



Conservation Clamor

WESTON COUNTY NATURAL RESOURCE DISTRICT

May 2024

Interested in Becoming a WCNRD Supervisor?

There are three board of supervisor positions up for election in 2024, one rural, one urban, and one at-large position.

If you are interested in running, please file an "Application of Election" with the Weston County Natural Resource District. We will have blank applications available in the district office. Applications must be filed between August 7 – 26, 2024.

Eligibility:

- To qualify for the rural position, you must reside within Weston County and outside an incorporated area.
- To qualify for the urban position, you must reside within an incorporated area within Weston County.
- To qualify for the at-large position, you must reside within Weston County.

Board Member Duties:

- Attend the regularly scheduled monthly Board Meetings and special meetings as needed
- Attend the annual Area I Meeting and Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts Conference
- Participate in other functions as needed to develop an effective natural resource conservation program
- Coordinate with local organizations, NRCS, and other State and Federal agencies to develop and implement local Conservation District Programs
- Guide District Staff to promote efforts towards responsible management
- Board members are volunteers and will not receive compensation. Board members will be reimbursed for District-related travel expenses such as mileage.

For more information, contact WCNRD at 307-746-3264 ext.4

In the News: Bird Flu

H5N1 avian influenza, or bird flu, is widespread in wild birds worldwide and is causing outbreaks in poultry and U.S. dairy cows with one recent human case in a U.S. dairy worker. While the current public health risk is low, the CDC is watching the situation carefully and working with states to monitor people with animal exposures.

Remember to disinfect your bird feeders frequently!



To reduce the risk of infection, poultry farmers and poultry workers, backyard bird flock owners, livestock farmers and workers, veterinarians and veterinary staff, and emergency responders should avoid unprotected direct physical contact or close exposure with sick birds, livestock, or other animals; carcasses of birds, livestock, or other animals; feces or litter; raw milk; surfaces and water (e.g., ponds, waterers, buckets, pans, troughs) that might be contaminated with animal excretions.

Report sick or dead birds to APHIS at 1-866-536-7593

For more information about avian influenza, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/> or <https://www.aphis.usda.gov/livestock-poultry-disease/avian/avian-influenza>

Board of Supervisors

David Tysdal dtysdal.wcnrd@gmail.com
Chairman, Rural

Tucker Hamilton thamilton.wcnrd@gmail.com
Vice Chairman, Rural

Emily Hartinger ehartinger.wcnrd@gmail.com
Secretary/Treasurer, Rural

Gene Norman gnorman.wcnrd@gmail.com
Supervisor, Urban

Tom Streeter tstreeter.wcnrd@gmail.com
Supervisor, At-Large

District Staff

Caleb Carter ccarter.wcnrd@gmail.com
District Manager (307) 746-3264 ext. 4

Erin Whitcher westoncountynrd@gmail.com
Administrative Assistant

District Hours
7:30 am to 4 pm—Monday-Friday

The USDA is an equal opportunity
provider and employer

NRCS Field Office

Hours: 7 am to 3:30 pm (307) 746-3264 ext. 3

Paul Eitel paul.eitel@usda.gov
District Conservationist

Austin Sommerville asommerville@nwtf.net
National Wild Turkey Federation
Cooperative Forester



Find us online!

Be sure to check out our website for all your updates and WCNRD news. You can find forms to sign up for programs, event details, and much more!

westoncountynrd.org

You can also connect with us on social media:

 facebook.com/westoncountynrd

 instagram.com/westoncountynrd

Mission Statement

“Providing leadership in conserving the natural resources in Weston County by providing information, education and technical assistance to meet the needs of our users.”

