



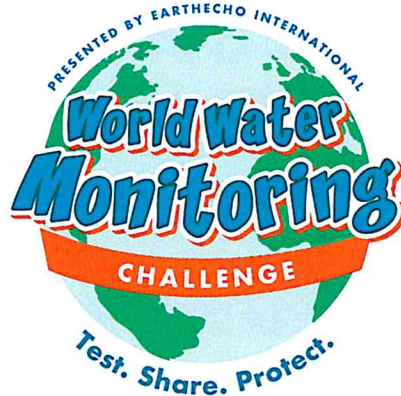
October 2015



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Conservation Winds



World Water Monitoring Challenge™

(WWMC) is an international education and outreach program that builds public awareness and involvement in protecting water resources around the world by engaging citizens to conduct basic monitoring of their local waterbodies.

The primary goal of World Water Monitoring Challenge is to educate and engage citizens in the protection of the world's water resources. Many people are unaware of the impact their behaviors have on water quality. Conducting simple monitoring tests teaches participants about some of the

most common indicators of water health and encourages further participation in more formal citizen monitoring efforts.

To accomplish this important task, the CCCD staff organized volunteers and activities to help test the water with 275, 7th grade students from Sage Valley Junior High on September 3 and 4. While comprehensive monitoring goes on all year, World Water Monitoring Challenge unites volunteers and water professionals to highlight the important role that monitoring plays in protecting water quality.

On September 1 and 2, Crystal with the CCCD provided the Enviroscape activity for the students to learn more about the watersheds in which they live, how watersheds work and how protecting their waters can have beneficial impacts downstream.

Other activities included studying macro invertebrates, weed identification, bird migration, predators and rabies education and a hands-on water erosion exhibit.

Having fun with the erosion trailer.

A total of 14 volunteers representing CC Weed and Pest, Powder River Energy, Predator Management Board, Wyoming Game and Fish, Waste Water Treatment Plant, CCCD and Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality were involved in the two day activity.



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CIVIL ENGINEER, P.E.

Tyrel West

ULTIMA ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT:

Amber Fowlkes

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

- ◆ October 7-9, 2015 NACD Regional Meeting in Utah
- ◆ October 12, 2015 Columbus Day Holiday-office closed
- ◆ October 13, 2015 CCCD Board Meeting
- ◆ October 28, 2015 Local Work Group Meeting - Buffalo
- ◆ November 3-5, 2015 WACD Convention in Laramie
- ◆ November 10, 2015 CCCD Board Meeting
- ◆ November 11, 2015 Veterans Day Holiday-office closed
- ◆ November 26-27, 2015 Thanksgiving Holiday-office closed

We're migrating. Migrate with us.

Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory has migrated to a new identity: **Bird Conservancy of the Rockies!** We have a new name, logo and slogan: *Connecting People, Birds and Land*. Our mission as an organization hasn't changed. We are still focused on conserving birds and their habitats through science education and stewardship.

Why did we adopt a new identity? Bird Conservancy of the Rockies to more accurately and completely reflects who we are and what we do as an organization. Since our beginning, we have had robust bird population monitoring, bird banding, and citizen science and education programs. But through 25-plus years of progress, we have greatly expanded to include cutting-edge research, private lands conservation, and international programs. We look forward to a bright future of continued partnerships and shared achievements with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Bureau of Land Management.

We are in the planning stages of providing an ESTATE PLANNING WORKSHOP. Watch for more information in the next newsletter!

Identifying Trees at Risk

By Kelly Norris, Wyoming State Forestry Division

Over the last few years Campbell County has experienced some severe storms that had lasting impacts to homeowner's trees and surrounding landscape. These storms came in the early fall or late spring and brought heavy, wet snow in high quantities. As a result, trees or parts of trees were damaged, leaving you to figure out if your tree could be at risk for a failure in the future.

Understanding What to Look For

It is important to understand what a risk for failure actually is in relation to trees. **Risk** is the likelihood of a conflict or tree failure occurring and affecting a target and the severity of the associated consequences – person injury, property damage, or disruption of activities. **Targets** are people, property, or activities that could be damaged, injured, or disrupted by a tree. A tree is considered *hazardous* when it has been assessed and found to likely fail and cause unacceptable injury, damage, or disruption – meaning it poses a high or extreme risk.

Assessing the Damage

Ask yourself these two questions after every severe storm:

Are major limbs still remaining and the trunk unbroken?

