



# BUTTE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## Commission Awards District \$300,000 for Conservation Project

An Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission committee recently selected a conservation project in the Butte SWCD for Water Quality Program for Agriculture (WQPA) funding. The 2022 legislative session put \$5 million towards re-funding the WQPA program and projects were selected throughout the state based on their water quality and quantity improvement merits. The District will act as the project sponsor and provide oversight as the project is being completed. The chosen project will



*Wheel lines will be converted to a pivot with LESA nozzles. Butte SWCD stock photo.*

increase irrigation water efficiency, reduce energy usage, and add wildlife habitat on a farm near Moore. The farm producer had previously worked with NRCS staff to create a conservation and engineering plan to help meet the goals of this farm prior to applying for WQPA funding. While not a necessary step, the

technical guidance from the NRCS helped form the producer's goals into a shovel-ready plan that fit WQPA objectives and their funding timeline. The project is expected to be completed in 2023. More information about WQPA can be found at <https://swc.idaho.gov/>.

## **Invasive Species Spotlight**

The multi-agency “Cheatgrass Challenge” adheres to the battle cry, “defend the core!”, but just what does that mean? As the battle against invasive grasses such as cheatgrass and medusahead continues, it is hoped that a new strategy to protect large expanses of native vegetation through preventative and proactive measures will turn the tide in the land manager’s favor. Actions that reduce intact ground from exposure and sensitivity to invasive weeds as well as increase the adaptive capacity of communities surrounding these core areas are being explored. In Idaho, Butte County is on the forefront of an identified core area. The NRCS office

offers technical and financial assistance to help landowners eradicate invasives and establish native vegetation. For more information, contact the NRCS office at 208-527-8557.

## **County Fair Fun**

The District was able to set up an educational display at the Custer and Butte County Fairs. The display board featured soil health and invasive weed information.



2022 County Fair Display

Handouts about NRCS and FSA programs were also available.

## **Natural Resource Camp Draws Area Youth**

This year the Butte Soil and Water

Conservation District sent eleven excited campers to Natural Resource Camp through their scholarship program: Jaida Rodriguez, Trista Hawley, from



Custer and Butte County Campers

Custer County and Daphne Bingham, Kaylee Stone, Journie Landon, Dean Rogers, Tier Gavin, Mason Reynolds, Taine Hollist, Garrett Waymire and Scarlett MacConnell from

Butte County. The camp was held at the central Idaho 4-H camp near Ketchum from June 20th to June 25th. Each camper got to spend a week near beautiful Sun Valley exploring and studying Idaho’s

natural resources. This is a hands-on camp so campers got to learn about wildlife, forestry, soil, range land, and water. They also got to enjoy outdoor activities such as hiking, fishing, volleyball, archery, survival, target shooting, and fireside sing-alongs.

### **Project Neighborly Grant**

The District was awarded a \$3,500 grant from the Idaho Community Foundation's Project Neighborly program.



The funding was utilized to purchase tables, equipment, signage, and advertisements for the Up-Winders Farmer's Market in Arco. The District

was pleased to offer support for local farmers to have the equipment necessary to sell their produce.



*Vendors at the Farmer's Market use canopies and tables provided by the Project Neighborly grant*

The equipment will also be used during the gardening support classes being held at Lost River Gardens every Thursday at 4pm. Everyone is welcome to attend these educational classes. The Up-Winders Farmer's Market will be held every Thursday from 5-7



*A class on fermenting foods draws public attendance*

p.m. at Lost River Gardens in Arco through the end of September. To learn more about Project Neighborly, visit [www.idahocf.org](http://www.idahocf.org).

**Thank you!**

We would like to thank the following businesses for supporting our conservation activities and projects!

- Pickles Place
- Walt Johnson Family
- Golden West Café
- Ivie's Foodliner
- Valley Insurance
- Lost River Electric
- Butte County
- Custer County

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