



Inside this newsletter

Page 2-Montana Awards

World's finest chocolate

Page 3-Montana Chapter donate

Wildlife Print

Montana Chapter holding
Nutrient Certification Workshop

**Page 4-Understanding Irrigation
Effects**

Page 5- Official Ballot

Jane Holzer Biography

**Page 6 & 7- Montana Chapter
SWCS 2008 Election of Officers**

**Page 8- SWCS Northern Plains
Regional Meeting in Rapid City, SD
on March 6-8, 2008**

Deadlines

January 10 Ballots due to Tom Pick for
2008 Montana SWCS Election of Offi-
cers

January 15-17 51st Annual Weed Con-
trol Conference, Great Falls

February 12-14 Nutrient Planning Certi-
fication Session, Bozeman

March 6-8, 2008-The Regional Meeting
will be March 6-8, 2008 at the Ramkota
in Rapid City South Dakota.

President's Message

Ann Fischer, Montana SWCS Chapter President

Happy New Year Montana SWCS!

This past year has flown by quickly. Chapter members have been involved in many projects and are appreciated by all. I am proud to work with this group of more than 200 members across Montana who are working in a natural resource field and committed to a stewardship ethic.

There are many events planned for the next year and beyond and much has been accomplished over the past year. Here are *some* of the chapter's accomplishments from 2007:

- Co-sponsored the AWRA Irrigation Workshop
- Held the Annual Technical Conference in Bozeman
- Representation from Montana at the International Conference in Florida
- *Painting with Soil* Project
- MT Chapter's Soil and Water Conservation Endowment
- Earth Bracelets
- Candy Bar Sales for Scholarship Funds
- Hosted the Northern Plains Regional Technical Mtg. in Red Lodge
- Awarded 2 scholarships
- Completed a membership survey
- Sponsored Chapter Awards for
Professional of the Year,
Land Steward of the Year

There are yet more changes. Carla Lawrence, the southwest director, is leaving Bozeman and the southwest area. Brad Trosper, the northwest director, has decided to give someone else the opportunity to serve as a director. Brad has a full plate and has been working to put together the summer tour near Flathead Lake in 2008. Thank you both for your dedication and time spent serving as a director!

I want to thank everyone for being a member of MT SWCS and wish you all the best in 2008.

Ann K. Fischer

Montana Awards

Hello.

Is anyone there?

It seems like each issue of the Newsletter I am asked to include an article asking for nominations for the Montana SWCS Chapter awards. It is December and so far I have been contacted by 1 member for a nomination. I have tried to ask nicely for nominations, but that doesn't seem to work, so now I'm being direct. I NEED NOMINATIONS SOON! Now people, this is not a complicated affair. Generally, if you have someone in mind, you know all of the information that I need for the nomination. All we ask for is a short write up of why you are nominating that person. I will help you.

Let me refresh your memory on the categories. Land Steward of the Year, is that landowner or operator that is just doing a good job implementing conservation on their place. These people are the ones that when we want to have a tour or use as an example we turn to. Almost every Conservation District in the State has a Cooperator of the Year, that's who we are looking for. Professional of the Year is that person who in their daily job promotes conservation to help others apply conservation. This could be a school teacher, a media person, or a government employee to name a few.

Please get your nominations to me by January 4, 2008. Dick Scheetz, Award Chairman, 635-5381 ext 107, richard.scheetz@mt.usda.gov. Thank you.

GOT WORLD'S FINEST CHOCOLATE ?

By Carla Lawrence

In November during the MACD annual convention, the Montana Chapter distributed boxes of World's Finest Chocolate bars to members willing to sell the product. Proceeds will be used to fund two annual scholarships, one for \$500 and one for \$250, which are awarded to college students attending an accredited college or university system, and enrolled in a natural resource field.

Yes, you heard it right, for one dollar you can satisfy all your cravings for chocolate. The candy bars are available in three delicious flavors: Milk Chocolate; Milk Chocolate with Almonds and Milk Chocolate with Crisped Rice.

