



Conservation Clamor

WESTON COUNTY NATURAL RESOURCE DISTRICT

September 2024

SAMPLE SPECIAL DISTRICT ELECTION BALLOT

Weston County Natural Resource District
Weston County, Wyoming
November 5, 2024

Ballot Instructions: To vote for a District Supervisor, place a mark in the box at the left of the name of the candidate you select, or place a mark in the box provided and write in the name of your choice. Vote for three (3).

If you spoil your ballot, do not erase. Instead, ask for a new ballot.

Urban Position (Vote for no more than one)

- Gene Norman
- Write In: _____

At Large/Rural Position (Vote for no more than two)

- Tom Streeter
- David Tysdal
- Jerry Varner
- Write In: _____
- Write In: _____

Voting will take place on November 5th from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the District Office.

**If you need to make arrangements for absentee voting, contact the district at
307-746-3264x4 or westoncountynrd@gmail.com.**

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 4:30 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

Jeremy Fultz jeremy.fultz@usda.gov
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

Upton FFA Agriculture Bash

October 1st @ Upton High School

Newcastle FFA Ag Day

October 4th @ Fairgrounds

Board Meeting

October 8th @ noon

Well Water Testing Day

Order Kits by 10/4, bring samples to the office 10/22

Election Day

November 5th – vote for WCNRD supervisors at the office

Board Meeting

November 12th @ 3pm

WACD Annual Conference (Office closed)

November 19-22 @ Jackson Hole

NEW PROGRAM!**LAB TESTING COST SHARE**

Send in soil, water, plants, forage, compost, manure, etc. for laboratory analysis.

WCNRD will reimburse 50% of the cost of analysis, up to \$200.

District members are eligible for this program once per calendar year.

We can also assist with selecting a lab or test and filling out the associated paperwork.

The application and program details are available on our website:

<https://westoncountynrd.org/lab-testing/>



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

Fall Well Water Testing

Call us to reserve kits by 3PM on October 4th

Pick up your kits October 14th-18th

Collect and return samples October 22nd

Bring samples to the WCNRD office in Newcastle by 10 a.m. or Upton City Hall by 11 a.m.

We are changing things up a bit and will only be offering the Annual Well Maintenance test (the \$30 test offered previously) this testing day. This test checks for presence of bacteria/E. coli and levels of nitrate and nitrite, sulfate, and total dissolved solids.

WCNRD will fully cover the cost of this test.

Kits will be limited to 1 per household, per testing date.

Call our office to reserve your kit or for more information

307-746-3264x4

For additional water testing, check out our new Lab Test Cost Share program.

<https://westoncountynrd.org/lab-testing/>

New Faces

There are a few new faces around the WCNRD, NRCS, and FSA offices. In the past weeks, we have welcomed James Pryor, Jeremy Fultz, and Ben Carter. Stop by and say hello!



James Pryor started as a Program Analyst for FSA in August.

Having spent fifty-one years of my life in various parts of north and central Texas, I never felt more at home than I did when I arrived here in Newcastle. I've been trying to move to Wyoming since my early twenties and am thrilled to finally make it up here. I look forward to getting to know and working with the producers of Weston County and will be happy to help in any way I can.



Jeremy Fultz is filling the NWTF Cooperative Forester position. His first day was September 16th.

I am from Clinton, AR. As an avid outdoorsman, I want nothing more than to see our forests and wildlife thrive. Some things I hope to accomplish while I am here are to see wildlife grow and thrive in their natural habitats and to sustain a healthy forest ecosystem. I look forward to working with you all and helping you reach your goals as landowners.



Ben Carter will be doing an internship with WCNRD this school year.

I'm a senior at Newcastle High School. I do cross country and soccer and play trumpet in the band. I am also the new intern at The Weston County Natural Resource District. I was interested in this position for a couple of reasons. My goal after high school is to pursue a career in cattle ranching and range management. The WCNRD has many programs that could help me learn new skills and valuable knowledge that I can carry into a future career, which is a big step in the right direction toward my future goals.

Rain Barrel Results

Between our rain barrel cost-share and the Rain Barrel Art Auction fundraiser, held on August 16th, WCNRD was all about rain barrels this summer.

At the end of our pre-order period, district members had reserved 85 barrels. We placed a bulk order for 90 barrels, which arrived on July 29th. The barrels were unloaded at the Weston County Fairgrounds and were picked up over the following days. There is still plenty of demand for barrels, so WCNRD is planning to coordinate a group purchase program with other conservation districts. We will likely do another round of pre-orders early next year, so keep an eye out for more information.



The Rain Barrel Art Auction was held during the Weston County Art Council’s first annual Chokecherry Festival on August 16. WCNRD purchased 8 rain barrels and prepared their surfaces by sanding and priming them, then volunteer artists painted the barrels. The barrels were displayed at local businesses for several weeks leading up to the auction. The barrels were sold at silent auction and raised over \$1400. The funds that were raised by this project will go towards creating a StoryWalk® program for local parks and trails.

