



COLORADO SWCS

CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

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President's Message

By: Storm Casper



Greetings to one and all of the chapter members of the Colorado Chapter of SWCS. I want to start off by saying that we have gotten off to a very good start this year with the great participation and attendance for the annual meeting and technical conference in Loveland, this past November. Over the next several months our members have numerous chances to attend exciting meetings and conferences that will serve to enhance both our educational and our networking opportunities.

I am delighted to be involved in SWCS which has allowed me to get to know many of you much better than we ever would without SWCS. It is important to recognize that each member of our chapter is a vital component of what makes the Colorado Chapter SWCS special. We should never be afraid to voice our opinions and concerns as we are all smarter together than each of us is alone. I look forward to seeing many of you over the next several months to bounce ideas around and find out what is going on in your life. TAKE CARE for NOW.

Congratulations!!

Congratulations to the following new Colorado Chapter SWCS members who received 1 year gift memberships at the annual meeting:

JOE CROWDER
SARA HANDLON
PATTY KNUPP
CAROLINE MORLAN

DAN OLSON
CATHY STEWART
SCOTT RAVENKAMP
AMANDA RICHARDSON

SHERRI BRANDT—
NEWSLETTER EDITOR

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

New Chapter Officers for 2012

At the Colorado SWCS Chapter annual meeting in November 2011, the chapter welcomed Michael "Storm" Casper as President for 2012, Catherine Dix as President-Elect for 2012, Daniel Palic as Director-at-Large and Barbara Gohlke as Secretary/Treasurer. You can get to know our new chapter officers a little better by reading their biographies below.

MICHAEL "STORM" CASPER — PRESIDENT 2012



Storm grew up working on the family farm and ranch in Southeast Colorado. Storm attended college where he graduated from Oklahoma Panhandle State University in 1991. In the fall of that year he moved to Denver to work and attend graduate school. In 1997 he moved back home to be closer to the land and to raise his family. In 1999 he began working for the local conservation district and the NRCS on a part time bases until he was hired for a full time position for the NRCS in 2006 as a Soil Conservation Technician. In 2006 he presented at the International SWCS conference in Keystone, Colorado and he was named as East Slope Director in that same year. In 2007 Storm attended the Northern Plains Regional Meeting in Red Lodge, Montana. In 2010 Storm began very interested in the topic of soil health after attending numerous presentations throughout the Northern Plains Region. In 2011 Storm was able to help organize and present on the topic of soil health at the 2011 SWCS technical conference. Storm is now serving at the Colorado SWCS chapter President for the 2011-2012 term. Storm resides in Springfield where he is married to his wife Larae, and has a daughter Rylee 23 of Shattuck, Oklahoma, and a son Garrett 16 of Springfield.

CATHERINE DIX — PRESIDENT-ELECT 2012



Catherine grew up in the small town of Deming, New Mexico, a place known for pure water, fast ducks, and 360 days of sunshine. She studied soil science at New Mexico State University and began her career with NRCS as a co-op student trainee in 1994. While attending school, she served as President of the Plant and Soil Association and also participated in a pilot program wherein she helped recruit students for NRCS on campus. Upon graduating, she accepted a position as a soil conservationist in Stilwell, Oklahoma. In 2001 she accepted a District Conservationist position in Alamosa, CO and has worked throughout the San Luis Valley over the last decade. She's now serving as the Area Resource Conservationist for Programs in Area 4. In her spare time, Catherine writes novels.

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DANIEL PALIC — DIRECTOR -AT-LARGE



My name is Daniel Palic. I am the District Conservationist for the Holyoke and Julesburg Field Offices in Eastern Colorado. I graduated from Colorado State University with a Bachelor of Science with a concentration in Soil Resources and Conservation and a Master of Science with a concentration in Soil Science. I was fortunate to accept a position with the USDA-Agricultural Research Service, Agricultural Systems Research Unit in Fort Collins, Colorado as an Agricultural Science Research Technician after graduate school. After almost 17 years with ARS I accepted a Soil Conservationist position in the Julesburg Field office in March 2010. In March 2011 I accepted the District Conservationist position for the Holyoke/Julesburg Field Offices.

I have been a member of SWCS for almost a year and look forward to becoming more active and involved with the society. I grew up and graduated from Julesburg, Colorado so I didn't hesitate at the opportunity to come back home, it only took me 24 years. I am excited to be able to raise my two sons, (Josh and Ryan), and share the small town atmosphere with my wife Rhonda. In my free time you can find me doing anything outdoor related, whether it be hunting, fishing, camping or just exploring.

BARBARA GOHLKE — SECRETARY/TREASURER



Hi, my name is Barbara Gohlke, and I am the new Secretary Treasurer of the Colorado Chapter--Soil and Water Conservation Society. I have two amazing daughters - Kirsten who is in second Grade and Nora who is in first grade.

