



Redington Resource Review
Resource News for the Conservation Minded
Producer and Landowner
A Quarterly Publication of the Redington Natural Resource
Conservation District
Volume 23 No. 3 August 2006

CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Submitted by Stefanie Smallhouse,
 Chair, Redington NRCD

RAIN!

"Anyone who says sunshine brings happiness has never danced in the rain" Unknown

.....or lived in Arizona!

There is no doubt that the myriad shades of green that blanket the desert are a welcome change! Thanks to an uncommon tropical storm system that stayed for a few days over SE Arizona, and our unpredictable, spotty summer storms, I think that everyone in the district received some much needed moisture. The resiliency of desert plants never ceases to amaze me. After months of no measurable moisture, and years of inconsistent precipitation - the grasses, forbs, and desert shrubs on our rangeland have sprung into action once again trying to reproduce as quickly as possible. We can also hope that our wells have been refreshed with a shot in the arm to the ground water table! It will take many more inches to make up for our years of drought, but I am certainly thankful for this clear break in the fine dust that has covered everything for too long.

Speaking of water.....

This issue of the newsletter will highlight what some people refer to as "rain makers" or center pivots. A very important advancement in agriculture that helps out the farmer when there is no rain, and conserves irrigation water at the same time. Many of you may have noticed in the last couple of years that these irrigation systems have been installed in the district. These improvements were possible with the help of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program administered by the NRCS and authorized through the 2002 Farm Bill.

Also in this issue, a piece about constructing escape ramps for wildlife to ensure that wildlife can safely utilize livestock waters during the drought. This concern has been brought forward in community issue discussions for the Lower San Pedro River Watershed Assessment. The district will likely be taking action on this, with some type of volunteer effort to install several of these ramps throughout the district where needed.

In the coming months the district hopes to be hosting the Executive Director for the NM Association of Conservation Districts to give us a presentation about the possible control of salt cedar along the San Pedro River. This is an exotic species brought to North America for the purpose of erosion control, but it tends to take over riparian areas and create monocultures. From the initial presentations of the Lower San Pedro Assessment (LSP), we learned that salt cedar occurs in a greater abundance along the river corridor than cottonwood or willow trees.

Please continue to check out the district website to learn more about the LSP findings and what is going on in the district. If you happen to go to the Cochise County Fair next month look for our district booth distributing conservation education material to fair goers!

Recently we have had a tragic reminder of the dangers that our summer storms and unexpected flash floods can bring. My deepest sympathies go out to the families of the men who were killed by the rushing flood waters of Hot Springs Wash earlier this month. The road was dry that day, but summer storms had hit the upper canyons and caused the rush of water. Please remember to look up before you enter any washes during this time of the year.

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Redington NRCD News and Announcements

Conservation Education Center Director Redington NRCD Job Opening and Description

The Redington Conservation Education Center (RCEC) is sponsored by the Redington NRCD. The Redington District Education Center provides current documentation, referral and dissemination of programs and materials, and information that promotes knowledge of the environment, including educational materials and programs to educate its cooperators, local students, and residents on the implementation of conservation practices in land use. The NRCD Education Centers help fulfill the statewide need for conservation and environmental education.

NRCD Ed Centers work with many Federal, State, and local agencies and entities to utilize funding, technology and staff to provide educational programs dealing with basic ecological principals and the effects of natural and man related processes on natural resources.

The RCEC and Director will be expected to fulfill the following requirements:

- Visit local high school science departments and distribute conservation education materials or funding for field trips/curriculum.
- Provide local elementary schools with conservation education materials and presentations on natural resource education.
- Develop a RCEC display for meetings and events
- Sponsor a county fair display when appropriate
- Sponsor or help facilitate the Arizona Envirothon when requested.
- Attend AACD/ Ed Center meetings
- Complete financial duties and reporting to the Redington NRCD on a monthly basis.
- Co-Sponsor a Conservation in Land Use Field Day with a local cooperator
- Support the local RC&D with educational material funding.
- Coordinate local educational workshops for cooperators

Estimated salary for this position:
\$600 per quarter plus reimbursement for travel and supplies.

