

FOSTER COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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"Fostering" Our Natural Resources



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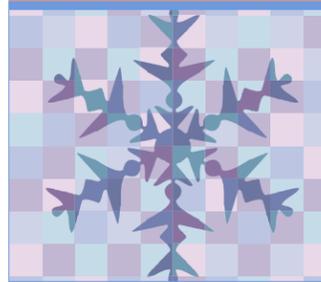
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FOSTER COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Conservation Communicator

Cody Montgomery Joins SCD Board

My name is Cody Montgomery and I am excited to be your newly elected Foster County Soil Conservation Board Supervisor. I was born and raised on our family farm southwest of Carrington before attending NDSU to major in Ag Systems Management, and minoring in Animal Science and Ag Economics. Shortly after graduation I began working for Titan Machinery, where I am currently still employed at the Jamestown location.

Almost two years ago my wife, Kim, and I decided to move back to the Carrington area to reside in a smaller town and become more involved on the family ranch. We have most recently welcomed our first child, Layne to the family and are still adapting to having a new boss in the house. In our time back on the ranch, we have become more aware of the need for conservation and the unique programs that are provided that encourage these practices. This led me to become interested in the vacant position on the supervisory board.

I would like to thank everyone for their votes, and look forward to promoting conservation and how programs can be tailored to assist producers in preserving our natural resources while still remaining economically viable.



Foster County SCD 2015 Supervisors, Advisors and Staff

Chairman Curtiss Klein	701-653-5708
Vice Chair Robert House	674-3606
Supervisor Cody Montgomery	652-5397
Supervisor Karl Hoppe	650-8810
Supervisor Marie Pozarnsky	652-1169
Acting NRCS District Conservationist Paul DuBourt	652-2551 Ext 101
Soil Con. Tech. Nichole Johnson	Ext 112
SCD Manager Dionn Schaaf	Ext 102
SCD 319 Coord. Brandon Schafer	Ext.113
SCD Ed. Coordinator Jill Vigasaa	701-799-5488
Foster County Extension Agent Joel Lemer	652-2581

Till it to me Straight....

- Foster County Soil Conservation District Board meetings are tentatively scheduled for 9:30 a.m. February 9, March 9, and April 13 (2nd Mondays). Please contact the district office at 652-2551 to confirm dates and times.
- USDA Service Center will be closed for President's Day on February 16.
- "Talking Dirt" on KDAK (1600 AM) will be at 8:20 am on February 4, March 4, and April 1 (first Wednesdays).
- Women's Ag Day has been scheduled for Thursday, April 9.

NDCDEA Offers Scholarship

The North Dakota Conservation District Employees Association (NDCDEA) established a scholarship for high school and college students interested in pursuing conservation education. The scholarship is open to high school seniors and college students who are residents of North Dakota and intend to or are currently pursuing an agricultural/natural resource management/environmental or related field at a two or four year university in the state of North Dakota. One scholarship will be awarded in the amount of \$1000.

Interested applicants are required to complete the application form and compose an essay of no more than 500 words on a topic chosen by the NDCDEA. Applicant will need to maintain at least a 2.5 GPA and be a full time student. Scholarship will be paid after the President of the Association receives the previous semester transcript, the \$1000 will be sent to the school of attendance, unless the recipient is a graduating college senior, then the scholarship monies will be paid directly to the recipient. If the scholarship winner does not maintain the 2.5 GPA, the second place qualifier will be awarded the \$1000. Applications and essays must be mailed by **March 7th, 2015**. Essays will be judged by the NDCDEA board of directors. The scholarship winner will be notified following the selection.

For further information and application materials, please contact the Soil Conservation District.



Rotational Grazing Systems and Livestock Water Developments

Rotational grazing is periodically moving livestock to fresh paddocks, to allow pastures to regrow. It requires skillful decisions and close monitoring of their consequences. Feed costs decline and animal health improves when animals harvest their own feed in a well-managed rotational grazing system.

More and more cattle producers are taking advantage of the new technology involving water developments. Take a look below and see what is being done. Cross-fencing range and pasture allows producers to harvest their grass crop by grazing livestock for a certain period of time, at a different season of use, each year. This allows plants to regrow and produce more leaf with higher protein levels thus putting extra pounds on the livestock being grazed.

The **Watershed Project** is able to provide engineering and financial assistance (60%) for:

- multiple wire electric fence
- barbed wire fence
- pasture and hayland plantings
- range plantings
- stock ponds
- spring developments
- pipelines
- troughs and tanks

These practices usually require a prescribed grazing plan.

