



# COLORADO SWCS

## CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

C O L O R A D O S W C S

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# President's Message

By: Ardell D. Halvorson



Welcome, Colorado SWCS Chapter members to another year of great conservation activities. I am proud to serve as President of the Colorado SWCS Chapter for 2009 and will do my best to help make it a great year. I previously served as Chapter President in 1991. I look forward to meeting many of you during the coming year. First, I want to thank all of members who put forth the effort and their time to make 2008 a great success. With active member participation, we can maintain the Chapter's leadership roll in the Northern Plains Region. This year, the Chapter and about 15 members will participate in: 2009 Regional SWCS Technical Conference in Rapid City, SD (Feb. 18-20); two college scholarships for students of \$500 each; several science fairs; summer tour(s); several conservation awards; and an annual technical conference in November along with our annual meeting.

The Chapter established a small grant program (\$200) to support activities related to SWCS Colorado Chapter mission. These are a few of the activities that I hope many Colorado Chapter members will actively participate in during 2009. Please log into the Chapter's web site to keep current on 2009 activities at <http://colorado.swcs.org/>.

If any Chapter member has suggestions for programs, comments about Chapter activities, or would like to volunteer to help with some of the year's activities, please contact one of the Chapter Board members or myself.

### EMAIL REMINDERS:

- ◆ **UPDATE YOUR NEW EMAIL ADDRESS BY CONTACTING KRISTI GAY—CO SWCS MEMBERSHIP CHAIR.**
- ◆ **ADD [memberservices@swcs.org](mailto:memberservices@swcs.org) TO YOUR ADDRESS LIST IN ORDER TO RECEIVE MESSAGES FROM NATIONAL SWCS.**

# SWCS HOLDS JOINT TOUR WITH SRM

By: Beth Fortman

October 17 showed itself to be the perfect day for a range tour. The Colorado Chapter of the Soil & Water Conservation Service and the Colorado Section of the Society for Range Management held a joint tour on the Apishapa Canyon Ranch in southeast Pueblo County.

John and Bonny Welch purchased the ranch in 1992 and their son, Andy, now operates it.

At the first stop on the tour Andy told the group about the family's history on the ranch and its past and present conditions. He explained his grazing management with his two herds of cattle. He's divided the ranch into two grazing systems with a herd on each system. Andy said his objective is not to increase herd size but to manage the forage. They have worked with the NRCS through several programs to improve and increase stock water facilities and cut pasture size down with cross fencing.



Tour group listening to Andy Welch at the first tour stop



Tour group taking in the view of Apishapa River Canyon.

The second stop overlooked the Apishapa River canyon with education on the tamarisk control Andy implemented, by Patty Knupp, Private Lands Wildlife Biologist. Andy also talked of the vast history of the ranch and surrounding rangelands. The Canyon has been home to Native Americans and homesteaders of which some evidence remains today.

What a great spot to eat lunch and enjoy the scenery! Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the day!

John Welch also spoke on rotational grazing at the annual Colorado Section SRM meeting in Ft. Collins this past December.

The Colorado Chapter of the Soil & Water Conservation Society once again plans on holding a joint tour with the Colorado Section of the Society for Range Management in summer 2009. Look for tour dates, location and highlights in the next newsletter.

# CO SWCS WELCOMES NEW OFFICERS

In October 2008, the Colorado Chapter of SWCS welcomed Ardell Halvorson as President for 2009, Charles Pannebaker as President-Elect for 2009 and Cynthia Crist as West Slope Director for 2009. You can read more about Ardell, Charlie and Cindy in their biographies below.

## ARDELL HALVORSON

I have been a USDA-ARS employee since May, 1971, starting my career in Sidney, MT as a Soil Scientist working on saline seep (dryland soil salinity problem) and soil fertility management on dryland and irrigated cropping systems. I became a member of SWCS (formerly the Soil Conservation Society) in 1971. I became a member of the Colorado Chapter of SWCS in 1984 when I was transferred to Akron, CO where I was a Soil Scientist and Research Leader with ARS working on developing more intensive dryland cropping system and soil fertility management.



