

# White River & Douglas Creek Conservation Districts Natural Resources Conservation Service & Farm Service Agency

April 2011

**Special points of interest:**

- Wild Horse Range Coalition website: [www.wildhorserange.org](http://www.wildhorserange.org)
- Fish orders are coming up
- Noxious weed cost share program
- Rangeland monitoring workshop
- District Equipment

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## Wild Horse and Range Summary

**Summit of the Horse:**

During the first week of January, Callie Hendrickson, Gary Moyer and Wade Cox attended the Summit of the Horse; “A gathering of men and women who make their living with horses, and those who care deeply about ecological balance on healthy lands.” Approximately 150 people from across the United States, Canada, and Mexico attended The Summit to discuss solutions for wild/feral horse overpopulations and the lack of horse processing facilities. The Districts displayed our booth/exhibit helping attendees understand what we do and our concerns regarding the horse overpopulations. Douglas Creek District Board Member, Wade Cox, presented a rancher’s view in the “Unintended Consequences on State, Tribal, and Private Lands” panel presentation. White River District Board Member, Gary Moyer, presented the National Association of Conservation Districts’ (NACD) perspective on the importance of managing the horse numbers to prevent range degradation.

**Website:** The Districts

have developed a web site for the Wild Horse Range Coalition to provide interesting and accurate information about wild/feral horses. One of our goals for the site is to gather groups and individuals interested in requiring BLM to manage horses and the rangeland by reducing horse numbers and keeping them within the Appropriate Management Level (AML). AML is determined by BLM staff to be carrying capacity of the land for horses in order to achieve and maintain a thriving natural ecological balance on the public lands. Please visit the site at [www.wildhorserange.org](http://www.wildhorserange.org) and let us know what additional information you would like to see on the site.

**Wild Horse Proposed Strategy:** BLM released their 32 page Proposed Strategy for Future Management of America’s Wild Horses and Burros on February 28, 2011. The District drafted comments on the Strategy and encouraged all partners and interested individuals to provide BLM comments as it is critical that BLM hears from the people living in the areas directly affected by the

overpopulation of horses. This was distributed to the Districts’ email distribution list and via the website.

**Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board:** Board member, Gary Moyer, and Executive Director, Callie Hendrickson, traveled to Phoenix, AZ to provide oral comments to this Board who advises BLM on the horse and burro program. There were approximately 45 people who made comments. There were six speaking in support of BLM gathering the horses and keeping numbers within AML. The rest were there to express their emotional plea for BLM to stop killing the horses and to allow them to roam on the free open range. One of the activists’ primary goals is to remove the cattle from the range and allow the horses to utilize it. To say this is an emotional issue is an understatement! While there, we had the opportunity to provide interviews for two Wild Horse and Burro “documentaries” and one with a Phoenix TV reporter. We were pleased to have the opportunity to share the “other” side of the story.



**DCP** – The deadline to enroll in the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program is June 1, 2011. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. If your farm has a recorded cropping history with the Farm Service Agency, please contact the county office for more information on this program.

**Acreage Reporting** – The crop acreage reporting deadline is July 15, 2011. Timely and accurate acreage reporting is critical to receiving program benefits. Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) participants must report their acreage 15 days prior to the onset of harvest or grazing.

**NAP** – Participants in the Non

-Insured Assistance Program (NAP), who suffers a disaster related loss on any of their crops, need to notify the County Office within 15 days of the loss becoming apparent to maintain payment eligibility. If you decide to graze a field that you intended to hay when you reported your acreage, please notify the county office immediately so that an appraisal can be completed. An accurate appraisal cannot be completed once the livestock have been turned in unless grazing exclusions have been set up according to FSA regulations. The deadline for timely filing 2010 production report is July 15, 2011.

**Disaster Programs** – If, due to a weather event, you have a loss on any of your crops, livestock death losses, or have to feed in excess of normal, please notify the county office within 30 days of the weather event. You may qualify for one of several disaster programs that are available.



**Annual Banquets** were held by both White River and Douglas Creek Conservation Districts. White River held their banquet in January and Douglas Creek held their banquet in April. Meeker native Kelly Moyer gave a fabulous presentation on her recent travels abroad with the IFYE program for White River's banquet. Douglas Creek had a presentation by former Botany professor and CSCB board member Jack Burk. Both banquets were educational and entertaining. The Boards would like to say THANKS to all the attendees! The picture above shows White River's President JD Amick with the 6th Grade poster contest winners: Kasey Rosendahl, Madeline Amack, Kendra Nelson and Maggie Phelan.

