



# Williams County Soil Conservation District

August 2021



## ConVersation ~ n ~ ConServation 4th Annual Ladies Ag Night

On Thursday July, 15th we hosted our 4th Annual Ladies' Ag Night "Conversation ~ n ~ Conservation" event. This year was geared towards mental health awareness. We had a fantastic turnout with Adrienne DeSutter as our main speaker. She was very well received even with it being a touchy subject for most people. She has a masters degree in counseling and shared some of her own life experiences with mental health in her farming community. Her focus was to break the barriers



and start having the conversations, because as uncomfortable as it may be, its even more uncomfortable having to attend someone's funeral due to a mental health crisis. Adrienne stressed there is no shame in asking for help, everybody in some shape or form has struggled with mental health, no matter who you are or what you do.



Our second speaker of the night was local gardener Cindy Getzlaff. She talked about tips and tricks that she uses for her own garden. Some of those tips, included her rotational gardening practices and her main weed control, which is conservation grade fabric supplied by the local soil conservation districts. She also discussed ways to conserve water during these dry times.



This truly was a great night to get out and socialize, enjoy good food and drinks, door prizes, make new friends, and get real about our mental health! We appreciate all the ladies who attended as well as our generous sponsors and caterers who made this night possible!



# Soil Health & Intercropping Tour



More and more farmers and ranchers are taking action to improve the health of their soil. Producers who use soil health building practices that include such things as no-till, cover crops and diverse species rotations have been reporting greater productivity, profitability and resiliency to weather extremes. Healthy soil also helps protect our soil and water resources and can lower input costs, which can lead to a healthier bottom line for your business.

To provide an opportunity to learn more about what some producers in the area have been doing to improve their soil health, the Soil Conservation Districts, NDSU Extension Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service and Ag Improvement Associations in Williams and Divide counties held a soil health tour on July 22.

The tour started at the Williston Research Extension Center with an overview of a cover crop and annual forage demonstration being conducted by the Williams County Soil Conservation District in conjunction with the Research Center. One of the objectives of the demonstration is to look at the production potential of several annual forages and cover crop mixes with drought tolerance in mind for years such as this.

From there the tour headed north with stops at several farm operations to hear about actions they are taking or planning to improve their soil health. Participants were able to see a range of soil health practices and differences in soil structure as some producers on the tour are just in the early stages of trying to improve their soil health while others have been working on it for many years.



One of the tour stops was at Andrew Sylte's. Andrew is in the beginning phases of a sustainability plan that will use full season cover crops and livestock integration working with a neighbor along with fall seeded cover crops to add crop diversity and improve soil health.



Another was at the Wheeler Ranch where Blake and Tom talked about how they are using cover crops and annual forages to expand their livestock operation and integrate livestock more into their cropping system.

From there the tour moved up into the Noonan area where Greg Busch and Morgan Jacobs talked about intercrops they have tried to increase diversity in their cropping systems and featured a field of mustard and maple peas Greg is growing as an intercrop this year. The final stop of the tour was at one of Harlan and Phil Johnson's fields north of Wildrose where they are growing an intercrop of flax and lentils.

The long-term goal for many of these producers is to rebuild the soil closer to what it was under prairie conditions. Prairies and prairie soils flourished with a diversity of plants that grew from early spring to late fall. Unfortunately, farming has taken its toll on our soil with most agricultural land having at best only about half the organic matter and topsoil compared to what it had before it was first cultivated.

The tour concluded with a supper at Wildrose for the 40 participants and a chance to visit about practices they had seen on the tour.

If you would like some help or suggestions on how to incorporate any of the soil health principles into your operation to improve soil health, stop by the SCD office or give me a call.



**Keith Brown, Soil Health & Cropping Systems Specialist**

**Williams County SCD**

**701-648-9841 Cell or 701-572-6729 ext. 3 SCD office**

## Pipeline & Plow Prices

With little to no rain in the forecast, it is safe to say it is very dry. Water quantity and quality in livestock dams and dugouts is likely very diminished. That's why it is more important than ever to have fresh water systems in place for your livestock needs. The District offers the rental of a shallow pipeline plow as well as 1 1/2 inch poly-pipe in stock.

- Plow Rental: \$0.25/foot
- 1 1/2" Pipe Available: Call for Pricing
- Pipe Fuser is available at time of plow rental
- A few basic pipe fittings are available at the tree shed (only available for 1 1/2" poly pipe)



## District Services & Price List:

Machine Planting: (Includes Trees - Min. 1500ft)	\$31.00/hundred ft.
Machine Planting with Weed Barrier (Includes Trees — Min.1500ft)	\$86.00/hundred ft.
Fabric: 6' x 300' Roll	\$100.00
Fabric: 6' x 500' Roll	\$150.00
Staples Individual	\$0.15 Each
Staples Box (500)	\$75.00
Casoron Application: (Fall)	\$18.00/hundred ft.
Plantskydd 1lb. Box (Deer Repellent)	\$27.95 Plus Tax
Plantskydd 1 qt. Pre-mixed	\$19.95 Plus Tax
Plantskydd 1.3 Gallon refill jug	\$57.95 Plus Tax
Plantskydd 1lb granular	\$10.95 Plus Tax
Plantskydd 3.5 lb. granular shaker	\$27.95 Plus Tax
Plantskydd 20 lb. granular bag	\$112.95 Plus Tax
Poly-Pipe 1.5 inch	Call for Pricing
1 1/2 inch fittings available in limited supplies for poly-pipe.	
Water kits.	\$10.00

