



Colorado Conservator

“your voice for locally led conservation”

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CACD's 65th Annual Meeting To Provide Valuable Training

By Darlene Jensen,
CACD Executive Director

The CACD 2009 Annual Meeting will be held November 16-19, 2009 in Breckenridge at the Beaver Run Resort. The facility offers a comfortable indoor atmosphere for networking and sessions. Guest rooms are offered at the conference rate of \$96. Please visit the CACD website for details on registration, lodging, conference agenda and tax exemption options. (www.cacd.us) In this edition of the Conservator you will find the conference agenda and registration form.

This year's conference will provide valuable training to district supervisors and employees on district management and financial responsibilities, as well as leadership, grant writing and legislative action. Breakout sessions are sure to provide for engaging dialogue. CACD is fortunate to have the expertise in district management being brought to the Annual Meeting through the valued instruction of Ray Ledgerwood. Ray provides instruction to districts and partners in conservation nationwide.

For anyone who has had the opportunity to be a part of instruction provided by Ray, their roles in conservation and their relationship with partners in conservation and with



CACD's Annual Meeting Planning Committee. CACD appreciates the effort and hard work of the Committee in putting together a very enlightening agenda.

employees, landowners, elected officials and funders has without a doubt brought more impact to what they do and how it gets done. Ray has a dynamic message and his passion from years of experience in providing instruction to districts is contagious. He has a way of helping us all recognize that what we do has global impact. He also helps better understand the detail behind what and how conservation partners engage with their boards and staff, with producers and landowners. In addition to this special instruction, the Colorado State Conservation Board will unveil a district manual it has been working on which is a tool to help guide districts in their work. Valuable information compiled in this guide will be made available the session identified on the agenda as “The Conservation College”. Attention will be given to financial management techniques, fiduciary responsibility and conservation representatives roles. Highlights of breakout sessions include, a Long Range Planning Session instructed by Ray and the Conservation Specialists; Legislative Training, instructed by CACD lobbyist, Tracee Bentley, Grant Writing and Fund Raising instructed by representatives of the Community Resource

Center, Denver; Establishment of a Conservation Education Program presented by Conservation Education Specialist, Judy Lopez; and Budget Development instructed by an expert in Quickbooks. As insurance affecting many areas, including vehicles and property, has been an issue on many partners minds this year, due to circumstances that have impacted district operations, there will be information on insurance discussed at the Annual Meeting. A resolution is being brought by a District this year to address this very issue.

A Healthy Forest Initiatives session will be held with part of the session dedicated to discussion of a pending Memorandum of Understanding between the Conservation Districts, the U.S. Forest Service, the Colorado State Forest Service and the Department of Agriculture. Input and comments from conference participants is additionally encouraged in this session. Another session where additional comment and input is welcome will be in the Watershed Dam Projects.

Watershed dam maintenance and liability associated with these dams, many now reaching their life expect-

(Continued on Page 10)

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President's Message



Harley Ernst

Hi Everyone! It is a busy time and time goes fast. We have 10 members on the CACD Board and it is great to know that each one has their specific area knowledge and concerns. They work together to help one another and for the good of all. Gary Moyer, Bob Warner, and Harley Ernst traveled to the regional meeting in Dubois, Wyoming hosted by the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts to a very good and well fed convention. The convention was a combination of the Southwest Region and the Pacific Region. They had separate business meetings and the employees had their separate

meeting also. We heard reports from NACD representatives on carbon concerns and the Conservation Stewardship Program. Brian Kelly of the US Fish and Wildlife Service gave an update on Sage Grouse petition for review and update on other petitioned species. We had a Wiggins Fork Tour on clearing forest pine trees and dead timber in favor of aspen trees for elk habitat and forest health. The next day we heard a presentation on organic waste diversion and use with composting as well as renewable energy facilities. This leads to utilizing waste in landfills.

CACD Board members, district board supervisors and employees as well as other partners are busy with watershed meetings and resolutions in preparations for the annual meeting to be held in Breckenridge on November 16-19, 2009. CACD will be working on resolutions of concerns across the state with water, air, weed, soil and yes, people, who are stewards producing food and fiber for all.

Thanks to committee members who are working to get the annual meeting together as well as our sponsors for their support. Looking forward to seeing you at Breckenridge. Have a great harvest and planting time and God bless you!

The Colorado Conservator

Providing Colorado With
Conservation News for 40 Years
Jerry Schwien, Editor
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GOAL: The Colorado Conservator informs residents of Colorado about natural resources conservation. Information from our sponsors will emphasize natural resources and conservation programs available to landowners.

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CACD 65th Annual Meeting Nov. 16-19

Breckenridge, Colorado



CACD Annual Meeting Agenda November 16-19, 2009 (www.cacd.us) Beaver Run Resort, Breckenridge, CO *Conservation College: Higher Education in Natural Resources Conservation; Hands-On Training for Conservation Districts & Partners*

Sunday November 15 GLCI Committee Meeting 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm
Camp Rocky Committee Meeting 11:00 am to 1:00 pm

Monday November 16

10:00 am – 1:00 pm CSCB / CACD Joint Board meeting (Buffet Lunch 11:30)
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm CSCB / CACD Individual Board Meetings
3:00 pm – 5:00 pm District Budget Development Session / Open to All
4:00 pm EXPO - Exhibit set up begins
10:00 am – 4:00 pm Soil and Water Conservation Society / (All invited; separate fee)
5:00 pm – 7:00 pm Individual Resolutions Policy Committee Meetings / All attend
7:00 pm Ice Breaker Reception ALL INVITED