Estimated time requirement ~20 Hrs/month

Apply by September 30th, 2006
Contact: Stefanie Smallhouse 520-212-2639
Judy Dykes 520-212-5839
Don Looney 520-212-2900

Redington NRCD Watershed Protection Fund Grant

The Redington NRCD is in the final stages of completing the WPF final report. It will be available on the Redington NRCD web site at: <http://www.redingtonnr.cd.org>

On the Redington NRCD web site you can also read about the history of the Redington NRCD, past and current projects in the district, election results, news, contact information. You can also download cooperator agreements and read archived newsletters.

.....
:The Redington NRCD was established in 1947 and is:
:responsible for 285,860 acres of land located within:
:Pima, Cochise, Graham and Pinal Counties. The district:
:is an independent political subdivision of the State of:
:Arizona that works with private landowners on a volun-:
:tary basis to help provide science-based technical assis-:
:tance for the purpose of conservation. Over 200,000 acres:
:of land are under conservation management plans or:
:using conservation practices. Only 48,071 acres in the:
:district are privately owned. Over 156,000 acres are state:
:trust lands.
:.....

NACD Report

Submitted by Don Looney

National Association of Conservation Districts policy comments to Congress on a number of topics important to the West!

On behalf of the nation's 3,000 conservation districts, the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) is pleased to provide comments to the House Committee on Resources' to provide our views on working ranches, healthy rangelands, and maintaining open space. Established under state law, conservation districts are local units of government charged with carrying out programs for the protection and management of natural resources at the local level.

The rangelands of the nation's private ranches and public domain are a vital economic and environmental force in America. Approximately 250 million acres of federal rangelands administered by the U. S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management are grazed by livestock under permits issued to private ranchers. Federal grazing permits are essential to the economic viability of many ranches and to the balanced use of private and federal lands that make up the landscape in the American West.

Forage is a principal resource, and livestock grazing is an essential tool in managing rangeland as well as forest resources and establishing a desirable ecological balance. NACD urges federal and state agencies to continue consideration to the roles of livestock in multiple-use managements of rangelands and forested

Newsletter produced by J. Dale

If you would prefer to receive this newsletter electronically, please email jdale@cdarc.org

ecosystems.

NACD supports the notion that grazing management practices should be implemented in an economically and environmentally sound manner in order to meet the national needs for food, fiber, wildlife, recreation, and water quality. With the threats of wildland fire, invasive species, drought, and land fragmentation, it is vital to the long term sustainability of our rangelands to work with federal land managers, permittees, and landowners in a cooperative manner to ensure that our working rangelands are conserved for future generations.

Working Rangelands

NACD supports a working lands concept and believes that agricultural producers must have an economically viable farming/ranching operation to be able to make an investment in conservation practices on their land. NACD defines working lands as those lands in economic production of food, feed or fiber. Where grazing is discontinued or private ranches are subdivided, the long-term health of watersheds is at risk due to the fragmentation of habitat and changes in land uses at the urban interface. Encouraging such fragmentation of open space should not be supported by taxpayer dollars.

NACD does not support permanent retirement of permitted rangelands through a federal buyout program. A permit buyout program would have only one objective - the elimination of grazing on public lands, and therefore, the virtual elimination of livestock production in the western states. Properly conducted range livestock production is not only ecologically sound but also provides income to both the federal government and local economies that otherwise would come out of taxpayer's pocket.

The majority of Western ranchers rely on public lands to support their livestock for part of the year. Without federal grazing permits, these producers would not be able to support the same numbers that they can with federal grazing allotments. It is just as important to recognize base property as a condition of the grazing permit. Ranchers who would support selling their allotments to a buyout program could be forced to cease livestock production and subdivide their privately owned ranchlands to replace income lost from their annual sales, consequently removing the open space characteristics of western landscapes and eliminating environmental benefits produced by their operation.