Are at least 50 percent of the tree's branches still intact?

If you answered yes, there is a good chance your tree will recover fully. It may have some character now, but it has a good chance of surviving the damage.

Next, evaluate your tree of concern for major defects and conditions that increase the potential for failure.

Dead parts

Broken and/or hanging branches

Cracks

Weakly attached branches and codominant stems

Missing or decayed wood

Unusual tree architecture: lean, balance, branch distribution, lack of taper in the trunk

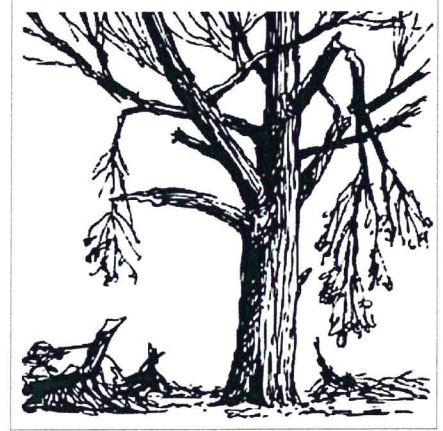
Loss of root support (any recent construction activities?)

Resist the urge to do it yourself and Hire an ISA Certified Arborist

You may be tempted to complete clean up pruning on your broken and hanging limbs, but work that requires a ladder or overhead chain saw work is a job for a professional arborist. A professional arborist has the experience and equipment needed to safely and efficiently remove or prune severely damaged trees. ISA stands for the International Society of Arboriculture and is the professional society that provides certification for arboriculture.

If you feel you have one or many of these defects or conditions listed above, it is recommended to contact a certified arborist to assess the extent of damage your tree has. Every tree is unique and should be assessed in person for its own needs. A certified arborist will be able to help you decide what action is appropriate to take for your tree to mitigate any hazards it may have.

For more information please contact Kelly Norris, Wyoming State Forestry Division at the following phone number: 307-684-2752 or via email at Kelly.Norris@wyo.gov



PUBLIC NOTICE
LONG RANGE PLAN 2016-2020
RELEASED FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

The Campbell County Conservation District (CCCD) will accept written comments on their Long Range Plan 2016-2020 beginning Thursday, September 24, 2015 and will continue through November 9, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. Copies of the document are available at the CCCD office located at 601 4J Court, Suite D, Gillette, WY as well as on their website (cccdwy.net). For more information, contact the CCCD at (307) 682-1824.

What the Campbell County Weed and Pest Control District can do for you!

By Aaron Ide, CCWP

After talking with many people from around the county, and many others that call or come into our office, we have come to a conclusion that most people do not understand what the Campbell County Weed and Pest (CCWP) can provide to citizens of the county. Hopefully this article will fill you in on what the CCWP can do for you, and some things that we cannot.

I am going to use the most common example that we get every year, especially this year. You want us to come spray a noxious weed species (i.e. Canada Thistle) on your or your neighbor's property. We run into a few issues with this. As a county department, we cannot compete with the private business sector (commercial applicators), so we are restricted to spraying these species on property and Right of Ways that the county owns. There are a few exceptions in special management programs (Leafy Spurge) or Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) concerns (Dalmatian Toadflax). If we would start treating every private landowner's noxious weed problems, which we do not have the time or manpower to do, we would be taking a large chunk of business from those local commercial applicators. The other issue is that people assume that we can trespass on your neighbor's property to spray their noxious species. This is not the case; we can be ticketed for trespassing just as easy as you could if you were to access a neighbor's property without permission. Now you're saying to yourself, well if you can't spray my or my neighbor's weeds what can you do for me?

