

## In This Issue

- President's Message
- Heidi Brewer Appointed to Leadership Development Committee
- 2006 SWCS Annual Conference
- Montana SWCS Annual Awards
- Scholarship Fundraising
- 2006 Scholarship Winners Announced
- Introduction to a Montana SWCS Board Member
- Montana Chapter to Hold CNMP Development Course
- Northern Plains Regional Technical Meeting
- Introduction to a New SWCS Member
- Montana Chapter Member Wins a Trip to Hawaii

## Upcoming Events

February 21

[Weeds and Their Management: A Problem for Wildlife?](#)

February 26 - March 3

[National Invasive Weed Awareness Week](#)

February 27-28

[Harvesting Clean Energy](#)

February 27 - March 1

[Montana Communities and Wildfire Conference](#)

February 28 - March 1

[2006 Montana Plant Conservation Conference](#)

March 2

[Organic Agriculture/Crop Alternatives Workshop](#)

June 26-28

[Adaptive Management of Water Resources](#)



## President's Message

*Tom Pick, Montana SWCS Chapter President*

The excitement of hosting our annual chapter membership meeting and technical conference has just about worn off. While one of the senses I'm now experiencing is that of relief that the intense effort is over for another year, I have to say that a far more overwhelming sensation is the pride I have in the conference planning committee. I know that these folks exhibit the same skill sets in motivation, creativity, adaptability, thoroughness, and pride in working at the day jobs that provide their livelihood. Most impressive of all is that they pull this quality exercise off while working full time at their day jobs. These volunteers truly are leaders of our conservation endeavors in Montana.

Once again the SWCS annual conference provided THE forum for conservation professionals in Montana. There was a combination of great speakers and innovative ideas. I think the hallmark of a great conference is when you leave with the gray matter cranking about the ideas presented. This meeting definitely provided that experience. Please thank the committee led by Ann Fischer and staffed by Carla Lawrence, Heidi Brewer, and Brad Troster. John Rouane, Jr. assisted the group with sponsorships and commercial display arrangements. Dr. Azizur Rahman headed up the poster presentations. And once again, Dick Scheetz organized a great array of offerings for the silent auction and scholarship raffle.

Be sure to read Ann's and Dick's account of the annual conference in this newsletter. If you would like to help plan and organize next year's meeting, please get in touch with Ann. The conference committee will soon begin to discuss ideas, topics, and venues for 2007.

On another track, I've asked Membership Committee Chair Matt Crampton to put together a work plan for the committee to help us reach a goal of increasing our Chapter membership by five percent during 2006. That's only about five members. While that may not seem like a towering pinnacle of achievement, in reality we have to gain at least twice that many because over a typical year we lose five or so members. He also plans a member survey. Some of the activities that Matt's crew will inquire about are your interests in member services and professional development needs.

Speaking of membership losses, I know of several great members we are about to lose because opportunity has called them elsewhere to demonstrate their skills. Next month Dr. Azizur Rahman and family will head to Fresno, California. We wish him well in this new adventure with the NRCS and hope to see him again down the road at SWCS functions.

Dr. Perry Miller, researching cropping systems at MSU, has given up his membership to concentrate on other activities at MSU. Ross Bricklemeyer, a research associate in MSU's Department of Land Resources and Environmental Sciences and recent conference speaker on ag opportunities for carbon sequestration credits, has actively assumed Dr. Miller's MSU membership. Ross has also agreed to serve as the chapter's liaison to the National Carbon Offset Coalition, Inc. Watch for future articles and updates from Ross on activities of the coalition and the [Big Sky Carbon Sequestration Partnership](#). This latter endeavor is one of the [U.S. Department of Energy's \(DOE\)](#) seven regional partnerships across the country. The university's research is the first phase of a regional framework to create a new, sustainable energy future that cleanly fulfills the energy needs of the northern Great Plains.

