

CONSERVATION NEWS

McCONE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Circle Kids 4th-6th Grade Class Trip

Missouri-Yellowstone Confluence Interpretative Center

Fort Buford State Historic Site

May 24, 2016

VOLUME 16, ISSUE 6: JUNE 2016

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We were greeted with another sunny day as we traveled to North Dakota May 24th. While visiting the Interpretative Center and Fort Buford, we learned about the joining of two rivers or "confluence" of the Missouri and Yellowstone; area paleontology; and frontier, military and Native American history.

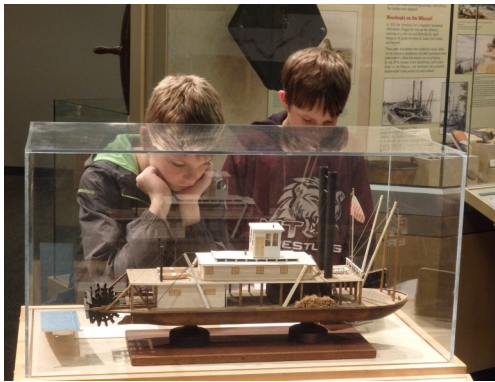
Did you know? A record paddlefish was caught at the Confluence that weighed a 101 or 110 pounds (depends on who was telling the story!) and produced 24 pounds of caviar worth **\$10,000!**

Did you know? Fort Buford is the site of Sitting Bull's surrender in 1881.

Did you know? Fort Buford will celebrate its sesquicentennial this year. Sesquicentennial = 150 years!

"...I walked down and joined the party at their encampment on the point of land framed by the junction of the rivers; found them all in good health, and much pleased at having arrived at this long wished spot ..."

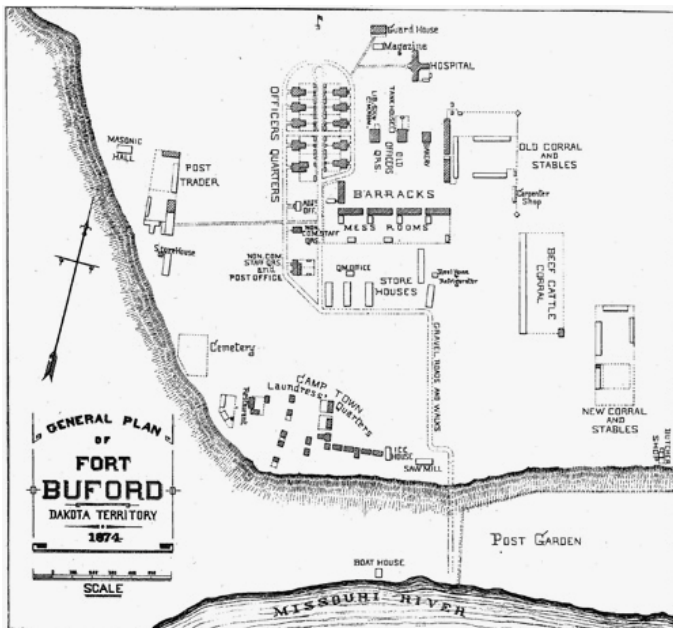
Meriwether Lewis, April 26th, 1805



A scavenger hunt, map reading ... and then lunch



Then off to Fort Buford . . . to see the barracks and the 1st Sergeant's room with its horse-skin rug; Officer's quarters & to peer down the barrel of a cannon . . .



←1874 Map

In 2016, the original features that still exist include a stone powder magazine, a large Officer's quarters building, and the post cemetery site.

You could also tour a replica building of the soldiers' barracks that includes the 1st Sergeant's room, soldiers' billet, mess hall and kitchen.

Straw Bale Gardening Project

May 2016



Upper left: Pallet fence: 3 pallet per side. Behind it, early blooming lilacs

Lower left: Bales ready to be planted

Right: Middle row planted with cherry tomato, basil, lettuce, bok choy, Swiss chard and kale



By Mary Hendrix

It's early spring and the Straw Bale Gardening Project is set- up and ready to go.

Each straw bale was watered with the hose and then thoroughly soaked in the recent rains (almost 2" in 2 days per my backyard rain gauge). Thank you Mother Nature! It was also amended with organic fertilizer in the pre-planting stage.