We would like to extend a big thank you to the volunteers, artists, businesses that hosted the barrels, sponsors, the Weston County Arts Council, and everyone who participated in the silent auction.

Volunteers: Margaret Beverly, Tavis Whitcher, David Tysdal, Tom Streeter, Sherie Hilgenkamp
Artists: Jen Womack, Tavis and Nicole Whitcher, Sharon Groskopf, Cadence Larson, Bailey Perkins, Grace Sandrini and Suzanne Ackerman, Casimir Blumenthal, and Aaron Kibben
Hosts: Bomgaars, Grazer’s, Ace Hardware, WyoDak Real Estate, A-1 Agency, Decker’s Market, Woody’s Food Center, Joe’s Food Center, Something Healthy Market, Sagebrush Market, WC Sport&Western Wear, Farmers Insurance, First Northern Bank, Newcastle Motors, Edward Jones
Buyers: Craig Wiggins, Barb Crow, Shelley Williamson, Flowering Fingers Garden Club, Susan Lankford, Newcastle Vision Clinic, Rick and Susan Pillen, Sherie Hilgenkamp, and Deb Ellsworth



Sponsors



Outdoor Education Grant Brings Pollinator Program to Children's Library

By Ben Carter

One of the goals of the Weston County Conservation District is to help teach the youth of this community about natural resources, agriculture, and conservation. The Outdoor Education Assistance Grant was designed to help the district meet this purpose. The grant helps local school and youth groups fund education programs related to conservation and natural resources. While this grant has existed for several years, it has been largely unused. Recently, though, word has spread, and the grant has now been put to use in an amazing way by the Weston Library Children's Librarian, Mendocino Ellis, known as Miss Mendo to children who attend her programs.

Miss Mendo came across the Outdoor Education Assistance Grant through a network of friends who eventually led her to the Weston County Natural Resource District office. She discussed her ideas with District Manager Caleb Carter and applied for the grant. After receiving approval by the WCNRD Board of Supervisors, Miss Mendo purchased reusable sprouting trays and other materials necessary to grow lime basil seeds with the children. She used this to teach kids about how to tend to plants, from the ins and outs of growing them to using them in their favorite dishes.

Miss Mendo stated that this project connected her to the community in so many ways. She had kids come in every day to help her water the plants. This daily ritual helped her connect with one kid in particular who was very shy. It even helped her develop a relationship with the parents by sending plants home to grow and cook with. Miss Mendo said that it felt so good to be doing something new and different that felt truly special for the community. When asked if she enjoyed working with the WCNRD, she said she thoroughly enjoyed it and the district helped her in so many ways, both inside and outside the project. When I asked Miss Mendo if she had any advice for people who wanted to dive into a similar project, she stated, "Don't be afraid to play. As adults, we way over complicate things and that's not what the kids want. They just want to play."

With the Outdoor Education Assistance Grant, more programs like this are very realistic. This grant also recently helped the Upton FFA program send several members to the Wyoming Resource Education Days camp.



The Outdoor Education Assistance Grant helps fund hands-on outdoor learning experiences for youth that focus on natural resources and/or agricultural activities. This grant is available to school and youth organizations in Weston County.

If you would like to apply for the grant, contact the office or visit <https://westoncountynrd.org/outdoor-education-assistance-grant/> for more details.

Wildfire Resources

University of Wyoming Extension has created a page with resources for those affected by wildfire. It includes resources for before, during, and after wildfire events, such as home hardening information, evacuation checklists, post-fire restoration recommendations, and a list of financial assistance available to landowners and producers. The site will be updated as new information becomes available.

Scan the QR code or go to
<https://bit.ly/wy-wildfire> to visit the website.



The screenshot shows a website interface with a navigation menu on the left and a main content area on the right. The menu includes categories like 'BARNYARDS & BACKYARDS', 'BUSINESS', 'COMPOSTING', 'DOMESTIC ANIMALS', 'ENERGY', 'FLAMES/WATER/INSE/POLLUTANT', 'FOOD, LOGS, SAFETY, PRESERVATION', 'FORAGE / FEEDS / GRAZING', 'FRUIT GROWING', 'GARDENING (VEGETABLES & HERBS)', 'INSECTS', 'LAWNS', 'NATIVE PLANTS - 01 GROWING', 'NEIGHBOR RELATIONSHIPS', 'PESTICIDES', 'PLANT DISEASES', 'POLLINATORS, SUPPORTING', 'SAFETY', 'SERVICES', 'SOILS & FERTILIZATION', 'TREES & SHRUBS', 'WATERS', and 'WILDS'. The main content area features a 'RESOURCES' section for 'BARNYARDS & BACKYARDS' with sub-sections for 'LIVELI', 'INFORMATION', 'EVENTS', 'MAGAZINE', 'CONTACT US', and 'ASK A QUESTION'. A 'Wildfire' banner image is displayed, followed by a '2024 Wildfires' section with introductory text and a list of resources for producers affected by wildfire, including 'When to start and what you can do first', 'Financial resources', 'Debris Wildfire', 'Wildfire In The Area', 'After Wildfire', and 'Wildfire Ecology'.

