster and speech contests, and spends countless hours assisting the state Envirothon committee.

Mindy Hawley and Chairman Randy Purser

Invasive Weed Spotlight

The 2021 Butte SWCD's newsletters will focus on the invasive grass



Core areas of the Cheatgrass Challenge, credit USDA-NRCS

Cheatgrass, *Bromus tectorum*, and the efforts of the NRCS and other partner agencies to combat the species. The NRCS, along with partner agencies, started the Cheatgrass Challenge in response to the growing threat created by Cheatgrass and other invasive grasses. Cheatgrass reduces the productivity of grazing lands, destroys habitat for native species, and increases the frequency and intensity of wildfires.

The strategy of the Cheatgrass Challenge is to defend the core areas of native grasses, grow this core area, and mitigate impacts. More information on the Cheatgrass Challenge can be found online at www.id.nrcs.usda.gov.

District Welcomes New Board Member

Hayden Isham was elected last Fall to represent the Little Lost River Valley on the Butte SWCD board. Hayden was born and raised in Howe and is an active member in the family's alfalfa and timothy grass hay farm. Hayden



Hayden Isham

graduated from the police academy at Idaho State University and earned a certificate

in law enforcement. Hayden currently works part-time as a patrolman in Butte County. Hayden was appointed in early 2020 to fill the remaining term of Jeff Isham. Hayden stated, "I have big shoes to fill left by my Uncle Jeff who served on the board for many years. I'm excited to be a part of the board and have a lot to learn. I hope to help the farmers in the Little Lost River Valley learn about the different conservation programs available."

Chris Merrill, NRCS, Retires

Chris Merrill started his career with the NRCS in 1985 as a soil conservation technician and has worked as a civil engineering technician for the last 25 years. In his 35-year career, Chris served as the state safety officer for 12 years and was a part of the SNOTEL team for 30 years. When asked what he felt were his

biggest accomplishments during his time at the NRCS, Chris pointed to a project at the beginning of his career in the Little Lost River Valley where two



Chairman Randy Purser and Chris Merrill

miles of trenches were dug to facilitate sinking of the river to prevent flooding and icing in the town of Howe during the wintertime. Chris was also involved in a project on the Arco desert where 42 miles of livestock water pipeline and numerous watering troughs were installed. He is proud of how successful this project has been and how it has allowed more efficient use of the grazing available

on the desert. Chris plans to spend his retirement working a few days a week for the court system, taking long rides on his Harley, and golfing.

NRCS Staff Changes

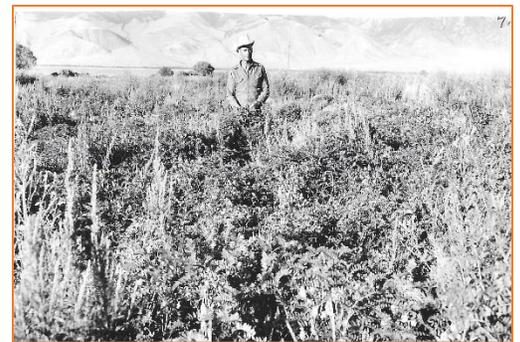
The past few months have seen some changes among the Arco NRCS staff. The NRCS has recently redrawn the coverage boundaries for each NRCS office. The Arco office will continue to serve Butte and Southern Custer Counties along with the majority of Blaine County. Jesse Fullmer who has been the District Conservationist in the Arco office was recently promoted to the Team Lead of the new area. Lara Fondow, who has been the soil conservationist in Arco for the past four years, was

“There can be no greater issue than that of conservation in this country.” Theodore Roosevelt

recently hired as the Resource Conservationist and will continue to work with landowners to implement conservation practices on their operations. While the positions and responsibilities of the NRCS staff have changed, we are excited to have the same friendly faces in the office.

Blast From the Past

A recent photo found in the SWCD’s files shows a 1954 field planting of milk vetch on the Otto Johnson Ranch. Otto is pictured standing in the lush growth.



1954 milk vetch planting



ButteSoilAndWaterConservationDistrict



Butte SWCD LOCAL WORK GROUP MEETING



Local Work Group Meetings are a valuable part of the NRCS planning process, providing an opportunity for local land managers to be part of a collaborative effort to improve natural resources within your county.

You are invited to:

- ✓ Review performance of the past year's projects.
- ✓ Help shape plans and priorities future projects.
- ✓ Connect with partners and new audiences to seek opportunities to leverage partnership funds.
- ✓ And learn about other NRCS programs which may prove beneficial to you.

WHERE: Butte County
Business Center, 159 N. Idaho St.,
Arco, ID 83213

*Zoom link provided upon request

DATE: April 14, 2021

TIME: 1:00P.M.

For more information contact:
butteswcd@outlook.com or call
208-527-8557



www.id.nrcs.usda.gov

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

The
Butte Soil and Water Conservation District

is hosting a

**OPEN TO
THE PUBLIC**

**Spring Cleaning
Recycling Event!**

ITEMS ACCEPTED:**



- Electronics
- Old Appliances*
- Batteries
- Furniture

*\$10 fee for each
refrigeration unit

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY

MAY 7TH AND 8TH

**SCIENCE CENTER
PARKING LOT, ARCO**

9:00AM – 8:00PM

****NOT accepting hazardous
wastes, household trash, or
tires. Come prepared to
load your heavy items onto
a trailer.**

For more information and a complete list of accepted items visit www.butteswcd.org or
e-mail butteswcd@outlook.com

Butte SWCD
P.O. Box 819
Arco, ID 83213

Butte SWCD Board of Directors

Randy Purser	Chairman
Mark Telford	Vice-Chairman
Todd Perkes	Treasurer
Walt Johnson	Member
Hayden Isham	Member

Butte SWCD Staff

Frances Perkes	Office Manager
Mindy Hawley	Outreach Coordinator
Stephanie Barnes	Admin. Assistant
Jennifer Weathered	Technician

NRCS Staff

Jesse Fullmer	Team Lead
Lara Fondow	Resource Conservationist
Berett Erb	Range Mgm't Specialist

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