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## Upcoming Events

November 28-30

[Montana Grain Growers Annual Conference](#)

Phone: 406-761-4596

December 5-7

[2006 Watershed Symposium](#)

Phone: 406-994-6671

December 12-15

[Montana Stockgrowers Association Annual Conference](#)

Phone: 406-442-3420

January 16-18

[Montana Weed Control Association Annual Conference](#)

Phone: 406-684-5590

January 30

[Montana SWCS Chapter Pre-Conference](#)

January 31-February 1

[Montana SWCS Chapter Annual Conference](#)



## President's Message

*Tom Pick, Montana SWCS Chapter President*

Theodore Roosevelt, one of our esteemed early conservationists and the 26th President of the United States, often referred to his position in the White House as a 'bully pulpit.' Bully meaning 'good' and, well, I guess we all get the pulpit part. I won't go so far as to truly equate my experience these past two years with Teddy's, but there are some similarities given that I've had this unique opportunity to communicate regularly from

this platform with professional peers in Montana, across the Northern Plains Region, the U.S., Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and working from other lands and waters around the globe. I've been granted the opportunity to represent our chapter, express my point of view and, at times, advocate for positions or actions I've thought were in the best interest of our organization and its members.

I've also been fortunate to work with a great bunch of folks who represent you, the members, on the Board of Directors for our Montana Chapter. They have been a dedicated, innovative, and extremely creative group who devote time and attention to get together on the phone once a month plus take extra hours during evenings and weekends to accomplish our goals, objectives, and tasks that we hope make for an effective chapter. At least we hope that you experience the results of our efforts in this way. If not, then we haven't been communicating effectively.

By the way, if you'd like to check to see what the Board is up to, the minutes of each monthly teleconference are posted on the [Montana Chapter](#) website not long after the third Tuesday of each month. Anyone is welcome to join in the teleconference or suggest items for action or discussion. Just give me call at (406) 587-6947 or email me at [tpick@bresnan.net](mailto:tpick@bresnan.net). Don't worry, I already get so much junk email that getting on another list won't matter much.

Speaking of communication, I'm constantly amazed at how much writing and speaking our profession requires. Sometimes it seems like that is pretty much all that I do, and I don't think I'm alone in this regard. Given the increasing technical complexities of our work and myriad opportunities created through new communication technology, the task of effective communication demands that we be ever more efficient, accurate, and thorough in disseminating information, pleading a case, or pitching a deal to a client or audience. How much time are they really going to spend listening? As well, how do we best reach our audience, or even determine who it really is? How about a conservation pod cast, text message, or even the old fashioned face to face meeting? How does national conservation policy play into the social aspect of conservation? For better or worse, I'll bet less and less work gets done down at the old café (oops, that's the new computer communication - the old cafe didn't serve lattes and didn't have a fancy é at the end) any more.

To try and address this growing need to continue to improve our skills and professional abilities to embrace and use new communication technology and strategies, the Chapter's Annual Conference and a special day-long workshop prior to the Annual Conference will focus on this issue. Check out the article in this newsletter and the website to learn more. We've also just issued the Call for Posters, so please consider participating in this manner to share your experiences as well as attend to listen, discuss, and learn. Students will receive a fee waiver for the conference by submitting a poster. We have some exciting new features planned for this conference so please put it on your calendar now – January 31 and February 1 at the Holiday Inn in Bozeman. A pre-conference workshop will be held January 30 at the same venue. I hope to see you there.

On another communication note, please exercise your membership rights in the same manner as you hopefully exercised your citizenship right to vote in the recent general election for state and local offices. Let's 'get out the vote' in the upcoming Chapter and international SWCS elections. We have a great group of folks who have stepped up to run as

candidates for office, so please take the time to evaluate the candidates and vote in both election cycles.

