



BUTTE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Randy Purser 35 Years of Service

The Butte Soil and Water Conservation District held their annual meeting on December 14th. A service award was presented to Board Chairman Randy Purser for 35 years of service. Reflecting on his time on the board, Randy said, “This has been an active time for the board and the NRCS, we have been able to bring more funding into the District for conservation than at any other time.” Through partnerships with private landowners and the Natural Resources Conservation Service,



Board member Walt Johnson presents Chairman Randy Purser with a service award plaque for 35 years of service



The 1992 District board Reed Asay, Jack Jensen, Jeff Isham, Randy Purser and Walt Johnson

funding for 2021 was over \$4.2 million in Butte and southern Custer Counties, benefiting 33,878 acres. Lara Fondow, Resource Conservationist in the NRCS office, was also recognized for five years of service and presented with the Chairman’s Award

of Appreciation. Stephanie Barnes, District employee, stated that “Lara has been a vital part of the NRCS team and a great partner to work with to help meet the District’s goals of conservation. She goes above and beyond to assist our landowners and the District.”



Chairman Randy Purser presents NRCS employee Lara Fondow with a certificate of appreciation for five years of service

Weed Spotlight

When is a weed not a weed? This question was explored during a recent NRCS Plant Materials Center (PMC) presentation regarding the natural succession of rangelands for restoration.

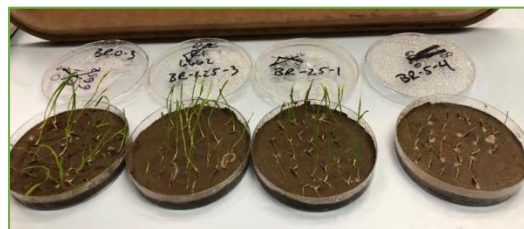


Curlycup Gumweed. Photo by Derek Tilley.

Derek Tilley, NRCS PMC Manager based in Aberdeen, stated that a plant can be labeled a weed based on its unwanted presence in a management system. Current research at the PMC is focusing on using native plants that are sometimes considered weeds to help restore rangelands from cheatgrass invasion using the natural succession of plants

in Idaho rangelands. Plants like curly cup gumweed, Verbena, sand dropseed, and prairie three-awn are being researched for their effectiveness in battling cheatgrass invasion. The PMC preliminary research has shown positive results for curly cup gumweed's ability to recolonize an area that has been treated for cheatgrass as well as its ability to lower cheatgrass seed germination rates.

More information about the NRCS PMC Idaho location can be found online at www.plantmaterials.nrcs.usda.gov.



Germination rates of cheatgrass grown in petri dishes with increasing concentrations of curlycup gumweed leachate. Photo by Derek Tilley.

NCDEA Scholarship Award

District Administrative Assistant Stephanie Barnes was awarded a scholarship by the National Conservation District Employees Association in 2021.



Stephanie Barnes holding the scholarship award

The scholarship paid for a staff development bookkeeping course. The scholarship is awarded to one District employee or child of an employee by the NCDEA each year. To learn more about the NCDEA, visit www.ncdea.us.

District Annual Plan of Work

The District reviewed and updated their annual plan of work to outline their goals for 2022. Goals include:

- 1) Increase water quantity and improve water quality
- 2) Improve soil health and reduce erosion through the adoption of BMPs on cropland, pasture, and rangeland
- 3) Improve animal waste management and promote riparian area protection
- 4) Conduct natural resources information/education activities
- 5) Effectively carry out District operations
- 6) Promote wildlife conservation
- 7) Improve natural resources conservation in urban settings

The full annual plan of work and the District's 5-year plan can be viewed on our website at www.butteswcd.org.

District Display Day

The District took part in the District Display Day at the Capitol in Boise in January. The



District's display board at Display Day in Boise. Photo by Sam Spaulding.

purpose of the event is to provide District employees and board members an opportunity to visit with elected officials about the activities conducted by conservation districts and to answer questions.

