



COLORADO SWCS

CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

COLORADO SWCS

MAY 2015

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SHERRI BRANDT—
NEWSLETTER EDITOR

President's Message

By: Rich Rhoades

Welcome to a very green spring! We've had rain on the eastern slope without too much flooding.

What has the chapter leadership been up to?

Science Fair - Chapter members and others throughout the state serve as judges at local science fairs. The Chapter provides ribbons and awards cash prizes to winners in the various categories. A very worthwhile effort. Consider being a judge next year.

Grant - We updated our grant program information on our website. The grant application is easy to complete and awards are generally in the \$200 range. As an example, CACD applied for a small grant to assist with the Envirothon held this year in Alamosa. This is a relatively new effort in Colorado but is held all over North America. High school teams compete, testing their knowledge of a variety of natural resource areas.

Scholarships - Note there is a college scholarship program available as well. There are two \$500 scholarships available. Applications are due March 31. Both the grant and scholarship information is on our website under "Awards".

International Meeting - the SWCS international meeting is in Greensboro, NC this year. We have two chapter members attending and you'll have a report from them next newsletter.

Summer meeting and tour - In this newsletter you'll find registration information for a tour on June 26. The tour will travel from Loveland to Estes Park. We'll view some of the projects put into place after the severe flooding in the fall of 2012. This should be an interesting and informative outing.

Research Support - the Chapter made a significant move to financially support research in soil health and cover crops. This is a multi-state effort with researchers from CSU and Kansas State. Dryland agriculture will be the focus. "Can cover crops replace fallow?" You'll have a chance to view some on-farm side by side comparisons. We should know soon if their grant application is funded.

Chapter Leadership Meeting - a few of the current and past leaders got together at the Mountain Park Environmental Center near Beulah CO to do some long-range planning. We came out with some great ideas. One of the items brought up at the meeting is to financially support soil and water conservation. Do you have an idea(s) how the chapter could use its financial resources to benefit conservation? Contact me or any board member with your ideas.

Facebook and LinkedIn - Donald Valdez and Aaron Reynolds are working to develop Colorado Chapter accounts in both of these social networking sites.

Newsletter - having been the newsletter editor some time ago (I still feel the pain), I want to thank Sherri Brandt for her continued efforts to get out a quality newsletter.

Annual Meeting - our annual meeting will be at Beaver Creek in conjunction with CACD. Room rates will be low and an interesting program is being developed. The exact date for our meeting hasn't been set but it will be the third week of November 2015.

Enjoy the rest of the summer and I hope to see you in late June for our tour of flood control/repair projects in Northern Colorado.

Finally long-time members said that one of the many benefits to being an SWCS member are the personal relationships that develop when working together on a worthwhile project. So consider attending a tour, annual meeting or other activity.

SWCS Summer Tour

2015 Northern Colorado Flood Recovery

- ♦ When: Friday June 26th, 2015
- ♦ Who's Invited: All SWCS members and guest(s).
- ♦ Time: 9:30 am (meet at K Mart @ Hwy 34 / Wilson in Loveland, just west of Lake Loveland – K Mart is on the NW corner of intersection). Park in the southeast corner of the lot close to Hwy 34.
- ♦ Transportation: The Chapter will provide a 12 passenger van. Due to very limited parking on the tour route there won't be any carpooling. Get your registration in early so we can make arrangements for additional vehicles if needed.
- ♦ Sam Adams from the Ft. Collins NRCS office will lead the tour.
- ♦ What you'll see: there will be several stops to show the flood damage and flood recovery efforts. We will have lunch in Estes Park.
- ♦ We will return to K Mart at approximately 3:00 pm. The return time is difficult to predict due to construction along the route.
- ♦ The chapter will provide light refreshments.
- ♦ Tour cost is \$20 which includes lunch.
- ♦ RSVP by June 18th. – see registration form on the next page

2015 Colorado Chapter Soil and Water Conservation Society

Summer Tour Registration

Flood Recovery in Northern Colorado

Friday June 26th, 2015

Friday June 26th: be there at 9:30 am

Meet at K Mart parking lot on the NW corner of Hwy 34 and Wilson in Loveland, CO

Tour will leave at 10:00am. Transportation will be provided. Tour ends at 3:00pm.