Our standing committees (membership, scholarship, and awards) have also been active and need your help. We need to be thinking about membership recruitment. Not simply as a periodic fraternity rush-type exercise, but a constant, steady effort to enlist new participants who can help take an active role in the Montana Chapter mission. Matt Crampton, membership committee chair, has done a great job crafting the member survey and putting together a strategy for sustaining membership. Justin Meissner, scholarship committee chair, recently announced the scholarship applications for this year. Please help him get the word out to eligible candidates. Dick Scheetz, awards chair needs your ideas and nominations for worthy candidates for the state level and national awards that we use to recognize exemplary activity in soil and water conservation. Please help these folks out as they can't do it all themselves to run effective programs.

Well, I guess my time in the 'bully pulpit' is nearing the end, literally and figuratively for this issue and my term as Chapter President. While I can't parody Teddy and say that I'm "fit as a bull moose," I do hope that we can consider the Chapter to be as "fit" today as it has been over the years. We will be looking for all of you to help us recruit new members and invigorate the current members to help us keep it that way as we head down the road.

## The Recordkeeping CDs Have Arrived!

*Emily Guldborg, Montana Chapter Secretary*

We are pleased to announce that the recordkeeping CDs are ready for distribution. Board members have already started distributing them at local meetings and conventions. If you would like one of your own or know of somebody who might be interested, please contact your Area Director or check out the recordkeeping documents on our website at [www.mtswcs.org](http://www.mtswcs.org). We welcome your comments on this recordkeeping CD so that we can determine if there is any demand for future revised editions. Many thanks to Heidi Brewer and Tasha Gibby for their hard work in getting the final version of the CD produced and distributed.



## Effective Communications: Connecting to the Conservation Audience

*Ann Fischer, Annual Conference Planning Committee Chair*

The Montana SWCS is pleased to announce their 2007 Annual Conference will be held January 31 - February 1, 2007, in Bozeman. The conference provides an exceptional opportunity for conservationists to exchange ideas and develop new skills to effectively communicate with a changing audience.

Graduate and undergraduate students, academic faculty, agency planners, land managers, and researchers are all encouraged to attend this conference which will address the increasing importance of human dimensions in natural resource management.

The conference will provide a diverse and dynamic group of speakers and include plenary, concurrent sessions and poster sessions. Topics will address demographics, marketing, communication and collaboration and build on the concept of the evolving conservation marketplace.

The cost for registration is \$65 for SWCS members and \$75 for non-SWCS members before January 5, 2007.

For further information regarding the conference or for a detailed agenda, log on to the Montana SWCS website at <http://www.mtswcs.org> or contact Ann Fischer at 406-778-2238 ext. 109.

## Talking About Montana – Heed the Call

*Tom Pick, Montana SWCS Chapter President*

In case you haven't noticed, the [Call for Papers](#) has gone out for the Soil and Water Conservation Society's [2007 Annual Conference](#) to be held July 21-25 in Tampa, Florida this summer. The theme is "Conservation Challenges in a Changing Landscape". The organizers are looking for presentations that address the results of research, testing, monitoring, and or lessons learned from personal experience working with conservation systems, technologies, programs and policies. There are two options to deliver a presentation: an oral presentation or a poster presentation. Presentation abstracts may be submitted within the general topic areas or one of the special emphasis topics.

General topics are:

- Soil Resources and Management
- Conservation and Environmental Policy and Program Design
- Water Resources and Management
- Adaptive Management of Conservation Efforts
- Conservation Education
- Biodiversity Conservation and Management
- Conservation in Urban Settings
- Conservation Tools and Technology

Special emphasis topics selected for the 2007 Conference are:

- Conservation Implications of a Bio-based Economy
- Integrated Watershed Management
- Adaptive Management: Theory into Practice

I know that in Montana we have many results, experiences, and lessons to share that fall within the broad range of topic areas to be addressed at the conference. Please consider submitting an abstract (250 words or less) for consideration. The abstract deadline of DECEMBER 1 is looming large so please don't delay. For details on submitting an abstract please review the online [Call for Papers](#).