Tuesday November 17

7:30 am – 8:15 am New Comers Meeting
8:30 am to Noon Group Policy Resolution Meeting / All attend
9:00 am Conservation Poster and Photo Contest Submittals
Noon – 1:45 pm Conservation Awards Luncheon
Noon - Silent Auction Opens
2:00 pm OPENING SESSION / Flag Ceremony Pledge of Allegiance
2:10 pm General Session Opening (Keynote)
2:30 pm - 3:00 pm CACD / CSCB Representatives Introduction
3:00 pm - 3:50 pm Partner Updates / FSA, NRCS, NACD
3:50 pm - 4:00 pm Break (Stop on by the silent auction; \$ go to conservation education)
3:15 pm – 4:30 pm Ladies Auxiliary Meeting / Open to those interested in attending
4:00 pm – 5:30 pm Legislative Training Session (Tracee Bentley, CACD Lobbyist)
4:00 pm – 5:30 pm Long Range Planning Session (Ray L. and Conservation Specialists)
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm Partners Opportunities Session and Combined Partner Appreciation Reception Open to All (Heavy Appetizers; TNC, GEO, Rural Development, CWCB, USFS)
7:30 pm – 9:30 pm Tuesday evening Luau/Toga Party

Wednesday November 18

8:00 am to 11:30 am Conservation College (Break 9:30-10 am) (Ray L. and Specialists)
11:30 am – 1:30 pm Lunch on your own (time to visit the sites)
Noon – 1:30 pm Auxiliary Appreciation Luncheon
Noon – 1:00 pm District Employees Buffet Luncheon (Dist. Emp. Assoc. sponsored)
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm **District Employees** Input Session and Meeting (Petra B. / Ray L.)
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm Resource Room–Information/Materials on Grant Writing Agreements
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm Watershed Project Dams (14 Districts; all invited to attend)
1:30 pm – 3:30 pm Healthy Forest Initiative Session (Moderator / MOU Discussion)
3:00 pm – 5:30 pm **Supervisors** Input Session Break 4:15 (Petra B. and Ray L.)
3:30 pm – 5:00 pm Fund Raising and Grant Opportunities Session (CRC Denver)
3:30 pm – 5:00 pm Conservation Education; How to Set Up a Program (Judy Lopez)
5:30 pm Conservation Awards Banquet /Gathering/cash bar
6:00 pm Conservation Awards Banquet Dinner Served
7:00 pm Conservation Awards Presentation
8:00 pm Live Auction / All Welcome

Thursday November 19

8:30 am – Noon General Assembly Business Meeting – Resolution Adoption
Direct Assistance Review and Discussion / All encouraged to attend
8:30 am – Noon NRCS Meeting (Training by Ray Ledgerwood)
1:00 pm - Wrap Up/Annual Meeting Planning Committee and CACD Board
REGISTRATION AND LODGING INFORMATION AT www.cacd.us



Breckenridge's ultimate full service resort and conference center provides everything from memorable family vacations to successful meetings



Beaver Run was selected due to its centralized location in Colorado, its spacious area and the rates offered were lower than several others. The Conference Center offers free parking and free shuttle to and from town (5 minutes away).

Conference guest rooms are all offered at \$96 and you have your choice of hotel rooms either double queens or king, a deluxe studio room with kitchenette or Colorado suite with kitchenette. Rates are good three days before and after the conference for folks arriving early or staying late. Please see the CACD website for the tax exempt form, should you or your organization be able to take advantage of a tax exempt status when making your reservations.

To make reservations please call the hotel directly at: **1-800-288-1282 or 1-970-453-6000.** Let them know you are making reservations under the CACD conference rate.

For folks who are able to bring their families, the resort also offers a heated indoor pool area and workout area and is on the ski slopes opening November 12.

For directions see the Beaver Run Website at: www.beaverrun.com

For conference details see:
www.cacd.us



Executive Director's Message

By Darlene Jensen

Two years ago this month I came to work for CACD to serve the conservation districts as Executive Director and just in time for the Annual Meeting. With another Annual Meeting upon us I am encouraged by the agenda that the Annual Meeting Planning Committee has put together as it will provide for you training and education that you will find useful in your work in conservation, in your business and in your every day life. Please make plans to join folks from across the state at the 65th Annual Meeting in Breckenridge.

As you know CACD has been very active this year in protecting funding to the conservation districts through CACD's intense lobbying efforts of state legislators and through conversations with Joint Budget Committee members. This next year will prove to be another challenging year as there are proposed budget cuts at the state level that will again require direct conversations with legislators and partners to assure funding to the conservation districts stays intact. This year \$391,000 was paid out in direct assistance dollars to conservation districts by the state to assist in conservation district operations. CACD has been informed that the state may again challenge funds appropriated to conservation districts. Last year on three separate occasions these funds were challenged and by enlightening the legislators of the importance of the conservation districts' work on behalf of producers and landowners in Colorado, the funds were, for the most part, left intact. CACD will work very hard to assure the same results this next fiscal year. In the interim, CACD is working to seek alternative funding sources for conservation districts.