With these membership changes in mind, we should always be on the lookout for our own replacements. Not that any of us are ready to move on right now, but we can never have too many minds working on finding solutions to the pressing issues of the day. It's usually true that the fresher minds burn a little brighter. While not a documented fact, I've always believed that the reason most people give their time to activities like SWCS .... is because someone once took the time to ask them to join and participate. So when you have the opportunity, please help us build our chapter by asking the leaders of the future to join us in sharing our avocation. We might even have some fun along the way, too.

## Heidi Brewer Appointed to Leadership Development Committee

*Carla Lawrence, Montana SWCS Chapter Southwestern Region Director*

Last July, during the National Convention of the Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS), in Rochester, NY, Heidi Brewer was appointed to serve as one of nine regional committee members to the Leadership Development Committee for a three-year term. The region comprises seven chapters in six states including Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Wyoming.

The Leadership Development Committee is the principle body within the Society charged with helping chapter leaders and other members develop leadership and other skills that will enable them to be more effective as chapter leaders and conservation professionals. Currently, the committee is planning the agenda for the Leadership Development Workshop to be held July 22, 2006, during the National Convention in Keystone, CO.

Heidi has been an active member of the SWCS and the Montana Chapter since 1996. She has proven her leadership skills by serving as secretary, president-elect, president, and past-president of the Montana Chapter. The Montana Chapter is proud to have Heidi representing our state, and the other states in the region, on the National level.

Congratulations Heidi!



## 2006 SWCS Annual Conference

*Ann Fischer, Montana SWCS Chapter President-Elect*

The Annual Technical Workshop for the Montana Chapter SWCS was recently held in Billings, MT. "Amber Waves of Change: Tips and Tools to Grow with the Shifting Ag Landscape" was sponsored by Carbon Conservation District and the Montana Chapter of SWCS.

While conference attendee participation was down, the conference speakers were great. In fact, I believe we enrolled a few new members during the conference. Quotes from Aldo Leopold weaved their way through the speakers throughout the conference.

Tom Pick, president, opened the conference with welcoming remarks and Dave White, NRCS state conservationist, followed with generous compliments about the contributions to society made by SWCS.

Steve Van Fossen was the first plenary speaker of the day, beginning the tribute to Aldo Leopold and reflecting on the diversity of resources across Montana. Steve was followed by Sheldon Atwood, from Utah State University, to discuss "Having it All: Balancing Economics and Ecology." Sheldon also paid tribute to Mr. Leopold and stated that we can only create the future we want by approaching conservation in whole new ways.

Russell Nemetz, Ag Director from the Northern Ag Network, entertained and enlightened us during lunch by feeding us tidbits from his travels and work on ag business, both nationally and internationally.

The afternoon gave many pause to decide which session to attend. There were two concurrent sessions of three main topics with three speakers in each session. The topics included grazing resources, cropland resources, and alternative resources. In the grazing resources session, Atwood spoke about "Thinking About the Box: Questioning Modern Conservation," Les Gilman from Ranch Resources, Inc., spoke about the changing face of the western landscape, and Lance Vermiere, ARS in Miles City, covered "The Challenging Taboos in Fire and Grazing Management." The cropland session included Jon Stika, NRCS Agronomist from North Dakota, who presented a discussion on "Less Disturbance/ More Diversity," Mark Liebig, from Mandan ARS, offered "Soil Microflora and Fauna: Their Role in Improving Soil Quality," and Aziz Rahman, NRCS Agronomist from Bozeman, MT, discussed the benefits of precision agriculture. Carbon sequestration, on-farm energy developments and biofuel developments were covered in the alternative resource session by Joel Brown, NRCS in New Mexico; Ross Bricklemeyer, MSU; Dave Ryan, Butte; and Dick Iverson, NRCS.



*Dave White, NRCS state conservationist, opens the annual SWCS technical workshop.*



*Steve Van Fossen*



*Sheldon Atwood and his son Bryn.*



*Russell Nemetz*

In the evening there were poster presentations, an SWCS chapter meeting, a social, and a silent auction.