## Conservation Corner – Ask Dr. Conservation

Dear Doctor Conservation. I have a horse pasture where I pasture my horses. They do alright there and find enough to eat most of the time till it snows and I have to feed hay I used to buy from my neighbors before they quit talking to me. I don't ride 'em much anymore but they're nice to look at out there in the pasture. The pasture has a creek that flows through my place and the horses drink right out of the creek. They're natural horses as I don't give them artificial foods or supplements and the creek water is natural and good. I even drink it myself sometimes. When it freezes up I need to do a little ice choppin' but that's good exercise for me.

Why, my problem is that the last few years, the creek has etched itself down in the ground so far that the horses can't reach down to get a drink, even on their knees. This bothers me as I spent good time cuttin' that darn brush and trees out of the way so the horses could get to the creek and so I could see that pretty water from my big picture window. What gives? Should I did a deeper hole or build a pond now?

Signed, Horses Out of Water

Dear HOW: Thanks for your missive. Sounds like a nice place that you have there. Have you considered getting giraffes to replace the horses? Just kidding. Actually, it sounds like there might be some changes taking place in the creek that is causing the problem. I really should visit your place to see what is going on before jumping off the bridge, so to speak, with advice, but hey, this is my advice column job so here goes.

Your stream is doing what stream engineers (real people, not beavers who some people refer to as stream engineers) call downcutting, probably due to the fact it is eroding the soft material in the stream's bed. This phenomenon usually occurs slowly over long periods of time. There can be a number of reasons for this to occur, but to be blunt, to have it happen pretty fast means a) you messed up or b) somebody else messed up.

You should let the brush grow back so the roots will help hold the soil in place. This will probably involve changing how you pasture and water your horses, too. It might also change what your neighbors think of your horse pasture management style. Not much else you can do, sorry to say, except to let nature take its course to heal and allow the stream to recover over time unless you've got really big bucks and if you did you probably wouldn't be writing me for free advice. As a 'natural' proponent, I'm sure you can see the merit of this approach. If you feel an excessive need to dig or fill after this Doctor's prescription, please consider playing in the sandbox with your kids.

Thanks again for writing, but if you would have written me a long time ago, we could have avoided this problem. Let that be free advice to other HOWs out there that might foresee a similar problem some day. I guess we could call it preventative medicine.

Dr. Conservation



## Award Deadline Approaching

*Dick Scheetz, Montana SWCS Awards Committee Chair*

Applications for SWCS awards to be presented at next summer's International Conference in Florida must be received at National Headquarters by December 12, 2006. There are 7 award categories at the National Level, ranging from a new category recognizing research excellence to an award recognizing outstanding service to the Society. Several awards are available to non-members as well as members. Take a look at the SWCS website at [www.swcs.org](http://www.swcs.org) and click on awards to view all of the categories.

The deadline for the Montana SWCS chapter awards will be December 20, 2006. There are 2 categories to be nominated from the membership. The Professional Award is presented to someone who has used their professional position to further the natural conservation movement. This individual could be a government employee, state or federal; a teacher; a technical service provider or any of a number of other professions. The Land Manager Award is for that special person who is going the extra mile to adapt conservation practices on the land that he/she is actively managing.

To date, I have not received any nominations. The Montana SWCS Chapter prides itself on the number of National Award winners from the State in the past. Please do some thinking and get a nomination in. I can help with the application forms, but they are very simple. The Montana Chapter Awards are a great way to show that someone that is doing the right things that it is noticed and get some recognition for them. Contact Dick Scheetz, Ryan Young, or Kathy Sikorski with your nominations.

## SWCS Election for Board of Directors

*Heidi Brewer, Montana SWCS Nomination Committee Chair*

A slate of nominees has been selected for the Montana Chapter of SWCS board of directors election. Positions open for election this year are: President-elect, Secretary, Treasurer, Southwest Director, and Eastern Director.

The election ballot and nominee bios will be sent in a separate mailing. Please be watching your e-mail and mail and remember to vote to select your candidate of choice.