CACD continues in programs under the Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative Contribution Agreement with NRCS, which has provided for successful range education workshops. GLCI was founded to provide high quality technical assistance on privately owned grazing lands on a voluntary basis and to

Colorado Association of Conservation Districts 2009 65th Annual Meeting - Registration Form

Last Name _____	First Time: Yes / No
First Name _____	CACD Member: Yes / No
CACD Membership No. _____	NACD Member: Yes / No
Spouse Last Name _____	Representing: _____
Spouse First Name _____	Affiliation: _____
Address _____	
City _____	No. Years Attending: _____
State / Zip _____	Single Day Registration \$60
Phone (Bus Hrs) _____	Mon. Nov 16 Yes / No
Phone (Cell or A/Hrs) _____	Tues. Nov 17 Yes / No
Fax _____	Wed. Nov 18 Yes / No
Email _____	Thurs. Nov 19 Yes / No

Registration Details

	Cost	No.	Total Cost
Pre-registration (without meals)	\$110.00		
Registration after Nov.10 *	\$135.00		
Please select your meal choice below			
Pre-registration Pkg:			
A - Registration/1 Awards lunch/1 Banquet	\$170.00		
B - Registration/2 Awards lunch/2 Banquet	\$230.00		
Complimentary registration	\$0.00		
Welcome Reception	\$0.00		
Monday Mex. Buffet Lunch	\$33.00		
Tuesday Awards Luncheon **	\$29.00		
Weds. Ladies Aux. Appreciation Luncheon	\$0.00		
Weds. District Employees Luncheon	\$15.00		
Banquet/Awards/Entertainment			
London Beef Broil	\$35.00		
Lasagne (Veg.)	\$35.00		
EXPO / Booth Registration	\$300.00		
Sponsorship:			
Bronze	\$250.00		
Silver	\$500.00		
Gold	\$1,000.00		
Platinum	\$2,500.00		
Diamond	\$5,000.00		
Break Sponsor	\$125.00		
CACD Individual Membership	\$35.00		

* Late registration fee \$25
Package A or B

**Tuesday Awards Luncheon
Choose One (p.person)
___ Beef Roast
___ Italian Chicken
___ Vegetarian Dish
(Chef's Option)

(Weds) Ladies Auxilliary
Appreciation Luncheon
No. attending: _____

(Weds) District Employees
Italian Buffet Luncheon
No. attending: _____
(By Dist. Empl. Assoc.)

(Weds) Banquet Dinner
Choose One (p.person)
___ London Beef Broil
___ Lasagne (veg.)
___ Atlantic Salmon

Total	
Payment Details: Credit Card	Check Number:
Name on card:	Card type: Visa / Mcard
Card Number:	Expiration Date:

increase the awareness of the importance of grazing land resources. Established in 1991, GLCI is carried out through coalitions of individuals and organizations functioning at the local, state, regional and national levels. The coalitions include livestock producer organizations, scientific and professional grazing resource organizations, conservation and environmental groups, and state and federal natural resource and agricul-

ture agencies. CACD is also looking to engage in contribution agreements for small acreage workshops and conservation planning.

A financial review has just been completed by CACD's CPA, Ken Waugh and Associates. Copies of the review will be available at the CACD Annual Meeting, or if you would like a copy mailed to you please contact the CACD office.

Lastly, CACD welcomes

Lanny Dehnam to the CACD Board of Directors, representing the Gunnison-Dolores Watershed. Lanny will be in attendance at the Annual Meeting. If you have the chance to attend the conference, the CACD Board and the CSCB Board will be introduced to all in the Opening Session, November 17. The work for CACD is endless, however, the value in serving the districts and the producers is priceless.

Partners in Conservation



CACD is proud to have these state and federal agencies as contributing sponsors to our newsletter. The following pages are dedicated to conservation programs of the sponsors.

NRCS and the Republican River Sign Water Conservation Agreement

CACD has learned that NRCS and the Republican River Water Conservation District (RRWCD) recently signed an Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP) contract in Burlington, CO.

The purpose of the agreement contract is to establish a partner-based, dedicated funding pool for the RRWCD and NRCS to provide financial and technical assistance for water conservation measures in the Colorado portion of the Republican River Watershed.

The two-year agreement will provide cost-share assistance to eligible participants who voluntarily enter their land into AWEP to permanently convert irrigated land to sustainable dry land cropping, and grazing lands management systems.

This program seeks to enroll approximately 2,500 acres into the program through September 30, 2010.

The AWEP program was established by Congress in the 2008

Farm Bill. The program promotes ground and surface water conservation partnerships to assist farmers and ranchers implement and maintain practices on their land. Through AWEP partnerships, local conservation priorities are addressed and the NRCS is able to leverage investment in natural resources conservation.

The NRCS and the Republican River Water Conservation District have pledged \$1 million each for the two-year project.

Eligible producers are encouraged to apply through the continuous sign-up process at any time. Information is available through the Republican River Water Conservation District office in Wray, and through any of the NRCS field offices in the Basin. Producers who offer land for enrollment into the program will be compete for funding using a ranking system developed in partnership with the RRWCD. The District website is <http://www.republicanriver.com/>.

NRCS Begins Statewide Sign-up for the New Conservation Stewardship Program

Continuous Sign-Up Began August 10

CACD has learned that the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) first continuous sign-up for the new Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) went well in Colorado. The first cutoff for ranking purposes was Sept. 30, State Conservationist Allen Green recently announced.