In 1994, I was transferred to the USDA-ARS location at Mandan, ND for 3.5 years as Laboratory Director/Research Leader/Soil Scientist. I worked on dryland reduced- and no-till cropping systems for efficient water use and optimum economic returns. I returned to Colorado in late 1997 as a Soil Scientist/Lead Scientist with the ARS Soil-Plant-Nutrient Research Unit in Fort Collins.

Since 1997, I have been working to develop no-till crop production systems for irrigated land, efficient N management practices for irrigated crop production including vegetable crops at Rocky Ford, soil carbon sequestration, and greenhouse gas emissions under irrigated cropping systems.

## CHARLIE PANNEBAKER

Charlie grew up on a small dairy farm in SE Pennsylvania. He has earned an AAS in Agronomy from the State Univ. of New York at Cobleskill and a BA from the U of Georgia, also in Agronomy. Charlie has worked for SCS/NRCS since 1974. He has worked as Soil Conservationist in two Field Offices and District Conservationist in three Field Offices in PA from 1974 through 1992. Charlie joined SWCS in 1976 and belonged to the Keystone Chapter and served as Sect/Treasurer for several years. Charlie came to Colorado in 1992 and has worked as a Resource Conservationist in the La Junta Area Office since then. Charlie has been a member of the Colorado Chapter of SWCS since 1992 and served as the Science Fair coordinator for several years.



He has been married to his wonderful wife Fran for 32 years and they have 2 grown children. Fran is a Resource Management Specialist for the Park Service at Bents Old Fort.

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## CHAPTER OFFICERS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Charlie believes that he can use his career experience and ability to listen to and work with people to be a good president of our chapter.

### CINDY CRIST



Cindy is a 1984 graduate of Colorado State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agronomy - Soil Resources and Conservation concentration. She was a Range Ecology major for 2 years prior to changing to Agronomy and served as Secretary of the Range Science Club.

From 1993 to 1998 she worked as a Water Quality Specialist for the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, establishing water quality standards and a non-point source water pollution control program for surface waters on the reservation. From 1998 to 2001 Cindy worked as the Environmental Programs Director for the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, Establishing programs that addressed, water quality, air quality and the management of solid and hazardous waste on the reservation.

In 2001, Cindy was hired as a Soil Conservation Technician for the Natural Resources Conservation Service - Salinity Control Program, Cortez, CO. She also worked in the Cortez NRCS Field Office as a Soil Conservationist from 2002 to 2005.

In 2005 Cindy was hired as the District Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service in the Monte Vista Field Office.

Cindy is a recent graduate of the Colorado Agriculture and Rural Leadership program sponsored by Colorado State University. She has also assisted with the family ranch in Cortez, CO.

## UNDERGRAD SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABLE FROM CO SWCS

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

Each award consists of a certificate and \$500 honorarium. The \$500 award is intended to assist the student in completing his or her degree. Award 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 Award Program application form (available on our website [www.swcs.org/en/colorado\\_chapter](http://www.swcs.org/en/colorado_chapter) click on awards) and supporting information. Email completed

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# ANNUAL TECHNICAL CONFERENCE A SUCCESS

By: Ardell D. Halvorson

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he Colorado Chapter of the SWCS held its annual technical conference titled "Impact of Energy Development on Soil and Water Resources", on November 17, 2008 at the Rocky Mountain Park Inn and Conference Center in Estes Park. The conference was held in conjunction with the Colorado Association of Conservation Districts annual meeting and was organized by Ardell Halvorson, Troy Bauder, and Tony Arnhold. Conference presentations emphasized the environmental impact of coal bed methane (CBM) waters on soil and water resources in the Colorado-Wyoming region and how to manage CBM waters.

Presenters included Dave Neslin, Acting Director of the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission; Gary Beers, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE); Heidi Hadley, Bureau of Land Management (BLM); Adam Bedard, VP, Water Resource Engineering, Norwest Applied Hydrology; Dr. George Vance, University of Wyoming; Dr. Lorenz Sutherland, USDA NRCS; Travis James, USDA NRCS; Al Trujillo, Colorado Division of Wildlife and Pat O'Toole, Rancher and President of Family Farm Alliance. These presenters told the group about the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission; coal bed water discharge and related problems, including public lands; managing water discharges and associated salinity problems; energy development impacts on wildlife; and a rancher's perspective on managing soil and water resources impacted by energy development .