## Rangeland Monitoring Workshop June 1st

The White River and Douglas Creek Conservation Districts will be offering a Rangeland Monitoring Workshop to be held on Wednesday, June 1st. This program is based off of a joint effort to standardize Rangeland Monitoring Protocols across this state. The groups involved include: Colorado Association of Conservation Districts, Colorado Cattlemen's Association, US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Colorado State University Extension, Colorado Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative, Colorado Public Lands Council, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and State Board of Land Commissioners.

The instructor for the program will be Robbie LeValley from CSU Extension, who is well known for her straight forward, scientific approach to range management. This will be a fantastic opportunity for all landowners with grazing land both public and private to learn monitoring protocols accepted by federal agencies, how to determine forage utilization, and adjust their grazing management program to sustain working ranch lands.

### PAM

Once again the district is selling PAM! We have it in stock at the office and are selling it for \$5/lb.

PAM is a horticultural water absorbent polymer that: increases water holding capacity of the soil; reduces irrigation requirements; reduces leaching of water and nutrients; increases shelf life of plants and promotes growth of plants.



**Time to order Fish!** The District has chosen E&J Fish Farm from Berthoud, CO as the supplier for this year's fish. We are in the process of getting the availability, prices, delivery dates and order forms together. Call the office at 970.878.5628 or email [Stacey.Gould@co.nacdn.net](mailto:Stacey.Gould@co.nacdn.net) for more information.

# GRASSLAND RESERVE PROGRAM

## A Conservation Easement Program offered by USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

GRP is a voluntary program offering landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance grasslands on their property.

The GRP program was reauthorized by the 2008 Farm Bill and emphasizes support for working grazing operations, enhancement of plant and animal biodiversity, and protection of grasslands under threat of conversion to cropping, urban development, and other activities.

The program has three enrollment options: (1) permanent easements and (2) rental contracts. Rental contracts can be for 10-year, 15-year, or 20-year terms. There are two types of easement enrollments: (1) direct landowner applications—NRCS holds

the easement; and (2) applications from eligible entities (e.g., land trust), where the entity will hold the easement. Enrollment of eligible expiring CRP lands into GRP will be limited to perpetual easements or 20-year rental contracts.

For permanent easements the land must be free and clear of all liens once closing has occurred. A payment cap on permanent easements of \$500,000 dollars exits unless the land has a known Sage Grouse population, in which case the State Conservationist will waive the payment cap.



The application process, like most easements, takes a significant amount of time until the easement is actually closed on. However, the majority of the work is handled by the NRCS Field Office and State Office. The costs of the surveys, appraisals, and all closing costs are incurred by USDA and no out of pocket expenses are required by the landowner.

Applications are accepted year round, and while the cutoff date for 2011 is April 8<sup>th</sup>, signing up during the spring and summer months allows us to develop a strong application package for the 2012 round of funding.

Please contact the NRCS office at 970-878-5628 or stop by with any questions.

## RBC Noxious Weed Cost Share Program

Rio Blanco County is once again able to offer a cost share for herbicides for the control of noxious weeds. In 2010 all available funds were utilized. In order to maximize noxious weed control efforts programs for 2011, the Weed Board has implemented the following program. For private landowners preparing a management plan a 50% herbicide program is available up to a maximum cost share level of \$500. For individuals purchasing herbicides without a management plan a 25% cost share rate of \$250 maximum is available. Areas considered to be turf, ornamental gardens, or residential will not be cost shared. Cost-share materials must be applied to lands that are located in Rio Blanco County and are considered to be range, pasture, or agricultural lands. 2,4-D Amine and Low Vol formulations, non selective herbicides (glyphosate) and adjuvant are excluded from the cost share program, but are available for purchase at low cost.

We would be happy to assist in the development or review your Weed Management Plan to develop the best possible control measure to avoid, ineffective materials, incorrect rates, less than optimum treatment timing and off label applications. Assistance in developing management plans can be obtained from the County Weed Department 970-878-9670 or CSU Extension 970-878-9490. Recommendations may be found in CSU Weed Fact Sheets, effective product labels or from qualified individuals.

### Management Plans Check List:

1) Consider the following for effective product selection and plans:

target weed(s),  
non-target vegetation or crop,  
desired herbicide(s),  
correct rate per acre  
treatment timing.

2) Sketch a map of the weed project. Note: does not need to be to scale or fancy, simple is usually best. Information such as: crop or adjacent crops, named roads, property lines, streams and ditches are helpful. Map must include weed species and location.

Turn in your Noxious Weed Management Plan to the Weed or Extension office for review or bring it with you when you receive your herbicide order.