		Number		Total
Registration \$20 (includes lunch)				
	TOTAL			

Name	
Address	
Phone	
E-mail	

Please send check & registration form to:**Barbara Gohlke 5212 Stetson Meadows Dr., Colorado Springs, CO 80922****Email: coswcsmail@gmail.com for registration questions.****Due to making van rental decisions, registration MUST be received by
Thursday June 18, 2015.**

70TH ANNUAL

— • SOIL AND WATER • —
CONSERVATION SOCIETY
— • CONFERENCE • —



— • COMING HOME • —
— • TO CONSERVATION • —

PUTTING SCIENCE INTO PRACTICE

JULY 26 – 29, 2015

— • GREENSBORO • —
NORTH CAROLINA



PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

www.swcs.org/15AC

JOIN THE CONVERSATION
#SWCSAC

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

Coming Home to Conservation: Putting Science into Practice

The 70th Annual Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS) Conference will provide a forum to celebrate past conservation accomplishments as well as share and promote science-based knowledge on critical, current issues facing soil, water, and environmental sustainability.

This year's conference will take place in North Carolina, the home state of Hugh Hammond Bennett, which provides a unique combination of conservation history and Southern hospitality. Already an active soil scientist in the years prior to the Dust Bowl, Bennett witnessed first-hand the social and environmental devastation of significant erosion. His nation called on him to help stem the tide of its worst environmental disaster by implementing soil saving practices in the Great Plains and beyond. Hugh Hammond Bennett later helped found the Soil and Water Conservation Society and led the charge of identifying and applying sound science in pursuit of conserving soil and water resources. With the same mission today, even greater natural resource challenges are met in the midst of climate change and increasing populations. The path paved by Bennett's efforts and example provides a solid foundation, and conservationists must strive to continually improve the use and preservation of resources to build a sustainable future.

One way the SWCS is moving forward on current environmental challenges is by incorporating the former National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) National Water Conference into the International Annual Conference, which will increase collaborative opportunities for land-grant based scientists and educators engaged in water issues. SWCS welcomes this addition to the already diverse audience and the enhancement it will provide to all conference participants.



Science Fair Winners

The Colorado Chapter of SWCS proudly supports regional science fairs and the Colorado Science and Engineering Fair. Projects are judged on criteria relating to CO SWCS mission statement, "to promote the wise use of soil, water and related resources through scientific, educational and service oriented functions".

In 2015, the Science Fair Committee sent prizes and had winners selected at 11 regional fairs and 2 winners selected at the Colorado State Science and Engineering Fair.

Below is a partial listing of the winners.

Morgan/Washington BiCounty Science Fair

Joel Wagner
Kaytlyn Keating
Emilee Wells
Kabrie Keating

Southeastern Colorado Science Fair

Jazmin Santos
Devyn Kincade & Pedro Gomez
Tim Ludwig
Jillian Butler

Colorado Science and Engineering Fair

Katie McCall Walsh Jr/Sr High School - for her project titled "Natural Fertilizing: Observing Wheat Growth with Different Manure"
Cassidy Plane Sargent Jr/Sr High School - for her project titled "More or Less"

CONGRATULATIONS!

COLORADO SECTION SRM SUMMER TOUR

WEST SLOPE -- JUNE 25TH & 26TH



Learn the history of the area and how agriculture & ranching have played an important part.



Enjoy the scenic beauty offered by this montane landscape.

Pre-registration is required by June 15:

Thursday Evening: Campfire Cookout & Music.....\$20 per person [students \$15]

Friday Morning: Campfire Breakfast & Coffee.....\$5 per person [students \$3]

Friday 9 AM to 3 PM: Tour & Lunch.....\$15 per person [students \$10]

Pre-register On-Line at

www.westsloperangetour.eventbrite.com

Contact regarding questions:

Ben Berlinger bberling@bresnan.net

Tom McClure tmccclure@fs.fed.us

Late registrations accepted the day of the tour (lunch will not be included).



Colorado Section
Society for Range Management

Co-sponsored by the North Thompson-Fourmile Grazing Association and the Mount Sopris Conservation District

THEME: *Cooperative Rangeland Stewardship over the Decades.*

With continuity, great communication and a partnership approach, this Forest Service grazing allotment is an outstanding example of long-term success and sustainability.

WHAT: Thursday, June 25 pre-tour evening gathering for family activity & other events located on the North Thompson-Fourmile Cattle Allotment on the White River National Forest.

Friday, June 26 vehicle tour on a large & diverse grazing allotment.