UPCOMING EVENTS

Special Budget Meeting

May 30th @ 2 pm, District Office

Board Meeting

June 11th @ 3 pm, District Office

Black Hills Natural Resource Youth Camp

June 5, 6, 7

First Farmer’s Market

June 20th, 5-7 pm @ Newcastle Lodge Parking Lot

Board Meeting/Budget Hearing

July 9th @ 3 pm

Household Hazardous Waste Day

September 21st @ 10 am–1 pm, Elementary School Parking Lot



Did you know the WCNRD also offers the Barnyards and Backyards magazine that we send out quarterly? Any district member is welcome to sign up to get one mailed to you!
If you're interested in getting the magazine call: 307-746-3264

E-Newsletter

If you would rather receive your newsletter via email, please contact us at westoncountynrd@gmail.com or call the District Office at (307) 746-3264, ext. 4

We're accepting community photo submissions!

Contribute to conservation by sharing your photos of Weston County, so that we show the beauty of our county in our educational materials, publications, website, and social media.




Scan to learn more



2024 Photo Contest Winner

Congratulations to Kallie Bailey for winning our photo contest! Kallie was born and raised in Newcastle, Wyoming. Raised on ranch life, her days were filled with 4-H shows, rodeo events, and all the gritty work that comes with it. Her portfolio spans the rugged landscapes of Wyoming, Montana, and South Dakota. This year's winning photo was taken at Hill View Farms. You can check out more of her work on her Facebook page,

Rock'n B Photography.

As the contest winner, Kallie received a tree or shrub of her choice from Crestwood Growers. She chose to donate her tree to the Newcastle Arbor Day planting.

Thanks to everyone who participated in the contest, and to everyone who voted. View all of the entries at <https://westoncountynrd.org/about-wcnrd/gallery/>

2024 Hazardous Waste Day Saturday, September 21ST 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Newcastle Elementary School Parking Lot



This year our Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day will be on Saturday, September 21st from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Newcastle Elementary School Parking lot. We will be accepting a wide variety of, including:

- **Automotive**– (DO NOT MIX AUTO FLUIDS) antifreeze, oil, brake fluid, transmission fluid, car batteries
- **Paints/Solvents**- latex or oil-based paints, paint stripper, paint thinner, wood preservatives
- **Lawn & Garden**-fertilizers, pesticides, rodent poisons, fungicides
- **Home**- bleach, disinfectants, drain cleaner, glues, nail polish remover, household batteries, florescent light tubes, aerosols, lighter fluid
- **Electronics**- computers, monitors, household printers, laptops, televisions
- The Newcastle P.D. will be on site to collect prescription medication for disposal.

While there is no charge for this service, we do ask that you bring donations of food or hygiene items for the B.R.E.A.D. Office.



Need Your Septic Tank Pumped? We have a cost-share program for that!

Wyoming DEQ recommends that you have your septic system inspected by a septic professional every one to three years and pumped at least once every three to five years. While it might seem costly to pay several hundred dollars for inspection and pumping every few years, it's a lot cheaper than having to replace the whole system because it failed due to lack of maintenance. If your septic system is not functioning properly, it can contaminate nearby soil, water bodies, and well water.

WCNRD has a cost-share program to assist landowners with the cost of maintaining their septic system. The cost-share is a flat rate of \$100 per household, and applicants are eligible for funding every two years. For more information about the program, visit our website. <https://westoncountynrd.org/septic-maintenance-2/>

FAREWELL PARTY

for

AUSTIN SOMMERVILLE

Join us in thanking him for all of his hard work and wishing him good luck in his new role.

Friday, May 31st, at 1 - 3 pm.
USDA Service Center Conference Room

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Light refreshments will be provided

Rain Barrel Cost-Share

We are excited to offer a 50% cost-share on 55-gallon rain barrels. Barrels will be available to district members for \$50.

Call or email by May 30th
to reserve a barrel
746-3264x4 or

westoncountynrd@gmail.com

We now have a barrel at the office
if you want to see one in person
before pre-ordering.

No payment is due until pickup.



Setting Up A Successful Rain Barrel

Rain barrels have become increasingly popular in recent years as a way to conserve water and reduce utility bills. Not only do rain barrels provide a valuable resource for outdoor watering, but they also help nourish plants with natural rainfall and reduce the flooding, pollution, and erosion caused by stormwater runoff. Setting up a successful rain barrel is simple, but it does require consideration of several factors.

