

### Community Environmental Fair

This year's Pocatello Community Environmental Fair will take place on Saturday, April 26, 11:00 am to 3:00 pm in Tydeman Park/Optimist Park area (8th Ave.- Sherman to Young Street). In addition to a large variety of exhibitor booths there will be entertainment on stage throughout the day, a children's activities area, and an area for the public to relax and enjoy the event. The PSWCD and NRCS will be there sponsoring a children's activity booth, so stop by and visit! For more information visit the Community Environmental Fair website at [www.envirofair.org](http://www.envirofair.org).

### Idaho Ag in the Classroom

Are you K-12 Educator? The Idaho Ag in the Classroom organization has several workshops and tours organized this summer to increase your knowledge of Idaho agriculture and assist with curriculum development. University of Idaho Graduate credits are available. Visit their website at [www.idahoaitc.org](http://www.idahoaitc.org) for more information.

Are you interested in advertising in our bi-monthly newsletter? Our rates are \$25.00 per newsletter for a 2.250 x 2.5 ad or 6 newsletter adds for \$125.00. Call the PSWCD office for more information.

**Portneuf Soil and Water Conservation District**  
1551 Baldy Ave., Ste. 2  
Pocatello, ID 83201  
208-237-4628

# PORTNEUF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## APRIL 2008

### Water Supply Outlook Report for UPPER SNAKE BASINS as of APRIL 1, 2008

Mother Nature finally delivered the much needed punch of above average precipitation where it was needed the most. The Upper Snake region rebounded since last month and relieved many water users. Precipitation above Palisades Reservoir in March was 140% of average but only 116% in the Henrys Fork and Teton Basins. Cont. page 4



Mr. Hobson (and son Kenneth) of Lava Hot Springs, inventor and builder of the "Snow-traveler." According to a 1952 news article, the craft was built as a model, "from which others are to be constructed as a new Idaho business venture, the craft is called a Snow-mobile..."

They are at the head of Mink Creek conducting a snow survey April 1, 1952, with Mr. Onstott of the SCS. Snow reports from that year indicate it was a near record snow pack in the Mink Creek and Pebble Creek areas.



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All Portneuf SWCD and NRCS programs are offered on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap.

Portneuf SWCD is an equal opportunity employer

[www.pswcd.org](http://www.pswcd.org)

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Justin Krajewski, Range and  
Riparian Specialist  
Ben Evans, Water Quality  
Resource Conservationist  
Amy Jenkins, Water Quality  
Monitoring

## PSWCD Office:

1551 Baldy Ave., Ste. 2  
Pocatello, ID 83201  
208-237-4628 x111  
portneufswcd@dcdl.net

## ARE YOU A CRP PARTICIPANT?

As winter draws to a close, it's important to remember the obligations and responsibilities associated with CRP contracts. In particular, weed control. Spring is a great time to look over your fields and see what problems may exist with noxious weeds. Timing is everything when it comes to weed control and spraying in the spring is the best time for several types and varieties of weeds. If you have questions about what chemicals to use, or when it's best to use them, Bannock County is fortunate to have an excellent Noxious Weed Supervisor; Dave Hallinan is always ready and more than willing to assist producers in any way he can. Give him a call if you have questions. His number is 251-0049.

Another requirement for all CRP contract holders is to make sure that cattle are fenced off of CRP acres. After a winter like the one we just experienced, you can be certain that some fences will be in pretty bad shape. Please remember to check your fence lines and make the necessary repairs to keep your CRP land eligible for payment. Our office is required to spot check a specific percentage of CRP contracts each year. Unauthorized grazing and/or failure to control noxious weeds will result in serious fines or even contract termination. If you have any questions regarding the CRP program and the rules and regulations associated with it, please contact our office. Our phone number is 237-3435, Extension 2.