I am currently serving as Finance Committee Chair. I have learned much about SWCS during my past years of service and am looking forward to continuing to serve the Colorado Chapter. In the past I have held the positions of Director at Large and Secretary- Treasurer. I have helped the Chapter to review the by-laws and assisted with registration, etc. with several conferences. I have attended SWCS Northern Plains Leadership Meetings and served on the finance and registration committees for the 2006 SWCS International Meeting in Keystone.

I have worked for the Natural Resources Conservation Service since 1996. I am currently a Soil Conservationist in the Colorado Springs Field Office. I am also a member of the Society for Range Management, American Society of Agronomy, and I am a certified crop advisor.

Welcome New Officers!

2011 Technical Conference Highlights

Submitted by Ed Kilpatrick

Colorado SWCS presented a technical conference in conjunction with the CACD meeting in Loveland, CO this year on November 14th and 15th of this year. The theme of this year's conference was Soil Health. Presenters on this topic included Storm Casper and Tim Steffens of the NRCS starting off on Monday afternoon with a general discussion of Soil health. Ed Kilpatrick of NRCS demonstrated NRCS Colorado's new Rainfall Simulator, showing the effects of Soil Health and residue cover on soil erosion and water infiltration. Dr. Kristine Nichols of USDA-ARS, Mandan, ND spoke on Monday afternoon with the first of 2 sessions regarding the role of soil microbiology in Soil Health. Brendon Rocky, a potato producer from the San Luis Valley of Colorado gave a presentation on his use of cover crops as green manure on their potato ground and its benefits as Monday's session closed.



Ed Kilpatrick showing off the Rainfall Simulator.



Slake test demonstration.

On Tuesday morning, Ed Kilpatrick demonstrated the Slake test of the soils that were used in the Rainfall simulator the previous day. Dr. Nichols continued Part II of her presentation on soil microbiology. Scott Ravenkamp, a producer from Hugo, CO and President of the Colorado Conservation Tillage Association gave a presentation about his first cover crop. The Tuesday session was capped with a panel discussion of all the presenters plus Grady Grissom, a rancher from Las Animas County using managed grazing on his 14,000 ac. Ranch. Panel participants

fielded questions written out by the conference attendees.

Many positive comments were received on the information presented and the SWCS committee felt very fortunate to have a part in bringing this information to our members. A big thanks to all of the members of the Colorado Soil Health Team as well as to everyone that helped make this conference a success.



Conference attendees watching the Rainfall Simulator in action.

CO SWCS Conservationist Award

Submitted by Beth Fortman

At the CACD annual meeting in November 2011, the Colorado Chapter of SWCS presented the Conservationist of the Year award to Wickstrom Farms.

WICKSTROM FARMS

Wickstrom Farms is a family operated enterprise located in the northwest corner of Morgan County, Colorado. The farm got its start in the early 1900's when a homestead was claimed on 160 acres north of what is now Jackson Reservoir. The grassland was plowed in order to grow winter wheat. Over time, they knew that surface residue from the previous crop needed to be maintained to reduce wind erosion. Eventually they diversified more with various cropping systems, crop rotations and no-till conservation practices.



The family expanded to include cattle and a feeding operation. Range management increased from continuous grazing to a rotational system that gave the better utilization within each pasture and better plant diversification. Monitoring sites are also used to evaluate the grazing patterns and maintain production during drought periods.

CO Chapter Awards

The annual meeting of the Colorado Chapter of SWCS was held in Loveland following the Technical Conference on November 14, 2011. Outgoing President, Dawn Jackson, presented the President's Citation award to Mike Collins and Renee Koch. A Chapter Commendation award was presented to Barbara Gohlke.



Barbara Gohlke receiving her Commendation award from Dawn Jackson.

CO Hosting NP Regional Meeting

Looking for a great way to network, meet the boards from other states and hear conservation stories from your neighbors? If so, mark your calendar to attend the SWCS Northern Plains Regional Meeting March 8, 9 and 10, 2012. The meeting will be held at the Comfort Inn in Sterling, Colorado. The agenda is currently being drafted and we are looking at the following topics and activities.

Thursday evening is usually set aside for networking, a potential tour and a social. Friday's technical session will cover the topics of sustainable agriculture, soil health and Trimble training. On Saturday, the 6 states in the Northern Plains Region will give Chapter reports and Northern Plains Director, Anita Nein, will give a Regional/National update. A final agenda/meeting flyer will be posted on our website as it becomes available.

If you are interested in attending the 2012 SWCS Northern Plains Regional Meeting, please visit with CO Chapter President Storm Casper or Mike Collins (mike.collins@co.usda.gov) for more details.