Rod Heitshmidt, ARS, Miles City, conveyed more of Aldo Leopold's sentiments on Thursday with his presentation, "Some Random Thoughts about Conservation by a Conservationist." He got the group postulating what the future of conservation would and/or should be.

Three panel members wrapped up the conference with some innovative techniques. The panel included Ray Banister from Wibaux and his boom/bust method of grazing, Noel Keogh from Nye on "Corralling Change, Changing Corrals, Managing the Difference," and Tom Agnew from Big Timber with information on small wind farms.

The conference couldn't have been a success without the help of the many people involved. Thanks so much to all the speakers, Carbon Conservation District, NRCS, Tom, Heidi, Carla, Brad, Ed, and Tasha. Thanks to John for helping with sponsorships and Aziz for preparing the poster presentation.

Preparations for next year's conference will soon begin, so if anyone has any ideas or would like to help in planning the conference, please let me know.



*Rod Heitshmidt*

## Montana SWCS Annual Awards

*Dick Scheetz, Montana SWCS Chapter Eastern Region Director*

The second annual Montana SWCS Chapter awards were presented at the annual conference in Billings February 2-3, 2006. The awards were initiated to recognize Montana conservationists in three categories; land user, professional, and president's choice. This year, the Awards Committee (Dick Scheetz, chairman; Kathy Sikorski; and Ryan Young) received several excellent nominations for consideration. We thank everyone who submitted a nomination and encourage all members to submit a nomination at any time during the year for consideration next year.

Alan Johnstone was selected for the Land User/Producer of the Year Award. He was nominated by Warren Kellogg with concurrence from the Park Conservation District. Alan has served as chairman of the Upper Shields Watershed Association since 2002. He has great leadership skills and is very committed to the watershed group. Alan has spent a great deal of time communicating with others in the group and with the watershed staff. He has traveled to many grant hearings at his own expense to testify in support of the watershed group, and is an excellent speaker.

Alan runs a 5,200-acre cattle ranch with his wife south of Wilsal. Together, they have completed many off-stream water developments, a stream restoration project, and have implemented a prescribed grazing system that involves rotation grazing to benefit the riparian and upland habitat. They have also implemented a monitoring program on their range and riparian areas to measure the effectiveness of their efforts. Alan has an excellent set of records and GIS maps to document their achievements.

John Rouane was selected as the Professional Conservationist of the Year. John has spent a lifetime providing technical assistance in conservation implementation. He served as the District Conservationist in Roundup for 26 years and some notable activities during that time include the development of the Lake Mason Grazing District; the development and implementation of the Careless Creek water quality project; development and implementation of the 1985 Food Securities Act conservation plans; the Bull Mountain Mine Pumping Project; and completion of the Musselshell River assessment. John has assisted on numerous irrigation tours and participated in annual outdoor classrooms.

John is actively involved in the Roundup community. Some of his community activities included supporting his church, Lions, Kaycees, and assisting with the annual Christmas Basket Drive. John is an active member of the Montana SWCS and currently serves as the Board of Director Representative for the Southcentral Area. He has strongly supported the silent auctions at both the State and national levels. He has attended several professional development training sessions at the National and Regional level and numerous training conferences at the State Level.

Montana SWCS President, Tom Pick, selected Heidi Brewer for the President's Award. Heidi has served the Montana SWCS tirelessly for a number of years. She served as the chapter secretary for several years before taking the reins as chapter president in 2003. Heidi continues on the board of directors as past president and has also taken a new responsibility as part of the Regional Chapter Development Committee. Heidi has spent many weekends creating Earth Bracelet kits for youth activities across the state. Whenever there is a task to be completed for the chapter, it can be assured that Heidi has had a hand in the project at some time. She has arranged the facilities and meals for numerous annual conferences and has chaired the annual conference committee. Heidi is a strong supporter of fund raising efforts of the chapter.