First, when deciding on the size of your barrel, consider that even a light rain on a small roof can quickly fill a single rain barrel. A quarter inch of rain on a 1000-square-foot roof will produce around 155 gallons of water. If you have a larger roof, you may want multiple barrels.

Once you've selected your container, the next step is determining how the water will get into the barrel. This can be as simple as cutting and angling your downspout so that it empties over the barrel or attaching a flexible downspout extension and connecting it to the barrel. You can also install a diverter kit that directs the water from the downspout into the barrel while leaving the end of the downspout in place.

Another important factor to consider is what happens when your barrel gets full. If not handled properly, an overflowing rain barrel can lead to flooding, erosion, and damage to surrounding areas. Many rain barrel systems include an overflow hose connection point so that you can direct excess water out to a lawn, rain garden, infiltration trench, or soaker hose. Another option is to connect multiple barrels so that overflow from one flows into the next. Some diverter kits are also designed to handle overflow.

The rain barrel should have a cover to keep insects, debris, and animals out of the water. There should also be a debris screen either at the end of the downspout or at the top of the rain barrel. Collected water should be used regularly so that it does not become stagnant. When collecting rainwater, we suggest waiting 10-20 minutes before diverting the rainwater into the barrel, to give the rain time to wash dirt and debris off the roof and gutters. Delaying collection like this will help keep the barrel clean and reduce the chance of the collected water being contaminated with E. Coli or other bacteria.

Barrels should sit on a sturdy platform and be raised high enough that you can fit your watering can under the spigot, or if you're using a hose, that there is enough elevation to create gravity flow. If you want to use a moderate-flow watering system, consider using a submersible pump instead of relying on gravity alone.

Most manufacturers recommend that you empty your barrel and clean it before the first freeze of the year. To prolong the life of your barrel, store it inside over the winter so that it is not repeatedly frozen and thawed, as this can make the container and fittings brittle.

A final factor to consider is that although rain barrels are great for harvesting rainwater for later use, combining rain barrels with landscaping features that allow the soil to soak up the rain will improve soil health and reduce stormwater runoff.

In conclusion, harvesting rainwater with a rain barrel can be an environmentally friendly and cost-effective way to conserve water and provide nutrients for your plants. By accounting for these key factors and being mindful of proper maintenance, you can successfully set up a reliable rainwater collection system in your backyard.



Visit <https://bit.ly/rainwater-harvesting-article> for a Barnyards and Backyards article about rainwater harvesting in Wyoming.

Scan the QR code for a rainfall harvest calculator provided by www.gardeners.com



2024 Arbor Day Celebration

On April 29th, WCNRD, the City of Newcastle, Newcastle Tree Board, Wyoming State Forestry, and community volunteers celebrated Arbor Day by planting cherry trees and shrubs in Washington Memorial Park in Newcastle. The ceremony was kicked off with Mayor Pam Gualtieri reading the proclamation and a capsule with the signed proclamation and names of all volunteers being deposited under the 2024 Arbor Day Tree, a variety called "Sweet Cherry Pie."

Varieties planted include Canada red chokecherry, purpleleaf sand cherry, Nanking, Montmorency, Mesabi, Evan's Bali, Romeo, and Juliet varieties. These are public trees, so the public is welcome to collect the fruit that these trees and shrubs produce – if you can beat the birds and deer to them.

Many memorial and Arbor Day trees in Newcastle have a sign with a QR code. Scanning the code will take you to the City of Newcastle Urban Forestry map, with the location and information for many of the public, memorial, and Arbor Day trees in Newcastle. Scan the QR code to the right to see the map. Thank you to everyone who participated in the 2024 Arbor Day Celebration!



Boat Check Stations are Back

Do your part to keep Aquatic Invasive Species out of Wyoming's water.



