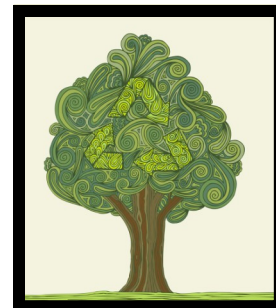


NDASCD

N.D. Association of Soil Conservation Districts

CONSERVATION NEWS

To advance the interests of North Dakota Soil Conservation Districts



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By James Teigen



Thanks to all who attended the NDASCD Convention in Bismarck in November. The attendance and participation were great, especially when the ongoing harvest was considered. And thank you to those who submitted suggestions and comments on how to improve next year's meeting. A summary of the convention appears elsewhere in this newsletter, but I will discuss a few topics here.

Two resolutions were considered and passed at the business session. The first was a request to allow lands being removed from the Conservation Reserve Program to be seeded to a cover crop as a way to promote no-till practices and improve the prospects of realizing a favor-

able crop during the first growing season after CRP. This resolution had already been submitted to the FSA Acting State Committee, who decided not to forward the request to the National level because they felt farmers had already been successful with planting spring-seeded crops directly into chemically destroyed CRP cover using no-till techniques. In addition, the Acting State Committee asked for detailed information, research, or examples where this has worked and why it has to be completed before October 1, the allowable date for destroying cover on expired CRP contracts. The NDASCD board has decided to take this resolution to the NACD convention in February and has asked the two SCDs that sponsored the resolution to provide further information.

(Continued on page 2)

EXECUTIVE LINE—Tom Hanson

The 2009 Annual Meeting appears to have met with much favor by the conference attendees. The numbers were down slightly, but the evaluations and comments received indicate a high degree of satisfaction with the meeting. Of

course, we received many comments via the evaluation sheets regarding areas which could be improved and we will be taking all of those into consideration as we begin planning for the 2010 Annual Meeting.

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(President's Report continued from page 1)

When more background information is available, the resolution may also be resubmitted to the FSA State Committee.

The second resolution called for the development of a large-scale living snow fence initiative which would provide financial assistance to landowners in establishing, maintaining, and devoting land to living snow fences. Besides improving travel safety in wintry weather, these properly placed tree rows would reduce snow removal budgets for government entities, sequester carbon from the atmosphere, provide wildlife habitat, give micro-climate modification for crop growth, and provide other benefits to society. This resolution will also be forwarded to NACD for possible inclusion as a climate control measure, and will be developed on the state level. Our SCDs are ready and willing to plan and plant trees for all kinds of uses.

A good discussion regarding growing our ND Natural Resources Conservation Trust was also held at the annual meeting. The State Board continued that discussion at the December meeting, and will try to complete plans during the January meeting to raffle a new pickup in 2010. Checks to districts qualifying for this year's Trust grants have been distributed.

I mentioned the late harvest earlier. It appears that delayed harvest has distracted producers from other decisions they normally would have made, especially regarding plans to renovate existing shelterbelts or plant new trees. Tree sales in some areas are down, while a few districts are reporting good sales progress. Perhaps the milder (so far) winter will allow producers and districts to consider and plan new tree plantings. The favorable weather in November helped Greg Morgenson and the rest of the Nursery staff to lift a lot of seedlings and they anticipate completing grading before Christmas. Availability of tree seedlings for the spring should be very good.

In closing, I want to remind supervisors to continue the on-line supervisor training, and send everyone best wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

(Executive line continued from page 1)

Thanks to all who took the time to fill out the evaluations and drop them off as they are very important to the NDASCD Board of Directors when they look to meet your needs in future annual meetings.

Please read Jim Teigen's column for a good run-down of the annual Meeting happenings. Thanks to those supervisors who participated in the Business Meeting which passed two resolutions, one on CRP conversion and one on living snow fence. These resolutions have been examined by the NDASCD Board at their December meeting and rewritten for NACD submittal. We will also be sharing the CRP resolution with the FSA State Committee with supporting documentation to more fully explain the need for the action called for.

Another action the Board of Directors passed was changing the method of distributing this newsletter. With the large cost to print and mail the newsletter, we will now be e-mailing the newsletter to SCDs who can then forward it to supervisors. If supervisors would like the newsletter e-mailed to them directly from our office, they can give us their e-mail address or authorize the SCD clerk to give us those addresses. This method will get the newsletter to supervisors and SCDs quicker and much less costly.

