

September 2012

# Powder River News

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Anita Bartlett

Range & Wildlife Specialist– Reese  
Irvine

## ***NRCS STAFF***

District Conservationist-  
Allison McKenzie

Rangeland Management  
Specialist-Kassie Bales

## **What's Happening in Your Back Yard**

On October 10, 2012 the Powder River Conservation District in conjunction with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will be hosting a day in the field including an educational tour that will look at split estate reclamation opportunities.

Below is the tour agenda with site locations:

- 8:00 am ~ Coffee and Rolls and the PRCO office
- 8:30 am ~ Leave District Office
- 9:30 am ~ Meadow Creek Oil Field
  - Site 1
  - Site 2
- 11:00 am ~ Big Bend Coal Bed Methane Project
- 11:30 am ~ Mojave Fee Horizontal Deep Oil Well
- 12:00 pm ~ Lunch (provided) at Meike Ranch
  - Meike Ranch History-presented by Don Meike
  - Water Quality Update-presented by Anita Bartlett & WWC Engineering
- 1:30 pm ~ Return to Kaycee

Please RSVP to the Powder River Conservation District (307-738-2321) by Friday, October 5, 2012 so that we can coordinate lunch and transportation.

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## PREPARING FOR WINTER

As days grow shorter and nights cooler, it becomes clear-winter is almost here. Are your perennial plants ready? If not, here are a few helpful tips to get you ready.



**Roses:** Prune canes back to 10-12 inches and mulch the plants. Hardy shrub-type roses do not need fall pruning.

**Bulbs:** Gladiolus, dahlias, some lilies and other tender bulbs won't survive winter. Dig them up and store them in a cool dry place. Tulips, narcissus, and other hardy bulbs can be planted until you can't get through the soil to get them in the ground. In fact, it's actually better to plant them later, rather than earlier, as they can sometimes break dormancy if the wrong weather patterns occur.

**Autumn Lawn Care:** Tree leaves are a major hindrance to proper grass growth, if they get too thick on your lawn, they can actually kill even a healthy turf by not allowing the grasses to store enough energy for winter survival and proper dormancy. You should also trim any grass that does not normally get cut. Especially around tree trunks, shrubs, and perennials. Longer grass provides shelter for mice, which will make wintertime meals of the bark on such plants.

**Trees:** If you have young trees, protect the trunks from rodent and rabbit damage with hardware cloth. Tree wraps can also be used to protect the trunks of young and smooth-barked trees from winter sun injury, but the tree wraps need to be taken off in the spring. Winter sun injury happens when the sun warms and thaws the bark on the southwest side of the trunk. Cold night temperatures then freeze and kill the cells on that side of the tree. To protect the roots of recently planted trees, spread mulch two to four inches deep around the base as the soil freezes.

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## PRCD Offering Cost Share Programs

The PRCD is offering two Cost Share Programs: the first is for large rural projects that make a positive difference on the land. This is a cost share program where the PRCD matches 50% up to \$5000, on a reimbursement basis. Projects will be reviewed by staff, then must be approved by the PRCD board before they are initiated. Some examples of projects that qualify under this program are: Solar pumping units, fencing for implementing rotational grazing systems on pastures, or fencing riparian areas to reduce impacts of livestock grazing.

The second cost share program provides incentive for residents and businesses to conserve soil, water and energy. The program also encourages beautification of the landscape. This program matches 50% up to \$1000, on a reimbursement basis. Some examples of projects that qualify under this program are: planting trees and shrubs, xeriscaping to replace traditional lawns, and installation of efficient drip systems for trees and shrubs.

For more information on these cost share programs or for an application please contact the PRCD office at (307) 738-2321 or stop by the office at 350 Nolan Avenue, Kaycee, WY.

## PRCD FY 2011-2012 Accomplishments

### Administration

- Attended Area I meeting and the WACD State Convention
- Acted as a cooperating agent to Buffalo BLM Field Office Resource Management Plan revision meetings.
- Attended the WCDEA Winter Training, Water Module II Training, Living Snow Fence Training and the Public Records & Open Meetings Act Webinar Training
- Participated in the Local Working Group

Public Outreach- Publish articles in local newspaper & published 4 district newsletters, continued to maintain & update the district website

### Education

- Adult Education
  - CoCoRaHS/ Severe Weather Training
  - City Council & County Commissioners Presentation
- Youth Education
  - World Water Monitoring Day
  - Adopt A Tree Program with the Kaycee Elementary School
  - The Miraculous Seed
  - Transplanting
  - What Is a Mineral?
  - Wet & Wild H2O
  - Animal Adaptations
  - Johnson County 3-4<sup>th</sup> grade Rendezvous
  - Johnson County 4-H Livestock Clinic & Judging Contest
  - Colonial Day
  - Rainfall Simulator



### Special Projects

- Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day w/ Lake DeSmet C.D.
- Free Well Water Testing Day
- Arbor Day Celebration
- Town Park Beautification Project
- Emergency Watershed Protection Project-Red Fork Diversion
- Cost Share Programs-10 cost share projects were completed this year; they ranged from xeriscaping, to stock water pipelines, to solar pumps and panels.
- Tree Plantings at Kaycee Schools and the Town Park
- SGI Fence Markers
- Middle Fork Stream Assessment
- Dull Knife Reservoir Emergency Action Plan

### Water Quality

- Continued Water Monitoring efforts for selenium on 3 impaired streams.
- Submitted to Wyoming DEQ and EPA a Use Attainability Analysis to address Site Specific Criteria for the Selenium standard on Murphy Creek.
- Began water monitoring on the Powder River for and impairment of the arsenic standard.