Thank you and congratulations to the Montana SWCS Chapter award winners!



*Alan Johnstone accepts the LandUser/Producer of the Year Award.*



*John Rouane accepts the Professional Conservationist of the Year award.*



*Heidi Brewer accepts the President's Award.*

## Scholarship Fundraising

*Dick Scheetz, Montana SWCS Chapter Eastern Region Director*

A silent auction and refreshment basket raffle were held at the Annual Conference in Billings again this year. Proceeds from these fundraising activities are used to provide two college scholarships that total \$750 each year. Although this year, we did not raise all of the money required for the scholarships, through the sale of items donated by members, over \$400 was raised.

I know it seems like we are constantly being hit up to donate to different causes, but please consider donating an item to the silent auction for next year's conference. Generally the hand made items generate the most interest and dollars, so if you have a hobby, set aside one item to help fund some starving college student's school. Who knows, the scholarship winner may be working in your office someday soon. Wouldn't it be nice to be able to say, "I helped fund your college tuition."

## 2006 Scholarship Winners Announced

*Justin Meissner, Montana SWCS Chapter Scholarship Committee Chairman*

The Montana Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society 2006 scholarship winners were selected during the annual meeting in Billings. The applications received were from students representing both community colleges and universities. The panel of judges was very impressed with the quality of applications received and the respective letters of support.

The \$250 winner is Brian Skunkcap of Browning, Mont. Brian is a sophomore at Blackfeet Community College majoring in Natural Resource Management. Brian has a 3.0 cumulative GPA and plans to graduate May of 2006. Brian is a member of the AIES Club and attended the national conference in North Carolina. Brian's future plans are to earn his masters degree and pursue a career in Natural Resources Management.

The \$500 winner is Rebecca (Reba) Eliasson of Roundup, Mont. Reba is attending Montana State University-Billings. Reba is currently working for the NRCS through the Student Temporary Employment Program. Reba is a junior majoring in Business Finance, with a cumulative GPA of 3.7. Reba plans to graduate in May of 2007 and continue working for the Natural Resources Conservation Service as a Soil Conservationist.

## Introduction to a Montana SWCS Board Member

*Stacy Denny Eneboe, Montana SWCS Chapter Northern Region Director*

I am Stacy Denny Eneboe and I am the Northern Region Director for the Montana SWCS Chapter. I have been a member of SWCS since 1997. I became the Northern Director in 1999, just in time to help plan the 2000 Annual Conference.

I grew up near Busby, MT, on a cow/calf operation which the family continues to operate. I graduated from Hardin High School but not before becoming an employee of SCS. I became a COOP student in 1989 prior to my Senior Year of High School. I worked for SCS while attending Junior College in Glendive, MT, where I received an Associates Degree in Arts and an Associated Degree in Ag. Business. I continued working for NRCS while attending college at MSU in Bozeman where I graduated with a degree in Animal Science in 1995. I spent two years in engineering before I realized that I didn't have the funds to become a full time college student and quickly figured out that Animal Science was the quickest way out.

I became a full-time employee for NRCS in 1996 in Chinook, MT, as a Soil Conservationist. After moving my household another two times I now reside in Conrad, MT, where I am the District Conservationist for Pondera County. Prior to that, I was the District Conservationist in Teton County for 5 years

My husband, Erik Eneboe, is the Conrad Unit Manager for the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), previously known as the Montana Department of State Lands. (Between NRCS and DNRC even the blood relatives are continually confused as to who works for what entity.) Erik and I have two beautiful little girls. Brae is two years old and Tala (pronounced Tayla) is 6 months old. We have resided in Conrad for the last 7 years.