This is a good time of year to be selling chocolate bars, with the holiday season right around the corner. The World's Finest Chocolate bars are slim and fit nicely into that Christmas stocking. Who doesn't want to wake up on Christmas morning with chocolate in their stocking? And who wouldn't want to support conservation and the conservationists of tomorrow?

If you are interested in selling and/or purchasing World's Finest Chocolate bars, contact Carla Lawrence at (406) 587-6952 or email at carla.lawrence@mt.usda.gov. You may also contact folks in your area who are selling candy bars.

Members selling include:

Tom Pick, Heidi Brewer, Carla Lawrence, Bozeman

Ann Fischer, Baker

Kathy Sikorski, Baker

Jane Holzer, Scott Brown, Tara Ryan (MSCA), Conrad

Amber Kirkpatrick, MSU Bozeman

Kit Sutherland, Hamilton

John Blaine, Missoula

Gordy Hill, Joliet

Dick Scheetz, Terry

Stacy Eneboe, Conrad

Matt Crampton, Chinook

The executive board encourages all SWCS members to help out by purchasing candy bars to support the scholarship fund. It is as easy as making a phone call or sending an email.

Montana Chapter donates Wildlife Print to Montana Weed Control

The 51st Annual Conference of the Montana Weed Control Association (MWCA) will be held January 15 – 17 at the Heritage Inn in Great Falls. This year's conference offers an outstanding agenda of workshops and break-out sessions, promising something for everyone involved in the management of invasive weeds.

Each year during the conference, the MWCA Coordinator Support Committee sponsors the annual raffle with the drawing to be held at the 2008 Conference in January. Each year the raffle provides a significant financial boost for many special projects of the MWCA, and adds to the fun at our annual conference.

For several years now, the two grand prizes of a \$500 shopping spree and a \$500 rifle certificate and an additional prize of a **framed wildlife art print by artist Laurel Ovitt, donated by the Montana Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society.**

Ticket buyers can specify their choice of prizes by checking a box on their ticket stub. The first prize winner will receive the item selected on their ticket stub. Second and third place drawings will be for the remaining two items. Of course, you need not be present to win.

The drawing will be held in Great Falls at the MWCA Annual Convention and Trade Show during the breakfast meeting on Thursday, January 17th. Only 1500 tickets have been printed. Prices are \$5.00 each or 6 for \$25.00. Unsold tickets will be collected and sold at the Annual Convention in Great Falls until all have been sold, or until the breakfast meeting begins.

Tickets for the raffle are being sold by County Weed Coordinators and other members of the Association who have volunteered to help with this fundraising effort. Contact them to get in on your chance to win.

Montana Chapter to Hold Nutrient Planning Certification Sessions

By Tom Pick, Rick Fasching and Tommy Bass

The Montana Chapter is sponsoring a facilitated Nutrient Management Planning and Comprehensive Nutrient Management Planning (CNMP) training session on February 12 to 14, 2008, at the Wingate Motel in Bozeman, Montana. Participants who complete the training and subsequently submit an approved Nutrient Management and/or CNMP plan will then be certified as a planner in the respective category. The workshop is available to the public and NRCS employees who wish to be certified as a planner in these specialties. Non-NRCS participants will also be eligible for registration with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) as a Technical Service Provider (TSP) in this discipline.

Cost is \$40 for the one-day, February 12 Nutrient Management Planning session and \$80 for the two-day CNMP session; or \$100 for both sessions. The Nutrient Management course is a pre-requisite for the CNMP course and will feature components of Precision Agriculture. The instructor cadre is drawn from NRCS, Montana State University, Extension Service, and the Montana Department of Environmental Quality. The agenda and registration form is posted on the Chapter's website at: <http://www.mtswcs.org>. Co-sponsors for the sessions are Montana State University and the Certified Crop Advisors (CCA) WY/MT Advisory Board. Continuing Education Credit hours for CCAs will be provided. Registration deadline is February 1, 2008.