Fuels Reduction

Pre-settlement population levels of large naturally reproducing herbivores (predominantly bison and elk) had a great impact on the ecosystems of the West. Prior to western settlement and domestic livestock production on western lands, these animals impacted range, forest and interface ecosystems and provided a host of services. One of these services was the management of underbrush and sub-canopy vegetation through both vegetation consumption and the effects of their movements across and through the landscape.

The utilization of grazing for fuels reduction activities on public and private lands provides a tool against catastrophic wildfires. This natural form of fuels reduction acts as a contributing factor in protection against wildfires while helping to maintain diversity among the plant species in both open and forested areas.

The presence of cattle on these lands today, both on Federal and private holdings, is a substitute for and carry-over of this role of livestock on the western landscape. NACD believes that careful management, good monitoring, and adaptive science and techniques can develop grazing as one of the important tools among others in the national effort to reduce high-density fuel loads and catastrophic fire damage.

Invasive Species

Introduction of invasive plants to public and private rangelands are a major threat to rangeland health. As these non-native species move in to rangelands, many of the native grasses and forbs (which serve as feed for rangeland animals) are displaced or killed. In many cases, such as the tamarisk infestations in the southwest, the invasive plants absorb increased levels of water and nutrients from the soil, causing devastating effects on rangeland ecosystems, as well as minimizing grazing capacity.

Cooperation between government agencies and rangeland producers, increased public awareness, and consistent federal funding commitments are all necessary for invasive species eradication and rangeland restoration efforts. Conservation Districts provide the mechanism for project implementation and will continue partner with Federal agencies in these efforts.

Drought

Drought continues to plague many regions of this country. It is a costly function of normal climate patterns. Drought occurs every year in different states; however, it is the multi-year droughts that can have devastating impacts on local and regional economies and result in major funding challenges. Drought can result in losses in rangeland production, cause wildfire and put added burdens on areas that already have limited water supplies.

Current drought conditions over much of the West have resulted in widespread reductions in grazing or total destocking of rangelands. Livestock reductions have been voluntary on private, state and some federal lands. In other cases, federal land management agencies have mandated reductions or destocking. NACD believes it is imperative for federal land management agencies to make decisions on a site-specific basis and should consider the existing forage conditions in all pastures to be used within the foreseeable future.

Both the agency and the permittee should monitor conditions to adjust the plan as needed. A flexible, cooperative approach will improve the ability of both ranchers and agencies to deal with drought.

NACD encourages support for policies and programs that provide a continued commitment to healthy working rangelands. We look forward to continuing to work with the Committee on these issues in our continued commitment local landowners in resource conservation and land stewardship.

Redington Natural Resource Conservation District & Conservation Education Center Board of Supervisors:

Stefanie Smallhouse, Chair
carlink@hughes.net

Judy Dykes, Secretary
dykes@rnsmtc.com

Don Looney, Treasurer
dbl@hughes.net

Charles Kent, Supervisor
ckent1@starband.net

Les Helfrich, Supervisor
chiefc@rnsmtc.com

Cascabel Volunteer Fire Department News

Submitted by Les Helfrich, Fire Chief, CVFD
chiefc@rnsmtc.com



HOW SAFE IS YOUR HOME?

This final article on Defensible Space will consider Zone 3, which is an area of no specified size. A gradual transition into this zone from defensible space standards to other management objectives you may have is suggested.

Typical management objectives for areas surrounding homesites are: provide optimal recreational opportunities; enhance aesthetics; maintain healthy trees; provide barriers from wind, noise, dust and visual intrusions.

A greater number of wildlife trees can remain in Zone 3. Mowing is not necessary. While it may be a good idea to prune trees along trails and fire access roads, pruning is generally not necessary except it helps to reduce ladder fuel growth.

