

OUR MISSION

We will provide an open forum in which all interested parties may work in a collaborative effort to sustain our rural quality of life and protect and enhance our natural resources. We are committed to research and educating our Valley residents and the public about our Watershed and the steps we can take to preserve and maintain the integrity of the river, the land and the beauty of our Valley. We will endeavor to bring together public, private and government resources, funding and grants to achieve our goals.

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Lindsey Clark,
SVWC Coordinator

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Stillwater Valley Watershed Council



Message from the Chairman, Mike Lorash

As the recent board member elections have passed, I am very honored to serve as the new chairman for the SVWC. Working with the great folks we have volunteering on the Board of Directors, within the various committees, as well as throughout the Council, will ensure another successful year. Our goal is to again assist with cost-share on weed control while educating our community of the benefits of controlling them.

The SVWC has been successful in securing numerous grants for weed control from the Rural Advisory Committee, Absarokee Community Foundation, and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. In addition the SVWC was a fundamental part, led by the Stillwater County Weed District, in receiving three Noxious Weed Trust Fund grants. With these funds, cost-share for weed control will be available on thousands of acres within the watershed's boundaries.

If you are a land owner, small or

large, and you are looking to control the weeds on your property we have programs that will fit both needs. Please contact Lindsey or any board member to discuss what options are available. The sooner we can get started on a program of control, the more effective our treatment will be.

The Small Landowner Spray Week is planned for the second week of June and focuses on properties that are 20 acres or less. If you are interested contact Lindsey. For larger acreages, the helicopter is scheduled again for this year and if you have an area that is a candidate for aerial treatment, we need to hear from you ASAP so we can get you on the list.

Thanks to Lee Schmelzer and Lindsey Clark for putting on the Pesticide & Rangeland Education Day held in early May. It was very informing and the wide array of presenters was great. The information taken away from the day could be utilized by everyone.

Thanks again to the Extension Office and Weed District!

We are branching out into other watershed issues as well and hope to bring in professional expertise for other avenues of importance. To start off the summer we will host a "5W's Workshop" on July 7th and cover such important topics as wildfire, wildlife, water, weeds and western rangeland. Thank you to all who have been involved in bringing this to formation.

As with all non-profits, we are continually working on fundraising. Our organization has been very successful in fundraising and grant writing; by doing this, the more dollars we receive the more we are able to apply on the ground. Thanks to all who have donated and supported the SVWC in the past. Through your efforts we are where we are today.

Mike

UPCOMING EVENTS

- June 6th – Board of Director and Committee Planning Meeting–
Anyone is Welcome!*
- June 11th – Tentative start date for Small Landowner Weed Control Week*
- June 25th – Secondary start date for Small Landowner Weed Control Week*
- July 7th – 5 W's Workshop (agenda & details inside)*
- August 25th – Annual SVWC BBQ & Auction Fundraiser*

How the SVWC got its start.....

Since 2006, the Derby Fire impact zone has gained attention by landowners, agency personnel and concerned sports-persons and thus became the catalyst for the development of the Stillwater Valley Watershed Council (SVWC). This council was established when volunteers and other concerned citizens realized that the impacts of the Derby Fire reached beyond the burn zone and included adjacent ranch and public lands.

The SVWC has expanded from the original goals of noxious weed control to looking at the entire watershed and taking a comprehensive approach to the cause and effect of land changes. This has resulted in increased participation by government, non-profit organizations and private land owners (both large



acreage and small lot owners) along the Stillwater River and its tributaries as well as the formation of numerous committees within the Watershed.

Thus far our focus has been:

- Noxious weed control.
- Improving the quality and supply of water.
- Mitigating fire by improving the health of our forest.

SVWC's Cost-Share Opportunities for Chemical Application—Sign Up Now!

The Watershed Council recently received a \$30,000 grant from the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation to use for the control of noxious weeds within the Watershed. Funding is still available for cost share on chemical and contractor services.

What do I need to do?

If you would like to participate and take advantage of this opportunity please fill out the form on the inside back page of this newsletter. Mail it to PO Box 112, Absarokee, MT 59019. The SVWC Board of Directors will approve your application prior to receipt of cost-share.