## Scholarship Drive 2006

Justin Meissner, Montana SWCS Scholarship Committee Chair

The SWCS will be accepting applications for two scholarships of \$500 and \$250 respectfully. The criteria for the scholarships are: 1) Undergraduate currently enrolled in an agricultural or natural resources related curriculum. 2) A Montana resident that is an enrolled freshman or higher at an accredited college, university, or vocational school. 3) A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale.

The application is a short 2-page questionnaire that only takes a few minutes to complete. Applications are available from the school financial aid office or at [www.mtswcs.org](http://www.mtswcs.org). Application packets are also available at the following address.

Applications must be post marked no later than January 12, 2007

Send Applications to:  
SWCS Scholarship Committee  
c/o Justin Meissner  
109 Railroad Ave. East  
Roundup, MT 59072

## SWCS Display Available to You

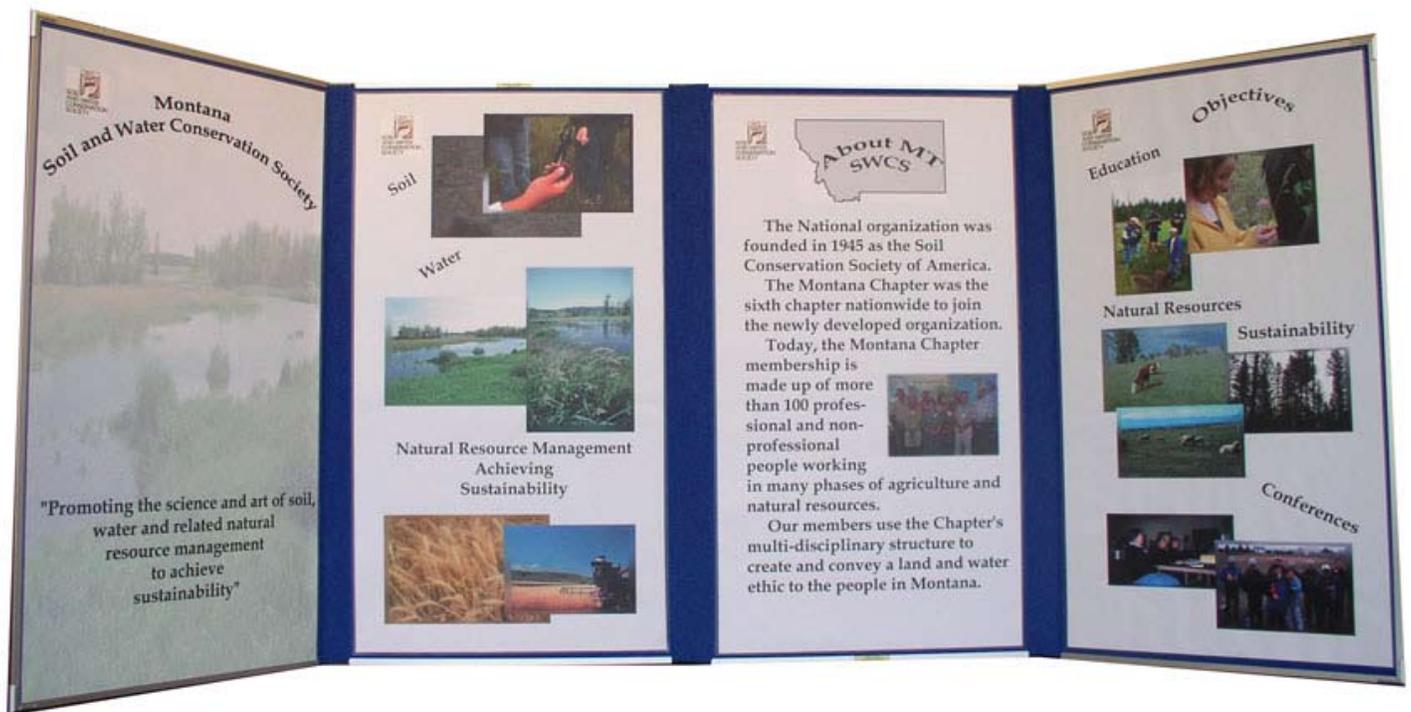
Carla Lawrence, Montana SWCS Southwest Area Director

The Montana Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS) display was designed to promote the chapter and for the purpose of recruiting people with an interest in the natural resources conservation field.

