

LaMoure County SCD
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THE LANDSAVER



LAMOURE COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Fall/Winter 2021

Volume 31, Number 2

24th Annual Eco Ed Camp held for county 6th & 7th graders

After taking a year off, the LaMoure County Soil Conservation District hosted the annual Eco Ed day camp on September 8th at the LaMoure County Memorial Park. Since last year was skipped, both 6th and 7th graders from the LaMoure County schools of Edgeley, Kulm, LaMoure, and Marion attended the camp, totaling 97 students!

The goal of this camp is to provide hands-on-learning about ecology - the study of living things and their environment.



The camp included 5 outdoor classroom sessions of Water Quality, Rangelands, Woodlands, Soils, Wetlands and a presentation from Jim Gerholdt and his "Remarkable Reptiles."

The students were tested at the end of the day with the highest scores receiving a medal and the highest school average receiving a trophy, which went to the 6th grade class of Edgeley and the 7th grade class of Marion.



Board Members:
Christof Just, Chairman
Aaron Stroh, Supervisor
Boyd Ballmann, Supervisor
Lynn Haro, Supervisor
Ann Moch, Supervisor

District Staff:
Susan Muske, District Manager

NRCS Staff:
Amanda Brandt, District Conservationist
Kelsey Naze, Soil Conservationist

Office Location: 211 South Main St., LaMoure Office Phone: 701-883-5344

District programs are offered on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

District board meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of each month, 8 p.m., LCSCD office, but are subject to change. Be sure to contact the office for the latest info. Meetings are open to the public.

Planting, Pruning, Pests, and Pestilence



This will be the focus of NDSU Extension | LaMoure County's tree program on **October 21, 2021 at 3pm**, co-sponsored by LaMoure County Soil Conservation District and Harmsen's Greenhouse.

Join us at Memorial Park in Grand Rapids for an innovative learning experience. Attendees will drive through the park following the Extension agent, Julianne Racine. There will be stops at pre-determined tree specimens to discuss what was notable about each one. As well, there will be a stop, or two, to demonstrate and offer guidance on planting trees, pruning, managing pests, and disease.

All attendees will receive a gift certificate for 5 trees from LaMoure County Soil Conservation and be entered in a drawing for a \$100 gift certificate to Harmsen's Greenhouse. Register at tinyurl.com/TreeProgram2021.

You may also contact the office at (701) 883-6080 with any questions or, for more information. We look forward to seeing you.

**Tree
Order
form
enclosed!**

Place your
order this
fall to
ensure
availability!





Pictures from camp...



...Precision Ag continued here

conservation. Whichever route you choose, this enables you to make potentially more money on those poor acres. The extra income could come from the value of what is produced, or from a potential program payment that would just add to the fields profitability.

I understand not every operation collects or uses precision ag data. That doesn't mean we can't provide another set of eyes and perspective and help accomplish the win-win. There are other tools such as NDVI and aerial imagery, crop budgets, as well as farmer knowledge we can use to help not only boost profitability, but also provide wildlife and environmental benefits (some of those which could have a monetary value as well).

Pheasants Forever does have some programs we can use in SE North Dakota, including the Soil Health and Habitat Partnership (SHHP), PATCH, and also some watershed improvement dollars. While we enjoy using our programs, we also refer people to other partners we work with to help make a plan that fits the client's field. Our main objective is still to achieve results and benefits, whether our program is used or not. I also find myself working with local soil conservation districts who are leaders in local conservation and knowledge.

Feel free to contact me with habitat or conservation needs, or if you just want another set of eyes on your operation. Our services don't cost anything to you and don't obligate you to any commitments. I can be reached at alang@pheasantsforever.org or by calling 701-840-3062.

Thank you for your interest in conservation and have a productive fall!

Austin S. Lang



Grassed waterway providing habitat and reducing erosion



Since 2015, the North Dakota Forest Service (NDFS) Windbreak Renovation Initiative (WRI) has offered technical and financial assistance to private windbreak owners statewide to restore, protect, and enhance their deteriorating windbreaks. For example, if your windbreak is deteriorating and in need of removal and replanting, the WRI program may be able to provide you with some technical and financial assistance to get the project done.