Before it was time to plant, the bales were inspected and found to be cool to the touch, but surprisingly intact. My expectation was a more pliable growing medium, maybe more mushy, but then it's straw! There was also quite a bit of volunteer wheat. I've decided to clear the surface, but should wheat grow around the bale, I plan to leave it there for a fuzzy green look. 🌱🌱🌱

On May 18th, about 2 inches of top soil was carefully added to the top of each bale. Two cherry tomato plants (one red and one golden) were planted in cages. Next, complimentary plants—basil was planted with them.

Seeds were also planted: Kale, lettuce, Swiss chard, green zucchini, spinach, bok choy, and two different types of sunflowers.

On May 20-21, the wind blew very hard. The poor basil was ready to surrender and lay down permanently. As of today (5/23), they are still reclining on the soil. May 25-26 . . . the rain continues, but the basil is springing up :)

In June, I am planning on planting: Japanese eggplant, yellow zucchini, and sugar baby watermelon. And adding a scarecrow.

More updates to follow . . .



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

FREE FISHING



Wednesday, May 04, 2016

Here's the perfect gift for Dad and Grandpa: free fishing for all over Father's Day weekend, June 18-19.

"There is no better way to enjoy Montana with friends and family than to plan for a day of fishing," said Jeff Hagener, director of Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks in Helena said. "You can fish without a license on June 18 and June 19, but you must follow all of Montana's other fishing regulations."

In total, each year more than 230,000 residents and 160,000 nonresidents purchase a Montana fishing license. Anglers spend more than \$900 million annually in Montana for things like transportation, food and guide fees.

Montana's most popular waters include the Madison, Bighorn, Missouri, Bitterroot and Gallatin rivers; and Canyon Ferry, Flathead, Georgetown, Hauser, and Fort Peck lakes.

"Montana's 'fish for free' weekend is the state's Father's Day gift to dads everywhere," Hagener said. "We want everyone to have a fun time, so we're also encouraging folks to check conditions first and to always keep safety as their top concern."

###

Support for DRWA Legislation

Dry-Redwater Regional Water Authority (DRWA) is excited to announce that legislation has been introduced by U.S. Senator Steve Daines that would move Montana rural water projects forward and ensure completion of authorized projects across Montana.

The Western Water Supply and Planning Enhancement Act of 2016 (S.2902) received a Senate hearing on May 17, 2016. Dry-Redwater's Authorization bill was fully incorporated into S.2902.

DRWA continues to work on forward progress outside the legislature, as well. Additional extensions are being designed. Two short service mains are planned for construction in 2016, and additional potential lines are being evaluated.

If you have any questions or comments, or for additional information, please contact Mandi Nay, DRWA Coordinator.

406-485-DRWA

drwa@midrivers.com



Beginning Farmer and Rancher Loans

FSA assists beginning farmers to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's average size farm.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit Montana FSA online at www.fsa.usda.gov/mt and the national Farm Loan Program page at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/farm-loan-programs/index>.

FSFL Offers New Loans for Portable Farm Storage and Handling Equipment

FSA will provide a new financing option to help farmers purchase portable storage and handling equipment through the Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program.

The program offers a new "microloan" option, which allows applicants seeking less than \$50,000 to qualify for a reduced down payment of five percent and no requirement to provide three years of production history. Farms and ranches of all sizes are eligible. Producers can invest in equipment like conveyers, scales or refrigeration units and trucks that can store commodities before delivering them to markets. Producers do not need to demonstrate the lack of commercial credit availability to apply. FSFL eligible commodities include aquaculture; floriculture; fruits (including nuts) and vegetables; corn, grain sorghum, rice, oilseeds, oats, wheat, triticale, spelt, buckwheat, lentils, chickpeas, dry peas sugar, peanuts, barley, rye, hay, honey, hops, maple sap, unprocessed meat and poultry, eggs, milk, cheese, butter, yogurt and renewable biomass. FSFL microloans can also be used to finance wash and pack equipment used post-harvest, before a commodity is placed in cold storage.

Conservation Reserve Program Results Announced

USDA announced the enrollment of more than 26,600 acres in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) general and grasslands signups in Montana.

