

Winter Newsletter

February, 2006

PACD moves to new office



PACD Chairman Steve Dutcher measures for new windows (top); volunteers make repairs to wall.

Although the address has changed, you can still reach us by phone at 332-3114, and fax at 332-3855.

Seedling tree orders due April 1

The Popo Agie Conservation District will accept seedling tree orders until April 1, 2006. The tree program offers a variety of low-cost seedling trees for conservation and landscaping projects.

Seedling tree orders will be delivered on April 26th, and will be available for pick-up at our new address at 221 South 2nd Street in Lander. Please call for species selection or ordering assistance today!

The Popo Agie Conservation District has relocated to 221 S. 2nd Street in Lander, the building previously occupied by the Lander Art Center and Gravity Club.

PACD is very pleased with the new space which will not only provide a wonderful work space for staff, but will accommodate future growth. There will also be a Xeriscape garden and a tree demonstration planting area at our new location!

In an effort to reduce our paper consumption, we now offer the PACD quarterly newsletter electronically and via our website.

Please contact PACD if you would like to receive the newsletter via email, if your address has changed, or if you know someone that may like to be added to our mailing list!

USDA Offers energy cost offset for completion of EQIP practices

Help is currently available for producers hard-hit by escalating energy costs. On January 19, 2006 Agriculture Deputy Secretary Chuck Conner announced \$40 million for one-time payment adjustments that will allow eligible Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) participants to complete conservation practices that have been delayed because of recent increases in energy prices.

"There are many conservation practices that farmers and ranchers have put on hold because of increasing energy prices," Conner told the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts at their annual meeting here. "This adjustment will help our producers to fully implement those practices which will increase the protection of our natural resources and in some cases, lessen the impact of high energy prices by reducing producers' need for energy and energy-related inputs."

This assistance is part of USDA's effort to mitigate the impact of high energy costs on agricultural producers. The USDA energy strategy was announced on Dec. 7 in response to concerns raised during the nationwide USDA Farm Bill Forum tour.

The one-time adjustment will apply to participants who signed EQIP contracts in 2004 or earlier. The increase in payment will apply to specific practices that have been most affected by spikes in the cost of concrete, steel, plastic pipe, and other construction materials. **The increase will only be paid for practices that are completed between March 1 and June 30, 2006** and will focus on specific practices that have escalated in price by 20 percent or more because of rising energy costs.

The Energy Initiative applies to regular EQIP projects. Contact Kevin Edinger at 221 S. 2nd Street or call 332-3114.



Current snowpack data available

Water supply forecasting activities are administered and conducted by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to provide irrigators and other water users with factual and current estimates of annual water availability from high mountain snowpacks. This information is then used to predict stream flows and available water supplies for agricultural, industrial, recreational, and urban water use needs for the following season.

Obtaining accurate and timely information on the extent and water content of the mountain snow pack requires specially trained people and unique equipment. The federal, state and private cooperative Snow Survey Program has met customer needs since the mid-1930's and continues to evolve in response to increasing demands of water users. The Snow Survey Program

provides monthly updates for precipitation, temperature, snow depth, snow water equivalent, stream flow and stream flow forecasts from December through June each year.

SNOwpack **TE**lemetry (or **SNOTEL**) data is transmitted by radio signals to receiving stations. This network transmits snow, precipitation and temperature data to a central computer facility in Portland, Oregon. Once the data is in Portland, the Centralized Forecasting System (CFS) analyzes the data and generates stream flow forecasts as well as tabular data summaries. SNOTEL sites are scattered throughout the Wind River Mountains and the data gathered by these sites is updated weekly. Data can be accessed at any NRCS office or online at:

<http://www.wy.nrcs.usda.gov/snow>

WIND RIVER BASIN SNOTEL SITES

Deer Park: elevation 9,700 feet

Snow Water Equivalent: 12.7" (96%)
 Snow Depth: 45.9"
 Year to Date Precipitation: 15.8"

South Pass: elevation 9,040 feet

Snow Water Equivalent: 12.3" (100%)
 Snow Depth: 49.3"
 Year to Date Precipitation: 13.2"

Townsend Creek: elevation 8,700 feet

Snow Water Equivalent: 3.9" (65%)
 Snow Depth: 18.2"
 Year to Date Precipitation: 6.6"

Hobbs Park: elevation 10,100 feet

Snow Water Equivalent: 7.3" (70%)
 Snow Depth: 29.9"
 Year to Date Precipitation: 8.0"

Popo Agie Conservation District

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Lander, WY 82520

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Department of Ag Youth Advisory Board has vacancies

The Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) Board of Directors initiated four positions for a Youth Advisory Board to the WDA Board. The goal was to involve young people in the decisions facing agriculture today. Currently, these positions are advisory, but there is legislation that would make these positions full voting members of the Board for six year terms. Involving young people in the decisions confronting agriculture is critical to this industry in Wyoming.

There are two vacant positions on the Board for candidates between 18 and 30

years of age for the Northwest and Southeast regions.

The WDA will solicit applications through February and hope to make selections for the Youth Advisory Board at the April Board meeting.

Please contact the Popo Agie Conservation District at 221 S. 2nd Street (332-3114) or Wyoming Department of Agriculture at (307) 777-6569 for more information or to obtain an application packet.