Any watercraft transported into Wyoming from March 1 through November 30 must undergo a mandatory inspection by an authorized inspector before launching in any water of the state. Any watercraft that has been in a water infested with zebra/quagga mussels within the last 30 days must be inspected by an authorized inspector before launching during ALL months of the year. All watercraft must stop at any open watercraft check station on their route of travel, regardless of previous destination and intention to launch in Wyoming.

NRCS Conservation Programs and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)



Overview

The IRA provides USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) with \$19.5 billion in additional funds over five years for its existing conservation programs, including the [Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#), [Conservation Stewardship Program \(CSP\)](#), and the [Agricultural Conservation Easement Program \(ACEP\)](#).

The IRA directs NRCS to use these additional funds specifically for climate change mitigation, activities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve carbon storage, like:

- ◆ Cover Crops
- ◆ Reduced-Till and No-Till
- ◆ Nutrient Management
- ◆ Prescribed Grazing
- ◆ Tree/Shrub Establishment
- ◆ Wetland Restoration

Through this funding, NRCS is seeking to both benefit the climate, by reducing greenhouse gas emissions; and the producer, by improving access to programs and providing financial and technical assistance to improve their farm, ranch, urban operation or forest land.

NRCS Climate-Smart Mitigation Activities

For a current list of NRCS climate-smart mitigation activities eligible for IRA funding see: nrcs.usda.gov/mitigation-activities.pdf.

How to Apply

EQIP and CSP

NRCS accepts producer applications for its conservation programs year-round, but if you're interested in EQIP or CSP, you should apply by your state's ranking dates to be considered for funding in the current cycle. Funding is provided through a competitive process: nrcs.usda.gov/ranking-dates.

ACEP

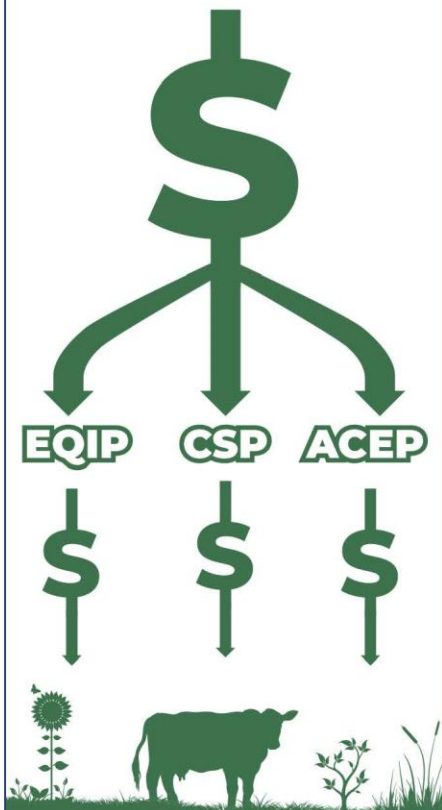
ACEP Agricultural Land Easements (ACEP-ALE) and Wetland Reserve Easements (ACEP-WRE) applications for the current IRA funding cycle must be submitted by **November 13, 2023**.

Improving Access

Every producer has a part to play when it comes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, regardless of the size or type of operation. Whether you are a new or an existing NRCS client, we encourage you to apply. We want to make sure you have access to our programs and get all the assistance for which you are eligible.

Contact NRCS at: farmers.gov/service-center-locator.

Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)



Climate-smart mitigation activities, e.g.

- Cover Crops
- Reduced-Till and No-Till
- Nutrient Management
- Prescribed Grazing
- Tree/Shrub Establishment
- Wetland Restoration





Weston County Natural Resource District

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(307) 746-3264, ext. 4

westoncountynrd@gmail.com

**Bulk Rate
U.S. Postage
Rate
Newcastle, WY
Permit No. 52
Return Service
Requested**

May 2024 Conservation Clamor

Meetings are held the second Tuesday of every month
at 3:00p.m. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

The Weston County Natural Resource District is an equal opportunity employer

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