The display is a four-panel tabletop fold-out display, with a blue background and colored photo panels. One of the center panels features the national SWCS mission statement: To foster the science and the art of soil, water, and related natural resource management to achieve sustainability. The other center panel describes what Montana SWCS is all about and the two remaining panels of the display feature color photos of events and activities.

This tool is available to all SWCS members, and was designed to be a portable traveling display to be featured at trade shows, conferences, conventions and similar events.

If you are interested in having this display at any event you are hosting or involved with, contact Carla Lawrence at (406) 587-6952 or Heidi Brewer at (406) 587-6905.



## Northern Plains Meeting Coming to Montana

*Carla Lawrence, Montana SWCS Southwest Area Director*

The Montana Chapter is hosting the 2007 Northern Plains Leadership/Professional Development meeting, March 8-10, 2007, at The Pollard, a historic and famously appointed hotel in the heart of downtown Red Lodge. This regional SWCS meeting includes representatives from six states: Montana, Colorado, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming. The annual meeting rotates across the region, and Montana is excited to be hosting this event in 2007.

The meeting will begin in earnest on the 9th, but we will have some activities and functions for those coming in on the evening of the 8th. We are hard at work on a robust technical and professional development activities and field tour. We plan to have an informative and fun session that you won't want to miss. As an added attraction, the nearby Red Lodge Ski area will still be open for those who are so inclined (downhill) and want to add this activity to their trip.

Tom Pick, current chapter President, is heading up the planning team for this event. We'd like to have a good turnout from Montana members to welcome and meet with these folks from around the Northern Plains Region. An agenda will be sent out when it is finalized. If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact Tom at (406) 587-6947 or email him at [tpick@bresnan.net](mailto:tpick@bresnan.net).

## Meet Your Current Montana SWCS Chapter Treasurer

*Ed Musser, Montana SWCS Treasurer*

I am currently Relationship Manager/VP with Northwest Farm Credit Services, an agricultural cooperative. I have been employed in this and other Farm Credit positions for the past 24 years. I attended the University of Montana, graduating in 1978 with a BA in Economics, and Montana State University, graduating in 1996 with an MS in I&M Engineering. (Don't ask who I cheer for during the Cat-Griz game!). I am a native of Pennsylvania but have lived in Montana for 35 years in both eastern and western Montana.

I have been a member of the Montana Chapter of SWCS for the past 26 years and currently serve as Treasurer. I also served in the past on the Board of Directors. I am also a member of the American Agricultural Economic Association. Other community involvement includes serving on the Boards of Habitat for Humanity of Gallatin Valley and the Lewis & Clark Marathon Association.

I enjoy hiking and fishing around the Gallatin Valley and upland bird hunting with Copper, my springer spaniel.

## Introduction to Allison Levy, a New SWCS Member

*Tasha Gibby, Montana SWCS Chapter Newsletter Editor*

Allison Levy began as a student SWCS member while at Montana State University studying in the land rehabilitation program. Allison has worked in the environmental consulting capacity for the past four years for OASIS Environmental in Livingston, Mont.

In that position, she has worked on many, varied projects that have taken her to locations all around Montana as well as Alaska. Allison's professional expertise includes identification and community mapping of plant communities including noxious weeds and hydrophytic vegetation; wetland delineation; monitoring boundaries; soil classification and pedology; soil remediation and overburden science; soil and water chemistry; riparian ecology; nutrient cycling; rangeland resource measurements; species composition; distribution and density and point intercept transects; GPS; and GIS.