Where can I use the funds?

If you are within the Stillwater Valley Watershed's boundaries and have greater than 20 acres of land on or adjacent to elk habitat, you are eligible. The SVWC will reimburse landowners up to 50% of chemical or contractor services, not to exceed \$1000. This reimbursement will occur once an expense receipt and map of the application area are received. This cost-share opportunity is on a first come-first serve basis until the funding is exhausted.

Will a helicopter be in the area?

YES! If you have a large area of land infested with noxious weeds and it is difficult to reach by ground application, the Weed District will coordinate a helicopter contractor to be in the area around mid-June. The cost is \$15-\$17/acre, plus approximately \$15/acre for herbicide. Please call Lindsey to schedule soon.

What about biological control?

The Weed District is keeping track of landowners interested in ordering biological control agents for use on leafy spurge or spotted knapweed infestations. The cost is \$90/release (1200 flea beetles) for leafy spurge and \$50.00/release for knapweed bugs (approx. 105 bug/release). It is the goal of the Weed District to try to collect bugs this year as well in order to save money for the landowners. If you have, or know of, a location where bugs have been continually released in the past this may be a candidate for a collection site. Please contact Lindsey if you would like to volunteer to help collect insects or have a potential collection site in mind!



Contact the Weed District Office at 322.1106 to schedule an aerial herbicide contractor OR pre-order bug releases!

Weeds, Weeds, and More Weeds.....

It is that time of year again and those pesky weeds have gotten a good start to the season. With the early, dry spring we were experiencing combined with the recent moisture, those weeds seem to be ahead of schedule. We must all think about controlling those little buggers before they get out of control! Below is a list of local applicators that are commercially available and licensed to help you tackle your infestations, no matter how large or small! Also, for those bigger jobs are a few aerial applicators.

Commercial Ground Applicators

Bob's Noxious Weed Control—Bob Montgomery, Park City: 633.2070 or 366.0969
Range Rider Land Management—Mike Larson, Reed Point: 780.0197
Red Rooster Ranch Spraying—Daniel Yates, Luther: 425.1510
American Enterprises Inc—Ken Bechen, Absarokee: 328.4600
Ranch Wise—Todd & Tanya Daniels, Joliet: 855.5694
BC Ranch Repair—Ben Wynthein, Fishtail: 328.4547

Commercial Aerial Applicators

Joliet Flight Service—Wade Blaine, Joliet: 962.3218
Heliworks Flight Services—Will Hogan, Deer Lodge: 846.1388
AV8-Orr Helicopter Services LLC—Andy Orr, Sula: 360.0207

Small Landowner Weed Control Project

THIS IS THE TIME TO BECOME AN ACTIVE WEED MANAGER.... In 2007, public and private landowners on the upper Stillwater joined together and formed a Weed Management Area (WMA). The formation of this WMA gave public and private landowners the opportunity to utilize funding sources available to assist noxious weed control projects. This cost-share project took a "top-to-bottom" approach at weed control. Each year weed management efforts started at the Woodbine Trailhead and moved downriver as far as funding allowed, eventually ending at Nye. This project was the first organized weed management effort along this critical river system.

The summer of 2011 saw the SVWC continue that project further downriver to Beehive. Forty-two landowners participated, directly impacting well over 300 acres. By initiating landowners to cooperate simultaneously, a more effective control program was achieved. This summer the SVWC will continue this project further downriver, as far as funding allows.

The estimated cost of this project will be \$135.00 per hour (it is estimated that one hour of application will treat one acre of land). With grant monies that have been secured, matching funds, and in-kind contributions, the cost to you the landowner will be \$50.00 per hour along with your \$25.00 annual membership to the SVWC. Landowners will be accepted for this program on a first come, first served basis (based on earliest sign-up date). A prepayment of \$50.00 will be collected prior to the scheduled



application and deducted from your final bill. Any additional control measures over one hour of application time will be billed to the landowner by the SVWC at a rate of \$50.00 per hour. The maximum annual cost share per landowner is \$255.00 which is 3 hours application time at \$85.00 per hour.