Reduce Your Wildfire Vulnerability

In the face of escalating wildfire threats, it is more important than ever for homeowners who live in the wildland urban interface (WUI) to take steps to protect their home and property in the event of a wildfire. Creating defensible space and taking steps to harden your home are critical steps in the defense of these homes and communities. By retrofitting your home with ignition-resistant materials and creating more wildfire-resistant landscapes, you can significantly reduce vulnerability to wildfire.

1. Common Ignition Sources: Most homes are ignited by flying embers rather than direct flames. These embers can travel significant distances and enter homes through various openings. Radiant heat from nearby wildfires also poses a significant risk.

2. Defensible Space: This is the area around a home where vegetation is modified to reduce wildfire risks, allowing firefighters to defend the structure effectively. Homeowners can refer to resources on creating defensible space for more detailed guidance.

3. Home-Hardening Techniques:

- Maintain a non-combustible zone of at least 5 feet around the home by removing flammable vegetation and debris.
- Use fire-resistant materials for roofs, chimneys, vents, eaves, and windows to prevent ember entry.
- Utilize fire-resistant siding and decking, ensuring proper maintenance and cleanliness to minimize flammable materials.
- Address garages and fences with non-flammable materials and tighten seals to prevent ember entry.
- Ensure driveways are accessible for emergency vehicles and that address labels are clearly visible for quick identification by responders.

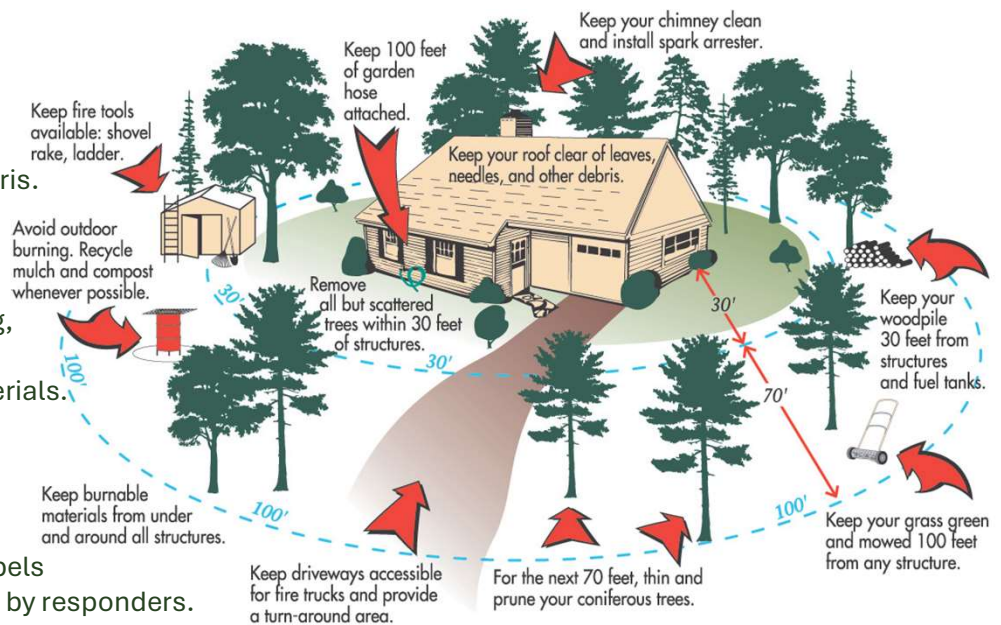


Image courtesy of firesafemendocino.org

While these measures cannot guarantee a fireproof home, they significantly enhance fire resistance and contribute to community safety. Taking steps to harden homes is both a personal and communal responsibility to protect lives and properties. WCNRD can provide free technical information on home hardening and has a cost-share program to assist landowners with creating defensible space. Call our office for more information: 307-746-3264x4.



Weston County
Natural Resource District

Weston County Natural Resource District

1225 Washington Blvd. Suite 3

Newcastle, WY 82701

(307) 746-3264, ext. 4

westoncountynrd@gmail.com

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

September 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

In this issue...

WCNRD Special District Election Sample Ballot

New Faces at the NRCS, FSA, and District Office

Well Water Testing Date

Rain Barrel Results

Children's Library Receives WCNRD Outdoor Education Grant

Wildfire Resources

Home Hardening Tips