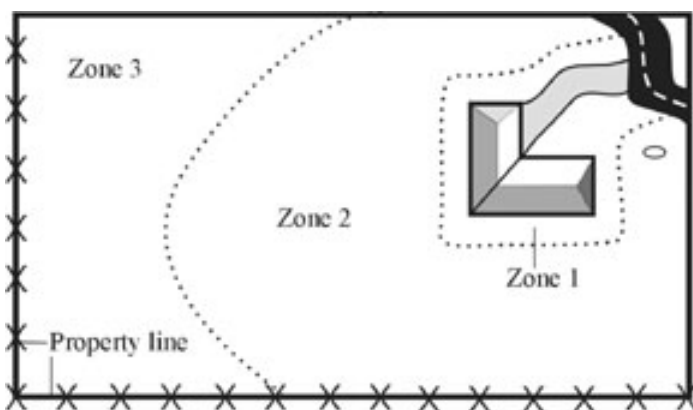


Figure 1. The three fire-defensible zones around a home or other structure.

FIREWISE ANNUAL CHECKLIST (Defensible Space requires maintenance)

- ▶ Trees and shrubs are properly thinned and pruned.
- ▶ Slash from thinning is disposed of properly.
- ▶ Branches overhanging the roof and chimney are removed.
- ▶ Chimney screens are in place and in good condition.
- ▶ Chimney flues are cleaned at least once a year.
- ▶ Grass and weeds are kept mowed.
- ▶ At least one outdoor water supply is available with hose & nozzle, so all parts of the house can be reached.

- ▶ Clearance of trees and branches is adequate for emergency vehicles. Is there a turn-around area or second means of egress?
- ▶ Are house numbers posted and easily visible?
- ▶ There is an easily accessible tool storage with rakes, shovels, hoes, axe and a ladder available in case of fire.
- ▶ Is your IN CASE OF EMERGENCY information list near the phone?

The Department is proud to announce that on June 12, 2006 we received a 1976 4x4 mini-pumper from the Oracle Fire Department. The Dodge unit carries 250 gallons of water and is rated at 250 GPM @ 150 PSI. It has been equipped and is ready to serve the community and make mutual aid responses. The Board of Directors and all members again wish to thank the Oracle Fire Dept. and Jim Etshokin, Assistant Chief for making this possible.

Rainfall Measurements for Area

Data from M Diamond Headquarters near Redington:

May 06-- Trace
June 06-- 0.81"
July 06-- 3.85"
1/2 Aug-- 0.52"

Data from Cascabel Clayworks, Cascabel

May 06-- 0.81"
June 06-- 0.96"
July 06-- 5.54"
1/2 Aug-- 1.88"

Data from Harold Elliott, Cascabel

May 06-- 0.11"
June 06-- 1.45"
July 06-- 6.59"
1/2 Aug-- not reported

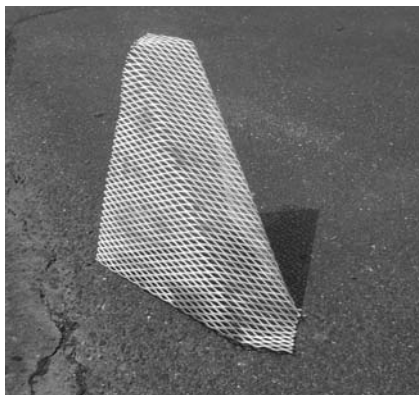
Wildlife Escape Ramps

Submitted by Dave Matthews, NRCS District Conservationist

In July 2006 a workshop was held in Cochise County to provide hands-on guidance for constructing wildlife escape ramps. Attendees learned about proper construction and installation of wildlife ramps. Escape ramps provide a safe avenue for bats, birds, rodents, and other animals to climb from open tanks and troughs to avoid drowning.

Wildlife escape ramps can be easily produced at a very low cost. They can be built from sheets of expanded metal and cut in squares to any desired size. The squares are then easily bent into a wedge shape. The metal ramps are painted for rust protection and ready for installation. They are bolted or otherwise secured to the lip of any tank or trough. Anyone interested in these escape ramps can stop by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office in Willcox to view a completed ramp.