I visited with a gentleman today who mentioned he had been traveling to and from Fargo before and after the Christmas blizzard. He traveled Interstate 94 and it was apparent that living snow fences could easily and efficiently prevent the snow piles which had occurred in areas of the westbound lanes. I'm sure that we can see this on state, county, and township roads now also and are reminded of last winter and how much expense and time snow removal required. Now is the time to sell trees for living snow fences to landowners and operators along these susceptible areas. In the past, continuous CRP has been a good program for living snow fences as has EQIP. Please communicate this message in your winter newsletters and verbal communications.

From the NDASCD and Lincoln-Oakes Nurseries staffs, our very best to you in 2010.

NDDA helps bring latest technology to fight noxious weeds at the county level

By Jim Hansen, NDDA GIS Coordinator

Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring says new mapping technology better equips county and city weed boards to target and control noxious weeds.

“Knowing the location of infestations will help us better decide where the worst problem areas are and what action is needed,” he says. “Accurate mapping also helps us demonstrate to lawmakers that more resources are needed to control noxious weeds.”

As of Nov.10, the North Dakota Department of Agriculture (NDDA) has received approximately two million weed data points since 2007 from county dataloggers. Used with global positioning system (GPS) devices, dataloggers store weed data collected in the field. The hardware can be handheld or mounted on a vehicle, such as a spray truck or ATV. Counties can upload the data to NDDA and to a laptop with just a few clicks of a mouse. The datalogger unit has five programmable buttons representing different species of noxious weeds. The buttons also calculate canopy coverage according to how many times the button is pressed. One press of the button signifies 0-21 percent; two for 22-50 percent and three for 51-100 percent coverage. Counties use “canopy cover” data to determine if weeds in the area have been effectively controlled.

NDDA has also developed an online mapping system for public use. Weedmapper contains datalogger data, which can be displayed in multiple years or one year at a time. Many layers can be added for greater detail and search criteria. The website provides counties with records of collected data for multiple years on weed location and the success of previous weed control efforts. The maps can be printed for reference and distribution.

The Alltopo software used by the counties has many useful features, such as:

- Topographical maps for latitude and longitude location;
- Data logger waypoints overlaid on topographical maps;

- An import/export feature for shapefiles that can be used in other GIS software ;

- Export of data to Google Earth;

- A spray area acreage calculator, which multiplies the boom width by the distance traveled, thus calculating the amount of chemicals applied.

Dataloggers, GPS units, laptops and software were purchased through grants from NDDA. North Dakota now has 51 counties and one city using these new weed data acquisition tools. NDDA has received positive feedback from counties which have found the equipment to be very advantageous and cost-effective by accurately directing the weed control officers to rural control sites and the documentation of digital collected data.

Check out this information at www.agdepartment.com

ARS LAB DIRECTOR RETIRES

Dr. Jon Hanson, Northern Great Plains Research Laboratory Director, has retired as of December 31, 2009. Dr. Hanson assumed the Lab Director/Research Leader role at the Mandan ARS Lab in 1998 after a distinguished career as a USDA-ARS Rangeland Scientist at Fort Collins, Colorado and Cheyenne, Wyoming. He received B.S. and M.S. degrees in Botany from NDSU and his Ph.D. in Range Science from Texas A&M University.

When Dr. Hanson assumed the Laboratory Director position in 1998, the NGPRL was under attack for closure. Jon addressed the concerns for the lab and has turned it into a facility unique to ARS where the clientele have become an integral piece of planning and research direction. As such the area served by the NGPRL has a strong support base of farmers, ranchers, and others who use the research done there in their businesses.

Dr. Hanson was recognized for his many accomplishments by his peers, colleagues, and partners at a retirement open house on December 18 and again at a Retirement Dinner on December 19.



WE'RE ON THE WEB

NDASCD.ORG

North Dakota Association of Soil
Conservation Districts
3310 University Drive
Bismarck, North Dakota 58504

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY 2010

- | | |
|----------|--|
| 5 | Diversity, Direction, Dollars Agriculture Forum
Dickinson, ND |
| 12-13 | Manitoba/ND Zero Till Workshop
Minot, ND |
| 19 | Board of Directors Meeting
Lincoln-Oakes Nursery, Bismarck, ND |
| 20 | Burleigh County Soil Health Workshop
"Back to the Future" - Ramkota Hotel
Bismarck, ND |
| 30-Feb.3 | NACD Annual Meeting
Orlando, Florida |

