

PORTNEUF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

October 2009

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

2009 Ag Days

The District again supported the Bannock County Farm Bureau's Ag days for 4th graders on Sept 28-30. According to Sherril Tillotson, Farm Bureau Women's Committee, "We had 1,167 participants from Pocatello (which included students, teachers, and parent chaperones). In addition, there were about 12 from Oneida County that attended. It was a good project again this year, and we are so grateful to have NRCS and Portneuf Soil and Water Conservation District as our partners."

The District and NRCS demonstrated erosion control practices and the importance of appropriate use of fertilizer on lawns and farms. The students also discussed what they could do around their homes to protect soil and water. Highland FFA handled the rotation of groups of students, and discussed animal care, showing a variety of farm animals, and ATV safety. The kids got to watch a potato digger in operation, and were able to pick their own potatoes to take home. A variety other groups provided activities and demonstrations related to agriculture and safety for the students. Many thanks to Swore Farms for providing an opportunity for students to visit their farm and see agriculture in action!

FFA Soil Judging

The Regional FFA Soil Judging contest was held in Pocatello September 24th. Around 80 high school FFA kids from southeast Idaho competed to see who would go on to the state competition. Dr. Maynard Fosberg, professor emeritus from University of Idaho, and Kristin May from NRCS set up the soil pits. Dr. Fosberg, now 90 years old, has been actively supporting the soil judging contests state wide for many years. District and NRCS staff assisted in soil pit monitoring during the contest, and the District sponsored a snack break for all the attendees. The state soil judging finals were held in Burley on October 13.

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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

**CALENDAR OF
EVENTS**

**Portneuf SWCD
Board Meetings**

November 10,
2009 NRCS Office
Pocatello, 7 pm

December 8, 2009,
Annual Meeting TBA

Soil Conservation
Interim Committee
Meeting, November
3, 9:30 a.m. to
12:30 p.m. Idaho
Supreme Court
Basement Confer-
ence Room; 451 W.
State Street, Boise,
Idaho

IASCD Annual Con-
vention, November
15-18, Boise

Pocatello NRCS Field Office Update

B.J. O'Doherty, District Conservationist
USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service
Pocatello Field Office
October 2009

Personal Introduction

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I am the new District Conservationist (D.C.) in the Pocatello Field Office (F.O.) assisting the Portneuf Soil and Water Conservation District (PSWCD). To provide a brief personal background, I was raised in Georgia then moved to central Montana, in the Neihart/White Sulphur Springs area. I graduated from Montana State University-Bozeman with a degree in Range Science. Most recently, my family and I relocated from the town of Springfield in southeastern Colorado. My wife Bev is a Nurse Practitioner with a background in Rural Health and Emergency/Urgent Care. We have five children ranging in ages from 13 to 2 years of age. We are currently renting a place in the Robin/McCammon area. The oldest three children are enrolled in the Marsh Valley School System. I am looking forward to assisting the PSWCD in conserving our natural resources both in the agricultural and urban setting in Bannock County.

Conservation Stewardship Program of the 2008 Farm Bill

As a brief update of happenings and highlights in the Pocatello Field Office, I will start with the Conservation Stewardship Program of the 2008 Farm Bill (CSP-2008). This is a new program that is similar but has significant differences from the Conservation Security Program of the 2002 Farm Bill (CSP-2002). The CSP-2008 rewards ag producers for the conservation activities that they are currently doing or have done in the past. This program 'dove-tails' into the existing Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). EQIP encourages ag producers to increase existing or adopt conservation activities. The sign-up deadline for CSP was 30 Sep 2009. We have four pre-applications for fiscal year 2010. The full applications are due on 30 Oct 2009.

Portneuf-Marsh Valley Canal Company Canal Improvement Project

Turning to the canal improvement project of the Portneuf-Marsh Valley Canal Company (PMVCC), the endeavor is in the initial stages. This project is funded by the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP). To date, \$ 4.3 million have been obligated to the project for the fiscal year 2009. We anticipate construction to commence in fall 2010. The NRCS engineering team has been formed and is in the initial stages of the design. Ron Jolley will be the PMVCC point-of-contact. I will be the NRCS point-of-contact as the District Conservationist in the Pocatello Field Office.

My family and I are thrilled to be in southeastern Idaho. I am looking forward to serving the ag producers and all the residents of Bannock County.

Report of Accomplishments cont.

Synopsis of financial assistance coordinated for constituents with the District Conservation Partners to plan, design and implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) to protect, enhance, and conserve Idaho's renewable resources.

District Name: Portneuf SWCD				
Funding Source	Purpose / Benefit	Funding Re- quested	Funding Re- ceived	Return per Dollar In- vestment
Total District Funding		\$4,935,284*	\$ 4,856,574*	
County / City	District Operations	\$16,700	\$16,700	\$290
State of Idaho (base funding)	District Operations	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$157
State of Idaho (match of City/ County funds)	District Operations	\$33,400	\$25,694	
District's Elected Officials (in-kind time)	District Operations		\$4,200	\$1,155
USDA Farm Programs (inclusive)	Conservation	\$ 4,570,513*	\$4,393,109*	
Landowner match	Conservation		\$24,782	
Other Funding (describe)		\$309,670.87	\$387,088.87	
\$319 Water Quality Grant Phase 2	Water Quality	\$278,545	\$278,545	
Landowner match			\$ 69,636	
\$319 Water Quality Grant Phase 1	Water Quality	\$31,126.00	\$ 31,126	
Landowner match			\$ 7,782	

*includes \$4,293,980 NRCS AWEP Project in Bannock County

The Annual Report of Accomplishments is completed every year by each Soil and Water Conservation District in the state. This year these reports will be combined into one very nicely bound report for the Governor and for Legislators and others that need to know who we are and what we do as Soil and Water Conservation Districts in the State of Idaho.