FSA will accept 17,829 acres in general enrollment in Montana, the most competitive selection in the history of the program, with the acreage providing record high conservation benefits. USDA selected offers by weighing environmental factors plus cost, including wildlife enhancement, water quality, soil erosion, enduring benefits, and air quality. The results of the first-ever enrollment period for CRP Grasslands, FSA will also accept 8,857.5 acres in the program in Montana, providing participants with financial assistance for establishing approved grasses, trees and shrubs on pasture and rangeland that can continue to be grazed. FSA continues to accept CRP Grasslands offers and will conduct another ranking period later this year. Participants in CRP establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees (known as "covers") to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat on marginally productive agricultural lands. In return, FSA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. Contract duration is between 10 and 15 years.

Upcoming FSA Deadlines in Montana

- **June 15:** The nomination period begins for County Committee Elections across Montana.
- **July 15:** 2016 Acreage Reporting Deadline for Spring Seeded Alfalfa Seed, Forage Seeding, Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Fruit (except cherries), Vegetables, Christmas Trees, and all Spring-Seeded Crops and any other crops not required to be reported by previously announced deadlines.
- **July 16:** CRP 2016 Summer/Fall Managed Haying and Grazing Begins (with prior County Committee Written Approval of Request)
- **Aug. 1:** Deadline for 2016 ARC and PLC Enrollment
- **Aug. 1:** Last day to file nomination forms at the USDA Service Center for County Committee Elections



FEATURED NOXIOUS WEED: OXEYE DAISY

Oxeye daisy (*Chrysanthemum leucanthemum*) is a Priority 2B listed noxious weed in the state of Montana. Priority 2B species are noxious weeds that are abundant in Montana and widespread in many counties. Management criteria for these species includes eradication or containment where these species are less abundant.

Oxeye daisy is native to Europe and the temperate regions of Asia. The unopened flower buds of this plant are similar in taste to a Mediterranean food called capers, which are often marinated and eaten.

This plant is very versatile and can thrive in various habitats such as meadows, pastures, woodlands, along irrigation ditches, roadsides, as well as disturbed areas such as hay fields, lawns, and gardens.

This plant has a shallow root system with branched rhizomes capable of growing new plants. Oxeye daisy plants grow up to 3' in height; the dark green smooth stem is mostly unbranched. Basal leaves situated at the base of the plant and lower leaves of the plant are 2" to 5" long and are widest at the tip; these leaves occur on long narrow stalks and have rounded teeth. Leaves that occur toward the stem apex are smaller in size; these leaves are toothed and do not grown on a long stalk.



Oxeye daisy flowers from June to August. Flowers are 1" to 2" in diameter, with each stem producing a flower. The flower head itself consists of about 20 white ray florets that encircle a depressed yellow disc shaped center. After pollination, flower heads produce tiny, flat, black, ribbed seeds that can remain viable in the soil for up to 3 years. A single oxeye daisy plant can produce up to 500 seeds.

Oxeye daisy is still being sold in wildflower seed mix packages, so be sure to check the label for contents of wildflower seed mixes for this invasive, state listed noxious weed before you plant it.

Oxeye daisy is difficult to control because it reproduces through both seed and rhizomes. It can be controlled by various integrated weed

management techniques such as herbicides, hand pulling and cultivation. Often control measures are most successful by using a combination of integrated weed management control methods.

Article source: http://agr.mt.gov/agr/Programs/Weeds/MTNWEC/PDF/NP_ready_OXEYE_DAISSY.pdf

Photo source: www.mtweed.org

Is it a Weed or a Flower?

Oxeye daisy resembles its close cousin, the Shasta daisy. It can be difficult to determine the difference between the Shasta and the oxeye, even from comparing leaves from the two plant species. A general rule of thumb is that generally the flowers of the Shasta daisy are larger than those of the oxeye daisy, sometimes up to 2" in diameter. The foliage of the Shasta plant is also more full, giving the plant a more "bush-like" appearance.



Montana Rangelands Partnership

The Montana Rangelands Partnership is excited to announce that our technician program is up and running!

The MRP was born out of a desire to engage landowners in monitoring and conservation efforts, while recognizing the good stewardship that has already been happening for generations. The partnership brings together multiple public and private organizations at local, state, and national levels, with the common goal of responsibly managing our rangeland resources.

The technician program is designed to provide landowners with the tools to make sound, informed decisions that further conservation and their livelihood. Our range technicians work one-on-one with landowners to establish range monitoring programs and create grazing management plans that can be continued into the future. We aim to empower ranchers with knowledge they can pass on to younger generations.

MRP is unique because our technicians are not tied to any specific conservation program, and can offer independent technical expertise tailored to the landowners' objectives. Participation is voluntary and free of charge; the only requirement is a desire to keep our rangelands healthy and productive for years to come!