"The Conservation Stewardship Program changed dramatically in the 2008 Farm Bill," said Green. *"NRCS took the time to develop a program that would appeal to our diverse customers and offer them an equal chance to participate. We hope that agricultural and forestry producers in Colorado take full advantage of the benefits this newly revised program offers."*

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) authorized the Conservation Stewardship Program. Congress renamed and revamped the former Conservation Security Program completely to improve its availability and appeal to agricultural and forestry producers. The Conservation Stewardship Program will be offered in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the Pacific and Caribbean areas through continuous sign-ups with announced cut-off application dates for ranking periods. The maximum annual enrollment is capped at nearly 12.8 million acres nationwide.

NRCS administers CSP, a voluntary conservation program designed to encourage agricultural and forestry producers to adopt additional conservation practices and improve, maintain and manage existing ones.

To apply for the newly revamped CSP, individual producers, legal entities and Indian tribes will be encouraged to use a self-screening checklist first to determine whether the new program is suitable for them or their operation. The checklist is available on NRCS Web sites and at NRCS field offices.

After the self-screening, the producer's current and proposed conservation activities are entered in the conservation measurement tool

(CMT). This tool estimates the level of environmental performance to be achieved by a producer implementing and maintaining conservation activities. The conservation performance estimated by the CMT will be used to rank applications.

A producer must treat at least one resource concern and one priority resource concern during the length of the CSP's five-year contract. Colorado NRCS identified five priority resource concerns that will be used to rank applications.

Colorado's priority resource concerns include: Animal, Plants, Soil Erosion, Water Quality, and Water Quantity.

NRCS field staff will conduct on-site field verifications of pre-approved applicants' information provided for the CMT.

Another major change in the program is the method of payments. CSP will offer two possible types of payments—annual and supplemental. The annual payment will be established using the conservation performance estimated by the CMT and calculated by land use type for enrolled eligible land. A supplemental payment is also available to participants who also adopt a resource-conserving crop rotation. The annual payment limitation for a person or legal entity is \$40,000. A person or legal entity cannot exceed \$200,000 for all contracts entered into during any five-year period.

Land enrolled in the Conservation Security Program, Conservation Reserve Program, Grassland Reserve Program and Wetlands Reserve Program are ineligible for the new Conservation Stewardship Program.

The new CSP is very different from the old Conservation Security Program. Under the old program, producers were eligible if they were in the selected watersheds. All contracts under the old CSP will be honored until the end of the contract term.

For more information about the new CSP, please visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/new_csp/. For more information about conservation programs in Colorado, please visit www.co.nrcs.usda.gov.

Huwa Family--CACD Conservation Farm Family of the Year

By Jerry Schwien, Editor

Information for the following articles was provided by Jolene Arnold, Southeast Weld District Board Member and by Sharie Prow, Bookcliff CD District Manager.

CACD wishes to recognize all families who were nominated through their watershed for Conservation Family of the Year. Each family is putting significant conservation practices on the ground. Farm families: Huwa Family Farm, Duaine & Wanda Dodsworth Farm, Jim Ford/Neufeld Family Farms, Morales Farms, and Ratkovich Farms Inc. Ranch families: Dodo/West Elk Ranch, Abbott Ranch, Larry Hoozee Farms LLC, Wilbur Miller Ranch, Karney Land & Cattle Inc, Lois Kitten Family Ranch, and Jim & Lucile Morehouse.



The Huwa's: Corey, Herman, Tyrun, Rich and Brent.

Huwa Farms, located in Prospect Valley, has been honored by the Colorado Association of Conservation Districts (CACD) with the coveted Farming Conservationist of the Year Award. This award is awarded annually to a farming family that demonstrates outstanding conservation practices and Huwa Farms has demonstrated such practices for years. They were nominated by the Southeast Weld Conservation District and will be recognized several times throughout the state.

Ten watershed districts throughout the state nominate a farming operation within their area for this award. A nomination form and photos of their operation are submitted to CACD where a panel of experts review them and chose a conservationist of the year based on outstanding conservation efforts. Some of the conservation efforts demonstrated by Huwa Farms are 998 acres planted grass on pivot corners and fields to combat wind

erosion and weed control, constructed six ponds to allow water storage for irrigation and recharge the aquifer, 7900 feet of gated pipe irrigation for erosion control and water management, and 5800 trees placed in six tree windbreaks in the past five years. These are just a few examples of their conservation efforts. Huwa Farms has operated in Weld and Adams counties for 34 years and has spanned four generations.

Huwa Farms will be recognized during CACD's Annual Meeting, at Beaver Creek Run Resort in Breckenridge. The awards dinner will be held November 18th. They will also be commended during the rodeo performance January 20, 2010 at the National Western Stock Show. As district supervisors we are very proud to have the 2009 Farming Conservationist of the Year in our conservation district. CACD is also proud to congratulate the Huwa family for their excellent conservation efforts.

Dodo Family West Elk Ranch--Conservation Ranchers of the Year



Sideroll sprinkler, one of many conservation measures, installed on West Elk Ranch.

CACD has selected the West Elk Ranch near New Castle as our Conservation Ranch of the Year. It is operated by the Dodo and Dodero families.

Sponsored by the Bookcliff Conservation District in the Colorado River Watershed, West Elk Ranch has been committed to conservation since the ranch patriarch Ralph Dodo purchased the ranch in the 1920's. Over the most recent twenty years the ranch has installed thousands of feet of underground pipeline, twenty-nine sideroll sprinklers and three big guns for water conservation and to increase hay and pasture production. This year they have put up 1206 ½ tons of hay for their large cattle operation.