The 2012 weed season will be especially challenging. The record high water levels of 2011 exceeded the capacity of river and stream banks. The flooding that resulted deposited weed seeds from offsite areas that usually don't affect the tributaries. We must all take responsibility for managing our property to keep the Stillwater Valley from being over-run with noxious weeds. The longer we postpone aggressive control measures, the more it will cost and the more noxious weeds will devalue our property creating greater environmental problems. We are offering you an opportunity to join with your neighbors in an effort to protect the natural ecosystem of the Stillwater River.

If you are interested in taking advantage of this opportunity, please fill out the form on the inside back page and return it to us. If you have questions, please contact Lindsey. You can also send any inquiries to SVWC2010@hotmail.com.

The tentative start date for the spray project is June 11th; however, as is often the case and the weather may not cooperate, a backup date of June 25th has also been set. We will keep all participants updated as that date gets closer.

5 W's Workshop—July 7th, 2012

A watershed has many components. Within the Stillwater Valley's Watershed five major environmental components exist that impact the residents (both human and non) and landscape the most. In order to better understand the importance of these components, the SVWC is hosting a "5 W's Workshop" on July 7th. This opportunity is free to all Council members. Experts from around the county and state will be on hand to discuss such topics as: **WILDFIRE, WEEDS, WATER, WESTERN RANGELAND & WILDLIFE**. This informational event will help you to better understand how to manage your property, small or large, and truly make the most out of the beautiful place you live.

*We hope to see you at the event!
Please RSVP to Lindsey by July 2nd.*

WHEN: Saturday, July 7th

WHERE: Nye Fire Hall

TIME: 9:00 am to 3:00 pm; LUNCH PROVIDED

AGENDA

9:00–9:15 am ◊ Welcome & Introductions

9:15 am–12:15 pm ◊ Workshop Rotations: Wildfire, Weeds & Water (45 minutes per station)

12:15–1:00 pm ◊ LUNCH

1:00–2:00 pm ◊ Western Rangeland

2:00–3:00 pm ◊ Wildlife

3:00 pm ◊ Tour of West Fork River's potential projects (for those interested)

Potential Devastating Effects of the West Fork of the Stillwater River

This letter is to advise landowners along the lower West Fork River of a couple situations with the potential for major negative effects on the West Fork's channel system.

Landowners in the Berkley Subdivision should be made aware of an active landslide on the south bank of the West Fork River. There is a high potential of landslide activity during high water which could then divert the West Fork north into the subdivision.

Residents along the lower section of the West Fork should be advised that the West Fork is eroding the south river bank at the mouth of Horseman Creek. The area of concern is 1.5 miles up Limestone Road. This has the potential of transferring the river's system into an old river channel that exits at the Nye Trading Post.

In the past, attempts have been made to notify adjacent landowners to rectify the potential situation. KeyO Inc, however, has been threatened by lawsuits

because of our efforts. Neither one of these potential disasters will greatly affect our ranch, although serious negative effects could be faced by our neighbors. We are agreeable to helping find a solution to help our neighbors.

I believe that through the Stillwater Valley Watershed Council, we have the structure to collaborate with the neighborhood to find an equitable solution for the aforementioned potentially devastating occurrences. For those interested, we can arrange a tour of the sites on the afternoon following the 5W's Workshop on July 7th. This will provide interested residents and landowners with more information and solution oriented ideas. We urge you to contact neighbors not involved in the SVWC and alert them of the issues.

Noel Keogh,

Nye Rancher & SVWC Member



Local Business Spotlight—White Deer Ranch

Owners: Lee and Roxanne Dunn

White Deer Ranch was purchased in 1989, and was named after an albino doe living on the place at that time. The Bar WD brand was established. Three years ago, Lee and Roxanne converted two houses on their ranch into vacation rentals. In addition to the vacation rentals, they are exploring all aspects of organic certification, permaculture and self-sustained farming and ranching techniques. White Deer Ranch became organically certified for hay and pasture in 2011.



The Dunn's are also cultivating the ecotourism and farm-stay experiences that their 450 acre ranch has to offer. There is a 10 acre aspen forest, an 11 acre trout lake, an apple tree orchard, a historic barn, and original homestead house on the place. Guests can learn about the ranching operations, take away historical information about the homesteaders that came to this land and what it is like to live as a Montanan.