NRCS provides technical and financial assistance to livestock operators for the development of alternative uses of manure, waste utilization, nutrient management, application methods and timing, storage facilities, and improved feed management technologies. Assistance is provided through the development of a CNMP. Through the CNMP process, livestock producers and NRCS (or a TSP) evaluate waste and nutrient considerations and prepare alternatives that meet producer objectives while protecting surface and groundwater resources. For animal feeding operations that must also be permitted under state and federal water quality regulations, the CNMP can also be developed to serve as the required Nutrient Management Plan.

For more information please contact: Tom Pick, NRCS Water Quality Specialist, 406-587 6947 or thomas.pick@mt.usda.gov; Richard Fasching, NRCS State Agronomist, 406-587-6837 or

richard.fasching@mt.usda.gov; or Tommy Bass, Extension Livestock Environment Associate Specialist, (406) 994-5733 or tmbass@montana.edu.

“Understanding Irrigation Effects Workshop was a Success

By Tom Pick

Irrigation Effects on Surface Water and Ground Water,” was the topic of a workshop sponsored by the Montana Chapter on October 10, 2007 in Lewistown. The workshop was held prior to the American Water Resources Association (AWRA) State Conference. Attendance was at capacity with 40+ participants and numerous people on the waiting list.

During the morning indoor session a number of pertinent issues were raised and discussed, ranging from acknowledging variability in monitoring results to examples of ground and surface water studies linking impacts to irrigation, and basic and advanced water measurement field tools. Peter Robinson, Regional NRCS Irrigation Engineer, discussed flumes, weirs, and other devices used to measure water and soil moisture. A working, miniature flume table was on hand to demonstrate the operational features and strengths/limitations of a number of different in-channel water measuring devices.

Several interesting water use/balance case studies were presented including one on Flint Creek. Scott Brown of the Montana Salinity Control Association described his work to evaluate the origin and extent of saline seepage near an irrigation canal.

An afternoon field trip on the beautiful fall day took the group to the restored Brewery Flats area on Big Springs Creek just south of town. There, we featured four stations to demonstrate water measuring devices in use. Water legend Ron Shields, semi-retired USGS hydrologist, showed everyone the proper use of a pygmy meter to measure water velocity and channel cross section to calculate stream discharge. Mike Roberts, DNRC hydrologist, demonstrated placement and data management associated with an Aquarod device which records and stores water stage and temperature. Bill Gardner, a Fish, Wildlife & Parks Biologist, provided hands on experience with installing and using several types of thermistors, or insitu temperature recording devices. Tom Pick manned another station to allow participants to see and discuss placement of four devices: a totalizing flowmeter commonly used on center pivot sprinklers to measure instantaneous discharge and record total yield of in-pipe flow; a Parshall flume used to measure in-channel discharge; gypsum moisture blocks used to measure and track soil moisture, and an Irrrometer, a type of tensiometer used to help track plant water use and schedule irrigations.

Feedback from the attendees indicated that everyone learned a lot about many water measurement devices they don't have exposure to very often. They really appreciated the effort of the Chapter to help organize and sponsor this event. The AWRA Board also expressed their thanks to the SWCS for the opportunity to partner on this event. A number of Chapter members were on hand to participate in the workshop and help us to get the Chapter's message out to a new audience and potential members.



OFFICIAL BALLOT

Montana Chapter Soil and Water Conservation Society

2008 Election of Officers

Section Chair-Executive Council Director

**** VOTE FOR ONE CANDIDATE IN EACH SECTION ****

South Section

Gordon Hill

Roger Hybner

North Section

Matt Crampton

Joyce Trevithick

Northwest Section

Angel Rosario

Bruce Sims

Mail completed ballots to: Tom Pick, 28 Golden Trout Way, Bozeman, MT

59715 or Email electronic message in this format to tpick@bresnan.net by

January 10, 2008.