The Dodo and Dodero families have installed watering troughs to help manage livestock and over two miles

of wildlife friendly fence on the high country property. Over the last ten years they have installed sideroll irrigation systems on most of the irrigated fields to improve production. They have completed most of the work without cost share. They currently have an EQIP project to install 725 feet of pipe on one field and an additional 2700 feet of pipe to eliminate a leaky ditch to improve irrigation water management.

In addition to their busy ranch business, they volunteer on several boards and associations and are always eager to lend a hand when called upon to help educate students and teachers on ranching and agriculture. They are very important and valuable members of this community. Congratulations to the Dodo and Dodero families of West Elk Ranch in New Castle, CO.



First Contract Signed in Limestone-Graveyard Creeks Watershed Using American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 Funds

Article prepared for CACD by Mary Miller, La Junta

The first contract in the Limestone-Graveyard Creeks Watershed Project using American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009



Felipe Padilla, second from right, watches NRCS Area Conservationist John Knapp sign an NRCS contract for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds to be used for improvements to Padilla's farm. District conservationist Dave Miller (L) and State conservationist Allen Green (R) look on.

dollars was recently signed by John Knapp, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Area Conservationist, La Junta, Colo. The project area is in Bent and Prowers counties.

Earlier this year Secretary of Agriculture Vilsack announced over \$3.6 million in assistance to improve water quality, increase water supply, decrease soil erosion, and improve fish and wildlife habitat in rural communities of Colorado as a result of President Obama's ARRA of 2009. A total of five Colorado watershed projects were approved for funding, including the Limestone-Graveyard Creeks Watershed Project in the Las Animas and Lamar areas which will receive approximately \$150,000.

The project area encompasses approximately 60,000 acres in the two counties. The conservation practices installed will help improve water quality, improve irrigation system efficiencies, and reduce irrigation-induced erosion.

"We are very pleased that the

Limestone-Graveyard Creeks Watershed Project was one of the five watersheds in Colorado to receive funding," states Knapp.

NRCS is a federal agency within the Department of Agriculture which manages and administers the technical and financial assistance for these watershed projects.

The funds for these watershed projects go directly to the producers. Money will be spent locally for materials and contractors which will help local Southeastern Colorado community economies.

When the projects are completed the local area will be significantly impacted. Research

indicates that watershed improvement measures in this project will result in the reduction of sediment transported into the Arkansas River by approximately 39,000 tons per year. There will also be a significant reduction of nitrates, selenium, and salts leached into surface and groundwater sources within the watersheds.

NRCS partners in the Limestone-Graveyard Creeks Watershed are the Bent and Prowers Conservation Districts as well as the Fort Lyon Canal Company and the Colorado State Conservation Board.

For additional information about the Limestone-Graveyard Creeks Watershed Project, contact Cindy Schleining, Las Animas field office, at 719-456-0120 ext. 3 or Susan Hansen, Lamar field office, at 719-336-9059 ext. 3.

Funding provided through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of is part of the Obama Administration's plans to modernize the nation's infrastructure, jumpstart the economy, and create jobs.

Turkey Creek CD Noxious Weed Program

Prepared for CACD by Bill Alt, Turkey Creek District Supervisor

On December 23, 2008 the Pueblo Board of County Commissioners and the Turkey Creek Conservation District signed an Intergovernmental Agreement assigning the District responsibility for managing the control of noxious weeds on unincorporated private lands in Pueblo County. This agreement is Pueblo County's latest action to comply with the mandate of the Colorado Noxious Weed Act passed by the state legislature in 2003.

While the county was in the process of finding a replacement Weed Coordinator, Turkey Creek Conservation District approached the County Commissioners with a unique and detailed plan for managing control of noxious weeds. Under this concept, bound by the conditions listed in the Intergovernmental Agreement, Turkey Creek would take the responsibility for managing weed control and report directly to the County Commissioners.

To fund the program the county has compensated the District with approximately the same amount of money they would have paid a Weed Coordinator. This gave Turkey Creek excellent leveraging opportunities for acquiring cost share grants from the state and federal sources. Already, using county funds as seed money, Turkey Creek has been awarded a cash grant of \$25,000 from the Colorado State Conservation Board's Matching Grants Program which can only be spent on cost

share with landowners for control of noxious weeds listed on the county's noxious weed lists.

The Turkey Creek Board of Supervisors will promote the new weed control program and emphasize the incentives of making professional help available to landowners. In addition, the Board will be picking up 50% of the cost (limit \$1000.00 per applicant) for as long as the money lasts. While the state law and corresponding county Ordinance 15 can force landowners to control their weeds, it is Turkey Creek's plan to make the control of weeds a voluntary, cooperative effort. The District Board of Supervisors is convinced this is a win-win plan for both the county and the landowner—and, of course, the environment.

Leafy spurge and yellow star thistle, along with a host of others, can be found in Pueblo County. Leafy spurge can be found in many parts of the county with the largest infestations in Beulah, Rye, Colorado City and Avondale. Fortunately, yellow star thistle has been found in only one location and is believed to be controlled although it will have to be closely watched for the next fourteen years.