## Rental Equipment

Shallow Pipeline Plow	\$0.25/ft
6 ft Frontier Drill	\$100.00/Day
10 ft Truax Drill: (Min. 10 Acres)	\$12.50/Acre
Custom Seeding: 30 ft Drill (Min. 40 Acres)	\$20.00/Acre
Post Pounder	\$200/Day
Tree Site Prep Service (Min. 2 hrs.)	\$.75/hr.

# Custom Seeding

**\$20.00 an acre**



**Min. 40 acres &  
Max. 160 acres**

Fall will be here before we know it and many producers will be busy harvesting. Whether you lack the time, equipment, or man power, contact the District for your conservation seeding needs. If you are looking at seeding a field back to pasture, hayland or annual cover crop mix, contact our office and we'll be able to help you develop a mixture that will fit your goals. We are able to take care of your cover crop or grass seeding needs with our 30ft no-till drill. The charge is \$20/acre with a minimum of 40 acres, that is charged regardless if the acreage amount is reached. We would just need a map of the area you are wanting seeded, copy of the seed tags, and our custom seeding sheet signed. Stop in or give us a call before our slots fill up!

Downtown Office: 701-572-6729 ext 3 or Tree Shed 701-774-2319

## In Memory of Owen Anderson

On June 2nd, we lost another great board member. Owen Anderson served diligently on the Williams County Soil Conservation board for 20 years. Dedicating his time to not only farming but also to the conservation practices of the land. He found the time to serve on several other boards in the area as well. He was a very talented wood-worker, with his most prized work being a replica of the Rainbow Valley Church. Owen and his wife Edith had 3 children. One of which still serves on our board to this day; Donald Anderson.

In honor of his memory, the employees from the Soil Conservation District and NRCS family donated this beautiful memorial tree and plaque for his family to enjoy. Owen will be deeply missed by all who knew him.



Pictured: Owen's wife Edith

## 2021 Tree Season

This spring was a dry one and this also meant that tree numbers were down for machine plantings. However, we did see an increase in handplant sales and a lot of new faces this year. In the end, we ended up installing 102,339 linear feet (19 miles) of trees and 85,144 (16 miles) of fabric. A big thank you to all of our seasonal workers who helped make this another successful tree season!



If interested in a machine tree planting for 2022 please call the office to get the process started. Plans need to be completed by the end of Fall, along with a site visit from one of our staff. Now is also the time to start thinking about handplants for next year. It is best to have order sheets turned in by Nov 1st to ensure availability. The sheets can be found in our office, Facebook page, and website.

## *On the Horizon*

- **Handplant Replacement Service** —The District will come out and replace the dead trees in already existing tree rows. Prices will become available in the next couple of weeks.
- **Eco-Ed Education Days:** September 15th & 16th - all county sixth graders come out for a 2 day event that the district hosts. We are always looking for volunteers to help those two days. If interested please contact the office.
- **Board Meeting:** September 9th
- **Achievement Award Winner Banquet:** October



## Water Sampling Kits

Due to the extreme drought, areas once full of water are no longer available or quality of existing water is in question. Water is in high demand for livestock and making sure that water is safe to drink is equally important.

Potential factors that can contaminate water include but are not limited to: nitrates, human sewage, algae blooms, animal waste, fertilizer, salts, and heavy metals. If you think your livestock's water supply may be contaminated or just want to double check, give our office a call or stop in. We can either schedule a time to come collect a sample or you can take the kit and collect the sample yourself. Another resource is to contact Kelly Leo our local County Extension Agent to get a more immediate test.



# DON'T DELAY! Sign Up Today!

Are you interested in installing or adopting conservation practices on your farm or ranch? The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) may be available to help with technical and financial assistance. This program is designed to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits.

If interested, please contact the Williston NRCS office. We will then schedule a field visit to meet with you about your goals and objectives for your farm or ranch as well as begin the conservation planning process.

**The deadline to sign up for EQIP is earlier this year than in the past. If interested in applying, please submit an application to the NRCS**

**no later than *September 24th, 2021.***

If you have any questions, please give the NRCS a call at 701-572-6729 ext. 3. We look forward to working with you!

## Tree Site Prep Service

Looking at having a machine tree planting this spring and lack the equipment to break up the ground? Contact the District for your fall site prep and get ahead of the game. All tree plantings that contain fabric are required to get worked up! We will be offering a chisel plow for fall prep when needed and a roto-tilling service before planting begins. Site preparation (plowing/ tilling) is essential for proper soil -to-root contact, providing for better fabric installation, and making for a more successful planting. This is especially important for sites that are in native sod or in a grass lawn with fabric going down. The District will provide a tractor, operator, and equipment for \$75/hour with a minimum charge of 2 hours. Call the office to get on our list.