JANE HOLZER

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jane Holzer is the Program Director of the Montana Salinity Control Association (MSCA) located in Conrad, MT, serving all of eastern Montana. She has been involved in the program since its inception, serving as agronomist on the technical field team. MSCA is a satellite program of Montana's conservation districts, emphasizing saline soil and ground water investigations for individual farms and watershed-scale projects. MSCA is currently involved in fourteen watershed projects ranging in size from 6,000 to 300,000 acres.

Holzer graduated from Montana State University with an emphasis in Agriculture Production/Agronomy and Rural Sociology. Her focus with MSCA involves cropping systems for dryland salinity control, focusing on replacement of summer-fallow with rotations of perennial forage and intensive annual cropping using economically-viable grains, oilseeds and annual legumes. She works closely with USDA and state agencies to utilize and tailor technical and financial assistance programs for saline reclamation.

Jane is involved in conservation district events and MSU agricultural research activities, and professional organizations including Soil and Water Conservation Society and American Water Resources Association. MSCA was an invited participant in the first International Salinity Forum in 2005, held in California with over 20 nations represented. Holzer has provided tours for numerous researchers and agricultural producers from Canada and Australia. Jane was raised on a diversified cattle and grain ranch at Stanford, MT and maintain interests there.



~Check out the Members Only Section on the SWCS Web Page~

Renew your membership, update your address, or check out the membership directory at the new Soil and Water Conservation Society membership section. <http://www.swcs.org/>

Montana Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society 2008 Election of Officers

by Tom Pick, Past President and Nominating Committee Chair

The Montana Chapter was organized in 1945, the sixth Chapter to organize and affiliate with the national organization, then called the Soil Conservation Society of America. The first slate of officers was elected later that year, some 63 years ago, in December. To help ensure the continued growth and success of the Montana Chapter, please exercise your members' responsibility in selecting Chapter leaders from among these outstanding members who have stepped up as candidates to run for election.

The Montana Chapter is divided into five sections. Section Chairs serve three-year terms and also serve as the Executive Council member from their respective Section. called the Soil Conservation Society of America. The first slate of officers was elected later that year, some 63 years ago, in December. To help ensure the continued growth and success of the Montana Chapter, please exercise your members' responsibility in selecting Chapter leaders from among these outstanding members who have stepped up as candidates to run for election.

The Montana Chapter is divided into five sections. Section Chairs serve three-year terms and also serve as the Executive Council member from their respective Section. sections. Section Chairs serve three-year terms and also serve as the Executive Council member from their respective Section. Terms among the five Sections are staggered. Section Chairs are often also commonly referred to as, "Board Members" or "Directors."

Positions for three Section Chair representative positions are up for election this year: South, North and Northwest. Next year, the Southwest and East Chairs are up for election. The candidates running for election to the Executive Council to serve as 2008 through 2010 Section Chair/Executive Council Representatives are as follows:

South Section

Gordon J. Hill

Gordon is currently the District Conservationist in Joliet, Montana. He had the opportunity to move back to the ranch that he grew up on in 2004 when the previous DC retired. Gordon and his wife, Debbie moved from Bozeman to Roberts after working in Bozeman as the District Conservationist for 15 years.

Gordon has been a member of SWCS for more than 25 years (although not exactly sure how much more). He was the co-chairman of Youth Activities the last time Montana hosted the National SWCS Convention in Billings. His main interests are working in the farm and ranching industries, hunting, golf and especially Bobcat Athletics. In the past, Gordon was very involved with youth so he is a lifetime member of the Montana Officials Association, after being a basketball official for 17 years.

Candidate's statement: "I am running for the Executive Council position to try to encourage SWCS to continue to have Technical Meetings each year and to encourage young students to pursue a career in Natural Resource Management (and also active members of SWCS). I think we have a very good membership in Montana and would like to keep our Montana Chapter one of the Region's best. At our annual SWCS meetings we hear presentations from University Professors, people in private business, and people in other agencies about clean water and other issues of interest.

