



# Wyoming Chapter—SWCS News Winter 2014-2015

## President-Elect's Message

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### Our Mission

*Foster the science and art of natural resource conservation. Targeting conservation of soil, water, and related natural resources on working land—the land used to produce food, fiber, and other services that improve the quality of life people experience in rural and urban communities. Working to discover, develop, implement, and constantly improve ways to use land that sustains its productive capacity and enhances the environment at the same time.*

Hello Everyone!

Well, the weather is just perplexing us all. It's been unseasonably warm, by 9 to 12 degrees F above normal lately, and precipitation free in much of the state. We got a little snow last week here in Laramie, and it quickly melted. Then within a couple days, the puddles even had dried up, the result of temps in the upper 40s and lower 50s and plentiful wind.

I've made my predictions for the coming months, while introducing my SOIL 2010 class to the US Drought Monitor Friday morning, qualifying those with, "We should never be too surprised, living in a semi-arid climate." That sentiment was echoed at breakfast this morning by a friend with the Medicine Bow Conservation District.

Shifting weather patterns keep all of us working in the area of soil and water conservation on our toes!

That said, I am including here a couple photos contributed by **Gary Stone**, who is a member of both the Nebraska and Wyoming Chapters of SWCS, of winter in his part of the country this year. Enjoy! While some of us are doing dances and praying for more snow pack, others have been inundated.

And we are inundated with many activities as a chapter at this time of year. First, this is an election year.

Soon you will be receiving candidate biographies and a ballot to vote for your chapter officers. The deadline to return your ballot is May 1.

Because of some time issues, this year SWCS moved the date of awards nominations. They now are due March 16. See more information on both of these on Page 2. Also in this newsletter you will find information on our Chapter Awards nominations and scholarship.

Those of us on the Leadership Committee recently held a conference in which the topic of awards was raised. There has been a decrease in the number of people and chapters, especially the latter, nominated for awards in recent years. We on the committee encourage all members of SWCS to your chapter for an award this year. The process is quite simple. Here is a link to the home page, where you can get started:

<http://www.swcs.org/>

Finally, in a recent Board teleconference, we discussed this year's workshop, which will be hosted by Area 2, in the southeast part of the state. If you have particular needs for training, or issues you see coming down the pike, please let me or your Area Director know, and we will take these into consideration.

Enjoy the rest of your winter, and as always, I thank you for your commitment to natural resources conserva-



tion in our great state.

Respectfully,

*Lisa Cox*



*Photos courtesy Gary Stone*

## Calendar of Events

- **March 16, 2015** : Deadline for **SWCS awards nominations**. Please contact your Area Director (see page 5) if you have questions about or need assistance with submitting a nomination.
- **March 15, 2015**: Annual Chapter Report due to SWCS, Ankenny, IA.
- **March 16, 2015**: Deadline for biographies for those interested in holding a chapter officer position are due
- **March 31, 2015**: Deadline for **WY Chapter Scholarship Applications**
- **April 15, 2014**: **Wyoming Chapter Awards nominations** due. (See page 3.)
- **May 1, 2015**: **Chapter officer ballots due**.
- **June, 2015**: **WyRED**. Dates and location TBA.
- **July 26 to 29, 2015**: SWCS 70th International Conference, **Greensboro, NC**. Theme: *Coming Home to Conservation: Putting Science into Practice*

## Your SWCS Board News

Elections for Wyoming Chapter officers will be held soon! Officers serve for a 2-year term, with the following open this spring:

President, President-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, and Area 1 Director (Cook, Weston, Campbell, Sheridan, Johnson, Natrona Counties), Area 2 Director (Converse, Niobrara, Platte, Goshen, Albany, Laramie Counties), Area 3 Director (Teton, Park, Bighorn, Fremont, Hot Springs, Washakie Counties), and Area 4 Director (Uinta, Lincoln, Sublette, Sweetwater, Carbon Counties.) You must be a resident of a county in the area you wish to serve, in order to run for Area Director.

Interested candidates should submit a brief biography to Elections Committee Chair **Theresa Bowen** at [Theresa.bowen@wy.usda.gov](mailto:Theresa.bowen@wy.usda.gov), no later than **March 16** to be considered. Ballots will be distributed to Wy-

oming Chapter members on April 1, and will be due returned to Theresa Bowen no later than May 1 to be counted. Election results will be announced at the Wyoming Chapter Annual Summer Meeting.