The Butte SWCD Board Meetings are held the third Thursday of the month. Visit www.butteswcd.org for the current agenda

Historical Document Database

The District is in the beginning phases of creating a historical document database that will be available to the public. Documents will include historical watershed studies conducted in the Big Lost River and Little Lost River watersheds. Contact the Butte SWCD for more information.

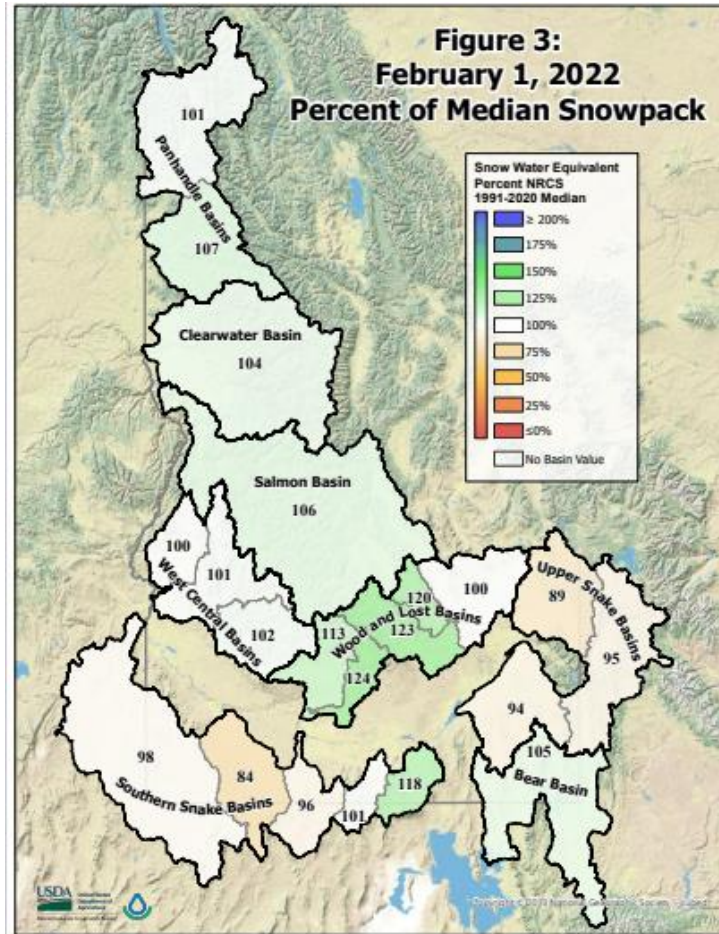
NRCS Office Remodel Completed

The office remodel in the USDA Service Center is now complete. The NRCS and the FSA are now co-located into one office space to provide better customer service to our residents. To locate the NRCS and FSA personnel,

please use the east door of the USDA Service Center building. With current COVID-19 restrictions, please call 208-527-8557 to make an appointment before coming to the office.

NRCS Snow Survey

The Natural Resources Conservation Service Snow Survey program is underway. The purpose of the snow survey is to measure snow fall in the mountains. This information can be used by irrigation districts and producers to estimate the amount of available water for the coming year. Snow and precipitation data can be accessed at www.nrcs.usda.gov.



February percent median snowpack made courtesy of NRCS.

No-till Drill Rental Available

The District has a 12' no-till drill for rent. The drill has the capacity for planting small grains, grass, and native flowers and forbs

\$12/acre

Please contract Randy Purser to schedule 208-589-3831

Beginning March 1st, the Butte SWCD will be moving office locations.

Our new physical address is:
260 W. Grand Ave, Arco

Our new phone number is: 208-423-8911

Our e-mail address is 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

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Stephanie Barnes Admin. Assistant
Samantha Spaulding NACD Technician

NRCS Staff

Jesse Fullmer Team Lead
Berett Erb Range Mgm't Specialist
Jennifer Weathered Soil Conservationist

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