



Conservation News

Winter/Spring 2018

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2017 Annual Report

2017 Conservation Achievement Winner: George & Victoria Ferderer



The Morton County Soil Conservation District is proud to present the 2017 Achievement Program Winner for Morton County to George and Victoria Ferderer (pictured far left). George and Victoria were honored at the ND Association of Soil Conservation Districts Annual Banquet held on November 20th.

The picture on the left includes George and Victoria, their children and their spouses, and their grandson.

"The conservation practice that I am most proud of is our commitment to farm 100% zero till since 2011. We adopted zero till for the obvious reasons of conserving moisture and soil but have also seen that we save on fuel and the time it takes to plant every year. I also use cover crops when and where I can to continue to build better soil health. Due to this practice, I see my crop yields continue to rise without significantly raising my inputs. I have installed cross fencing for better pasture grazing utilization and am currently working on installing a water pipeline and water tanks that will greatly improve our ability to use our pastures to the fullest potential." - George Ferderer.

Congratulations to the Ferderer Family!



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SUPERVISORS:

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ROCKY BATEMAN
AARON STECKLER
TRAVIS WOLF
RICHARD TOKACH

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DON TANAKA
TRAVIS ROSSOW
GEORGE FERDERER

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NRCS PERSONNEL:

VAL HARTMAN
PAULA KVERNUM
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FARM BILL SPECIALIST:

SARAH HAMILTON

2017 Annual Report

January - The Morton County SCD board reorganized and re-elected Ted Becker as Chairman, elected Rocky Bateman as Vice Chairman, Jim Hopfauf and Richard Tokach as appointed supervisors, and appointed Travis Wolf, Don Tanaka, and Duane Olsen as Advisory Supervisors. The County Elected Supervisors include: Ted Becker, Rocky Bateman, and Aaron Steckler.

February - 14th -15th - MCSCD staff partnered with NRCS and participated in the 2017 KFYP Living Ag Classroom. The staff engaged the children with a soil tunnel and taught them about some of the living organisms in the soil.

March— 1st - 2nd - On March 1st and 2nd Morton County SCD partnered with Burleigh County SCD/Menoken Farm, Dakota Prairies RC&D, and NRCS to host a Soil Health Workshop. The workshop focused on Building the Soil Health Foundation with featured speaker Paul Jasa.



The workshop was held at BSC where it also included a farmer panel including Rocky Bateman, Dana Fletcher, Aaron Steckler, Jeremy Wilson and Travis Wolf.

On March 2nd - Paul Jasa was also the featured speaker at Menoken Farm for a Planter Clinic.



7th - The Morton County SCD hosted Women's Ag Day at the Baymont Inn & Suites. The speakers included Dr. Barbara Handy-Marchello and Dr. Kimberly Porter. The speakers gave great presentations on some of the first women who settled in North Dakota and told some interesting stories. The evening also included a traveling exhibit from the State Historical Society of ND, titled "Land in Her Own Name". Over 200 guests attended the fun filled evening.



15th -16th - Beth attended the Tree Promotional Meeting in March sponsored by the ND Conservation Districts Employees Association.

28th - 30th - Brandon attended the 319 Watershed Coordinator Meeting.

April - 11th - The Morton County SCD, NRCS, and Morton County Water Board hosted the Water Festival at Nazarene Church in Mandan.



11th - While Water Festival was happening some staff and board members attended the Area IV Meeting in Emmons County.



18th - Morton County SCD Hosted a Shop Talk in Hebron, ND.

25th - Morton County SCD also hosted a Shop Talk in New Salem and Flasher, ND.

May - 5th - 6th - Morton County SCD held their Annual Hand plant pick up sale in New Salem, ND. This was a great year for Morton County SCD pre-order tree sales with a total of 118 orders totaling 81,721 Trees!

June - 9th - Morton County SCD held the annual Surplus Sale. The district sold 1,684 trees total.

Tree Planting Recap -

The Morton County SCD Tree Crew included: Walter, Tim, Sam, and Micaela.

Adam and the Tree Crew started planting trees on May 9th and concluded on June 12th.

They started laying Fabric on June 13th and concluded on July 7th.

In 2017 the tree crew planted 96,006 feet of trees and 67,162 feet of Fabric.



2017 Annual Report

July - Jonathan Lundgren & Allan Savory Events

12th & 13th - Morton County SCD partnered with Burleigh County SCD and Dakota Prairies RC&D to sponsor a set of valuable workshops with Jonathan Lundgren.

The first workshop was held at BSC titled, "Trading Biodiversity for Pest Problems".

The second day included a crop and pasture walk with Jonathan Lundgren at Menoken Farm. The second day concluded with a Menoken Farm Garden Tour which included the following speakers and topics: Entomology— Dr. Jonathan Lundgren, Pollinators—Darrell Oswald, Chad Thorson SCD Technicians, Hugelkultur—Derek Lowstuter—Forest Restoration Specialist, ND Forest Service, and Soils—Jay Fuhrer—Soil Health Specialist, NRCS. All 3 events were very well attended along with great information provided by all the speakers.