For more information, google North Dakota Forest Service, then click on the Windbreak Renovation Initiative quick link, or contact the LaMoure County Soil Conservation office at 883-5344 ext. 3.



PHEASANTS FOREVER AND QUAIL FOREVER
PRECISION AG & CONSERVATION
TURNING RED ACRES GREEN

Precision Ag Wins for Profits and Conservation

By: Austin Lang, Pheasants Forever



Having grown up on a farm and ranch in ND, I can appreciate how many changes have taken place in the ag business the past decades. The technology that is available in ag now would have been considered Star Wars fantasy and quickly dismissed 30 years ago. While there can be a lot of useful information gleaned from these new advances, it can also be overwhelming and time consuming to make use of it all. As a farmer and/or rancher, you must be able to make business and financial decisions, have knowledge of equipment and mechanics, understand animal and plant health, agronomy, soil science, and the list goes on.

I think a key to being successful is keeping things simple and understanding your limitations. While you may be good at many of the skill sets required to be successful in today's ag business, you certainly can't expect to be an expert in all of it. It is important to have trusted consultants and advisors who can help provide another objective look at parts of your operation, and provide input which saves you time and the pain having to learn everything yourself.

My position title with Pheasants Forever is Precision Ag and Conservation Specialist (a mouthful huh?!?). So what does Precision Ag and profitability have anything to do with wildlife, pheasants, or conservation? The decades-old idea that conservation and production ag can't be integrated is slowly being debunked through use of precision ag. The "all or nothing" approach that conservationists and farmers once held may not always prove true. Through using precision ag (specifically yield and economic data), we can look at an operation on a sub-field level. We often see some areas in the field tend to be consistently profitable, while other acres consistently run at a loss.

Often times the unprofitable (or "red" acres) tend to be saline-affected or hilltops that have been depleted over time. In many cases, simply not planting 5 or 10 poor-producing "red" acres may actually INCREASE profits for the field, with the added benefit of reducing inputs, not getting stuck in those spots, as well as other environmental benefits. Why not farm the best acres and boost profitability? After all, farming is a business, and losing money doesn't do anything to help business grow. Not farming poor acres can also help boost APH and improve your standing with crop insurance and other programs.

Suppose then we just leave these red acres, then what? Do they just turn into weed escapes that we have to deal with later? That is where the conservation portion comes into play. Every operation will have a different capacity and plan to utilize those acres. Some may plant a cover crop for seed or forage. Some may plant forages or crops more tolerant to the site conditions. Others may choose to put those acres into perennial cover for wildlife and

Continued on next page...

From the Desk of Sue...

Well, you know what they say, "If you don't like the weather in ND, stick around, it will change!" How quickly we went from too wet one year to too dry the next! The SCD tree crew planted 25 miles of trees this last spring with only one rain delay. Thankfully, those trees that received supplemental watering did pretty good in spite of the droughty conditions. Even though the growing season is winding down now, it is still a good idea to continue watering until freeze up. Evergreen trees lose water through their needles throughout the winter, so they need enough stored-up water to make it until spring so they don't suffer winter burn. There is no hard and fast rule for how much to water (even though everyone wishes there was)! Water slowly throughout the drip line to allow the water to soak deep into the soil profile. The goal is to have the soil moist deep down but not saturated.

Don't forget to check your fabric on past tree plantings to make sure the hole is still big enough to accommodate the growing tree trunk.

As always, be sure to check out our website for lots of good information!

www.LaMoureSCD.org

Emergency Feed Transportation Assistance Program

The North Dakota Department of Agriculture (NDDA) Emergency Feed Transportation Assistance Program will reimburse producers for a portion of feed transportation expenses.

Applications are due by Dec. 15, 2021.