We do offer a variety of services that can help you with your control of noxious species (weeds, insects, and rodents). Our knowledge and advice is our best service, so the first thing to do is call our office (682-4369) with any questions or concerns. When you call, explain the situation with as much information as possible, so we can put you on the proper track to controlling your problematic species. A prime example of this is our control options available for Canada Thistle. This prickly problem has had a banner year, with it popping up almost everywhere. Most of our calls are about this species in people's lawns; we have a great solution for this. If you bring in a compression sprayer (one to four gallons), we can put an herbicide called Transline (Stinger) in it for control in your yard, as long as you have no pod forming tree or shrub species (Locusts, Caraganas) near the infested area. If you have a larger infestation on your farm or ranch, we have other products that you can purchase at a cost shared price (80% off) for use in rangeland/pastures (Milestone) and some crops (Curtail). We also rent spraying equipment (ATV pull behind, truck bed, tractor/truck pull behind sprayers) for \$10 a day to help landowners control this species if the problem becomes larger than their equipment can handle. We prefer for landowners to use these sprayers in only in rangeland/pasture situation, because many of the herbicides used in them are not labeled for use in lawns or agricultural fields. If you have a problem that you think is too big for you to control. We can help you get into contact with a commercial applicators that can provide the type of service you are looking for (a complete list of local commercial application can be found on our website <http://www.ccgov.net/189/Weed-Pest> under the Commercial Applicators tab). Also, you can check the website under the programs tabs for any other current management programs that we are conducting to see if your property can benefit from being included in one of these programs. Now your saying, but I have treated my weeds, it is my neighbor that isn't taking care of theirs!

We have already established that we cannot trespass on someone else property to spray their weeds. Each situation differs, but for most cases we always try to tell them to talk to their neighbors, let them know they need to control their weeds. Some landowners do not know the benefits of noxious species control so stop by or give them a call and let them know the problem and tell them to contact us for control options. If it can be worked out this way it leads to much better relationship between neighboring landowners down the road. If you have tried to convince them to treat their invasive species to no avail, contact the Weed and Pest for assistance. If you let us know the situation, we can try to talk with the landowner, and give them some ideas for control. If they are still uncooperative, we will have you give a written statement, and we will proceed with action according to our state statute governing control of noxious species (11-5-109). We try not to use this step, because by the end of the process, the species usually has already finished it growth cycle, the landowner is mad at their neighbor, and the landowner is mad at us. This is why we extinguish all other options before moving on to this final step.

Campbell County Weed and Pest Control District is here to help every landowner with their noxious species control, whether you own a quarter acre or 25,000 acres. We always like to hear from citizens on their opinions on how we can make our operation as effective as possible and their ideas on other services that we could provide to help them on their war on invasive species. Hopefully, this article helps you better understand the products and services we provide. If you have any other questions or concerns, feel free to stop by our office or give us a call at (307) 682-4369.

Department of Environmental Quality Deserves Our Support
By Bobbie Frank, Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts, Executive Director

I don't know about you, but if I am out enjoying all our state has to offer in terms of recreation, including enjoying our waters, if I want to go for a swim I pick a waterbody in Wyoming, that well... has water. Actually I don't, because as those close to me know I am an aqua phobic but if I weren't I would want to take a swim where there is water!

I think we can all agree it would be nice if all of Wyoming's, drainages, draws, intermittent and ephemeral streams had water. Water in enough quantities to swim and kayak. These are the uses that are protected for in Wyoming designation of a water as a "primary" contact recreation water. If it can't support these, then they are protected as a secondary contact water.

What's the distinction? Well, the water quality criteria utilized to determine if there is a risk to human health is a "risk management" standard. If the water is a primary contact recreation water then the *E. Coli* standard is 126 colony forming units/100 ml and if it's secondary the standard is 630 colonies. Why the difference? Because the risk of immersion and ingesting quantities of water, increases when the activity involves immersion in the water. In a lot of Wyoming's waters, there is such minimal to low flow that the risk of ingesting just does not exist, unless you are drinking directly from the creek. Which most folks know is ill advised and this standard we are discussing, *E. Coli*, does not protect waters as "drinking water" sources.

Recently the Wyoming DEQ has been under fire in the press for their "Categorical Use Attainability Analysis" for recreation uses on Wyoming's waters. Unfairly so. The US Environmental Protection Agency has historically required that waters be protected for "fishable/swimmable" uses *unless* it is demonstrated that such uses cannot be supported or attained. The process for demonstrating what uses can or cannot be attained is called a "Use Attainability Analysis". DEQ has long recognized, as most reasonable folks do, that not all "waters" in Wyoming have water and are capable of supporting primary contact recreation activities that involve full body contact and immersion. In 2007 EPA disapproved DEQ's attempt to remedy the fact that all waters in Wyoming have water quality criteria applied as though they are all swimming holes, they began working on a very innovative, defensible and streamlined approach to determine which waters in Wyoming support primary contact recreation uses and those that support secondary uses, such as wading, fishing, etc.