Steve Myler  
County Executive Director  
Bannock County Farm Service Agency

## USDA Seeks Public Comments on Changes to CRP Managed Haying and Grazing

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is proposing rule changes to the frequency that managed haying and grazing is allowed on land that is enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Public comments, including comments on changes to primary nesting season dates, can be submitted both electronically and by regular mail. Comments must be received by close of business May 2, 2008. Direct comments to: MHG EA's, Geo-Marine Incorporated, 2713 Magruder BLVD., Ste D, Hampton VA 23666-1572, or send electronically to <http://public.geo-marine.com>. At the website you can comment under the "Idaho" section.

## Marsh Creek §319 updates

Opportunities are still available through the Marsh Creek §319 grant to install watershed improvement projects. Participants are eligible to receive up to 75% cost share on best management practices (BMPs). The main focus of this project is animal feeding operations that could affect water quality on or near Marsh Creek. BMPs are defined as a practice or combination of practices determined to be an effective and practical means of preventing or reducing the amount of water pollution generated by non-point sources. Some examples of BMPs that could be installed are water troughs, wells, pumping plants, corral fence, pipelines, corral berms, cross fences, pasture and hayland planting, and stream bank stabilization. If you are interested in finding out more about the Marsh Creek §319 project, or would like for us to come out and meet with you, please contact the PSWCD office, or Ben Evans at (208) 237-4628 ext. 124.

## Idaho Pilot Project

As discussed in our last newsletter, the Idaho Pilot Project, co-sponsored by Three Rivers and High Country RC&D, is conducting a survey to determine the number of landowners in Eastern Idaho interested in marketing carbon credits on private range lands. Currently, they have nearly met the goal of 125,000 acres of interested participants. If you would like more information on this project, or would like a survey form, contact Kevin Koester, Carbon Credit Coordinator, at 208-251-3091 or email at [kevkoester@aol.com](mailto:kevkoester@aol.com).

National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service (ATTRA) — this site has a great deal of current information on farm energy, including, for the adventurous, how to make your own biodiesel.

[www.attra.ncat.org](http://www.attra.ncat.org)

## Waste Not, Want Not

Three Rivers Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council is beginning an assessment of the various woody waste products found in our forests, landfills, industry and agricultural lands. The idea behind the need for such an assessment began 3 years ago when the RC&D Council was introduced to the *Fuels for Schools* program. This program provides information and assistance on how biomass waste can be used to economically heat public schools. Council, Idaho installed a boiler that burns waste from the surrounding forest (small logs) and saved over \$40,000 in heating bills the first year. Schools in Vermont have been utilizing forest waste as their heating source for years. It is the hope of the Three Rivers RC&D Council that a school in our area will be able to do the same.

The consulting firm hired to do the assessment has been charged to do the following:

1. determine the quantity and quality of woody biomass supply focusing on agricultural stover and forestry sources and urban wood waste,
2. determine the geographic distribution and transportation and site issues including haul time,
3. determine what end users are out there that could use the biomass for heat, steam, electricity generation and/or bio-diesel,
4. provide a comparison of current best technologies and emerging technologies that utilize the biomass.

The assessment is schedule to be completed no later than September 30, 2008. Look for a summary of the report in this newsletter or on the Three Rivers RC&D Council website, [www.3riversrcd.org](http://www.3riversrcd.org). If you have any questions on this project, give Paula Jones a call at 237-4628 ex. 104.

## Water Supply Outlook Report cont.

The welcomed precipitation helped build the overall snowpack in the region to 106% of average. The snowpack ranges from 93% in the Hoback River to 126% in the Pacific Creek headwaters. The region as a whole has achieved the normal seasonal snow water content peak for early April. The thirsty reservoirs desperately needed an average snow year after last year's hot and dry summer. Currently Jackson Lake and Palisades Reservoir are less than half full at 44% of capacity; 69% of average. On the main stem Snake River, the Blackfoot Reservoir is the least full at 27% of capacity and Grassy Lake and Henrys Lake are near full. The focus has shifted from mountain snowpack accumulation to the snow melt phase and associated peak streamflows. The seasonal streamflow volumes are forecast at near normal levels for most rivers in the Upper Snake Watershed. From now through July, **the lowest flow will occur in the Portneuf River at 91%** of average while the Teton River, Snake River near Flagg Ranch, Pacific Creek will have the most water and will flow near 110% of average. Calculations for the Snake River above Heise indicate that seasonal water supplies should be adequate (similar to 2006) to fulfill irrigation demands based on the Surface Water Supply Index (SWSI), which combines reservoir storage and projected streamflow volumes. The cooler this summer is the lower the irrigation demands will be, resulting in better reservoir carryover storage next year. For more information please visit <http://www.id.nrcs.usda.gov/snow/watersupply/#wsor>, then Idaho WSOR in adobe, then select "April 2008."