For more details go to:

www.nd.gov/ndda/program/emergency-feed-transportation-assistance-program



Agriculture Commissioner
Doug Goehring

LaMoure SCD Equipment for Rent

Call 883-5344 Ext 3 or 320-8724



Montana Post Pounder \$200/day

Kuhn Manure Spreaders \$300/day

John Deere No Till Drill \$8/ac

Great Plains Grass Drill \$8/ac



DO YOU HAVE COST SHARE TO CLEAN OUT DUGOUTS?

By: Amanda Brandt and Kelsey Naze

This is the question our office heard the most this summer. Our dugout is dry, do you have any cost share assistance to clean/dig it out? We are going to take this opportunity to “talk” about water quality and your livestock. The quality of water your livestock drink can affect how they perform over the summer months and into the fall/winter. Water problems caused by salinity, high nitrates, and algae are some of the factors affecting cattle performance. This past summer has been a good example, no rain means no water to collect in the dugout to water your cattle. No rain and hot temperatures can also create a blue green algae problem in dugouts/ponds for the little water that may be there. Cattle can die from blue green algae infestation and no water.

There is research out there that has shown an additional 0.3 to 0.5 pound per day gain if calves can drink out of a tank and not a pond or stream. Let’s put that in perspective. At 0.3 pound of daily gain and the grazing period for most cattle is 153 days (June – October), that is 46 more pounds per calf at the end of the summer. Now you multiply that by \$1.70 per pound that equals \$78 per calf. **If you have 100 calves that is \$7,800 more dollars.**

If you have a well already, it is much easier and cheaper to pump water to a tank by pipeline. In remote areas where no electricity is available, solar might work for you. Solar products have improved, and costs have dropped some, an estimated cost is around \$3,600. So, the solar system could pay for itself.

Why not invest in fresh water to benefit your livestock’s health? If you are interested in planning a water development project give our office a call at 701-883-5344 ext. 3 and we can assist you with type, location and if there is any cost share available.

Notice the dugout and tank below, not far from each other, but where are the cattle?



We don’t know what the spring will bring...
but let’s hope it won’t be like last spring.



The left picture is of 12 inches of soil that eroded and deposited in one spot in LaMoure County in March 2021. What is erosion? Soil erosion is when valuable topsoil is lost due to wind or water. Erosion can diminish soil health and potentially increase nutrient requirements (because they all blew or washed away).

Soil disturbance under dry (or any other condition) destroys soil structure and increases the potential for soil erosion after rain events. Let’s not forget the loss of soil organic matter, topsoil (if there is any) and nutrients (fertilizer, pesticides, etc.).



Aside from erosion, tillage/cultivating exposes bare soil and buries crop residue, which increases evaporation, thus pulling water carrying salts towards the surface. The key to managing salts is to manage the water that transports them and reducing tillage is critical in doing that (NDSU-Building Soil Health-SF1900, Aug. 2018).



Cover crop (Rye, Radish, and Turnip) aerially broadcasted into standing corn on 8-27-21. Picture taken 10-5-21

Now that harvest is in full swing, let’s think about leaving stubble and stalks standing. Things to think about right now to help with soil erosion this fall, winter and next spring:

- **Reduce or eliminate fall tillage-** some ideas may be to attend a foot ball or volleyball game, go to the pumpkin patch or do anything **EXCEPT** tillage this fall
- **Get a soil test completed so you know what nutrients are available**
- **Keep the ground covered, if not with a cover crop, leave crop stubble standing.**



Cover crop (Turnip, Radish, and Rape) no till drilled after wheat on 8-19-21. Picture taken 9-10-21

Here are a few tips from ND Farmers (per the NDSU Soil Health website):

- Manage residue coming out the back of the combine.
- Turn off the chopping head and leave corn stalks standing.
- Consider using a stripper head for wheat to leave residue standing and avoid a mat.
- Plant cover crops, especially after wheat, to help manage moisture.

If you are interested in trying cover crops for the first time or have a cover crop story, good or bad, stop in the office or give us a call at 701-883-5344 ext. 3.

Let’s “leave it out there” this fall and as the Practical Farmers of Iowa say, “Don’t Farm Naked- Plant Cover Crops”.