Landowners are encouraged to take advantage of cost share money available this year. If interested, contact the Turkey Creek Conservation District for further information. Phone: 719-543-8386 x116 or visit their web: puebloweeds.com

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npscolorado.com is supported by a Colorado NPS Project from the Water Quality Control Division, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

La Plata County Residents

... Western Regional Tree Farmers

Info for this story provided to
CACD by the Colorado State
Forest Service

For many years, Ken and Lois Carpenter vacationed at Lois' family property in Vallecito, Colo., a picturesque resort and lake surrounded by the San Juan National Forest in La Plata County, approximately 22 miles northeast of Durango. In 1976, they acquired the property from Lois' parents. They could not imagine then how their memories and love for the area would unfold.

This year, the Carpenters received the distinguished 2009 Western Regional Tree Farmer of the Year Award for their exemplary accomplishments in forest management on their 157-woodland acre tree farm, now called Pine Song.

The Carpenters' award marks only the second time in recorded history that Coloradans received the western regional award; Tom and Mary Bender of Larimer County were the first to receive the award, an honor bestowed on them in 1996. The Western Region of the American Tree Farm System (ATFS) includes California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, South Dakota and Washington. Approximately 3,300 forest landowners participate as tree farmers in the western region; more than 90,000 ATFS members participate nationwide.

Dan Wand, assistant district forester with the Durango District of the Colorado State Forest Service, nominated the Carpenters for the Western Regional Tree Farmer Award. In previous years, the Carpenters also won the 2007 Colorado Outstanding Tree Farmers and 2005 San Juan Outstanding Tree Farmers awards. Together, the three awards attest to this couple's perpetual hard work and reflects their devotion to forest stewardship.

Wand says the Carpenters are deeply rooted in their endeavors to improve their forest. "It's a pure pleasure and honor to work with forest landowners like Ken and Lois



Lois and Ken Carpenter at their home on the Pine Song Tree Farm

who are so passionate about nurturing their forest and serving their community, and exemplify a strong stewardship ethic."

In 1977, the Carpenters embarked on their first forest management project when they began building a vacation home. Dick Berkholz, then CSFS Durango District forester, helped them develop a plan to thin 10 acres for defensible space to help reduce wildfire hazard around the home site.

In 1995, they met with Wand who suggested they contact a consulting forester. Berkholz, retired from the CSFS and now a consulting forester, again was available to help them develop a forest management plan.

THE PLAN

The Carpenter's goals were to produce tangible wood products and restore their forest to a healthy condition. With this in mind, Berkholz surveyed forest conditions and divided the property into eight management tracts that considered various forest and topographic features. He developed a 20-year program for commercial and non-commercial thinning for saw timber, firewood, weed control and tree planting. "At this point, we were ready to roll up our sleeves and work on our forest," says Ken Carpenter.

MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

In 1996, the Carpenters contracted with a logger to cut and sell saw timber. The next year, they planted 1,800 ponderosa pine seedlings. Following their management plan, they continue to plant seedlings, and work on annual weed control, commercial and non-commercial thinning for firewood.

During this time, Wand dis-

cussed the American Tree Farm System with the Carpenters and explained the organization's four principals of sustainable forestry - wood, water, recreation and wildlife. They were pleased to learn that the ATFS not only focused on wood-products development, but also placed a high value on water, recreation and wildlife. It was a perfect match. In 1997, the Carpenters became certified members of the American Tree Farm System.

They moved forward and shifted their emphasis to an overall plan that incorporated these four principal ATFS activities. The Carpenters had plenty of wood, a large river bisecting the property, a great environment for recreation and an abundant wildlife population.

Before the Carpenters finally moved to Pine Song as full-time residents in 2000, they were happy with the progress they had made. However, instead of relaxing during their retirement, Ken says, "We sowed the seeds, so to speak, and have never regretted our decision to



work hard to properly manage our forest."

THE UNEXPECTED

The Carpenters already had started to implement their forest management plan when the 2002 Missionary Ridge Fire struck the Vallecito Valley.

The fire burned 80 acres at Pine Song, scorching vegetation within 100 feet of the Carpenters' home. Parts of the property received beneficial effects associated with a low-intensity surface fire, while other acreage on the property suffered from a high-intensity crown fire.

"It was a life-changing experience," said Ken and Lois in unison. Still, they did not surrender to the destruction, but instead persevered. They took on additional work to restore their property and the river from the fire.

This summer, the Carpenters held an event for fellow forest landowners at their Pine Song Ranch pavilion. Attendees included local forest landowners, San Juan Basin Tree Farm members and Colorado State Tree Farm Committee members. Later, a field tour of the property revealed the many forest man-



A dead tree trunk stands after the Missionary Ridge Fire burned the area. Seedling trees planted by the Carpenters will help regenerate the forest landscape.

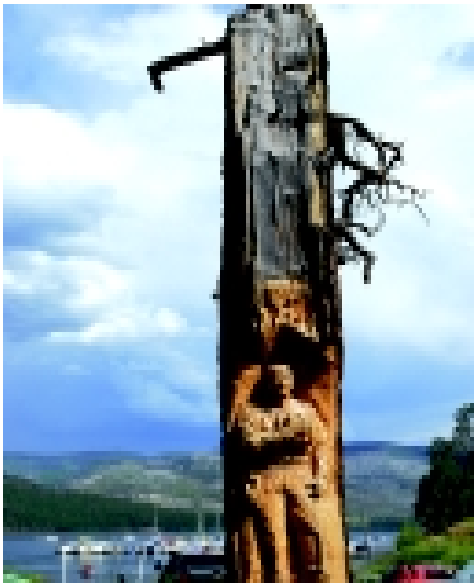


A view of a restored section of the Carpenter's property. The Vallecito Dam spillway into the Pine River is in the background.

agement activities the Carpenters initiated before and after the 2002 Missionary Ridge Fire.

