



HIGH COUNTRY CONSERVATION



Please give a warm winter welcome to our newly elected Supervisors!

Mary Fick-Montieth Urban Supervisor

Mary, a newly elected Urban Supervisor, first moved to Laramie to attend UW in 1971. She stayed, loving Laramie, Centennial Valley and the recreational activities of the Snowy Range. Her grandfather had been a County Agent, so she grew up planting trees, fishing and hunting. She retired from UW, a Project Coordinator with WIND and Wyoming AgAbility. She is interested in the prevention of soil erosion, maintaining water quality and protecting ranching, wildlife and its environment.

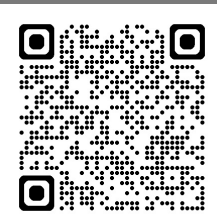


Jack Corson Rural Supervisor

Jack taught agriculture education at Laramie Junior High and Laramie High School for 19 years. The family ranch 95 North of Laramie in Albany County. The fourth and fifth generations are currently living on and operating the ranch today. Jack has been working with LRCD for over 20 years on a variety of conservation stewardship projects. The District has opened doors and opportunities to be a better land-steward and conservationist for Albany County's precious resources. Jack is looking forward to sharing those unique opportunities with other landowners within the county.

Long Range Natural Resource Management Plan

LRCD adopted their new
5-year Natural Resource Management Plan
on 12/18/2024.



A copy of the 2025-2029 Plan is on our website!



Convention Updates

As the Conservation District moves into our winter routine, staff are busy wrapping up completed projects and planning the next season project. Along with that we have been attending meetings and conventions. I have been able to attend two state conventions in November. The first was the Wyoming State Section of the Society of Rangeland Management (SRM). This is a professional organization whose focus is the science and art of managing our vast rangelands. I have had the privilege of being involved with SRM at the state and national level for a period of 19 years.

This year's State SRM meeting was held in Casper on November 5th & 6th. The first day we had a panel of eight organizations that discussed the values of forming strong partnerships with NGOs, Federal, State, and local agencies. Among the examples, the one that stood out was a large ranch in Natrona County that had partnered with BLM, USFS, Natrona County Conservation District, Natrona County Weed & Pest, State Forestry and Natural Resources Conservation Service to address encroaching conifers on their ranch. To date this project has been successful.

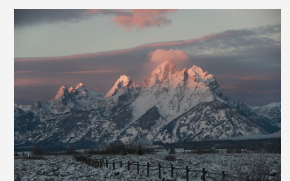
This led into the next day's topic "Conifer Encroachment across the Western Rangelands." Wyoming is witnessing a migration of conifers into our predominant rangelands. The result of this encroachment is loss of herbaceous production as the conifer out competes the forbs and grasses for valuable water resources. Additionally, as conifers move into the rangeland the fire intervals become shorter due to thicker tree stands.

Stay Connected

Lastly, the NRCS State Conservationist updated that there is no movement on the Farm Bill, and she had no timeline as to when Congress would approve the new Farm Bill. In addition, NRCS is still working on filling staff positions throughout the state.

Martin

*A snowcloud
hovering over Grand
Teton at sunrise.*



WACD Annual Convention Jackson Hole, WY

During the week of November 18th, Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) hosted our annual convention in Jackson. I attended a mini session on virtual fencing. Sublette County Conservation District (SCCD) has collaborated with producers over the last two grazing seasons. One producer grazed a large allotment of BLM land south of Big Piney and another producer had a forest allotment north of Pinedale.

Three key lessons were learned:

1. virtual fencing does not work well in steep terrain
2. training time for yearlings is longer than cows
3. there is a larger upfront cost on technology that is still being developed.

The takeaway here is "do your homework" and reach out to your local conservation district or NRCS office for assistance.

UNDERSTANDING BODY CONDITION SCORES IN CATTLE

WRITTEN BY HOLLY DYER

Did you know that a cow's body condition score, or its relative fatness, has the greatest impact on how quickly that cow will be able to be bred again after calving?

Most ranchers prefer their cows to be rebred within about 80 days after calving. This quick rebreeding strategy helps ranchers maintain and consolidate a specific calving window each year, which in turn, helps the rancher produce a fairly uniform-looking calf crop come time for selling them at the sale barn.

Understanding cattle body condition scores not only helps ranchers with rebreeding, but also plays an important role in evaluating the cow's overall nutritional needs. Here are some basic pointers to keep in mind as you try to gauge your cattle's BCS.

Overall, I was taught that it's best if you can determine the difference between a BCS 4, 5, and 6.