About 50 people (members and non-members) attended the conference. A total of 2.5 CEU for soil and water and 1.5 CEU credits for professional development were approved for the conference. Numerous positive comments about the content and quality of the conference were expressed by the participants. This was a very interesting and information filled conference that will help those involved with coal bed methane production and associated problems understand the many different aspects of this complex situation.

## SCHOLARSHIP CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

applications and supporting documents to Beth Fortman, [Elizabeth.fortman@co.usda.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.fortman@co.usda.gov), Chairperson of the Undergraduate Student Award Committee no later than March 30, 2009. The committee will make selections by July 31, 2009 and the award check will be mailed to the award winners after they provide proof on enrollment for the fall of their junior or senior year.

Any Colorado resident enrolled in a four-year Colorado college or university pursuing a degree in a natural resource related program is eligible. Students must be entering their junior or senior year in fall of 2009.

# CO SWCS PRESIDNET'S AWARDS GIVEN OUT

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The annual meeting of the Colorado Chapter of SWCS was held in Estes Park following the

Technical Conference on November 17, 2008. Outgoing President Jorge Delgado presented the President's Citation award to the following members of the Colorado Chapter of SWCS.

## Ardell Halverson

In recognition of your outstanding effort and achievement in organizing the "Impact of Energy Development on Soil and Water Resources" conference for the Colorado Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society in Estes Park, Colorado, November 17, 2008, and for your continuing support of the chapter.

## Troy Bauder

In recognition of your outstanding effort and achievement to organize the "Impact of Energy Development on Soil and Water Resources" conference for the Colorado Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society in Estes Park, Colorado, November 17, 2008, and for your continuing support of the chapter.

## Anthony Arnold

In recognition of your dedicated and diligent service to the Colorado Chapter of the SWCS as Past President during the last year, for your leadership as SWCS Colorado Chapter President during 2007 and for your continuing support of the chapter.

## Dawn Jackson

In recognition of your dedicated and diligent service to the Colorado Chapter of the SWCS as Director at Large for the past year, and for your continuing support of the chapter.

## John Scott

In recognition of your dedicated and diligent service to the Colorado Chapter of the SWCS as West Slope Director for the past four years, for your leadership in developing the SWCS CO Chapter Strategic Plans and for your continuing support of the chapter.

## Renee Koch

In recognition of your dedicated and diligent service to the Colorado Chapter of the SWCS as Secretary/Treasurer for the past year, and for your continuing support of the chapter.

## Beth Fortman

In recognition of your dedicated and diligent service to the Colorado Chapter of the SWCS as East Slope Director for the past two years, for your leadership in developing the 2008 Technical Tour at the Apishapa Canyon Ranch in cooperation with the Society of Range Management, for your leadership within the Chapter Award Committee and for your continuing support of the chapter.

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## PRESIDENT'S AWARDS FROM PAGE 6

### Kristi Gay

In recognition of your dedicated and diligent service to the Colorado Chapter of the SWCS as the Membership Committee Chairperson and as the Webmaster Chairperson and for your continuing support of the chapter.

### Sammie Molinaro

In recognition of your dedicated and diligent service to the Colorado Chapter of the SWCS as the Science Fair Chairperson and for your continuing support of the chapter.

### Mary Miller

In recognition of your outstanding leadership efforts and achievements as the Northern Plains Representative, your work in the SWCS Board of Directors and for your continuing support of the chapter.



Tony Arnold receiving his award from outgoing President Jorge Delgado.



Beth Fortman receiving her award from outgoing President Jorge Delgado.



Renee Koch receiving her award from outgoing President Jorge Delgado.