What are the current programs of the Montana Rangelands Partnership? The Montana Rangelands Partnership currently coordinates four main programs: 1) Rangeland monitoring technical assistance; 2) Montana Rangeland Monitoring Program; 3) Certification of grazing management plans and Certified Grazing Land Stewards; and 4) Education.

What happens to landowner monitoring data and grazing plan information? The Montana Rangelands Partnership does not share any data, photos or information that is collected during range monitoring or grazing management planning. All data, photos, and grazing plans are the property of the landowner. Participants' names, addresses, and range monitoring locations will be kept confidential.

What areas are served by the two Montana Rangelands Partnership rangeland technicians? Custer, Garfield, McCone, Prairie, and Valley Counties are the focus for southeastern Montana in 2016. Landowners in these counties are served by Cheryl Schuldt. Fergus, Petroleum, Blaine, and Phillips Counties are the focus for east-central Montana in 2016, and landowners in these counties are served by Emily Standley.

Have questions? Interested in participating? Contact Stacey Barta at (406) 444-6619 or at mrp@macdnet.org

Judith Basin County RANGE SCHOOL "LOW-STRESS LIVESTOCK HANDLING"



JUNE 2, 2016

Geyser Community Hall
Geyser, Montana 59447

For information call 566-2311 ext 107

Don't miss this important
learning opportunity!

PRE-REGISTER BY:
May 26, 2016

Registration fee:
Lunch \$10.00
Dinner \$15.00
(includes snacks, drinks)

A fourth generation Montana cattle
rancher, Whit Hibbard edits and publishes
Stockmanship Journal, authors a bi-
monthly guest editorial on stockmanship
for Drovers, and teaches clinics on low-
stress livestock handling (LSLH). Whit
participated in a major paradigm shift
on his family's ranch (Sieben Live Stock
Co., Cascade) from conventional to
LSLH. He believes strongly in its im-
portance and value and is committed to
its serious study and promotion.

8:30 a.m. Registration
9:00 a.m. - Class begins

What is Low-Stress Livestock Handling
(LSLH)?

How is LSLH different from
Conventional Handling?

Why is LSLH important?

Principles of LSLH

Techniques of LSLH

Lunch

Practical Applications of LSLH

How is LSLH relevant to Range
Management?

Dinner 5:00 with Questions & Answers

Registration information :

JUDITH BASIN CONSERVATION DISTRICT
121 CENTRAL AVENUE
STANFORD MT
406-566-2311 extension 107

Range School presented by:

Agriculture Building Committee



40th Annual Montana Range Days CHIEF JOSEPH PARK AND FAIRGROUNDS HARLOWTON, MONTANA JUNE 20-22, 2016

TOURS:

- TUESDAY ALL DAY - AWARD WINNING RANCHES OF WHEATLAND COUNTY AND BIOLOGICAL WEED CONTROL TOUR
- WEDNESDAY AM - UPPER MUSSELSHELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY BAIR MUSEUM AND GORDON BUTTE WINDFARM
- MONDAY THROUGH WEDNESDAY THE UPPER MUSSELSHELL MUSEUM AND MILWAUKEE DEPOT MUSEUM WILL BE OPEN FOR MRD PARTICIPANTS

WORKSHOPS FOR AGES 4 TO ADULT:

- PLANT ANATOMY, PLANT IDENTIFICATION, SOILS AND RANGE SITES, INVENTORY AND MONITORING, STOCKING RATE, UTILIZATION, AND RANGE PLANNING

COMPETITION:

- RANGE EXHIBITS, ILLUSTRATED TALKS, RANGE PLANT ANATOMY, PLANT IDENTIFICATION AND RANGE MANAGEMENT

THREE \$1,000 SCHOLARSHIPS!

- APPLICATIONS DUE APRIL 30

AWARDS:

- TOP SUPER STARTER, TOP WRANGLER, TOP GREEN HAND, TOP RANGE HAND AND MANY MORE!

PRIZES:

- CASH, BELT BUCKLES, TROPHIES, AND GIFTS!