In 2010, the Conservation Districts and DEQ discussed DEQ's proposal to use technology, Geographical Information Systems (GIS), combined with a set of criteria, including flow, distance to public recreation areas, schools, campgrounds etc., to determine which waters should be designated primary and which are secondary. This was combined with a very robust field verification process where DEQ personnel collected data on approximately 150 sites and the local conservation districts collected field data on 720 randomly selected sites, to compare to the model results. We had conservation districts out overnight in the back country to take data, in urban areas, and everywhere in between.

Most folks agree technology is a great tool, but may not always reflect the on-the-ground conditions and realities. Hence, the level of time and resources that went into collecting field verification data. The results, with some tweaking, and a few changes based on EPA input such as adding criteria such as flow, the model largely matched what was reality on the ground. DEQ also used an extra protective approach, despite flow levels, where water was located near a school, park, campground, major trails, etc. To ensure that where a water is likely to see a higher use due to vicinity of a recreational area, they would receive the higher level of protection.

After all of this work, DEQ went back out with a notice and invited anyone who had additional information to submit that for consideration last August. Based on that feedback, DEQ finalized the Categorical UAA, packaged it up and sent to EPA approval in December 2014.

EPA did not approve the submission. No doubt as a result of some letters they were receiving from some groups in Wyoming indicating they were left out of the process. EPA denied approval, despite the fact that they felt the approach was technically sound, based on a determination that DEQ was required to hold a “formal” public hearing with a transcriber. Although DEQ did not concur with this requirement, they have chosen to go forward with a hearing on September 16 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. in Casper.

In addition, to misplaced outcry about being left out of the public input process, there has been some attempt to turn this issue into a grazing issue. Frankly, it’s a disservice to all who are committed to water quality to turn this into an us versus them issue. We all can contribute to *E. Coli* loadings, whether it is from our recreation activities in the water, septic systems, livestock, waste treatment plants, and wildlife. Interestingly, the *E. Coli* criteria are an “indicator” that there may be pathogens that could cause illness, it is not a definitive. There is *E. Coli* in all warm blooded animals, only certain strains pose a risk to human health. Interestingly, according to researchers, in a paper published in July, U.S. Recreational Water Quality Criteria: A Vision for the Future, humans are more likely to get ill from human waste not animal waste. This is also discussed in EPA’s 2012 Recreational Water Quality criteria document. Further, the illness causing strain of *E. Coli* is not often found in grazing cattle according to the USDA NRCS technical note on Nutrient Management. Despite that we all have an obligation to do what is reasonable to protect our state’s water quality.

The Association would encourage folks that are informed and knowledgeable about the time and effort that has gone into this process and who agree that one Categorical Use Attainability Analysis and its public input process is much more efficient use of tax payers money, than potentially hundreds of individual UAA’s each with a separate public input processes, to show up and weigh in.

If there are instances where the public feels a waterbody was not designated correctly and there is a demonstration of primary or secondary use support, that can still be submitted in the form of a site specific UAA, even after the adoption of the Categorical UAA.

What we don’t want to see is this good, scientifically defensible approach abandoned. There are a significant number of drainages, dry draws; ephemeral and intermittent waters in Wyoming that have little no water in Wyoming. Today they have water quality criteria (standards) applied that treat it is as though it is capable of supporting swimming type activities. The Categorical UAA corrects that problem.

More detailed information on the Categorical UAA can be found on DEQ’s website at <http://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/WYDEQ/bulletins/1107acb>.

FROM THE NRCS....

NRCS is currently accepting applications for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to treat a variety of resource concerns on rangelands, croplands and forest lands. Funding will be set aside in 2016 to address the sage grouse initiative, forestry issues, water quality, soil health, streambank and riparian area habitat, invasive species removal and livestock protection/off stream structures. Applications for the Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) Program are also being accepted. These funds will be used to assist participants in planting windbreaks/shelterbelts and/or renovating existing windbreaks, installing seasonal high tunnels and removing Russian Olive/Salt Cedar. All signed applications on file as of September 18, 2015 will be considered for funding in FY2016. A second application sign-up date has been set for **February 19, 2016**. If funds are available, all applications on file by this date will be considered for funding during a second funding cycle. NRCS is also currently accepting applications for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). CSP is a voluntary conservation program that encourages producers to address resource concerns in a comprehensive manner by undertaking additional conservation activities and improving, maintaining, and managing existing conservation activities. If you are interested in one of these programs, please contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office at (307) 682-8843.

