



# Ecological Education

## (Eco-Ed) Days

On September 10, 11, and 12th the Williams County Soil Conservation District hosted their annual Eco-Ed days. This event is an education program geared towards all 6th graders in the county. This year we hosted around 460 students. The schools that attended this free event were: Bakken, Trenton, Tioga, Bainville, and a handful of homeschoilers.

### The 2024 Sponsors



In 2017, the Williams County SCD chose to break away from the normal curriculum and design a day with the main focus being on pollinators. Pollinators are truly an irreplaceable part of our ecosystem and deserve to have more light shed on their declining populations. We live in a prominent farming community and many crops are dependent on pollinators.

We have partnered with the Williston Area Woodworkers for the past several years to help build pollinator houses. This partnership has enabled each student to build their own pollinator seed house and take it home. The behind the scenes work that this group puts in for this program each year is remarkable and truly appreciated! Not to mention the amount of them that volunteer for all 3 days of the event.



This year we received generous donations from Kraken Oil & Gas, Triangle Electric, Brigston Electric, KLX Energy Services, and Chord Energy. These generous donations are truly a great asset to our program and without them this event would not be possible!

Some of these students have never used a power drill, bit n brace, or tools in general. This provides a great learning opportunity for each student and allowed a majority of the students to build their first woodworking project!

To go along with our pollinator theme, we also had a pollinator seed bomb station taught by Isabella Sferra, our Watershed Coordinator. At this station, the students were able to learn about different types of pollinators, why they are important, and about the decline in their populations. Each child was able to get hands on at this station and build their own pollinator seed bombs. A bag of premixed material was given to each student. Water was then added to their bags to allow the material to combine and form a sticky mixture. The students wore gloves and carefully rolled this sticky material into 2 round balls and placed on a sheet of cardboard to dry. The seed bombs have to dry for up to 48 hours depending on the size. The idea behind this activity is that kids are able to throw or plant these balls and wait for the native flowers to grow.

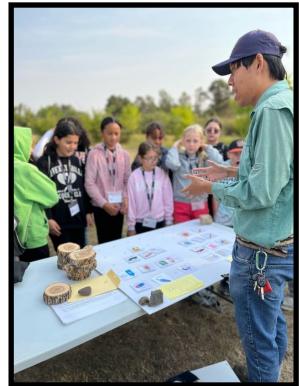


The next station the students attended was Electrical safety with Mountrail Williams Electric Cooperative (MWEC). Ryan does an amazing job with his presentation as well as demonstration. He covers how electricity works and the importance of safety around electricity in several different real world examples. This station better equips these students with how to deal with an electrical situation.



Keith Brown our soil health and cropping system specialist did a station on soil health. Here the students were able to see several demonstrations that represented the soil structure as well as a representation that was presented by using an apple.

The kids also got a chance to get hands on at our forestry station that was presented by Scott Dai. Scott jumped right in after being hired 3 weeks prior a the 4-H Youth Development Extension agent for Williams County and did a fantastic job. The kids were able to look at trees and discuss the characteristics they saw as well as differences between them. They were able to count rings on tree cookies and play a fun interactive game of deciding what products were made from wood and which were man made.



Rangeland was presented by our very own District Conservationist, Malinda Ferguson. At this station, the kids learned the value of native rangeland through a fun Bingo game. Native rangeland serves a variety of purposes including helping improve water quality, feed for livestock, wildlife and pollinator habitat and recreation. They learned how plants grow and how to identify common plants found in native rangeland in this area.

This was another great year for this event and we hope the kids had just as much fun as we did. A big thank you to Kraken Oil & Gas out of Sidney, MT as well as Brigston Electric for donating hamburger patties for lunch for all 3 days. The meal served for all the students and volunteers consisted of a grilled hamburger, chips, cookies, apple sauce, and a bottle of water. Thank you to Brigston Electric for providing the grill and KLX Energy Services for helping to grill all 3 days. You guys did a fantastic job!

We appreciate all the hard work and effort that these volunteers put in to help make these three days possible! My last thank you needs to go out to all of my volunteers and station personnel that donated one, two, or three days of their time to make Eco-Ed days a success. Without each one of you this would not have been possible!!