In a January 12 Board teleconference, it was decided to raise the annual scholarship from \$500 to \$750. The Board also discussed this year's workshop, which will be hosted in Area 2.

Gary Stone of NE and WY Chapter offered to send interested members a DVD, *River of Time: Wyoming's Evolving North Platte River*. For a copy, please contact Lisa Cox at [bebetterwriter@gmail.com](mailto:bebetterwriter@gmail.com). This resource is very well compiled and interesting!

A Board teleconference is scheduled for Monday, February 16, at 3pm. Members with interest are invited to participate as guests. Contact Melanie Purcell at [mpurcell@sublettecd.com](mailto:mpurcell@sublettecd.com) for call details.

## Education Update: Scholarship Available

The Wyoming Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS) wishes to announce that it will grant a \$750 scholarship during the spring semester of the 2015 school year. The recipient of this scholarship will be a deserving student preparing for a career in natural resource conservation or a related field at an accredited college, university, or vocational school in Wyoming.

To be eligible, a student must meet the following criteria:

- 1) Successful completion of at least one year of study in an accredited college, university, or vocational school in Wyoming;
- 2) A cumulative GPA of at least 3.0;
- 3) Enrolled in an agricultural or natural resource conservation related curriculum; and
- 4) Show reasonable need for financial assistance.
- 5) Previous scholarship winners are ineligible.

For a scholarship application, contact Scholarship Chair Dicksie Michael at [Dicksie.Michael@wy.usda.gov](mailto:Dicksie.Michael@wy.usda.gov).

Application deadline is **March 31, 2015**.

# SWCS Awards and Nomination Process

SWCS awards season is now here. Award nomination forms and Scholarship applications are now all available electronically. Log on to <http://www.swcs.org/awards> or <http://www.swcs.org/scholarships> for further details.

Chapter members are encouraged to nominate members, nonmembers and students for the various awards.

## Wyoming Chapter Awards nominations are due by April 15.

Below are the award categories. If you have questions or need assistance submitting a nomination, please contact your Area Director (see page 5.)

### Wyoming Chapter Awards Definitions

#### OUTSTANDING WYOMING CHAPTER MEMBER

Open to all Wyoming Chapter members for significant contributions to the objectives of SWCS at the Chapter level. The contributions could include leadership, long-term dedication, special workshops or conferences, officer duties, committee responsibilities or special contributions in conservation or education.

While many of our members are directly employed in the natural resource conservation field, accomplishments should be related to the Chapter with support and involvement with the Wyoming Chapter. In other words, although it may be part of one's job responsibilities, the nomination will be considered if the

project or work involved the Wyoming Chapter.

The nominee must be current in their membership, and member of the Wyoming Chapter. Nomination by Wyoming Chapter members.

#### OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO CONSERVATION - WYOMING

Open to non-members with employment or activities in agriculture and natural resource conservation fields. Activities may be related to improvement or management of wetlands and riparian areas, erosion control, rangelands and grazing systems, cropping systems, water quality (surface or groundwater), wildlife and fish habitat or a combination of the above. Nomination by Wyoming Chapter members.

#### OUTSTANDING CONSERVATION EDUCATOR - WYOMING

Open to non-members for contributions to natural resource and conservation education. May be through the Wyoming School system, special workshops or conferences, agricultural organizations or other educational programs. Nomination by Wyoming Chapter members.

#### OUTSTANDING CONSERVATION NEWS REPORTER - WYOMING

Open to non-members in recognition of outstanding efforts in communicating natural resource conservation issues. May be the written word of newspapers and magazines or through the media of television or radio. Nomination by Wyoming Chapter members.

#### OUTSTANDING 4-H AWARD IN SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION

Presented annually at the Wyoming State Fair. The Wyoming Chapter provides the plaque. Judging by State Fair 4-H officials.

#### RECOGNITION OF MANAGED NATURAL AREA

To recognize areas in which native vegetation is prominent. Eligible areas are those used for forestry, grazing, wildlife, recreation, nature center, watershed protection, scientific study or similar purposes. Recognition certificate and natural area directory listing. Nomination by Chapter.