# CO CHAPTER CONSERVATION AWARDS

By: Beth Fortman

## Colorado Chapter Conservationist of the Year

### Duaine & Wanda Dodsworth



Duaine and Wanda began farming in Wray, CO straight from college when he went to work for his grandfather on his dry land farm. At that time the farm was conventional tilled with half in wheat and half in summer fallow.

In the late 1980's they started planting a few acres of sunflowers and saw the benefit of not growing wheat exclusively, incorporating the sunflowers into their 3 year rotation planting into the wheat stubble.

Duaine is active in utilizing various programs and assistance offered by the NRCS and Pheasant's Forever Chapter.

Over the years Duaine has changed from the old traditional ways of farming and has become a leader in no-till, residue management, and intensive dry land crop rotation. The no-till system also provides cover for wildlife and protective environment for new seedling plants to grow in.

The Dodsworth's have 6 children and the family is involved in many community and school activities.

## Colorado Chapter Conservation Reporter of the Year

### Norma Engelberg



Norma has been a consistent friend of conservation and conservation issues for almost a decade during her tenure at the Pikes Peak/ Ute Pass Courier. This local weekly serves Teller County, half of Park County and down into the Ute Pass portion of El Paso County, serving over 5000 readers.

accurately.

She doesn't just report the news, she often visits the local landowners to get the "scoop" directly so she can report

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## CONSERVATION AWARDS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

Norma also reports on the educational opportunities of the local CD, such as the Riparian & River Trailer; forest mitigation to help reduce the threat of future wildfires; programs offered by the NRCS; private conservation efforts, such as the local Healthy Forest Initiative, Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership and the Woodland Park Community Wildfire Plan and its partners and mission; noxious weed identification and treatment needs, drought issues, and snow survey and water supply information.

### Outstanding Junior Conservationist of the Year

#### Lyndee Charles

Lyndee is a junior at Arriba-Flagler High School and lives north of Flagler in rural Kit Carson County with her family.

She is an active member of the Willing Workers 4-H club and served as the club reporter in 2007. She worked as a 4-H volunteer on a Flagler CD living snow fence planting.

She has been very involved in local, regional and state science fair competitions with projects related to agriculture and conservation.

She attended Camp Rocky in 2006 as a camper and was chosen to return in 2007, 2008 as a Jr. Leader, and 2009 as an Activity Coordinator.

Lyndee has also participated on the Soil Judging Team, and volunteers her time to community services and the El Pomar Youth Community Service organization.



Lyndee receiving her award from SWCS member Lana Pearson at the CACD Lucheon.



Lyndee and CACD Executive Director Darlene Jensen.

# NORTHERN PLAINS TECHNICAL CONFERENCE

*Jamestown, ND* – When you think of cocktails – soil is probably not the first thing that comes to mind. However, that was the thought on more than 120 participants at the “Conservation, Sustaining Our Future,” technical conference held in Rapid City, South Dakota recently. The conference was sponsored by the Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS) Northern Plains Chapters.

With the expansion of urban growth across the Northern Plains, land to produce commodities is becoming scarce. Agriculture must become more efficient to triple production. The three day conference provided natural resource enthusiasts from Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Nebraska and North and South Dakota the opportunity to hear the latest information on soil quality, water quality trading credits, energy and conservation. Presentations included “Dig It,” a new Smithsonian Display presentation, given by Dr. Gary Peterson of Colorado State University, soil and water quality and what that means to landowners as well as professionals, Animal Feeding Operation/Confined Animal Feeding Operation rule update, Pollinators, Carbon Credit Trading and Using Visual Simulations for Communicating Conservation just to name a few. Continuing Education Units were available from the Society for Range Management and provided for Certified Crop Advisors.

Proceeds from the silent auction provided resources for Northern Plains SWCS chapters to fund educational activities within their own chapters.

SWCS chapters across the United States foster the science and art of natural resource conservation. The work of chapters targets conservation of soil, water, and related natural resources on working land—the land used to produce food, fiber, and other services that improve the quality of life people experience in rural and urban communities. Chapters work to discover, develop, implement, and constantly improve ways to use land that sustains its productive capacity and enhances the environment at the same time.

A good time was had by all SWCS members and non-members from Colorado that went.



