

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

June 2011

## Special points of interest:

- FSA Update  
[www.wildhorserange.org](http://www.wildhorserange.org)
- CACD Meeting
- Range and Wild Horse
- District Equipment
- NRCS Sign up

## Contact Information:

Phone: 970.878.5628  
ext 3

Fax: 970.878.3730

Email:

Stacey.Gould-  
@co.nacdnet.net

Calliegj@gmail.com

## Inside this issue:

CACD Meeting	1
FSA News	2
NCWP	2
Sage Grouse	2
Range and Wild horse	3
Upcoming Events	4
NEW District Equipment	4

## CACD Annual Meeting

The Colorado Association of Conservation Districts (CACD) held their Annual Meeting Nov 14-17 at the Embassy Suites in Loveland, Colorado. Districts supervisors and staff attended the event, as well as over 200 people from other districts around the state. White River Conservation District's Vice President, Gary Moyer, was presented with two awards: Supervisor of the Year and Commission's Award for Conservation Excellence. Also, Gary Moyer and Stacey Gould were recognized as completing their 18 month Leadership Program. Douglas Creek and White River both took Resolutions to the meeting. Additionally, both districts were chosen to give a 10 minute presentation on the District and describe their journey to "Success" and how they have gotten the Districts to where they are today. In total, 4 board members and 3 staff attended this event and came away with ideas and excitement to bring back to the landowners.



**ABOVE:** Douglas Creek President Scott Robertson, White River Vice President (and newly elected CACD President) Gary Moyer and District Executive Director Callie Hendrickson present their "Success" during the CACD Annual Meeting.



**County Committee Election** – The ballots for the 2011 FSA County Committee election were mailed November 4<sup>th</sup> and must be returned to the office by December 5, 2011. This is a very important position for our county; so please vote!

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

**Disaster Programs**– If you have a loss from a natural disaster, there are several programs that may be able to help. The NAP (Non-Insured Assistance Program) is an insurance program that can pay for losses in excess of 50% of your normal yields.. You must file a notice of loss within 15 days of when the loss occurs or becomes apparent. The ECP (Emergency Conservation Program) provides emergency funding and technical assistance to rehabilitate farm or ranch land affected by natural disasters through cost-share. The LFP (Livestock Forage Program) and ELAP (Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program) can provide funding if your haystacks are destroyed, you cannot graze an area, or if you have to purchase additional feed or pasture. The LIP (Livestock Indemnity Program) can provide funding if you have animals die due to a natural disaster. You must notify the office within 30 days of when the loss occurs or is apparent for the ELAP, LFP, and LIP programs. To qualify for the SURE, LFP, or ELAP programs, you must have NAP or FCIA Insurance coverage on all of the crops on your farm.

**NAP Signup** – Signup for 2012 NAP (Non-Insured Assistance Program) coverage is underway. This program can pay for losses in excess of 50% of your normal yield for losses caused by natural disasters. The hay and grazing crop signup ends December 1, 2011. The service fee for this program is \$250 per crop not to exceed \$750 per county or a total of \$1875 in multiple counties.

**SURE Signup** – Signup for the 2010 SURE (Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program) begins November 14, 2011 and ends June 1, 2012. If you had more than a 50% loss of normal production due to a natural disaster, come into the office and enroll in this program.

**ECP Signup** – Signup for the 2011 ECP (Emergency Conservation Program) will be November 1, 2011 through December 30, 2011. The ECP program may provide cost-share assistance to producers to rebuild conservation structures, including ditches, headgates, and fence, which were damaged by the flooding in the spring of 2011. The funding for this program is not guaranteed. Please note that any work that you do to rebuild may or may not be cost-shared and you are completing it at your own risk.

## Northwest Colorado Watershed Partnership

In January 2010, a coalition of private and public entities came together to form the Northwest Colorado Watershed Partnership. The Partnership formed because land managers working in the Yampa, Green, White and Little Snake river systems recognized the colonization of invasive species and the need to address riparian restoration with a collaborative watershed wide approach. While the ecological goals of the Partnership are to improve riverside habitat, an equally important goal is to further engage the community and create a local restoration economy by focusing on creation of local jobs and community involvement. The shared management goals agreed on by the partners are documented in the Northwest Colorado Watershed Partnership Action Plan along with tools to reach the goals such as information on riparian restoration techniques and best management practices.

Currently the Partnership is working on eight demonstration projects: one on public and private land on each river system. These projects will exhibit the restoration process starting with the control of invasive such as tamarisk, Russian olive, Russian knapweed and kochia; revegetation with native plant species; and monitoring success. Each demonstration project is designed so the Partnership can learn what works in Northwest Colorado and make restoration efforts throughout the watershed more effective. The Partnership realizes that in order to achieve its goals, they have to work on a watershed level incorporating many individual projects into a comprehensive restoration strategy for the Northwest Colorado watershed. The Partnership is excited to engage the local communities to reach that goal. If you are interested in pursuing restoration work please let us know by contacting the District Office.