Roger Hybner was raised on a dryland farm/ranch north of Rudyard, MT, where the main crops grown were spring and winter wheat, barley, oats and beef cattle. His degrees are a Bachelor of Science in Agronomy and a Master's of Science in Adult Education from MSU-Bozeman. From 1986 to 2004, Roger was the Supt. of the University of Wyoming's Sheridan Research & Extension Center before moving ccer and high school basketball to Miles City to become the NRCS Lower Yellowstone Area Conservation Agronomist. He has been the Manager of the Bridger Plant Materials Center for the MT & WY USDA-NRCS since November of 2006.

Candidate's statement: "I have been a member of the SWCS since 2004, and I have had the pleasure of attending two annual meetings and would like to pursue a more active role in the organization. To me being a conservationist is of the highest priority, especially in current times of declining natural resources and high energy use."

North Section

Matt Crampton graduated from Montana State University and has been employed with the Natural Resources Conservation Service for twenty-four years. He started with the Soil Conservation Service as a student trainee at the Helena and Livingston field offices. After graduation Matt then worked at the Plant Materials Center for about a year. From there he worked in the Billings and Malta field offices. In 1990, Matt transferred to the Philipsburg office as the District Conservationist and then to Chinook as the District Conservationist in 1990. He has been a member of the Soil and Water Conservation Society since 1991 except for a short time in the mid 90's.

Candidates Statement: "As a member, one develops a perspective about any organization. Being an officer/director of SWCS can give one a whole different perspective. I think that this would give me the opportunity to assist with the goals that the chapter has set as well as to grow as a soil conservationist."

Joyce Trevithick

Joyce Trevithick is currently a soil conservationist in the Havre Field Office. She was born and raised on a grain/livestock farm near Geraldine. Joyce grew up working with cows and sheep and driving farm vehicles and tractors. She graduated from MSU with a BS in Animal Science and Agronomy in 1996. She spent several years assisting her parents on the family farm before going to work for the NRCS in 2003. During this time Joyce worked for a custom meat cutter in Fort Benton.

She spent her first year in the Great Falls office and moved to Roundup in the fall of 2004. In Roundup she was introduced to SWCS and encouraged to join by John Rouane. Joyce viewed her membership as a good opportunity to learn. In the fall of 2005 she transferred to the Havre field office.

Candidate’s statement: “I have been interested in increasing my involvement with SWCS so when the opportunity to run for the Northern Section was presented to me I knew I should at least try. It is easy to set back and allow others to speak for us, but the only way to learn how to speak for ourselves is to get out there and DO IT! Agriculture is huge part of the history and success of our country and I think we need to do all we can to present this fact to the large majority of the population that has no involvement with agriculture. I look at being a member of SWCS as an opportunity for me to learn from other members and to help others learn from us.”

Northwest Section

Angel Rosario has been a member of the SWCS for nearly 20 years. Angel is a native of Puerto Rico where he grew up on a small coffee and banana farm. He graduated with a bachelor’s degree in agronomy and soils from the University of Puerto Rico in the city of Mayagüez, and worked as a Peace Corps volunteer in Ecuador from 1984 to 1986 in agro forestry practices. Angel has worked for the NRCS since 1987 at different locations including Muscatine, Iowa, and Havre, Eureka, and Kalispell, Montana where he is presently the District Conservationist.