Proper design should allow for wildlife swimming in any direction in a tank to contact the ramp and climb out. It is



important that any ramp be secured against a side wall on the water facility. This ensures animals will come in contact with the ramp and not swim under or around it. The expanded metal ramps can also be designed and installed to provide float protection.

Ranchers are encouraged to provide year round water in troughs for wildlife species. This is especially important during times of drought. Some wildlife species need daily water to survive, particularly in the summer months. Bats and birds are an important part of the environment. They help with insect control and pollination of many plant species.

The NRCS requires installation of wildlife escape ramps in all newly constructed open storage tanks and livestock drinking troughs. However, it is a good idea for ranchers to install ramps in all their watering facilities. This helps to protect any wildlife species that may find its way inside a tank or trough. It also safeguards water sources from being fouled from dead, decaying animals. This helps to keep waters clean and safe for use by livestock and wildlife.

For additional information on wildlife escape ramps, contact your local NRCS office in Willcox at 656 N. Bisbee Ave. or call 520-384-2229 x.3.

APPLICATIONS BEING ACCEPTED FOR 2007 EQIP PROGRAM

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is now accepting applications for the 2007 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Agricultural producers who wish to apply should do so as soon as possible.

EQIP is a cost share program to help agricultural producers conserve and enhance natural resources. Eligible participants can receive financial and technical assistance to implement approved conservation practices. These practices include high efficiency irrigation systems and other water conservation practices for land currently being irrigated in our area. On rangeland, practices such as water developments, cross fencing, brush clearing, and seeding are eligible for assistance.

Agricultural producers interested in participating in EQIP can apply at their local NRCS office in Willcox. For more information, call (520) 384-2229 ext. 3 or visit us at 656 N. Bisbee Ave.

USGS Website allows monitoring of stream depth and discharge for different USGS gauges along the San Pedro:

<http://waterdata.usgs.gov/az/nwis/RT>

At first this site seems a little complicated but it is not if you locate the San Pedro River on the map. It is in the bottom right quadrant. Follow the river north and hold your mouse over the small circles as you go to see the name of gauge and current discharge rates for that location. Click on individual gauges to get more detailed information and graphs of change over time.



Monsoon damage on Cascabel Road, August, 2006. Photos by J. Dale.



Local Classifieds

Saguaro-Juniper Grass Finished Beef

jeannine85602@yahoo.com
(520) 212-7333

Bull Canyon & Boer Goat Ranch

Eggs, Feathers, Meat, Crafts
Don & Toni Looney
(520) 212-2900
bcogr@hughes.net



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Redington Natural Resource Conservation District Meeting Schedule

Unless otherwise notified, Redington NRCD Board meets the 4th Saturday of every month at the Cascabel Community Center

Next Meeting:

Saturday September 23rd 9 AM at CCC

All agendas are posted 24 hours in advance at the Game and Fish kiosks along the Cascabel/San Pedro River Rd. If you would like email notification of the agenda please email Stefanie Smallhouse carlink@hughes.net

The Redington Resource Review accepts ads on a quarterly basis. Ads measuring 4" x 3" cost \$5 per issue. If you are interested in placing an ad please email jdale@cdarc.org or submit your ad and payment to: Redington NRCD, PO Box 232, Pomerene, AZ 85627

Meeting Minutes

REDINGTON NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION
DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
SATURDAY JULY 22ND 2006
CASCABEL COMMUNITY CENTER

Call to order 9:10 a.m.

Stefanie Smallhouse, Les Helfrich, Don Looney, Judy Dykes

Congratulations to Stefanie and Andy on the arrival of their second child in Feb.