CO SWCS Offers Scholarship

As part of our mission, the SWCS Colorado Chapter has created an Undergraduate Student Scholarship Program that offers two \$500 scholarships to juniors or seniors attending a four year Colorado college or university studying natural resource related fields. This scholarship was created to recognize student leadership, consistent academic achievement, and civil contribution related to natural resources, especially soil and water conservation.

Each scholarship consists of a certificate and \$500 honorarium. The \$500 scholarship is intended to assist the student in completing his or her degree. Scholarship recipients will be invited to attend the SWCS CO Chapter Annual Fall Workshop where they will be recognized for their achievements. Their registration fees for this workshop will be waived.

Application packages must include a completed SWCS Colorado Chapter Undergraduate Student Scholarship Program application form (available on our website www.swcs.org/en/colorado_chapter click on awards) and supporting information. Email completed applications and supporting documents to Beth Fortman, Elizabeth.fortman@co.usda.gov, Chairperson of the Undergraduate Student Scholarship Committee no later than March 31, 2012. The committee will make selections by July 31, 2012 and the award check will be mailed to the scholarship winners after they provide proof of enrollment for the fall semester of their junior or senior year.

CO Springs Soil Health Workshop

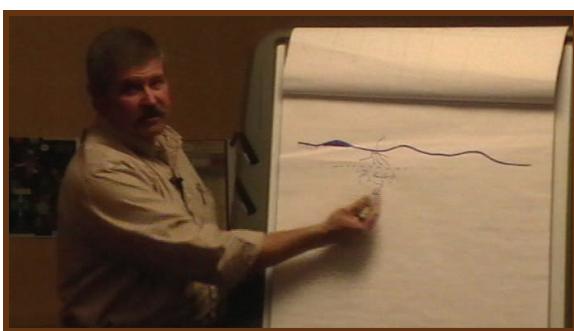
Article and Photos Submitted by Mike Collins

The 53 Soil Health participants were treated with some excellent presentations explaining in detail the benefits of building soil health in all cropland, rangeland, hayland and pastureland situations. Lots of questions and answers followed all sections of the two and a half day event Dec 19-21, 2012 in Colorado Springs.

A aggregate stability test and infiltration test was conducted to get some visible implants to use for further discussions as planners and agronomist spread the word on what building soil health means. A nice showcase of the rainfall simulator was also a highlight. The workshop was streamed and uploaded to ustreamtv.com, and by typing "soil health dec 2012" it should pop up. We found out shortly after the workshop that the USDA-NRCS computers are no longer able to view videos on ustreamtv.com. We are working on the details of getting some DVD's available. The networking and the outstanding dialogue made the workshop even better and at sometimes advanced. Another highlight was the Tuesday afternoon session when CO NRCS State Conservationist, Phyllis Philipps dropped by and stayed to listen to Ray Archuleta's presentation. Phyllis has provided outstanding leadership and support for this new conservation movement.



Jon Stika, NRCS Agronomist/Soil Scientist had some excellent presentations and illustrations, one of Jon's specialties is his effective instruction, it's the BEST!, check out the video and you'll see. We've been excited to have Ray Archuleta in Colorado for two sessions thus far with one more of his trips when he speaks in Montrose, CO Feb 6-8 at the Holiday Inn Express. Jon is also planning on coming back for the NP SWCS meeting in Sterling, CO March 8-10th to interact with some of the NP SWCS members and some farmers from the area.



Jon Stika, NRCS Agronomist/Soil Scientist from Dickinson, North Dakota.



Ray Archuleta, NRCS Conservation Agronomist from North Carolina.



EVENTS TO WATCH FOR

☺ SWCS NORTHERN PLAINS REGIONAL MEETING
MARCH 8—10, 2012 STERLING, COLORADO

☺ SOIL QUALITY NETWORKING
FEBRUARY 23—24, 2012 PORTLAND, OREGON

☺ SWCS 67TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
JULY 22—25, 2012 FORT WORTH, TEXAS



2010—2011 SWCS ANNUAL REPORT AVAILABLE ONLINE AT
WWW.SWCS.ORG/EN/ABOUT_SWCS

COLORADO SPRINGS SOIL HEALTH WORKSHOP VIDEO AVAILABLE AT
WWW.USTREAMTV.COM SEARCH SOIL HEATLH DEC 2012

NEW ON THE SHELF AT THE SWCS ONLINE STORE
[MANAGING AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPES II](#)

CARTOON BOOKLETS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE AT THE SWCS ONLINE STORE

FOR INFORMATION ON THE SWCS CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM VISIT
WWW.SWCS.ORG/EN/CORPORATE_MEMBERSHIP/

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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Colorado Chapter of SWCS is to promote the wise use of soil, water and related resources through scientific, educational and service oriented functions. The members promote a stewardship ethic that recognizes the interdependence of people and natural resources.