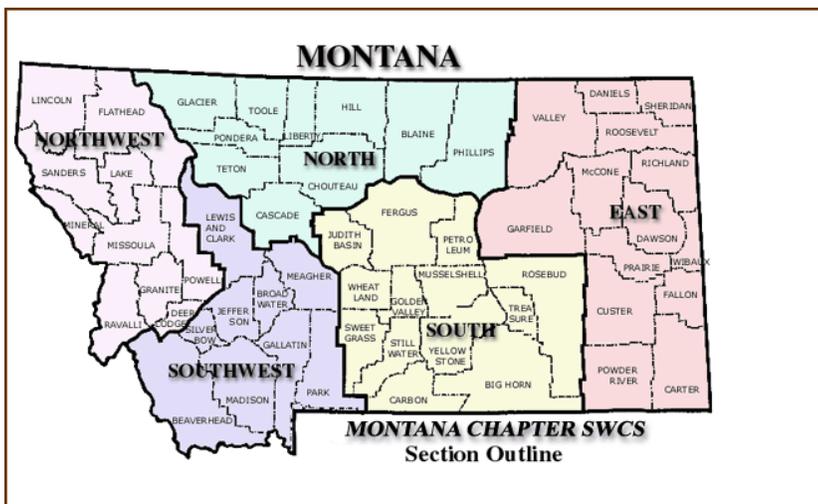
Candidate’s statement: “I value the work that the Society does worldwide to protect soil and water resources. I would like to help to continue with that tradition being more active with the Chapter’s activities in the state and in the area.

Bruce Sims now works as the Regional Hydrologist for the USDA Forest Service, Northern Region in Missoula, Montana. Bruce was a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Philippines; District Hydrologist on the Gold Beach Ranger District, Siskiyou NF; Forest Hydrologist, on the Santa Fe National Forest, and District and Area Hydrologist on the Tongass NF in Petersburg, Alaska. He began his most recent position as Regional Hydrologist in July of 2000. His duties include serving as the Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation (BAER) Coordinator for the Northern Region.

Bruce graduated from the University of Texas at El Paso with a B.S. in Secondary Education. He holds a M.Ed. in Geography and an M.S. in Watershed Management from the University of Arizona. His Masters Thesis studied the effects of prescribed fire on water quality. He served as the Secretary of the New Mexico Chapter of the SWCS in 1991 and 1992 and the President in 1993.

Candidate’s statement: “Tom asked if I was interested and I said ok because I have been feeling guilty about not being more active in the Montana Chapter. I am, however, very willing to serve and look forward to being a productive participant if elected.”

The Nominating Committee thanks each of these candidates for their willingness to run for election to the Executive Council. As one reviews their work and personal history it is easy to see the common traits that distinguish these individuals: an ethic of volunteerism and a ready willingness to play an active role to make a difference in their personal and professional environments. I wish the best to all of the candidates. In any case, the Chapter is set to win with an excellent cast of additions to our Executive Council. **PLEASE REMEMBER TO VOTE!!** .



SWCS Northern Plains Regional Meeting 2008-Rapid City

The Regional Meeting will be March 6-8, 2008 at the Ramkota in Rapid City South Dakota.

Below is a **tentative** agenda for the meeting.

Thursday, March 6, 2008 –Registration and arrival in the afternoon, with a social and informative presentation that evening on global warming.

Friday, March 7, 2008 –Informational presentations in the morning.

Foster Sawyer, SD DENR – underground water movement in the Northern Black Hills and Foothills, and septic systems.

Jared Oswald, RESPEC Consulting – Belle Fourche River Watershed Project – irrigation water savings.

Dr. Scott Kenner, SDSM&T – Water quality concerns in Rapid Creek

George Zimmerman, Black Hills RC&D Coordinator – Cheyenne River Watershed Project.

Talk on the Cellulosic ethanol plant that has been constructed outside of Upton, Wyo.

The tour plans include going to the Homestake Visitor's Center to hear a presentation on the progress and planned development and scientific projects for the Underground Lab slated to go into the old Homestake Mine. At Homestake Mine we'll go up to the Belle Fourche Irrigation District to view some of the automation that has taken place through the Belle Fourche River Watershed project to increase efficiency of irrigation water delivery and conserve water in the system.

Regional Workshop 2009-Rapid City

Mark your calendars now! A Regional Technical Workshop will be held in Rapid City, February 18-20, **2009**. A list of topics planned for the workshop includes Climate Change, the New Farm Bill, and Conservation Security Program (CSP), an update on Animal Feeding Operation Rules, Irrigation and Salinity Issues. There will be a wide variety of topics presented and all members are encouraged to attend.