Group of CO SWCS members and non-members that attended the Northern Plains Regional Technical Conference in SD. Back Row L to R: Charles Pannebaker, Tony Arnold, Beth Fortman, David Miller, Dawn Jackson, Travis McKay and Ron Schierer. Front Row L to R: Mary Miller, Lorenz Sutherland, Renee Koch and Calvin Melcher.

# SWCS INITIATES NEW MENTOR PROGRAM

By Colby Moorberg, SWCS Student Director

A new SWCS mentor program is available. Its aim is to act as a means for student

SWCS members and young professionals to find an experienced mentor of their choosing. The mentor program is run through the SWCS Network, an online social network created by the Society to encourage communication about conservation issues among our members. The network and the mentor program can also be used to interest conservationists and others who are not members of the society to get involved. If you are interested in participating in this exciting new opportunity, either as a mentor or mentee, I highly encourage you to go online and check it out for yourself. Becoming a mentor or mentee is easy to do, but you must be a member of the social network first.

To join the network, go to <http://swcsnetwork.ning.com/>. Click the “Groups” tab. If you are new to the network, you will be invited to join. After providing a name and email address, you will have full access to the network. To participate in the mentor program, look for a group entitled “SWCS Mentor Program.” Click on the “Join Group” button and you will be ready to mentor (or be mentored).

A detailed description of the mentor program is given in the group page. In short, mentees are responsible for finding their own mentor. The best person can be found by looking at potential mentor profiles available within the mentor group. To simplify the process for the student in finding the right mentor, it is recommended that each mentor provide basic information within their network profile. This includes their job title, a short description of what they do, etc.

This is an exciting opportunity for all SWCS members—new and experienced.

# CO SWCS CHAPTER GRANT PROGRAM

As part of our mission, the SWCS Colorado Chapter has created a new Grant Program that came into effect on January 1, 2009. Anyone from the general public can submit a proposal. Proposals must be oriented toward the conservation of natural resources and must align with mission and vision of the SWCS Colorado Chapter’s proposed activities and programs. Proposals should be designed to disseminate knowledge, train and educate peers and the general public in the field of natural resource conservation.

Proposal packages must include a completed SWCS Colorado Chapter Grant Program application form (available at [www.swcs.org/en/colorado\\_chapter](http://www.swcs.org/en/colorado_chapter) click on awards) and supplemental documents and should be emailed to Dawn Jackson, Chairperson, CO SWCS Grant Program, [dawn.jackson@co.usda.gov](mailto:dawn.jackson@co.usda.gov).

## SWCS 2009 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Are you coming to Michigan? The preliminary program is complete and online registration is now active for the 2009 Soil and Water Conservation Society's 2009 International Annual Conference on July 11-15 in Dearborn, Michigan.

This year the overarching theme of the conference is Delivering Conservation, Today and Tomorrow. We will explore the challenges facing the delivery of conservation planning, policy, and practices today and the issues that must be resolved in order to deliver sustainable soil and water conservation tomorrow and into the future.

Conference highlights include a screening of *Dirt! The Movie* (and a Q&A session with one of the directors), 24 symposia, more than 150 oral and poster sessions, eight tours, and a variety of additional networking opportunities.

Download the preliminary program, register, make your hotel reservations and more at [www.swcs.org/09ac](http://www.swcs.org/09ac)

Thanks as always for your continued membership and support of the Society. We hope to see you this summer.

Sincerely,

Jeff Strock, Program Committee Chair

Dewayne Johnson, Professional Development Director, Kelly Goward, Michigan Chapter

## NEW SWCS CAREER CENTER

Announcing the new SWCS Career Center -- your primary resource for making online employment connections in the conservation community. Many employers and job seekers today are discovering the advantages of an online approach for seeking and finding jobs and qualified candidates to fill them. More than just a job board, the SWCS Career Center offers resources for both employers and job seekers. Visit: <http://careers.swcs.org> to upload your resume, view available positions, or post an opening.

# 2009 COLORADO CHAPTER LEADERS



## OFFICERS

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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.