Allison grew up in rural upstate New York. She studied music, anthropology, and massage before settling down to land rehabilitation at MSU. Allison is drawn to this career because she likes to be outside and really involved in something that makes a difference in her community. Allison does routine wetland delineations following the *1987 US Army Corps of Engineer* guidelines, revegetation projects, and environmental management systems for agriculture. Allison also likes working in the greenhouse germinating plants for construction, rehabilitation, and habitat improvement projects. She has also had the opportunity to work with students in the Livingston area to teach them about her work and the importance of land rehabilitation.

Aside from work, Allison volunteers for Eagle Mount, is on a hockey team, plays the piano, and likes mountain biking, hiking, and climbing. She also does massage therapy part time.



## SWCS Benefits Members and Non-Members

*Ross Braun, International SWCS Membership Committee*

*\*Note: This article has been reprinted courtesy of the Oct. 23, 2006, Conservogram.*

In the process of recruiting SWCS members, we do a good job of identifying the professional benefits that members receive. However, there is another significant type of benefit that SWCS offers. SWCS provides opportunities for us to extend our conservation impact beyond our daily responsibilities. I feel lucky to have a job that I believe in and enjoy. And, I think most natural

resource professionals feel the same way. We want to do all we can to advance soil and water conservation. Membership in SWCS gives us the ability to expand our conservation influence. We can address issues that are not included in our day-to-day job. Through SWCS, we can network and influence people we do not necessarily encounter in our paid profession.

Many SWCS chapters successfully advance conservation by conducting educational activities for a wide variety of professions. As an NRCS employee, I have had limited conservation involvement with bankers, health officials, or land developers. SWCS activities, especially chapter workshops, provided me with events where I made valuable contact with people in disciplines other than conservation. Workshops about on-site septic systems, the economics of soil and water conservation, and community planning broadened my interaction and influence on important people. These have been very rewarding experiences.

Many organizations are interested in conservation education and addressing soil and water issues. They may be very interested in collaborating with SWCS. Some non-traditional partners to consider for future collaboration include banking organizations, home builders' associations, land use planners, health department inspectors, and lawyers. Facilitating cooperative activities with these organizations is a valuable service to them and to SWCS members. It can dramatically expand our conservation efforts. Individuals associated with these organizations may also be good candidates for SWCS membership.

When inviting people to join SWCS we should appeal to the altruistic nature and their personal interests in the environment. Make it a formal invitation. People like to be invited, wanted, and even needed.

Finally, do not forget our standard list of SWCS membership benefits:

- Professional development and education
- Visibility and career enhancement
- Networking with conservation leaders and peers from other locations
- Receiving the Journal of Soil and Water Conservation
- Non-partisan influence on conservation, environmental, and agriculture policy
- Discounts on publications and conferences
- Scholarships

## Call for Papers

*Tom Pick, Montana SWCS Chapter President*

The Call for Posters for the 2007 Montana Chapter Soil and Water Conservation Society Conference which will be held in Bozeman at the Holiday Inn on January 31 and February 1, 2007, is now available online at <http://www.mtswcs.org>. Note that the registration fee will be waived for students who submit and attend the Poster Presentation Session on the evening of January 31.

## Mystery Photo

*Tasha Gibby, Montana SWCS Newsletter Editor*

If you can identify this photo, courtesy of Tom Pick, you could win an embroidered Montana SWCS cap. Email me with your guess as to the location at [tasha.gibby@mt.usda.gov](mailto:tasha.gibby@mt.usda.gov). The first one to guess correctly will be the lucky winner.

By the way, have you taken any photos lately? I'm sure you have. Pick a couple that you like and submit them for the annual photo contest. You can mail a hard copy or email a digital file. For more information, contact me at the email address above.



# Happy Thanksgiving!

To submit articles or photos to the Montana Chapter Newsletter, contact Tasha Gibby at 406-587-6971 or [tasha.gibby@mt.usda.gov](mailto:tasha.gibby@mt.usda.gov).