Approval of the May 27th meeting

Motion to approve – J.Dykes
Second – L Helfrich
Motion carried

Approval of the June 13 Interim meeting with changes (spelling of Interim also noted Ed Center donations)

Motion to approve – L.Helfrich
Second- - J Dykes
Motion carried

Approval of Financial Report

Motion to approve - -J Dykes
Second L Helfrich
Motion Carried

Approval of payments to:

- a. Mary Smallhouse \$ 93.00 for lunch for the June 23rd. Lower San Pedro Watershed Assessment Presentation meeting
- b. Stefanie Smallhouse \$320.77 for partial printing and, mailing for the annual report. Also travel expenses for the L.A.I.A.G. meeting
- c. Don Looney \$243.00 expenses to attend the Jaguar meeting in Douglas and the State Technical meeting in Phoenix.

Reports

- a. Don Looney Reported on the State Technical Committee Meeting. There are probable changes in the future for working groups. Each district needs to decide how they want to be involved in the working groups for their area. There was a presentation from the Willcox San Simon District requesting that EQIP funds be qualified to make payment to farmers for short term retirement of pumping for certain fields to save water in times of drought. Similar to CRP program, but specific to water use.
- b. Jaquar Meeting in Douglas – they are drafting a new MOU for qualified voting signatures to the plan. Conservation Districts have been asked to sign on to the MOU. Redington will wait to see the new MOU.

c. Salt Cedar Evaluation and possibility of the New Mexico Executive Director visiting the District for an evaluation and possible suggestions as to funding the project.

d. Les Helfrich gave a report on the fire dept. –CVFD received a donated brush unit from Oracle

e. On June 10th a CPR AAD training was held by Amy Jo Schumaker with 6 in attendance

f. On July 2nd 2 Yuccas were set on fire at the 3-links ranch

g. On July 4th a small plane went down, minor injuries to the pilot.

h. Jacquie Dale e-mailed a notice the Aug newsletter will be out on Aug. 26 -Deadline for input is Aug. 18th.

i. Stefanie Smallhouse reported Dave Matthews had expressed his concerns for making the Saturday meetings. Stefanie said she will contact David Mckay as to the possibility of D. Matthews attending on a quarterly basis to work with the district.

Old Business

Request to have Exec. Director N.M. Association of Conservation Districts visit this District.

Motion to approve request - L. Helfrich
Second D.Looney
Motion carried

D. Looney drafting a letter to J. Latimar regarding District elections.

New Business

Posting of the Education Center Director

AACD Annual Convention Aug 21, 22, 23 in Pinetop Az.

Attending are Stefanie Smallhouse, Don Looney, Les Helfrich and Charles Kent.

Motion to send 4 supervisors J. Dykes
Second Les Helfrich
Motion carried

Call to the public

comments made regarding the speed on the road and the possibility of having more signs posted

Inquiries into the donation funds for the Watershed Stewardship Class—all funds have been distributed.

Meeting adjourned 10:55 AM

MISSION STATEMENT

The legislation establishing the Conservation Districts in Arizona described their mission as follows: ARS Title 37, Chapter 6 37-1001

It is declared that the policy of the legislature to provide for the restoration and conservation of lands and soil resources of the state, the preservation of water rights and the control and prevention of soil erosion, and thereby to conserve natural resources, conserve wildlife, protect the tax base, protect public lands and protect and restore this state's rivers and streams and associated riparian habitats, including fish and wildlife resources that are dependent on those habitats, and in such a manner to protect and promote the public health, safety and general welfare of the people.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information should contact USDA's Target Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326 W. Whitten Bldg., 14th and Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (202) 720-5964. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Redington Natural Resource Conservation

**District and Natural Resource
Conservation Service**

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(520) 384-2229 ext.3 (phone)

(520) 384-2735 (fax)

david.matthews@az.usda.gov (email)

www.az.nrcs.usda.gov (website)

NRCS Willcox Office Staff (Team)

Dave Matthews,

Marty Kroll,

Wilma Renken,

Matt Roberts

Dave Clough

Donna Matthews, RC&D Coordinator

Redington Natural Resource Conservation District

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