The graphic is a rectangular advertisement for the 2022 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) sign-up. It features the USDA NRCS logo at the top left. The title "2022 Program Sign-up" is prominently displayed in the center. Below the title is a grid of nine small images representing different conservation practices: Seasonal High Tunnel, No-Till, Pipeline, Watering Facility, Fence, Solar Pump, Water Well, Erosion Control, Tree Renovation, Grass Seeding, Wildlife Habitat, Cover Crops, Nutrient Management, Tree Planting, and Grazing System. To the right of the images, the text "Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Financial Assistance for Installing Conservation Practices" is written. At the bottom, the sign-up deadline is listed as "Sign up Deadline Friday, September 24th" and a note says "Please stop by the Williston NRCS office or call 701-572-6729 ext. 3 for more information." The USDA equal opportunity provider and employer logo is at the bottom right.



# Current Happenings



**Blacktail Dam subject of two-year project to test area's water**

As many of you might have seen through our Facebook page, as well as the Williston Herald, the District has been collecting water samples on Blacktail Dam for the past 2 years. These samples, look at the levels of nitrogen, phosphates, and bacteria in the water. Samples are collected bi-monthly and then sent to the Bismarck lab. The Grant for this project ends in September of this year and results will hopefully become available at the start of the next year. For more information checkout the article.

\*\*\*Photo credits: Mitch Melberg from the Williston Herald\*\*\*

## Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) for Ranchers and Pet Owners

Blue-green algae are simple plants that exist naturally in water and wet environments. They prefer warm, stagnant, nutrient-rich water and are found most often in ponds, lakes, and slow moving rivers.

- Dugouts, wetlands and lakes contaminated with fertilizer run-off or direct manure and urine contamination are prime places for algae to thrive.
- During periods of hot and dry conditions, rapid growth of blue-green algae may result in a "bloom". A bloom is a build-up of algae that creates a green, blue-green or white coloring on the surface of the water
  - Sometimes occurring as mats or scum.
  - It may look like a floating layer of paint.
- Windy conditions can concentrate algal blooms along water edges, increasing the risk for livestock to ingest algae when they drink.

The most common species of blue-green algae in North Dakota associated with poisoning are *Microcystis*, *Anabaena* and *Aphanizomenon*.

- *Microcystis* is the most common bloom-forming genus, and is often toxic.
  - **Microcystis** blooms are a greenish, thick, **paint-like** (sometimes granular) material that accumulates along shores.
  - Scums that dry on the shores of lakes may contain high concentrations of microcystin toxin for several months, allowing toxins to dissolve in the water even when the cells are no longer alive or after a recently collapsed bloom.
- *Anabaena* may form **slimy** summer blooms on the surface of lakes and reservoirs.
- *Aphanizomenon* look similar to **grass clippings** and are slender, straight filaments that can be observed separately or in clumps.

Blue-green algae toxins are released when algal cells are damaged and die in the water. This can occur when water is treated with an algaecide such as copper sulfate or when ingested water reaches the animal's digestive tract and algal cells are disrupted, releasing the toxins. Pets and livestock are most at risk when drinking contaminated water or cleaning algae from fur/hair coat. Most animals exposed to blue-green algae toxins die acutely and are often found dead very near the water source.

## Symptoms

- Some algae produce potent neurotoxins (toxins that affect the nervous system) that cause:
  - Muscle tremors, difficulty breathing, seizures, profuse slobbering, diarrhea, and rapid death within minutes to hours.
- Other algae can produce hepatotoxins (toxins that affect the liver) that can cause:
  - Death quickly or a more delayed onset of death after signs of liver failure develop.
  - Photosensitization, a skin condition causing white (light or non-pigmented) areas of skin to peel, can occur in animals that survive the acute stages of liver damage.

## Treatment

- The only treatment is supportive care and medications to alleviate the symptoms.





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## Supervisors:

Donald Anderson  
Ray

Blake Wheeler  
Ray

Ryan Davidson  
Tioga

TJ Halverson  
Tioga

Amber Anderson  
Williston

## **Deer & Rabbit Problems**

If you are having problems with deer, elk, moose, rabbits, or mice in your tree rows and/or garden areas consider using plantskydd. Plantskydd is a pest repellent that works by emitting an odor, associated with predator activity stimulating a fear based response that helps to repel animals. This product is available in the office in a 1 lb. Box, 1 qt. pre mixed spray bottle, 3.5 gallon refill jug, 1 lb. granular shaker, 3.5 lb. granular shaker 20 lb. granular bag. Plantskydd should be effective for approximately 6 months during winter and 3-4 months during the active growing season. Stop by the office to pick some up.



## District Staff:

District Manager:  
Molly Jugovic

Equipment Manager:  
David Telck

District Clerk:  
Desiree Novotny

Soil Health & Cropping  
System Specialist:  
Keith Brown

## NRCS Staff:

District Conservationist:  
Kevin Seitz

Soil Conservationist:  
Malinda Ferguson

Soil Conservation Tech:  
Scott Nordloef