MAJOR SUPPORTERS:
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AND CONSERVATION
NATURAL RESOURCES
AND CONSERVATION (NRCS)
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MT WOODCROWD ASSOC.
WHEATLAND COUNTY STOCKGROWERS
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MSU EXTENSION
MT GLCI
MEADOW GOLD DAIRY

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MONTANA CATTLE/WOMEN
MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
MONTANA 4H FOUNDATION
MONTANA FFA FOUNDATION
MONTANA LAND RELIANCE
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MONTANA STOCKGROWERS ASSOCIATION
MONTANA STOCKGROWERS RESEARCH
MONTANA WEED CONTROL ASSOCIATION
MT WHEAT AND BARLEY COMMITTEE
NORTHERN AG NETWORK
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SOCIETY FOR RANGE MANAGEMENT
INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN SECTION
NORTHERN GREAT PLAINS SECTION
WELLS FARGO BANK
WESTERN ENERGY COMPANY
WESTERN RANCH SUPPLY
WILBURS LUMBER COMPANY



"See you in Harlo"

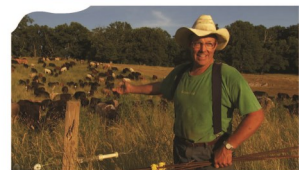
MRD@HARLOWTON
PO Box 201
HARLOWTON, MT 59036
(406) 632-5534 EXT. 101

REGISTRATION AND MORE INFO AT
www.montanarangedays.mt.net

Events in June

Come join us a 3 part series
"Grass Farming" with multi-
species grazing rotations

Joel Salatin



June 15, 2016

Winnett School Gym

\$10 for adults

Free to kids 18 and under

Agenda:

9:30am: Registration and Check-in

10am: Fields of Farmers and Working with Your Kids:

Creating Successional Success: How do we transition with working cross-generational successional farming enterprises? Most farms and family businesses lose continuity because parent and child never cultivated rewarding emotional and economic relationships. This challenging and far-reaching presentation offers techniques to eliminate dawdling, cultivate persistence, and stimulate innovation. It also includes structuring and scaling the farm to make room for the next generation. Salatin will also talk about getting more feet on the ground by adding stackable enterprises to the farm. The talk focuses on the basic principle: when impediments enter in any economic sector, keep young people from entering - if young people can't get in - then old people can't get out. And yet we see a tsunami of interest in local food, and young people ready to farm.

12pm: Lunch will be available for purchase, please RSVP to Carie Hess (406)429-6646 ext. 104 or petroleum@midrivers.com by June 6th to reserve your meal otherwise please bring your lunch.

1:30 pm: **Ballet in the Pasture:** Polyface Farm's choreographed plant-animal symbiosis heals the landscape, the community, and the eater. A theatrical performance mixing humor and bomb-shell food system analysis, Salatin's stormy-wednesday educates, entertains, and encourages. First rate pictures let the audience take a virtual tour around this grass-based multi-species livestock farm. Salatin's passionate explanations offer up a veritable epiphany on food and farming. Life-changing and ultimately memorable, Ballet in the Pasture is Salatin's signature performance.

2:30 pm: Break

3:00pm: **Relationship Marketing** For nearly half a century, Polyface Farm's patron base has morphed and expanded with the culture and new food awareness. As a 16-year-old with a backyard flock of laying hens, Salatin pedaled eggs around his rural neighborhood in the back of his bicycle. Mixing humorous stories with passionate "aha's", this presentation draws from a host of marketing venues to educate and entertain. Currently, Polyface supplies more than 5,000 families, 10 retail outlets, and 50 restaurants through on-farm sales and metropolitan buying clubs with salad bar beef, pastured poultry, eggmobile eggs, pigapig pork, forage-based rabbits, pastured turkey and forestry products using relationship marketing. Each has assets and liabilities, and Salatin freely discusses all the nuances. Heavy on hilarious stories, this talk empowers otherwise reluctant marketers to go for it.

Please contact the Conservation District office at 406-429-6646 ext. 104 by June 6th to let us know if you require special accommodations.

An Equal Opportunity Provider & Employer



Joel Salatin's Bio

Joel Salatin, 56, is a full-time farmer in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley. A third generation alternative farmer, he returned to the farm full-time in 1982 and continued refining and adding to his parents' ideas.

The farm services more than 5,000 families, 10 retail outlets, and 50 restaurants through on-farm sales and metropolitan buying clubs with salad bar beef, pastured poultry, eggmobile eggs, pigapig pork, forage-based rabbits, pastured turkey and forestry products using relationship marketing.