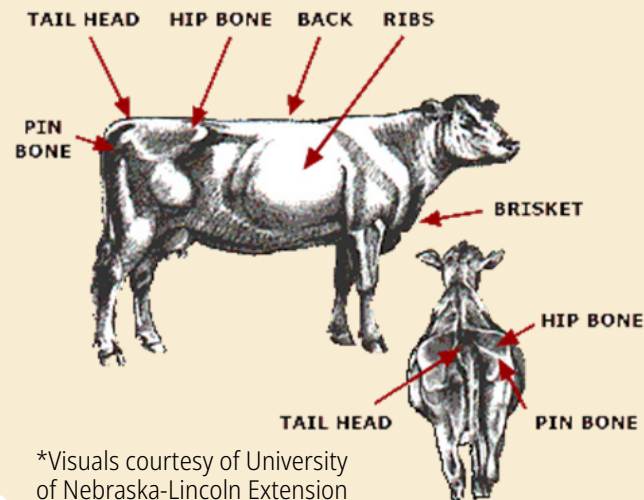
Good luck keeping those cows in tip-top shape as we continue through winter and prepare for Spring calving!

HOW TO SCORE

The Body Condition Score, or BCS, describes the relative fatness or body condition of a cow using a nine-point scale. A cow with the body condition score of one (BCS 1) is extremely thin whereas a score of 9 (BCS 9) is extremely fat and obese.

Overall, a BCS 5 cow is about average and represents a good target for most cow herds. However, if you're new to scoring, simply make note of which cows are thin, moderate, or fat and group them that way.

Nine Point Body Condition Scoring



RANCHER'S
CORNER

WHEN TO SCORE

Anytime you're running them through a squeeze chute – get your hands on them and determine where the most fat cover is. On the ribs? Hip bones? Spine? We're often visually deceived by those fluffy, hairy winter coats, or even mud, or the way the hair lays. So, its best to determine by touch rather than eyes.

SCORING CONTINUED...

Thin cows at calving (BCS 4 or thinner) do not produce as much colostrum and tend to give birth to weaker calves that may be more susceptible to diseases in their early stage compared to cows calving at a BCS 5 or higher.

1st- calf-heifers need to have a BCS of 6 at calving because they have not yet reached their full mature size and therefore need more nutrients to help themselves grow in addition to supporting their newborn calf and having a successful rebreeding season.

It is normal for a cow's BCS to fluctuate throughout the year given forage quality changes over time and the cow's physiological changes too. A cow needs the most nutrients during peak lactation -- at about 60 days after calving -- which is when the cow's BCS may be the lowest. Harsh winter conditions combined with nutrient-lacking feed will also cause body conditions to decrease.

A BCS of 4 would have sharp bony edges throughout the body, dimples along the spine are present, and a peaked spine. Lastly, a BCS of 6 typically has a very flat top on the spine and overall is fleshy everywhere with little to no ribs or sharp hip bones showing.



THIN



MODERATE



FLESHY

45
DAYS

Scoring your cattle 45-days after weaning gives you a good idea of how quickly the cow is "bouncing back" from the nutrient-drain that is supporting her calf. So long as their feed is meeting their nutritional needs, the cows deemed "thin" (or BCS 4 or less) at weaning should be gaining some weight back 45-days post weaning.

90
DAYS

90-days before calving is the last chance to begin supplementing thin cows in an attempt to improve their body condition. This would be a good time to separate thin cows that need higher quality feed and/or supplements from the cows already in good condition.

LRCO Online Tree Sale!

The annual tree & shrub sale for all Albany County residents will begin
WEDNESDAY 2/5/2025



Be sure to watch your emails and LRCO social media for further updates!

LOCAL WORK GROUPS - what are they?

Every year, the Laramie Rivers Conservation District partners up with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service district office to host a Local Working Group meeting open to the public.

These meetings are intended to bring together local landowners, ranchers, conservation partners, and other members of the community to discuss the natural resource needs for the county. Every NRCS office across the country conducts these meetings as an effort to continue locally-led conservation efforts.

The NRCS then considers all the feedback to update their short or long-term plans, funding priorities, and develop new implementation plans to address specific resource concerns.

LRCO participates in these meetings every year to help provide feedback they have gathered in their work with local landowners. However, both your local LRCO and NRCS teams would like to hear more from you!

THINK WE OUGHT TO FOCUS MORE ON FORESTRY MANAGEMENT?

WEED INFESTATIONS?

STREAMBANK RESTORATION OR IMPROVING WILDLIFE HABITAT?