Bud Halldorson, chair of the Colorado State Tree Farm Committee, attended the event. "The Committee is extremely proud that Ken and Lois have been selected as the 2009 Western Regional Outstanding Tree Farmers of the Year," he says. "The Carpenters truly reflect the image that all of us strive for in our participation in the American Tree Farm System."

During the event, the Carpenters



The Alan Wyatt memorial wood carving, one of 15 on the "Tour of Carvings" created to honor firefighters who risked their lives to protect the Vallecito community.

conducted a tour of their property, showing areas burned by the fire and those in process of restoration. On the opposite side of the Pine River, upstream from the meeting pavilion, stood a single dead, blackened tree trunk where a dense forest once stood. The dead fir tree had exploded when the wildfire crept down from the dam to their property. The trunk left by the Carpenters serves as a landmark. The seedling trees the Carpenters planted brought life back to the area.

Ken noted that from this point the fire jumped the river, igniting the forest within 100 feet of their home. Fortunately, it burned away from their home, yet progressed toward the Vallecito Dam spillway, on the northern-most side of their property. A walk between the house and the spillway reveals occasional scorched, decomposing chunks of logs that were intentionally left by the Carpenters. The log chunks lie among newly sprouted ponderosa pine and a mixture of wildflowers, signs that the land is naturally restoring itself.

After the wildfire, the Bureau of Reclamation and Pine River Irrigation District anticipated significant runoff from future rains. The agencies worked with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to widen and change the course of Jack Creek, a sporadic stream located below the Vallecito Dam and spillway that converges with the Pine River. After the first attempt failed to stop massive post-fire sediment from flowing into the river, the Carpenters allowed them to build a small pond on their property. They then approached the three agencies to devise a plan. A logging company cut and removed all saw timber and used burned trees to construct a horse-shoe-shaped barrier on the Carpenter's land to catch and distribute silt from future storms. Five years later, they removed the barrier and spread the three feet of silt over five acres of land adjacent to the creek. They reconstructed the Jack Creek streambed with boulders, lined the creek with young cottonwood trees and planted 200 spruce and ponderosa pine trees. Most recently, they planted 500 seedlings among the taller trees.

The rains also impacted Red Rock Canyon, a 20-foot deep ravine

located in the southeast corner of the Carpenter's property. The rains in the aftermath of the fire also dislodged tons of boulders and several 100-foot tall trees, bringing them down the ravine and blocking the Pine River.

The Carpenters developed a plan with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to remove the rocks, trees and other debris from the river and moved them into an abandoned gravel pit 100 feet away from the river. After cleaning up the river, they replaced the giant boulders, some of which weighed several tons, to restore the stream bed as close as possible to its natural state.

BACK TO THE GOALS

Despite the Carpenter's unexpected involvement with the problems left behind from the Missionary Ridge Fire, they didn't lose sight of their primary effort to develop a diverse and sustainable forested tree farm. They now focused on preventing future wildfire hazards on the property. They contracted with a fire mitigation company to use a hydro-axe on about 22 acres of the tree farm to remove brush. This opened up an area where increased sunlight could develop more native grasses and meadows.

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

As president of the Vallecito Community Council, Ken organized volunteers to assist with cleanup, erosion and weed control around the lake.

Ken also helped the council raise funds for 15 carvings to honor the 4,000 firefighters and support groups who risked their lives to protect the area's homes and businesses. One carving memorialized the life of Alan Wyatt, a tree faller who tragically lost his life fighting the fire.



Dan Wand and Lois Carpenter during the summer tour of Pine Song.

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CACD LADIES AUXILIARY INFO

Annual Meeting of the Auxiliary:

What: Formal Business Meeting (Old Business, New Business; Discussion of By-law changes, Financial Report, etc.); Participate in making a Christmas craft.
Where: Beaver Run Resort, Room TBA
When: Tuesday, November 17, 2009 3:15 to 4:30 PM

Auxiliary Luncheon:

What: Luncheon for all auxiliary members and all District Employees
Where: Beaver Run Resort, Room TBA
When: Wednesday, November 18, 2009: 12:00 Noon
(Please contact Darlene Jensen if you will be able to join us)

Silent Auction:

What: Primary fund-raiser to support Auxiliary programs and scholarships. We are requesting that each Conservation District donate one to three items for the Silent Auction. These can range from a craft item to something unique and specific to your area of Colorado. Any item that either male or female would enjoy. (Donations are tax-deductible).
Where: Beaver Run Resort, Room TBA
When: Tuesday, November 17 @ 11:00 AM through Wednesday, November 18 (4:30 PM).
(Please have your auction items dropped off for display by 8:00 AM, Tuesday, November 17)

Raffle:

What: Raffle to raise funds for Camp Rocky scholarships. Raffle items include the NACD Quilt for 2009, our theme is (Soil-Dig It!) and special items donated by the Upper Arkansas Watershed of Conservation Districts.
Where: Purchase raffle tickets at Silent Auction site TBA and during Convention Banquet.
When: Winners will be announced during the Banquet.

For additional information, contact Sally Fosha (719) 347-2785 or Darlene Jensen (719) 686-0020.

Annual Meeting continued from page 1

ancy, has become an expensive concern for many districts, due to the amount of insurance required to provide financial protection for districts against potential future claims, and the costs associated with the restoration or upkeep of the dams. Colorado is one many states impacted by dated watershed dams and solutions are being sought by conservation partners.