#### CHAPTER HORIZON AWARD

Must be a member of the Wyoming Chapter.

Must have been a member of SWCS for 10 years or less.

Candidate must have progressed satisfactorily within their profession.

Candidate must have been involved as an SWCS officer or on a committee.

(Current Officers and Committee Chairs are eligible).

One Award may be made annually at the Annual Meeting if there is a quality nomination or candidate. The award winner will be decided on by the previous years winner in consultation with the Awards Committee until we have three winners. At that point it will be decided on by a committee of (Continued on page 7) (continued from

**Wyoming Chapter Leaders**

**Committee Chairs:**

*Annual Meeting Program –*  
Vacant

*Awards –*  
Vacant

*Education and Outreach –*  
Mike Kasten  
920-843-2323  
mkasten@bksenvironmental.com

*Fundraising –*  
Vacant

*History and Archives –*  
Vacant

*Membership –*  
Vacant

*Public Relations and Media–*  
Lisa Cox  
385-228-4135  
bebetterwriter@gmail.com

*Nominations and Elections –*  
Theresa Bowen  
307-233-6756  
Theresa.bowen@wy.usda.gov

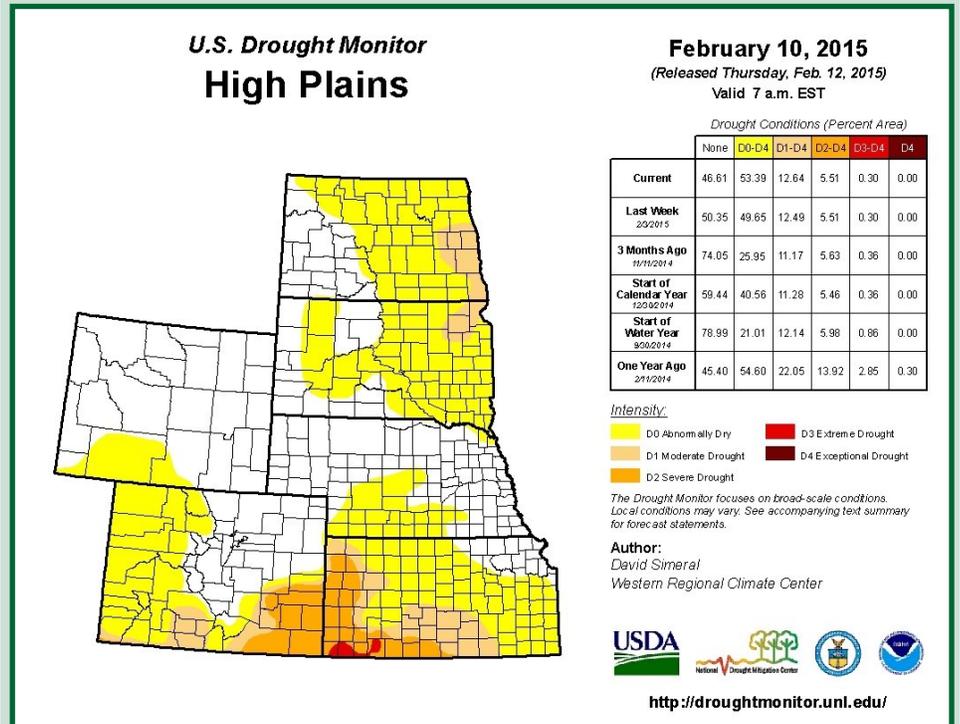
*Scholarship –*  
Dicksie Michael  
307-754-9301 ext 101  
dicksie.michael@wy.usda.gov

**Resource Roundup**

There are several current resources available for those engaged in the conservation of soil and water, whether from an agricultural, natural resources, or other perspective. In this and future issues of the Wyoming Chapter newsletter, you will find items of interest here in the Resource Roundup column.

United States Drought Monitor is a tool provided by The National Drought Mitigation Office in Lincoln, NE. The site is updated regularly, and features a map of the US with short- and long-term water drought pictured, and summaries of conditions by region, supported by regional maps, as shown below for the High Plains.

<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>



Conservation and rural-life policies are really two sides of the same policy; and down at the bottom this policy rests upon the fundamental law that neither man nor nation can prosper unless, in dealing with the present, thought is steadily given for the future.