White Deer Ranch has three live year-
dition to the lake, all of which are spring
irrigation capabilities through a gravity
tem. The Dunn's are using natural and
methods like no-till seed drilling, cover
sity, biological controls for pests and
ing the bio diversity of birds, bees and
control systems by improving habitat. All
fantastic growing environment for wild

For more information, please
visit:
www.whitedeerranch.com
You can contact us by calling
406.2904131 or emailing:
[dunn@whitedeerranch.com!](mailto:dunn@whitedeerranch.com)

round creeks in ad-
fed. There is also
fed irrigation sys-
organic farming
crops, crop diver-
weeds, and increas-
wildlife for natural
of this makes for a

and cultivated plants.

Lee and Roxanne have started a small herd of natural, 100% grass fed beef. The cattle are raised organically, and are working toward becoming organically certified in the future. Raised garden beds are used for annual vegetables. This summer they have added a few food beds using the Hugelkultur method. If you haven't heard about it, this design of soil on wood makes a raised garden bed that can support garden plants without the need for watering. By fall they will have converted one of their existing buildings into a greenhouse to provide year-round growing capabilities. The Dunn's hope to eventually provide locally grown, fresh and delicious, chemical free foods to farmer's markets, restaurants or local grocers.

Stillwater County is a wonderful place to live, work and raise a family. We hope this program will help enhance the quality of your life. Respect your neighbors' livelihood and property, and be aware that your actions impact your neighbors, human and otherwise.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE....HAVE YOU PAID YOUR 2012 DUES?

The Stillwater Valley Watershed Council relies on people like you to match project funds and provide essential operating support. In order for you to benefit from SVWC's programs you are encouraged to become a member. Annual dues are \$25.00.

Please consider donating to our non-profit, tax deductible organization.
Send membership or support to SVWC, PO Box 112, Absarokee, MT 59001.

WE ARE TRULY THANKFUL TO THOSE WHO HAVE GIVEN OR ARE CONSIDERING A GIFT!



The SVWC grants are making a huge impact in the control of noxious weeds on our property. The funding has made it possible to strategically plan how to reduce the weeds by over 70% the first year, making it possible to use less spray, more effectively to keep weeds under control after the initial investment. Without the grants and cost-share from the SVWC we would only be able to maintain, not get ahead of the problem.

I encourage you to join today and take advantage of the many opportunities offered by the SVWC, financial and otherwise!

Diana Scollard, SVWC Member

THANK YOU for your generous donations and 2012 membership contributions!