### Rangeland Management

- Worked cooperatively with the Kaycee Stock Trail Users to complete a spring restoration at the base of the Big Horn Mountains to improve the reliability of the water source for stock trail users.
- Hired a Range and Wildlife Specialist in partnership with the Lake DeSmet CD, NRCS, and Intermountain West Joint Ventures.

# PLANT FACTS

**Common Name:** *Ponderosa Pine*

**Species:** *Pinus ponderosa* Laws.

**Life Span:** Perennial

**Origin:** Native

**Season:** Evergreen

**Growth Form:** A tree (to 60 m tall); crown open, pyramidal when immature and becoming rounded; mature trees generally are without branches on the lower trunk; flowers April to June, reproduces from seeds.



**Vegetative Characteristics:**

**Leaves:** Needle-like in fascicles (a small bundle or cluster) arranged in spirals; 3 needles per fascicles. Fascicles are clustered or whorled near the tips of the branches; yellowish-green to dark green; fascicle sheath dark brown to black.

**Stems:** Twigs covered with needles and occasionally with leaf scales, buds brown, bark rough, scales reddish-brown, trunk straight.

**Cone Characteristics:**

**Cones:** unisexual in clusters at base of new growth; yellowish-orange in clusters of 10-12, woody.

**Mature Cones:** Ovulate cones woody, tips of scales rounded and often with a short spine, 2 seeds per scale, maturing the summer of the second season; seeds dark brown to purplish, with a prominent papery wing 3-4 times as long as the seed.

**Historic, Food and Medicinal Uses:** American Indians used cones to start fires; one of the principal lumber trees in North America; wood used commercially for boxes, crates, construction, and mill products; sometimes planted as an ornamental and in shelterbelts.

**Livestock Losses:** Browsing on needles causes abortion in cattle

**Forage Value:** Worthless to livestock; seeds are eaten by several bird species and small mammals; browsed by mule deer, white-tailed deer, and mountain sheep.

**Habitat:** Rocky hillsides, mountains, and plateaus; grows in moist or dry soils and in a wide range of soil types.

\*\*\*sited from *North American Range Plants*, Fifth Edition, Stubbendieck, Hatch, Butterfield.\*\*\*

## FREE WILDLIFE ESCAPE RAMPS FOR STOCK WATER TANKS

WE HAVE TWO TYPES OF RAMPS AVAILABLE: EXPANDED METAL AND FIBERGLASS. PLEASE CONTACT US AT 738-2321 IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN PLACING THE RAMPS IN YOUR STOCK TANKS.

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## Here's Looking at 2013



The time of year has come where we are finishing up fiscal year 2012 and getting geared up for fiscal year 2013. NRCS would like to encourage agriculture producers to submit applications for cost-share assistance. The new Farm Bill is still being worked on so the exact name of the programs is unknown but here's what will hopefully be available:

- Financial assistance to install or implement structural and management conservation practices. Examples include: increase grazing distribution through fences or water development or improving irrigation systems.
- Financial incentives to create high quality wildlife habitat. Examples: riparian area improvements, fish passages, and stream restoration.
- Financial incentives to improve existing sage-grouse habitat by using grazing deferment to improve ground cover. In addition to the incentive payment for grazing deferment there is also the option to install practices that will better help grazing distribution. Examples: stock and wildlife water development and cross fencing.
- Financial assistance to restore and protect wetlands and associated uplands through easements and cost-share only.
- Financial incentives to producers for current conservation practices they already apply to their operation as well as extra incentives to apply more conservation practices.
- Conservation easement.

\*\*\*Please stop by the USDA-NRCS office if you are interested in more information.

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## Wyoming Natural Resource Foundation Raffle

Your \$25 tax deductible donation to the WNRF enters you in a drawing to win:

**1st place**– 2012 Polaris Sportsman 500 ATV

**2nd place**–One ton of SmartLic Feed Supplement (of your choice)

**3rd place**–Steel tool Cart

This drawing will be held on December 12, 2012 in Casper at the WACD/WNRF state convention. ONLY 600 TICKETS will be distributed. To get your ticket stop by the PRCD Office at 350 Nolan Avenue in Kaycee.



*Powder River Conservation District  
P.O. Box 48  
Kaycee, WY 82639*

Non-Profit  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Kaycee, WY  
Permit #1

Mark Your  
Calendars!!!

Educational Tour-Wednesday, October 10, 2012 @8 am in Kaycee

PRCD Board Meeting– Wednesday, October 10, 2012 @ 3:00 pm



The PRCD is an equal opportunity employer.

Find us on the web: [www.powderrivercd.org](http://www.powderrivercd.org)