Before we had small children, Erik and I spent a lot of time outdoors, riding horses, fishing and camping. Now we are planning for those outdoor trips with the little ones in tow. As soon as Brae and Tala can ride a horse for more than an hour or two it's going to be back to the Bob Marshall Wilderness. Sleeping on saddle blankets, drinking hot chocolate or coffee with ashes, and listening to the clear water flow by are just a few of the great opportunities that await us. As Evan Esar said, "We can't do much about the length of our lives, but we can do plenty about its width and depth."



## SWCS Chapter To Hold CNMP Development Course

*Tom Pick, Montana SWCS Chapter President*

The Chapter is partnering with Montana State University (MSU) and the Rocky Mountain Regional Certified Crop Advisors Board of the American Society of Agronomy to develop and host a facilitated comprehensive nutrient management plan (CNMP) course. Successful participants who complete the course and submit an approved CNMP are then certified as a CNMP development

specialist in land treatment and nutrient management. Furthermore, participants are then eligible for registration with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) as a Technical Service Provider (TSP) in these two discipline areas.

The facilitated CNMP course will be held April 26-28 at the Billings Conference Center. The course is targeted for consultants, crop advisors, livestock operators, and other specialists who want to obtain the qualifications necessary for certification in these categories as a TSP in Montana. Class size will be limited to 20 participants. Instructors from NRCS, MSU, private industry, and state government will conduct the session.

The NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to livestock operators for the development of alternative uses of manure, timing and application, storage facilities, and improved feeding management technologies. This assistance is provided through the development of CNMPs. Through the CNMP process, the livestock producer and the NRCS evaluate nutrient management considerations and prepare alternatives that meet producer objectives and protect water resources. According to joint EPA and USDA policy, all regulated animal feeding operations, known as concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) are to have CNMPs in place by July 31, 2007.

Additional considerations for alternative waste utilization strategies (energy, compost, etc.), feed management, and waste handling systems will be presented in the facilitated course. Manure and wastewater handling and storage, another formal CNMP component will not be addressed at this session as considerable added preparation and application time is required to become certified. This component may be offered in a later session if there is interest.

It looks like we will need to charge \$85 dollars for the session to cover instructor expenses, materials, breaks, food, and the meeting room. This compares to about \$800 charged by some of the major university vendors around the country.

To register for this class, complete and return the registration form. To get an agenda or additional information, contact Tom Pick at [thomas.pick@mt.usda.gov](mailto:thomas.pick@mt.usda.gov) or (406) 587-6947. Again, class size is limited so don't delay. The chapter reserves the right to cancel the course if less than eight individuals are registered.

**Registration Form**  
**Facilitated Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) Training**  
**Montana Chapter SWCS**  
**April 26, 27, and 28, 2006**  
**Billings Hotel and Convention Center**  
**1223 Mallowney Lane, Billings, Montana 59101**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Business or Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street, Box or Apt number)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(city/state/zip code)

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed:  \$85 course arrangements charge. Please make check or money order out to Montana SWCS. Please, send no cash and sorry, but we cannot accept credit cards. Send registration form and payment to: SWCS, c/o Thomas L. Pick, 28 Golden Trout Way, Bozeman, Montana 59715.

We reserved a block of sleeping rooms at the Billings Hotel and Convention Center. Room rates are \$60.00 per night. Mention the Montana Chapter SWCS for the rate. For reservations call 1-800-537-7286. Room rate is guaranteed through April 15, 2006.

## Northern Plains Regional Technical Meeting

*Tom Pick, Montana SWCS Chapter President*

The Wyoming Chapter has announced the agenda for the 2006 Northern Plains Regional Technical Meeting to be held in Cody, Wyo., on March 23-25, 2006. Registration information and the agenda can be accessed at <http://wyswcs.home.bresnan.net/Workshops.html>.

These annual sessions have been held the past few years at locations in Medora, ND, and Estes Park, CO. The purpose of the meeting is to provide the chapters in the Northern Plains (MT, WY, ND, SD, NE, and CO) an opportunity to collaborate on shared experiences, discuss upcoming issues and events at the same time as matriculating on one or more technical issues. We believe that we have the outstanding region in SWCS and these regular meetings have been instrumental in providing a mechanism for our state chapters to mentor and motivate each other.