2012 Memberships to Date

* 4K Ranch * Dan & Emily Aadland * Fishtail Basin Ranch * Terry & Charlene Adams * Anderson Family Trust * Charles Barker & Pam Young * Jim Bates * Beartooth Mountain Christian Ranch * John & Laurie Beers * John & Judy Bostedt * Michael & Kimberly Boyle * Joe Brand * Broken Horn Ranch * Nancy Brown * Don Butcher * Richard & Jeanne Campbell * Mike Campbell * Michael & Jeannie Cantrell * Bud & Becky Chenault * Chris Clark * Kathleen Cochrane * Ray & Lori Cotter * Bill & Sandra Coverley * Jerry & Sandy Crawford * Pat & Linda Cunningham * Kathy Currie, Nye School * CB Marvin LLC * Brian & Connie DeCelle * Pieter & Charles DeGroat * Julie Dickinson * Torian Donohoe * Paul & Cathy Donohoe * Kyle & Anna Donohoe * Kevin Eberle * Scott & Barbara Edmundson * Jim & Sherry Edwards * Dennis Ekle * Ekwortzel Family * Ron & Peggy Ferster * Jean Forseth * Maretta French * Greg & Jan Frokjer * Kyra Gaskill * Lyle & Janet Graff * Charlie & Cindy Green * Beverly Hall * Mark & Patricia Hamilton * Bill & Betty Hart * JO & Erica Hash * Conrad Miller & Judy Haynes * Ken & Dorothy Hegg * Ron & Heidi Heller * Gerald & Jeanette Heuer * Alex & Andrea Heyneman * Bryann Hill * Clark Holton * Shirley Howard * Bruce & Patricia Johnson * Ken & Peg Joki * David & Sandra Joys * Kampfe Cattle Co LLC * Patrick & Charlotte Karnos * Vern & Averil Keller * Greg & Terline Keller * Judith Raines & David Kem * Noel & Penny Keogh * Joe & Johanna Kern * Paul * Maureen Klaboe * Lawrence & Karen Klee * Harold & Patricia Korell * Nels & Gail Larson * Tim Lechner * Ray Lien * Mike & Bobbi Lorash * Keith & Kathryn Martin * William & Patricia McAllister * Paul & Donna McClure * Bob McKinsey * Catherine Michunovich Trust * Doug & Sherry Moffet * William & Barbara Morse * Jack & Ann Mowell * Bill & Janice Mytton * Ruben & Pam Oliver * Charley & Jane Parker * Patricia Payer * Sandra Peck * Gerald & Coleen Perdue * Robert & Sylvia Peterson * Marvin & Dorothy Ratcliff * Bob Redman * Doug & Anna Robinette * Jim & Lin Roscoe * Michael Roscoe * Rossetter LLP * David & Nancy Rummel * David & Kelly Russell * Dave Sample * Phil Sandoval * Charles & Lana Sangmeister * Leonard & Marlene Saunders * Tim & Deb Schaff * Roger & Cecilia Schwarz * Beverly Schaffer * Jack & Paula Shemer * Shirley Sherman * Olaf & Helen Sherwood * Mauryce & Orsi Sowards * Robert Stafford * Jerry Sternad * Eileen Stevens-Schlaht * Marv & Lisa Sticka * Jay & Ginny Sulser * Gordon Walter * Lori Wenckus * Thomas & Maxine Williams * Clyde & Sonja Windecker * Debi Winge * Bruce & Theo Yanzick

Donations

David & Sandra Joys and Family
Lechner Family Foundation
Michael & Jeannie Cantrell
Charlie & Cindy Green
Fishtail Basin Ranch
Jack & Ann Mowell
JO & Erica Hash
Julie Dickinson
Maretta French
Nancy Brown
Clark Holton

Memorial Donations

† *IN MEMORY OF LYNNE JENSEN,
DALE & GLEN MCKINSEY, OLEAFA*

KIRCH †

Torian Donohoe

† *IN MEMORY OF WALLY & DORIS
ANDERSON* †

Beverly Shaffer

Join today and receive a complimentary window decal!



Stillwater Valley Watershed Council
Landowner Cost-Share Commitment & Membership Form

Landowner Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Local Telephone: _____

E-mail address: _____

Stillwater County Property Location: (section/township/range, subdivision)

Approximate # of acres in the project: _____

Please check all that apply, sign and return.

I am interested in participating SVWC's project.

The project I am interested in receiving assistance for is [i.e. Small Landowner Spray Project (<20 acres), cost-share for weed control (>20 acres), bug releases, stream bank restoration, corral relocation, wildfire protection, etc]:

I do not wish to participate in the SVWC project but in doing so, recognize that I am required to comply with the existing Montana Noxious Weed Law.

Yes, I want to join the Stillwater Valley Watershed Council. Enclosed is my \$25.00 annual membership fee.

I am already a member of the Stillwater Valley Watershed Council.

Please indicate your contact information and property location even if you do not wish to participate in the program. This will let us know if we have made contact with all landowners.

Signature Date

Please return to:

Stillwater Valley Watershed Council
PO Box 112
Absarokee MT 59001
406-780-1249



STILLWATER VALLEY
WATERSHED COUNCIL

SVWC
PO Box 112
Absarokee, MT 59001

Phone: 406.780.1249
E-mail: SVWC2010@hotmail.com

We are a volunteer group of local residents and interested representatives who are working together to enhance the quality of our rural Montana lifestyle by protecting, restoring and conserving our abundant natural resources, through good stewardship and community involvement for this and future generations.



Stillwater Valley Watershed Council

Stillwater Valley Watershed Council

ABSAROKEE



FISHTAIL



DEAN



NYE