The Watersheds have taken the opportunity to meet this fall and pass resolutions out of the Watershed and onto the Committee. The resolutions have been assigned to their respective Committee. There are several resolutions addressing land use and district outlook, with the balance of resolutions addressing waterway management and water quality, forest management and ag education. This is your opportunity to speak to your partners around the state on the subjects

of interest in resolutions, which create policy and address local through national items. Conservation Districts will have received copies of the resolutions prior to the Annual Meeting.

The conference will not be all business, as time to network with peers and partners as well as a time to reflect on the year's challenges and successes is a significant part of the annual meeting. Much of what is learned comes just from conversations amongst the conference participants with one another. As last year the welcome reception and the luau (held in place of a band and a dance) went over so big, the conference will again be hosting these casual networking opportunities.

This year to help with all of the awards being presented in one short day, the schedule has the Awards Luncheon on Tuesday and the Awards Banquet on Wednesday evening. This may give presenters and recipients alike the opportunity to enjoy more of the conference. The LIVE AUCTION will be immediately after the Awards Banquet. The live auction continues to generate much appreciated funds for conservation education programs, for youth and conservation leaders. The SILENT AUCTION also continues to be successfully hosted by the Ladies Auxiliary.

Thanks for Your Response to Conservator

Thank you to the many folks who responded with your emails to receive the Conservator by email to help reduce the cost of printing and mailing. Many folks however have limited ability to receive the Conservator by email. CACD is reviewing the costs of the printing and mailing of the Conservator and is looking at continuing the Conservator in print every other issue with circulation to 8,000 recipients statewide, and then making the Conservator available by email, website and hard copy upon request for two of the issues each year. At least until funding to support the total annual cost of printing, mailing and editing (\$24,000) can again be attained. Your suggestions continue to be welcomed.

Year after year the Auxiliary has supported conservation education and for the everlasting years of support to spouses dedicated to their work on behalf of producers, CACD is hosting an appreciation luncheon to say thank you to the Auxiliary.

After the engaging breakout Sessions conclude on Tuesday evening, CACD will again recognize all of its partners in conservation, hosting a Partner Appreciation Network Reception, for continuing to help producers and landowners succeed in putting conservation on-the-ground.

To close the Awards Banquet on Wednesday evening, presentations will be made for the Conservationist Rancher of the Year, and the Conservationist Farmer of the Year. This year's nominations are exceptionally competitive with significant conservation practices.

The theme of this year's conference is: *Conservation College; Higher Education in Natural Resource Management*. You will enjoy this conference, and the education and instruction you will receive will have lasting impact in your work and in your life. Although challenged budgets are of greater consideration this year, you will find the funds well spent in attending this conference. CACD hopes to see you there. Please see the CACD website for all registration, lodging and conference forms and information. www.cacd.us

CACD Individual Memberships

Colorado Association of Conservation Districts (CACD) provides guidance for individual conservation districts and promotes conservation at state and national levels. Today there are 76 conservation districts in Colorado which represent the landowners and producers statewide in natural resources management matters. CACD is a member of the National Association of Conservation Districts, representing 3,000 conservation districts nationwide.

We hear from landowners that the many programs and activities of CACD are essential to supporting the conservation movement, yet we realize it cannot be done alone. CACD is working to attract corporate and foundation sponsorships and individual members. CACD is working toward increasing sponsorship for the CACD Annual Meeting, Camp Rocky, and other programs, and is active in communicating with your legislators on issues important to the conservation districts and landowners on the wise use of natural resources in Colorado.

As you know, there is a cost for development of these programs and CACD is asking for your help to continue in its efforts on behalf of the conservation districts and landowners of Colorado. A \$35 individual membership from you and your conservation partners will assist in funding the long-standing work of this organization. You can play an important leadership role at this time by becoming an individual CACD member and making an investment in an organization which has provided an independent voice for the conservation districts since 1945.

CACD is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. We encourage you to complete the form for your individual membership or sponsorship to CACD and become a part of the natural resource conservation movement in Colorado. For further details on CACD please visit www.cacd.us.

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<small>(Break sponsors welcome at all levels; share in break sponsorships \$125 each welcomed)</small>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Exhibit Booth (includes booth space and one full registration to conference)	\$ 300

CACD is a Colorado 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions are fully tax deductible. Please see www.cacd.us for sponsorship details and forms.

Sponsor Benefits

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Conference Benefits:

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- Two (2) VIP Awards Banquet Tickets

Marketing and Membership Benefits:

- Four advertisements in the *Colorado Conservator*
- CACD Membership
- *Colorado Conservator* Subscriptions
- Ad and Website Link on CACD Website
- Presenting Sponsor Recognition on CACD website
- Presenting Sponsor Plaque

SILVER SPONSOR - \$ 500

Conference Benefits:

- Booth Space in Exhibit Hall
- One (1) Registration
- One (1) Awards Luncheon Ticket

Marketing and Membership Benefits:

- CACD Membership
- *Colorado Conservator* Subscription and One Ad
- Sponsor Recognition on the CACD website
- Sponsor Plaque

EXHIBITOR - \$300

- > One (1) Registration
- > Booth Space in Exhibit Hall

BREAK SPONSOR - \$500-\$1,000

- > Booth Space in Exhibit Hall
- > Literature recognition at break stations