



BUTTE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Serving Butte and Southern Custer Counties since 1953

Scholarships Awarded to Local Youth

The Butte Soil and Water Conservation District was honored to award the first annual Jeff Isham Memorial Scholarships to Alyssa Hawley and Tannabe Cecil. Named in honor of long-time board member Jeff Isham who served on the District board from 1989 – 2020, the \$500 scholarships will be applied towards their college expenses this Fall. Alyssa Hawley is a Senior at Mackay High School where she has a 4.0 GPA. Alyssa has been involved in high school sports, student council, the 4-H Robotics team, and the Butte SWCD's Envirothon Team. She has been accepted to attend Idaho State University this Fall and plans to become a physical therapist assistant. When asked why natural resource conservation is important, Alyssa stated, "Conservation efforts play a vital role in



Tannabe Cecil, board member Hayden Isham, and Alyssa Hawley

sustainable management and preservation of natural resources and ecosystems to ensure they are around for generations. By protecting the environment, wildlife, promoting sustainable resource use while stopping pollution, conservationists are able to keep the balance between human activities and environmental protection. Through practices such as establishing protected areas, habitat restoration, sustainable management, and wildlife conservation the Earth can continue to thrive and grow. It is important people continue

to prioritize conservation to ensure the long-term health of our planet." Tannabe Cecil is a Spring graduate of Cornerstone Academy and has been dually enrolled in the College of Eastern Idaho. She will attend Idaho State University in the Fall to complete a Bachelor of Science degree in biology and Dental Hygiene program. Tannabe has been involved with the Butte SWCD's youth activities for several years, taking part in the annual speech contests. This year Tannabe has also served as the volunteer Envirothon Team advisor. Tannabe has been involved with high school golf, 4-H Straight Shooters club, and was an Idaho Science and Aerospace Scholar (NASA). When asked why natural resource conservation is important, Tannabe stated, "At its core, conservation is an issue of respect. When we recognize the value of land, its diverse systems and ability to provide for our lives, it is impossible not to develop respect for the amazing responsibility of caring for what has been entrusted to us. In Psalm 24:1 it says, "the earth is the Lord's, and everything in it." As caretakers through conservation, it is humbling to realize how blessed we are to be able to enjoy and protect our environment for future generations."

New Study Highlights Importance of Farm Ground for Sandhill Cranes

In a 2024 study, researchers investigated the critical role of flood-irrigated agriculture in mitigating the impact of climate-induced wetland scarcity on summering sandhill cranes in western North America.



Can you spot these two Sandhill Cranes up Antelope? Excellent camouflage!

These birds rely on wetlands during their breeding season, but changing climate patterns threaten these vital habitats. The research highlights how flood-irrigated grass hay meadows, commonly found in agricultural landscapes, serve as crucial stopover sites for cranes. These meadows provide nesting areas and sustenance for both adult cranes and their colts. By maintaining and conserving these irrigated habitats, farmers play an essential role in supporting sandhill crane

populations. The study underscores the delicate balance between agriculture and wildlife conservation, emphasizing the need to protect these interconnected

ecosystems. (Literature Cited: Flood-irrigated agriculture mediates climate-induced wetland scarcity for summering sandhill cranes in western North America. Donnelly, J.P., et al., 2024.)

New NRCS Staff

The Arco NRCS recently hired Tricia Rogers as a soil conservation technician.



Tricia Rogers

Tricia will play a pivotal role in assisting landowners with their conservation plans. Her responsibilities will include collaborating with landowners to develop conservation plans, conducting fieldwork to assess soil health, erosion control, and land use practices, and monitoring conservation efforts to ensure compliance with best practices. Tricia's agricultural roots trace back to her upbringing on a farm in Nebraska.

She holds a degree in Agribusiness from Southeast Community College in Beatrice, Nebraska. Her practical experience includes work with confined animal feeding operations and farrowing practices. Tricia is a devoted mother of four daughters and resides in Mackay. Welcome Tricia!

TA Grant Renewed

The Butte and Blaine SWCDs renewed their technical assistance grant awarded by the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD). This will be the sixth year of the award that provides an employee in the Arco NRCS field office. This year's award will focus on providing engineering assistance to NRCS engineers and landowners. The current TA employee, Timothy Barnes, will be filling the role. Timothy holds a M.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering from New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology. For more information about the NACD, visit nacdn.net.

Arbor Day Celebrated

The District's Envirothon Team coordinated an Arbor Day Celebration for area residents. The Team distributed flyers and coordinated a tree seedling giveaway. They



The Envirothon Team and Team Advisor Tannabe Cecil

were able to distribute 200 blue spruce seedlings to residents. A special thank you to the Idaho Forest Products Commission for supplying the seedlings.

Envirothon Team Competes in Challis

This year's Envirothon Team included Hesston Beck, Garrett Beck, Josiah Cecil, Eliana Cecil, Trista Hawley, and Scarlett MacConnell. The students met several times between February

and April and learned from guest speakers about natural resource conservation. The Team also coordinated a community project and distributed trees and educational material to area residents for Arbor Day. They competed in the State level contest held April 29th & 30th in Challis where they took exams over natural resource related topics covering soils/land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, and wildlife. The group also

prepared a presentation over this year's special topic "Renewable Energy for a Sustainable Future". The Team ranked 6th overall and won the Rookie Team Award! We are so proud of the Team and would like to thank our volunteer Team Advisor Tannabe Cecil for coordinating the Team's activities and guest speakers. More information about Idaho Envirothon can be found at www.idahoenvirothon.weebly.com.



Hesston Beck, Garrett Beck, Josiah Cecil, Eliana Cecil, Team Advisor Tannabe Cecil, Trista Hawley, and Scarlett MacConnell

Butte SWCD
P.O. Box 819
Arco, ID 83213

Butte SWCD Board of Directors

Randy Purser	Chairman
Walt Johnson	Vice-Chairman
Todd Perkes	Treasurer
Mark Telford	Member
Hayden Isham	Member

Butte SWCD Staff

Mindy Hawley	Outreach Coordinator
Stephanie Barnes	Administrative Assistant
Timothy Barnes	NACD Engineering Technician

NRCS Staff

Jesse Fullmer	Team Lead
Berett Rosenkrance	Range Mgm't Specialist
Sara Zollinger	Soil Conservationist
Tricia Rogers	Natural Resource Technician

In This Issue:

Scholarship Awards.....	1
New NRCS Staff.....	2
Envirothon Team.....	3