AUGUST -

- ✦ The Staff participated in the CCCD booth during Campbell County Fair July 30, 31 and August 1st and 2nd. Crystal and Blair also presented the erosion trailer activity throughout the 4 days of Fair.
- ✦ Debbie attended the Governor's Updated Energy Strategy Session on August 4.
- ✦ Blair and Debbie continue the water monitoring on Little Powder River and Donkey Creek/Stonepile Creek. Blair also is assisting Crook County Natural Resource District with monitoring the Belle Fourche River.
- ✦ Crystal and Jennifer attended the Black Hills Natural Resource Youth Camp meeting on August 5 in Wright.
- ✦ All staff were present for the Board meeting on August 11.
- ✦ Jennifer and Crystal traveled to the State Fair in Douglas to volunteer to assist with educational activities and the WACD booth.
- ✦ Jennifer attended the National Forest Advisory Board meeting in Rapid City on August 19.

SEPTEMBER -

- ✦ Crystal presented the Enviroscape activity to 350 7th grade students at Sage Valley Jr. High September 1 and 2.
- ✦ World Water Monitoring Challenge was held at Gillette Fishing Lake for 275 7th grade students from Sage Valley Jr. High on September 3 and 4.
- ✦ Blair and Debbie continue to water monitor on Little Powder River and Donkey Creek/Stonepile Creek.
- ✦ All staff attended the CCCD Board meeting on September 8.
- ✦ All staff attended the Area I Meeting at Big Horn with the Sheridan County Conservation District hosting on September 9.
- ✦ Topic for the Landowner Lunch and Learn workshop on September 15 was Solar Thermal Stock Tanks. Crystal and Blair participated with 4 attending.
- ✦ Jennifer attended the Campbell County Commissioner Budget Meeting on September 15.
- ✦ Blair and Jennifer attended the Powder/Tongue and Northeast River Basin Plan Update by the Wyoming Water Development Office in Newcastle on September 15.
- ✦ Bob Maul and Jennifer attended the NRCS State Technical Committee meeting and the WDEQ public hearing pertaining to the Categorical Use Attainability Analysis for Recreation in Casper on September 16.
- ✦ Jennifer attended the Hazardous Mitigation meeting on September 17.
- ✦ Blair attended the Cheatgrass Management and Rangeland Health meeting in Douglas on September 17.
- ✦ BJ Clark and Lindsay Wood attended the Campbell County Board training held on September 17.
- ✦ The topic for Landowner Lunch and Learn workshop on September 22 was Hazard Trees.
- ✦ Jennifer and Blair completed a water monitoring field audit on September 22.
- ✦ On September 23, Blair and Jennifer assisted Peabody Energy with the range monitoring of the Mackey Road Easement.
- ✦ Crystal provided the Enviroscape activity for Homeschool students on September 28.
- ✦ Water Conservation was the topic for the Landowner Lunch and Learn workshop on September 29.
- ✦ September 29, the staff and DEQ personnel visited the monitoring sites on Little Powder and met with the Board to review the status of the monitoring program.

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TICKETS AVAILABLE AT THE CCCD OFFICE!

Enter to Win!

Donate \$25 to WNRFF
for your chance to win!

1st Prize

2015 John Deere XUV 550 Gator

Special thanks to
Sundance
Equipment Company



2nd Prize

Homak Pro-Series Rolling Tool Cabinet

Special thanks to
Shively Hardware



Your \$25 tax-deductible donation to the WNRFF enters you in a drawing to win a 2015 John Deere XUV 550 Gator, or Homak Pro-Series Rolling Tool Cabinet. The drawing will be held on November 4, in Laramie at the WACD/WNRFF state convention.

Only 650 tickets will be distributed

The Wyoming Natural Resource Foundation (WNRFF) is a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to conserving Wyoming's natural resources, heritage and culture. The WNRFF is a sister organization to the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts.

The WNRFF is working with conservation districts to

- Protect Wyoming's natural resource and agricultural tax base
- Protect and promote wise and multiple use of Wyoming's natural resources
- Promote and enhance water quality and quantity, wildlife habitat, conservation forestry and education
- Support locally led water quality and watershed planning efforts
- Enhance the capacity of local districts to better serve their constituents
- Provide a scholarship to a Wyoming student through the Gary Beach Memorial Scholarship
- Administer the Olin Sims Endowment Fund
- Provide youth and adult natural resource education,

and more...



Wyoming Natural Resource Foundation

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Donations can be made online on our website: wynaturalresourcefoundation.com