He holds a BA degree in English and writes extensively in magazines such as STOCKMAN GRASS FARMER, ACRES USA, and FOODSHED.

The family's farm, Polyface Inc. ("The Farm of Many Faces") has been featured in SMITHSONIAN MAGAZINE, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC, GOURMET and countless other radio, television and print media. Profiled on the Lives of the 21st Century series with Peter Jennings on ABC World News, his after-breakfast chat room fielded more hits than any other segment to date. It achieved iconic status as the grass farm featured in the NEW YORK TIMES bestseller OMNI-VORE'S DILEMMA by food writer gam Michael Pollan and the award-winning film documentary, FOOD INC.

A sought-after conference speaker, he addresses a wide range of issues, from "creating the farm your children will want" to "making a white collar salary from a pleasant life in the country." A westward, he describes his occupation as "mob-stocking herbivorous solar conversion signified carbon sequestration fertilization." His humorous and conviction-based speeches are akin to theatrical performances, often receiving standing ovations.

He has authored eight books, four of them how-to types:

PASTURED POLITICAL PROFITS: Net \$25,000 in 6 months on 20 Acres

SALAD BAR BEEF

YOU CAN FARM: The Entrepreneur's Guide to Start and Succeed in a Farming Enterprise

FAMILY FRIENDLY FARMING: A Multi-Generational Home-Based Business Testament

HOLY COWS AND HOLY HEAVEN: The Food Buyer's Guide to Farm Friendly Food, is an attempt to bring producers and patron together in mutual understanding and appreciation

EVERYTHING I WANT TO DO IS ILLEGAL: War stories from the local food front.

THE SHEEP ECSTASY OF BEING A LUNATIC FARMER

FOLKS, THIS AIN'T NORMAL: A Farmer's Advice for Happier Hens, Healthier People, and a Better World

His speaking and writing reflect dirt-under-the-fingernails experience punctuated with mischievous humor. He passionately defends small farms, local food systems, and the right to opt out of the conventional food paradigm. Four generations of his family currently live and work on the farm.

"Is that
a weed?"

"Oh God! What
will the neighbors
think of us!"



Photo source: www.awaytogarden.com
by andre the doodler

Weed Awareness Workshop Wibaux County Fairgrounds Exhibit Hall June 7-8, 2016

Weed ID, calibration, and
record keeping will be discussed.
There will be pesticide applicator points given.

For more information, please contact
ReNee Nelson at 406-796-2211 Ext. 106
or email: renee.nelson@mt.nacdn.net



Upcoming Events

June 2016

- 1 Board Meeting, Circle
- 2 Low-Stress Livestock Handling, Geyser
- 7-8 Weed Awareness Workshop, Wibaux
- 9 River Rendezvous, near Ft. Benton
- 15 Grass Farming with Joel Salatin, Winnett
- 19 Father's Day
- 20-22 Montana Range Days, Harlowton
- 23 CMR Community Working Group Meeting, Circle

July 2016

- 4 Independence Day: Office closed
- 6 Board Meeting, Circle

August 2016

- 3 Board Meeting, Circle

McCONE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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Sue Wittkopp, CED, FSA

McCONE CONSERVATION DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT CONSERVATION DISTRICT AUTHORITY

Mission Statement—By performing a leadership role in conservation for McCone County, the District will develop a more sustainable and economic resource management plan for the community.

Conservation District Authority— MCA 76-15-102 Declaration of policy. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the legislature to provide for the conservation of soil and soil resources of this state, for the control and prevention of soil erosion, for the prevention of floodwater and sediment damages, and for furthering the conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water and therefore to preserve natural resources, control floods, prevent impairment of dams and reservoirs, preserve wildlife, protect the tax base, protect public lands, and protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the people of this state.

County Landownership Maps for Sale

Wall Map	\$30.00
Book Map	\$35.00
Color Book Map	\$45.00

Equipment Rental

Tree Planter	\$0.20 per tree
Fabric Layer	\$0.05 a foot
Post Pounder	\$95.00 day/\$550.00 week

Tree Supplies

Fabric Squares 3' x 3'	\$0.75 each
Fabric Squares 4' x 4'	\$1.00 each
Fabric Staples	\$0.10 each
Fabric Staples	\$50.00 box
4' Plastic Tree Protector	\$2.00 each
Plantskydd 1 Quart	\$22.00
Plantskydd 1 Gallon	\$59.00