IS THERE A CONSERVATION PROGRAM YOU WOULD

LIKE TO SEE MORE SUPPORT FOR?

IS THERE A PRACTICE THAT YOU

WOULD LIKE TO IMPLEMENT BUT ARE HELD BACK BECAUSE IT IS TOO EXPENSIVE?

If you have input for our offices, or if you are interested in participating simply to learn more about current programs or processes, please consider attending our free and open Local Work Group meeting. We are tentatively planning for the Local Work Group meeting to occur in *April 2025*. Be sure to keep an eye out for the exact date!



Welcome Matt!

Matthew Gaw is a Forester with the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf), in partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). In his role, Matthew collaborates with landowners to offer technical assistance on conservation practices aimed at improving forest health and wildlife habitats. Please reach out to Matthew or anyone at your local NRCS service center if you would like assistance with achieving your forest land management goals and objectives.

Matthew comes to us from Athens, Georgia, where he studied forestry at the University of Georgia. Prior to joining the NWTf, he worked as a research professional at the Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources, where he served as the data manager for TimberMart-South. In his spare time, Matthew likes to read, hike and spend time with his yellow lab retriever, Bonnie.



WANNA VOLUNTEER?

LRCDC HAS SEASONAL OPPORTUNITIES THAT SOMETIMES REQUIRE EXTRA HANDS!

Discover the Benefits of Volunteering with LRCDC



Support a positive, environmental impact.



Develop teamwork skills by working with others.



Enhance your community through positive change.



Connect with new people and foster a sense of unity.



Boost your resume with volunteer experience.



Enjoy the rewarding feeling of making a difference.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN OUR EFFORTS?

EMAIL: INFO@LRCDC.NET

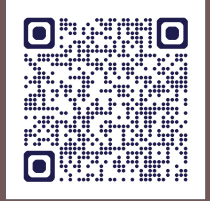
TO BE ADDED TO OUR VOLUNTEER LIST!

Farmers and Ranchers are constantly navigating a variety of occupational risks including respiratory diseases, zoonotic infections, skin cancer, musculoskeletal disorders, hearing loss, depression, anxiety, suicide, disabling injuries, and occupational fatalities.



AgriSafe HEALTH HUB

The AgriSafe Health Hub serves as your home base for trusted and reliable information on health and safety issues from AgriSafe and trusted partners. Need more assistance or unable to find information on your particular need? Contact AgriSafe!



Scan the QR code to volunteer!

Rooted in Laramie has just finished compiling data from summer tree checks, which included trees planted in 2022 and 2023. Paired with data collected last summer for plantings from 2019 - 2021, we are pleased to share that of the 390 trees we have planted, we have seen a 83% survivability rate. This is exceptionally high, and we credit this success to our desire to teach volunteers and homeowners the value of planting "the right tree in the right place the right way," our messaging about watering, and shared educational efforts with partners including the LRCDC, City of Laramie, UW Extension Agency, Wyoming State Forestry Division (WSFD), and Forest Service. We are an all volunteer organization trying to grow Laramie's community forest and are supported by grants from LRCDC, WSFD, Rotary of Laramie's Shawver Tree Fund and donations. If you'd like to learn more about Rooted in Laramie, please visit our website www.RootedInLaramie.org.

PAID INTERNSHIP



- Applicant must be 18 years of age and have fewer than 10 years of agricultural experience.
- Internships will be completed on host ranches/farms in the state of Wyoming.
- Stipend payment of \$5,000 for 10-weeks of hands on learning and required weekly written summaries.



Early consideration deadline

DECEMBER 6, 2024

Applications for spring and summer remain open until Feb. 7, 2025.

Contact the Growing coordinator with any questions! coordinator@growing-wy.org



COMMUNITY EVENTS



DUE BY:
FEBRUARY 7TH
2025

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT
GRANT APPLICATIONS




WWW.LRCD.NET



Soup and Solstice

Warm bowls and full hearts on a cold winter night!

Soup & Solstice: December 18, 2024 5 - 7 pm
Feeding Laramie Valley office building,
LaBonte Park 968 N. 9th St., Laramie




BI-ANNUAL MOOSE DAY

Winter • Summer • Laramie, Wyoming

Winter and Summer Moose Day are two events that happen each year in the Laramie area. The idea is to allow anyone in the Laramie area to adopt a pre-designed route, attend a training, and survey their route on a particular day at the same time as all the other volunteers. By the end of that day, we should have a better idea of whether moose can be found in that location that year.




Register for a Route

MERRY
Christmas

★ **HAPPY NEW YEAR** ★




CONTACT US

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