2009 Annual Report of Accomplishments

Portneuf Soil and Water Conservation District	Fiscal Year 2009
Mailing Address: 1551 Baldy Ave., Ste 2	
City: Pocatello, ID	ZIP:83201
Telephone:208-237-4628 ext. 111	
Contact Person: Scott Henderson	
County / Counties Served: Bannock	
Legislative District: 29, 30	IASCD Division: V

Conservation District Function or Mission Statement

To coordinate technical, financial, and educational assistance for responsible natural resource management that conserves and improves air, soil and water quality, and fish and wildlife habitat.

Most Significant Natural Resource Improvement, Project, or Accomplishment

Continued implementation of the Marsh Creek Water Quality Project with additional funding from DEQ §319 Non-point Source grant funding. The Marsh Creek project assists land managers in reducing run-off from animal feeding operations in the Marsh Creek Watershed, a §303(d) listed water body that flows into the Portneuf River. An intensive water quality monitoring component has been initiated in conjunction with this project.

Priority # 1 Water Quality

Completed two water quality improvement projects on Portneuf River (DEQ §319 Turnback Funding), seven contracts signed and initiated with DEQ §319 Marsh Creek Phase 2 funding, one project completed and two under construction with DEQ §319 Marsh Creek Phase 1 funding, two projects implemented with WQPA funding. Instituted an intensive water quality monitoring program on Marsh Creek in cooperation with multiple partner agencies.

Priority # 2 Urban (County/Cities)

Reviewed Bannock County planning and development applications as requested, met with City and County elected officials to increase understanding of local resource issues, participated in Open Space Visioning workshops with City of Pocatello, finalized MOU between Bannock County and District, and made a conscientious effort to work closely with municipalities within the district.

Priority #3 District Operations

Three Board members were re-elected to four year terms in Nov. 2008, attended fall and spring Division V meetings, attended IASCD conference, attended Three Rivers RC&D meetings, attended Portneuf Watershed Partnership meetings, attended Watershed Advisory and Basin Advisory Group meetings, and complied with the State of Idaho Open Meeting Law.

District Information and Education Accomplishments

Supported and presented program at School District 25 Ag Days, attended by 1000 4th grade children, participated in City of Pocatello Environmental Fair and the Portneuf Riverfest, supported and participated in FFA soil and land judging, presented program at Idaho Environmental Education Association conference, supported Ag in The Classroom, published five newsletters with distribution of 650, maintained and updated District website, attended Division V workshops, participated in Bannock County Noxious weed tour.

Board of Supervisors

Scott Henderson Chair
Kit Tillotson Vice-Chair
Dave Jackson Treasurer
John McNabb
Kevin Koester

Associates

Morgan Evans
Brad Kent
Kirk Irick
Paul Danielson
John Sigler

District Staff

Office Administrator
Janet Pacioretty

NRCS Staff

BJ O'Doherty,
District Conservationist
Ryan Clayton, Soil
Conservationist
Martha Nunez-Hagius,
Engineer

ISCC/IASCD Staff

Justin Krajewski, Range and
Riparian Specialist
Chris Banks, Water Quality
Resource Conservationist
Kelsey Flandro, Water Quality
Analyst

PSWCD Office:

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

Watershed Environmental Education Grant

The District, in conjunction with the Portneuf Watershed Partnership (PWP), is excited to be working with teachers during fall 2009 to help us finalize an Environmental Education grant application. This grant focuses on improving the resources we can provide to teachers interested in using the Portneuf Watershed (including Marsh Valley) as a site and topic for learning in their classrooms. We have been meeting with 5 participating teachers from Pocatello and Marsh Valley to provide an overview of the available resources and to brainstorm various opportunities for learning that exist when our own watershed is used as a site and topic for learning. The grant will be written with assistance and input from the teachers, and representatives of the PWP including the District, City of Pocatello, Idaho Fish and Game, and Three Rivers RC&D. Currently the PWP maintains a website: www.portneufriver.org which provides real time water quality data for the Portneuf River and Marsh Creek. As part of this grant process, we are looking to improve this website to make it more user friendly for teachers, students and community members, and potentially to allow these groups to post and share the water quality data they are collecting on field trips. This application will be submitted in early 2010.

Soil Conservation Interim Committee

An interim committee has been convened by the Idaho legislature to look at Idaho Code to address ambiguity in the statutes as to the roles and responsibilities of the Idaho Soil Conservation Commission, the Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and the Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts. This includes looking at the infrastructure, how to disburse the money, and the accountability of the money, while at the same time allowing freedom for the conservation districts to act as they know best for their respective areas.

Members of the Committee are Co-chair Senator Joe Stegner, Co-chair Representative Ken Roberts, Senator Lee Heinrich, Representative Darrell Bolz, Senator Bert Brackett, Representative Judy Boyle, Senator Kate Kelly, and Representative Liz Chavez.

For more information on the interim committee, meeting minutes, and background material, see <http://www.legislature.idaho.gov/sessioninfo/2009/interim/soil.htm>