Steve Oltmans, our regional director and current Vice-President of the SWCS Board of Directors, will be on hand to provide updates on national conservation issues. Other highlights will be discussions on the 2006 annual conference in Keystone, watershed planning, effective presentations, the 2007 Farm Bill, and a half-day grizzly bear habitat and management field tour up the North Fork outside of Cody. We hope to car pool down with a respectable size group of Montana chapter members. The meeting, activities, and camaraderie should be informative and fun. Please let [Tom Pick](#) or [Ann Fischer](#) know if you are interested in attending this meeting. We will likely head down the afternoon of March 23. The chapter has set aside some funds to help members participate in this meeting, so please let us know as soon as possible.

## Introduction to a New SWCS Member

*Joyce Trevithick, Montana SWCS Chapter Member*

Hi! My name is Joyce Trevithick. I am a new member of SWCS, having joined in 2005 at the encouragement of two other SWCS members, longtime member John Rouane, and Brian Kloster. I was working in the Roundup NRCS Field Office at the time and enjoying the benefit of learning from a veteran of the agency.

I grew up chasing cows and driving tractors in the Geraldine area. After working in Great Falls briefly after graduating from high school, I returned to farm with my dad. I have always wanted to learn more (my sisters say I was always asking “why?”), so finally went to college as a “non-traditional” student. I loved my cattle so began in pre-vet, ending up with a double major in animal science and agronomy. After a few more years on the farm, I finally figured out that I did not want to repair farm machinery the rest of my life.

I was fortunate enough to get on with NRCS in 2003 as a Soil Conservation Technician. I have spent time in the Great Falls Field Office, the Roundup Field Office, and am now a Soil Conservationist in the Havre Field Office.

I attended the 2005 Montana SWCS convention and left feeling encouraged and ready to take on the world! Of course that only lasted until the second change in EQIP rules, but it helped me to understand the need for these organizations. These meetings encourage us to keep trying. They allow us a sounding board on which to help each other develop solutions to our problems.

I do believe that societies such as SWCS are an important part of our development as resource conservationists. It broadens our minds and enlarges our horizons. I missed attending the 2006 meetings, but look forward to next year and also the information we get from the newsletters and magazine.

Montana is a great state and we are fortunate to be able to work in agriculture. I'll take this opportunity to thank John for encouraging me to join, and wish him the very best in retirement. We will miss him but I figure I can still find him in the field office! It's in his blood!



## Montana Chapter Member Wins a Trip to Hawaii

*Tasha Gibby, Montana SWCS Chapter Newsletter Editor*

The winner of the first annual Montana SWCS Photo Contest has received a two-week, expenses paid trip to Hawaii leaving February 18, 2006. And the winner is...well, I guess it must be me! I would like to thank everyone else for not submitting any photos, which allowed me to win hands down. I will be laying on the beach sipping pina colodas until March 3, so please forward your congratulations to my home address. Just kidding, just kidding.

Actually, there were no photos submitted to the contest, so we're going to change up the format a little bit. Please send in any interesting, or beautiful, or striking photos that you have taken or that you snap over the coming year. Don't worry, they don't need to match any kind of theme. They don't even need to be a certain size. And, you can submit as many photos as you like. If you have a photo that you'd like to share, just send it to me at 1111 West Park #D, Belgrade, MT 59714. At this point there is no deadline. However, I will be reminding you in each of the newsletters between now and the next annual conference. If I still don't get any submissions, I'll have to start calling people. I have heard the names of several “amateur” photographers.

Although next year's prize won't be as good as my trip to Hawaii, don't let that discourage you. There will be awards for the top three photos as judged by a panel. Plus, the chapter might be able to use the winning photos to raise funds for the chapter scholarship program.