WHY ATTEND:

- Gain an appreciation for the complexity of issues involved with the management of this higher elevation rangeland on Colorado's West Slope. Explore range management methods on this productive 35,000 acre grazing allotment with open parks interspersed with aspen, spruce & other habitats. Managing livestock in harmony with a wide array of other uses, including recreation, timber production, oil & gas development & wildlife has been key to success for many years.
- Enjoy fellow professionals & ranchers who share common interests.
- Appreciate the scenic beauty offered by this montane rangeland.
- Camp out in the mountains and/or enjoy attractions in the Carbondale & Glenwood Springs area the evening before the tour begins. For those camping out & enjoying the cookout, bring your camping gear, and be ready for a Hamburger cookout. Bring musical instruments and join in some campfire singin' & pickin'.
- Learn some of the history of the Roaring Fork and Crystal River areas and how agriculture has played an important part! The permitted ranches who use this allotment are preserving precious open space in a landscape that has undergone change for 50 years, changing from an agricultural focus to a highly developed international year-round recreation destination.

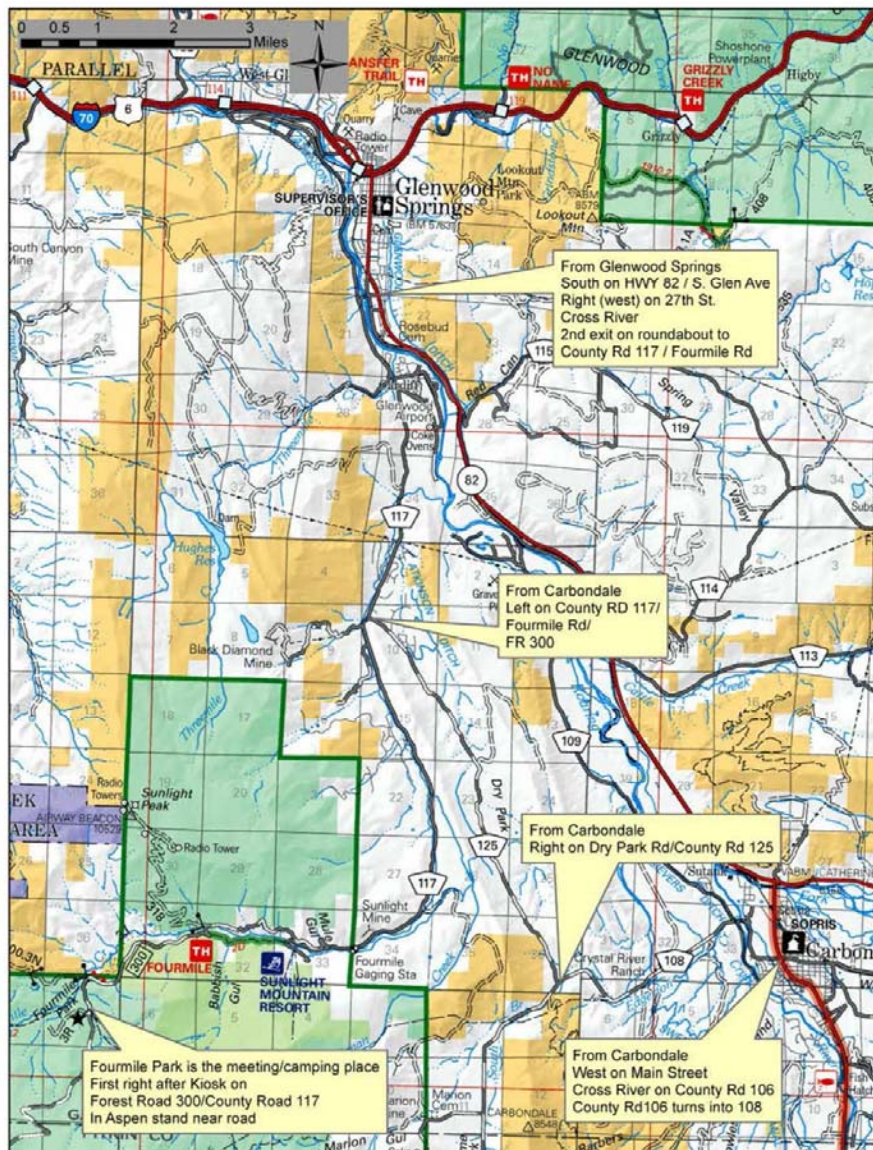
When: June 25th 5:00 PM to ? Campfire Cookout & Music

June 26th 7:00 AM to 8:00 AM Campfire Breakfast

June 26th 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM Range Tour & Lunch

Where: Meet both days at Fourmile Park on the White River National Forest. West of Carbondale (30 minute drive) or South of Glenwood Springs (40 minute drive) just beyond Sunlight Ski Area [see map attached on next page]

>Map showing location of Fourmile Park. Camping site for festivities on Thursday evening & starting location for the range tour Friday morning.