By doing an intensive grazing plan, grazing efficiency improves. More plant matter goes into the animal while giving greater rest periods to allow pastures to regenerate. This can allow producers to increase their herd capacity.

Please feel free to stop by the office or call Brandon about any of these projects you may be considering at 652-2551.



Pipeline Installation



Solar-Powered Wells



Cement Corner Posts



Spring Developments

Living Snow Fence

Do you have a piece of road where drifting snow is often a problem or blowing snow tends to make travel more hazardous in a storm? Have you considered planting a living snow fence to improve the situation?

Blowing and drifting snow is a perennial winter problem on North Dakota roads. It can lead to road closures and accidents, and snow removal is often a major expense for the state, counties, and townships.

Living Snow Fence refers to plantings of trees, shrubs, or other vegetation along roads to control the effect of snow on those roads. They can also be used to protect farmsteads and communities. These windbreaks reduce wind speeds and control where snow will be deposited. Properly positioned and designed living snow fence can:

- Help prevent large snow drifts on the road and road closures
- Improve visibility during ground blizzards, decreasing vehicle accidents, and
- Reduce the amount of snow removal required, saving the public money

Living snow fence can also be planned to have other functions, such as soil erosion control, livestock protection, or protection for crops to improve yields.

Field windbreaks can also be used to control the effect of snow on roads. These can be designed either to spread snow evenly across fields, or to help confine it in a relatively small area.

Most living snow fence is planted on the north or west side of the road. For these, the most windward row in a living snow fence needs to be at least 200 feet from the edge of road to be effective, and the leeward row should be no closer than 100 feet. Living snow fences act by slowing the wind down to the point that it drops the snow that it's carrying in and behind them. The area downwind of where the snow is deposited is protected until the wind picks up more snow, but windbreaks placed too close to the road are likely to cause snow deposition problems rather than solving them. Taller windbreaks capture more snow – doubling the height quadruples the amount of snow captured by a windbreak. Planning for vegetation density of 50% is often best to capture and store the most snow. Multiple rows are encouraged, but living snow fence is often planted as a two-row shelterbelt or even sometimes a single row of conifers or suckering shrubs where conditions are suitable.

For assistance with tree orders and tree plans, please stop in or contact our office at 652-2551.

Remember the Date!

We have just begun planning for the 2015 Women's Ag Day. We have tentatively scheduled the event for **Thursday, April 9**. If anyone is interested in joining the Women's Ag Day Committee to assist with planning and preparation, please contact the SCD office at 652-2551 ext.

Promoting Living Soil

In the past, people have thought of soil as "just dirt," but now we know that soil is alive. It is full of organisms that help it better perform its functions. These functions include agricultural production in both crop and range land. Healthy soils provide an environment that supports these organisms, which then assist with nutrient cycling and water management.

The NRCS lists four basic practices for maintaining soil health by providing a better environment for soil organisms:

Disturb the Soil Less. Soil disturbance like tillage breaks up the soil structure, reduces organic matter, and increases compaction. All of these make it more difficult for soil organisms to survive and help support the plants growing in the soil. Misapplication of chemicals can also affect soil organisms. Promoting those organisms can help to decrease the need for inputs.

Promote Plant Diversity. Biodiversity is important in any agricultural system. Diverse plants lead to a diverse and fully functioning soil food web. Lack of diversity limits the potential to produce and increases disease and pest problems. Diversity can be increased through a more diverse crop rotation and through the inclusion of cover crops. It is suggested that a rotation include at least three crops. Cover crops can help increase diversity to include both grasses and broadleaf plants and both warm and cool season plants.

Keep Living Roots Growing. Plants and soil organisms have a symbiotic relationship. The plants provide food to soil microbes, which reciprocate by bringing the plant water and nutrients it couldn't reach on its own. This occurs in an area around the roots called the rhizosphere. Living roots keep an active soil environment, which means there will be more soil organisms available to help support the next crop. The organic matter from recently dead roots and crop residue help support them during the winter when crops can't grow.

Keep the Soil Covered. Living or dead, soil cover conserves moisture, reduces soil temperature, reduces the impact of raindrops (preventing compaction and breakdown of soil aggregates), suppresses weed growth, and provides habitat for members of the soil food web that spend at least some of their time above ground. Decomposition of crop residues also provides organic matter and nutrients.

Besides supporting soil organisms, these management choices also affect other soil quality factors. Better soil aggregation and less compaction mean better water infiltration and less trouble with standing or runoff water. Increased organic matter also improves soil's water holding capacity and nutrient levels.



There are more individual organisms in a teaspoon of soil than there are people on the Earth.

The value of the services provided by soil organisms is estimated to be \$1.5 trillion per year (2011).