— Theodore Roosevelt

Another recent arrival on the resource scene is the documentary film *Symphony of the Soil*, directed by The Future of Food's Deborah Koons Garcia. Specific chapters cover birth and life cycle of the soil; formation, function and lives of the soil; and soil and agriculture and history. For more information, visit [www.symphonyofthesoil.com](http://www.symphonyofthesoil.com). The film can be purchased for home viewing for about \$20 and shipping.

**Annual Meeting Recap:**

SWCS Wyoming Chapter Annual Meeting was held in conjunction with the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts Annual Convention in November, 2014, in Sheridan, WY, at the Holiday Inn.

WY Chapter did not host a technical session this year, and attendance was not as good as last year. However, WACD is interested in working with your WY Chapter of SWCS again this year. Please let your Area Director know of any particular training needs you have, and we will pass this on to WACD. Also, if there are factors that prevent you from attending Annual Meeting, your Board would love to hear them so we can work on bringing you a fun and informative opportunity to get together as a chapter this November.

In 2014, Wyoming Chapter held a business meeting on-site that included a Go to Meeting video conference option. We learned that technology is

not always cooperative, and after nearly an hour trying to establish connections with Board members in Laramie and Pinedale (neither of whom, ironically, had trouble connecting), the meeting was postponed for a teleconference later in the year.

As well as solidifying meeting and workshop times throughout the year for the future, WY Chapter renewed its commitment to holding a technical workshop annually, revolving through the four areas of the state. This will allow for outreach to other practitioners and organizations, as well as the possibility for raising funds through registration fees. This year's technical workshop will be held in Area 2. If you have topics for consideration, please share them so we can provide you with an excellent opportunity for learning and socializing in the Cheyenne, WY, area.

The WACD silent and live auctions combined netted \$115 for the Wyoming Chapter.

**Wyoming Chapter Leaders**

**Officers:**

Vacant, President

Lisa Cox, President-Elect  
385-228-4135  
bebetterwriter@gmail.com

Cory Cole, Past President  
Cory.cole@ak.usda.gov

Roni Schadegg, Treasurer  
307-233-6747  
schadegg2@bresnan.net

Melanie Purcell, Secretary  
307-367-2257 ext. 108  
mpurcell@sublettecd.com

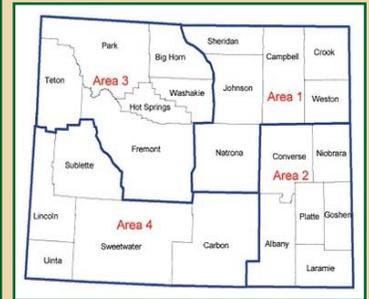
**Area Directors:**

Mark Opitz, Area 1  
307-234-8019  
mwopitz@gmail.com

Area 2– Vacant

Isabelle Giuliani Area 3  
307-745-9301 ext. 121  
Isabelle.Giuliani@wy.usda.gov

Melanie Purcell, Area 4  
307-367-2257 ext. 108  
mpurcell@sublettecd.com



**Annual Meeting Photos  
(Compliments of Brenda Ling, NRCS– Casper)**



**L-R, Top to Bottom: Emcee Jerry Shuman hands Mark Eisele his Chapter Award for Conservationist of the Year. Mark Opitz, Area 1 Director, receives the Chapter Leader Award. Astrid Martinez, NRCS– Casper, accepts Dan Mattke’s Member of the Year Award.**

Many Americans are trying to conserve energy as never before—they're now burning their morning toast on only one side.

— Anonymous

**We're on the Web!**

<http://wyswcs.weebly.com>

Only after the last tree has been cut down. Only after the last river has been poisoned. Only after the last fish has been caught. Only then will you find that money cannot be eaten.

— Cree

**SUPPORT YOUR CHAPTER!**

Wyoming Chapter has hoodies for sale. Contact Lisa Cox at [betterwriter@gmail.com](mailto:betterwriter@gmail.com) to place your order. They are a light, versatile sand color, with the SWCS logo on the chest. Quality Gildjian heavy blend 50/50 cotton for warmth, durability and ease of cleaning. Checks can be made to WY SWCS.

Proceeds for these sweatshirts go straight to your chapter to fund workshops, scholarships, awards, and other Wyoming activities.

\$40.00 includes shipping to you.