## Natural Resources Camp 2008

The 2008 Natural Resources Camp for Idaho youth 12-14 years old will be held June 23-28 at the Central Idaho 4-H Camp north of Ketchum.

The Natural Resources Camp has been a summer program since 1960. Spend a week near beautiful Sun Valley exploring and studying Idaho's natural resources. This is a hands-on camp; you will explore the world of wildlife, rangeland, forests, water and soil. You will also enjoy outdoor activities such as hiking, fishing, volleyball, firearm safety, target shooting, and fireside sing-alongs. Compete against your friends in the Tournament of the Outdoors. Camp participants will have many opportunities to discuss and debate natural resource issues and to discover their responsibilities as citizens.

The camp is sponsored by the University of Idaho Extension and Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts, in cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Idaho Department of Lands, the Idaho Soil Conservation Commission, and the USDA Forest Service.

The cost is \$175.00 due by May 23, 2008. Teachers are also encouraged to attend, graduate credit is available, look up <http://extension.ag.uidaho.edu/nrc/> for more information.

For registration and sponsorship information contact the District office at 237-4628, x111; or Amber Moore at 208-736-3629.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Portneuf SWCD Board Meetings:

May 14, 2008  
7:00 pm, NRCS  
Conference Room

June 11, 2008  
7:00 pm, call  
PSWCD office for  
location

### Local events:

Environmental Fair  
April 26, 2008

Stewardship Week  
April 27-May 4,  
2008

Natural Resources  
Camp June 23-28

## 2008 Stewardship Week "Water is Life"

The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) has proclaimed April 27 to May 4, 2008 as Stewardship Week with the theme "Water is Life."

The Earth's water is in constant motion in the process known as the hydrologic (water) cycle. There is no beginning or end to the hydrologic cycle. Water available to users can change due to the cycles of weather and changes in water quality. Throughout time, the same water has been transferred into the Earth's atmosphere and dropped on land again where it follows the water cycle through plants, soil, water bodies, animals and clouds. That means the water we use today is the same water that was here when dinosaurs roamed the land.

We all live in a watershed; they are the places we call home, where we work and where we play. Everyone relies on water to exist. What we do on the land impacts the quality and quantity of water and our other natural resources. "Each of us needs to take steps to invest in understanding the importance of water in our everyday life," said NACD CEO Krysta Harden. "Water is not a renewable resource. Education in your community and schools will benefit all citizens, for years to come as they gain a better appreciation of the importance of water resources. Conservation districts are working with local communities to address water quantity and quality issues in every county in America."

The Portneuf Soil and Water Conservation District is a member of NACD which oversees the Stewardship Week program. NACD represents the nation's 3,000 conservation districts, which were established to encourage resource conservation across the country. Stewardship Week is one of the largest national annual programs to promote conservation.

For information about Stewardship Week and conservation, contact the Portneuf Soil and Water Conservation District at 237-4628, x 111, or see [www.pswcd.org](http://www.pswcd.org). You can visit [www.nacdnet.org](http://www.nacdnet.org) to learn more about NACD and Stewardship Week.

Information provided by NACD

See [www.portneufriver.org](http://www.portneufriver.org) for more information on the Portneuf River Watershed monitoring and activities.

### Energy Estimators

\$4.00/gallon diesel?!? And how much for fertilizer??? Yikes... NRCS has several on-line tools for producers to estimate potential energy savings for tillage, nitrogen fertilizer, animal housing, and irrigation systems. Called "Energy Estimators", these can help you reduce energy usage on your farm.

<http://energytools.sc.egov.usda.gov/>