>List of motels in the Carbondale-Glenwood Springs area.

<http://www.carbondale.com/lodging>

<http://www.visitglenwood.com/stay>

<http://www.newcastlecolorado.org/things-to-do/lodging>

Rooms have been reserved at the Comfort Inn & Suites in Carbondale (970-963-8880) at the GOV rate of \$83 & commercial rate of \$139. For GOV rate you will need to present GOV ID, tax exempt certificate, & pay with a GOV travel card. When registering ask for the Society for Range Management room rate.

>List of family vacation ideas in the Carbondale/Glenwood Springs area.

<http://www.carbondale.com/activities-recreation>

<http://www.colorado.com/cities-and-towns/glenwood-springs>

<http://www.newcastlecolorado.org/things-to-do/outdoor-activities>

Farming Evolution 2015

By: Julie Elliot, NRCS

"It's not how much water you get but the amount you get into the soil."

This was just one of dozens of take home messages from the Farming Evolution 2015 event that was held in Holyoke on February 12 & 13. Gabe Brown and Ray Archuleta spoke to nearly 280 people on Thursday and 240 on Friday about a substance most people call 'dirt'. Gabe farms and ranches with his family near Bismarck, North Dakota. Ray, known as 'The Soils Guy', works for the Natural Resources Conservation Service. These nationally sought after speakers shared new insights into the foundation of agriculture – the soil.

When the soil is healthy this it is alive with underground creatures called micro-organisms. These underground creatures need to be fed. In fact, Gabe and Ray made the point several times that we should think of them as underground "livestock". Whatever happens to the soil impacts these critters. These critters effect how the soils behave.

One attendee commented that the most enlightening point was, "(the) Pictures of bacteria and plants by Ray (in the) afternoon session. WOW!!"

Another major topic was organic matter. Organic matter is what makes the soil able to soak in and hold moisture. Organic matter also holds the nutrients that feed the plants. Most farmed soils are really low in organic matter, less than 1 or 2% organic matter. Healthy native prairie sod has approximately 5% organic matter. Two thirds of organic matter is created by roots. The way to build up the organic matter is to maximize the time there are living roots in the soil.

As one attendee noted, "Diverse mix of plants build(s) soil."

All eyes were glued to the front when Ray showed how tilled-soils respond differently to water than no-till soils. Using the same soil type, Ray had a clump of each soil set into a wire mesh suspended in water. The difference between the two was unquestionable. The tilled soil immediately began to disintegrate while the no-till soil held together. Even after standing in the tubes of water all day, the no-till soil was still intact. The tilled soil had all fallen through the wire.



Attendees discuss the slake test demonstration with Ray.

Ray explained that biological glues hold the soil together. Biological glues are made by the underground "livestock". These glues also hold the soil particles together, which creates pore space. The more pore spaces a soil has, the better the infiltration. Tillage disturbs the soil profile, collapses the pore spaces and kills the underground livestock.

To the question, what was the most enlightening point, one person commented, "There were

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many, but every time I learn more about soils, I become more committed to making changes & learn more about the soil quality of our ranch and how we can improve it..."

Another referenced Gabe's observation about insects. "For every one pest species, there are 1700 beneficial insects."

Longest distance traveled awards were given to a young couple from Calgary, Canada, and a father/son duo from Ruby Valley, Nevada.



If you would like to hear the presentations, you can go to www.barnmedia.net. Type farming evolution in the search box, and then click on the header: 02-12-15 "The Farming Evolution 2015" in Holyoke Feb 12-13...WEBCASTS ARCHIVES.

The Farming Evolution was sponsored by the Haxtun, Sedgwick County and Yuma County Conservation Districts, the Upper Republican Natural Resource District, a Colorado State Conservation Board Grant, Colorado Soil and Water Conservation Society, Nebraska Soil and Water Conservation Society and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.



EVENTS TO WATCH FOR



☺ No-till On The Plains Whirlwind Expos
June 15, 2015 Stuart, NE
June 17, 2015 Venango, NE
[Www.notill.org](http://www.notill.org)

☺ Colorado Section SRM Summer Tour
June 25—26, 2015
Carbondale, CO

☺ CO Chapter SWCS Summer Tour
June 26, 2015
Loveland, CO

☺ 70th Annual SWCS International Conference
July 26—29, 2015
Greensboro, NC

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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.