Order your sweatshirt today! Specify quantity and size (M, L or XL).

We also have backpacks for sale with the SWCS logo, just in time for school. These packs are rugged nylon in a dark forest green, and are available for \$25 with shipping.



**Chicago Botanic Garden North Lakeshore Restoration Project**

Despite a very late start to the half day field trip, several attendees to the SWCS 69th Annual Conference enjoyed a trip to the Chicago Botanic Garden on July 30, 2014, where they briefly toured parts of the garden and learned about the North Lakeshore Restoration Project.

Curator of aquatic plants and urban lake studies Bob Kirschner led the tour, which focused on recent efforts to restore the lakeshore using bioengineering techniques. Kirschner explained to the group that the North Lakeshore project contains one-half million plants and 240 taxa in its efforts. Restoration workers have been using plants to replace sheep piling and rip rap. "We favor the workhorse plants," said Kirschner, and over time broaden diversity over this base, with a focus on native plants.

Some shoreline habitat enhancement techniques employed include, in addition to a variety of moist and

drier habitat perennials, an emergent wetland plant "shelf" to a water depth of 9 in., a protective overlay of benthic mesh, 9 in. thick and 9 ft. wide soil stabilizing "Geoweb", and protective angular stone edge and compacted clay fill.

The Chicago Botanic Garden Lakeshore and McDonald Woods restoration projects have received four honors, including "Conservation and Native Landscaping" and "Excellence in Restoration" by Chicago Wilderness, an alliance of more than 300 groups working to restore native habitats in the region.

The shoreline project has been conducted over the past decade and a half in six phases. Federal, state, and local agencies and private donors have supported the project, in which natural landscaping has stabilized soils along the shoreline improved water quality, increased flood resistance, and provided native habitat for a variety of aquatic and riparian species.

Photos next page are of Kirschner explaining the project to the tour, gathered on the shoreline, and purple coneflower on the shore, just one example of the many plant species in the Garden.

page 3)

*the last three Chapter Horizon Award winners subject to review by the Awards Committee to assure the selection meets eligibility criteria.*

*The Award will be presented by the winner from the previous year with only the selection committee and the Awards Committee knowing who it is beforehand.*

**Awards nominations can be submitted to your Area Director (see page 5), and will be considered by the entire Board.**

Additionally, Wyoming Chapter seeks an Awards Committee Chair who would announce awards categories and deadlines, solicit and accept awards nominations packets, and work with the Board to choose awards recipients annually. If you are interested in taking on this important, but marginally time consuming, role, please contact a chapter Area Director or Officer. Thank you.

### Annual Conference Field Trip Photos



# 70<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL

· SOIL AND WATER ·  
CONSERVATION SOCIETY  
· CONFERENCE ·



· COMING HOME ·  
· TO CONSERVATION ·

PUTTING SCIENCE INTO PRACTICE

JULY 26 - 29, 2015

· GREENSBORO ·  
NORTH CAROLINA

**Poster deadline is March 2.**

[http://www.swcs.org/en/conferences/2015\\_annual\\_conference/call\\_for\\_presentations/](http://www.swcs.org/en/conferences/2015_annual_conference/call_for_presentations/)

**DEADLINE March 16, 2015**

**Now Accepting 2014 Chapter Award Nominations**

Show off your chapter's dedication to conservation by nominating them for a chapter award today!

[http://www.swcs.org/en/members\\_only/chapter\\_reports\\_\\_awards/](http://www.swcs.org/en/members_only/chapter_reports__awards/)

**Accepting 2015 Individual Award Nominations**

Recognize an individual or an organization who has made contributions in the conservation of soil, water, and natural resources!

[http://www.swcs.org/en/members\\_only/awards\\_for\\_individuals/](http://www.swcs.org/en/members_only/awards_for_individuals/)

## **Spread the Word.**

**Talk with your fellow co-workers, students, and those individuals you know who have an interest in our natural resources. If you would like some brochures that answer the following questions...**

**Who Belongs to SWCS?**

**What does the Wyoming Chapter Do?**

**Why Join?**

**How Do I Become a Member?**

**Where Can I Learn More?**

**When did SWCS Organize?**

**contact any of the Wyoming SWCS Chapter leaders listed in this newsletter, and we will get some brochures to you.**

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Laramie, WY 82072  
**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**