## Sage Grouse Initiative: Partnering Across the West

NRCS structured Sage Grouse Initiative (SGI) to be a collaborative effort with its conservation partners across the West. Funding enhances the opportunity for USDA to strengthen its conservation commitment with state agencies responsible for managing sage-grouse populations. SGI facilitates landscape level improvements across the species' range while recognizing that threats and opportunities differ among states and within core areas. Close collaboration with many stakeholders, including State, local and Federal agencies, tribes, and NGOs, ensure that NRCS activities complement efforts already underway. SGI fosters coordination and implementation on a range-wide scale while ensuring local input and control over actions in specific States. USDA also works with Department of Interior (DOI) - US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to provide certainty to landowners who enroll in NRCS programs to benefit sage-grouse.

# Rangeland Health and Wild Horse News

**Piceance/East Douglas HMA:** I'll start off with the great news that BLM was successful in gathering 276 horses from within and around the Piceance/East Douglas HMA in September! Fifteen were released back to the HMA. BLM didn't receive a suit to stop the gather and to my knowledge, they didn't even have any threats. I observed day one of the gather and saw a very professional team handling the horses. It was a great pleasure to watch the Cattoor helicopter pilots gather the first 100 head of horses. I just wanted to meet them and shake their hands! We don't see many people who know how to handle livestock that well these days. We hear how far and fast they run the horses but to the contrary, those pilots brought the horses in at a trot and much of the time at a walk. Of course they had to put the pressure on them as they got close to the corral but even then it was just enough to keep their mind focused in the direction of the corral. We want to thank all the BLM employees who worked so hard to ensure this gather was a success. The Districts want to thank Mantle Ranch for a financial contribution to the Districts' efforts in insuring the excess horses are gathered. We also want to thank Williams Energy for volunteering the water truck and labor for dust abatement on the road to the holding site. We thank all of you who provided comments on the gather EA last summer when BLM was soliciting input. The Districts did provide comments and were excited to have a national horse organization provide BLM a letter in support of our comments.

**West Douglas Area:** The good news for this area is that the Districts and eight other parties have finally received Intervenor status in this case. The Plaintiffs filed an extension so if all goes well; the Judge should have a ruling by late spring. We are currently preparing our opposition to the Plaintiffs' motion and believe the BLM will prevail in this case so they can remove the horses as determined in the 2005 Resource Management Plan (RMP) amendment. We have been very fortunate to have several contributions to the Districts in support to our efforts on this issue. We would welcome any additional contributions.

**Wild Horse and Burro Program Input:** The Districts have provided comments to the Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board again this fall encouraging their recommendations to BLM are to remove all the excess horses in an effort to improve and/or maintain a thriving natural ecological balance (TNEB) on the range. We have also asked they seek effective population control including sterilization so they do not have to continue the expensive gathers and holding of the excess horses. BLM has contracted with the National Academy of Science (NAS) to conduct an independent, technical evaluation of the science, methodology, and technical decision-making approaches of the WH&B Program. Their first meeting was open for public comment. The Districts provided comments to this committee encouraging them to focus on rangeland health, population control, and options to reduce the holding of over 40,000 horses at an annual cost of \$37 Million to the taxpayers.

**Troubling news:** BLM contracts with short and long term holding facilities to care for the excess horses until the day they die (up to 30+ years of age). We have been told by BLM that they will be at maximum holding capacity by this December and therefore no room for additional horses that are to be gathered off the range. This causes us great concern that BLM management will use this as an excuse to not gather the excess horses. Yes, the PEDHMA is now within Appropriate Management Level (AML) with only the horses outside the HMA to be gathered but our goal is that they remove the horses from the West Douglas area within the next year. If they have no place to go with them, chances are they will leave them on the range. For these reasons and the absurd expense of keeping these horses on welfare for life (\$37 Million per year), we are taking an active role in the discussions on what BLM should be consider doing with the horses that have been removed from the range. Even though Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act states, "The Secretary shall cause additional excess wild free-roaming horses and burros for which an adoption demand by qualified individuals does not exist to be destroyed in the most humane and cost efficient manner possible" and "excess animals that are more than 10 years old or has been offered unsuccessfully for adoption at least three times shall be made available for sale without limitation..." the BLM continues to state that both of these options are "off the table". The Interior Appropriations bill does state, "Appropriations herein made shall not be available for the destruction of healthy, unadopted, wild horses and burros in the care of the Bureau of Land Management or its contractors or for the sale of wild horses and burros that results in their destruction for processing into commercial products". However, this is an annual bill and this rider has the opportunity to be stricken. The real troubling news is BLM management specifically telling the Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board (WHBAB) and the National Academy of Science (NAS) members these topics are "off the table". Last I checked the WHBAB is an Advisory Board and it is not appropriate for a BLM employee to tell them what they can or can't "advise". When the BLM tells the NAS committee euthanizing can't be considered under Project Scope Question #6, "Population control: What scientific factors should be considered when making population control decisions (roundups, fertility control, sterilization of either males or females, sex ratio adjustments to favor males and other population control measures) relative to the effectiveness of control approach, herd health, genetic diversity, social behavior, and animal well-being?", they are limiting the information available to Congress in the final report from NAS. We believe that the NAS Committee should definitely look at euthanizing and all other forms of "lethal control" including the simple sale of the animals as stated in the WHB Act. I encourage each of you to become involved in this issue. Without your voice, BLM will continue to hear only from the horse advocates who are relentless and verbally abusive to BLM. But with your voice joining in with your Districts' voice we will help BLM understand they are to manage for the natural resources health and for multiple uses. Please contact to District office for addresses and phone numbers of those you can contact so you can help make a difference.