19th & 20th - Morton County SCD Partnered with Burleigh County SCD, Dakota Prairies RC&D, and ND Grazing Lands Council to sponsor events presented by Allan Savory and Byron Shelton.

The first day included a Ranch Discussion at Black Leg Ranch about Resource Management. Byron Shelton presented on "Restoring Perennial Grasslands to Support People, Crops, & Wildlife." The evening concluded with a much anticipated speech from Allan Savory at the ND Heritage Center. Savory presented on "How Livestock & Grassland Soils Can Save Civilization." The second day took our guests to Kenny & Bonnie Miller's Ranch near Fort Rice, ND.



August - 29th - 31st - Brandon attended a Nutritional Management Training in Bismarck, ND. The training was hosted by NRCS.

September - 14th - The Morton County SCD Staff and Board attended the Area IV SCD Cooperative Research Farm Twilight Tour at the USDA-ARS Northern Great Plains Research Laboratory.



October - At the end of September Michele Doyle retired as the District Conservationist for the Mandan NRCS/SCD Office. Val Hartman became acting District Conservationist for Mandan. Val is currently the District Conservationist in the Center NRCS/SCD office and will be maintaining those duties as well.

November - 20th - 21st - The Morton County SCD Staff and Board attended the North Dakota Soil Conservation Annual Convention held at the Ramkota Hotel in Bismarck. The Morton County SCD nominated George and Victoria Ferderer as Morton County SCD's 2017 Achievement Winner.

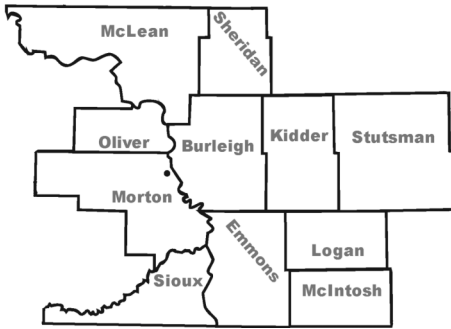
December - 4th-8th - Tom Gibson presented to Morton County School Students on his TREES Program presentations.

2017 Conservation Practice Implementation:

Cover Crop ~ 654.4 ac.
Residue Management/No-Till ~ 669.3 ac.
Forage & Biomass Planting ~ 215.1 ac.
Fence ~ 33,451 ft.
Pipelines ~ 17,176 ft.
Watering Facilities ~ 21,030 gal.
Prescribed Grazing ~ 246 ac.
Pumping Plant ~ 3
Portable Windbreak ~ 1
Windbreak Establishment ~ 12,382 ft.
Tree/Shrub Site Preparation ~ 4.5 ac.
Windbreak Renovation ~ 6,594 ft.
Water Well ~ 4
High Tunnel System ~ 2

Area IV SCD Research Farm Tour Presentation

September 14, 2017



Preamble By: Mark Liebig

According to the Department of Homeland Security, there are 16 critical infrastructure sectors whose assets, systems, and networks, whether physical or virtual, are considered so vital to the United States that their incapacitation or destruction would have a debilitating effect on security, national economic security, national public health or safety, or any combination thereof. The Food and Agricultural Sector is one of 16 sectors recognized by the Department of Homeland Security. The Food and Agriculture Sector is almost entirely under private ownership and is composed of an estimated 2.1 million farms, 935,000 restaurants, and more than 200,000 registered food manufacturing, processing, and storage facilities. This sector accounts for roughly one-fifth of the nation's economic activity.

Conservation Reserve Program Grasslands

By: Sarah Hamilton – Farm Bill Specialist

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is offering an exciting program, Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Grasslands. With this program, landowners and operators can protect grasslands, including pastureland and native rangeland, while continuing to use the areas as grazing lands. The objective of CRP Grasslands is to: 1) protect grasslands that positively contribute to the economy of many regions, 2) provide plant and animal biodiversity, and 3) improve environmental quality. For land to be eligible for enrollment in CRP Grasslands, the land must be native rangeland or currently planted to grass. Participants receive annual payments in an amount not to exceed 75% of the grazing value of the land (as determined by Farm Service Agency). If structural practices are needed to facilitate a grazing system, up to 50% cost-share assistance is available to establish approved practices. Contract length is 14 to 15 years. Enrollment for CRP Grasslands is open on a continuous basis, so stop by your local USDA Service Center to sign up today! If you have any questions, please call Sarah Hamilton at the Mandan USDA Service Center: (701) 667-1163 Ext. 3.

Conservation Client Gateway

What is Conservation Client Gateway?

Conservation Client Gateway is a secure web portal that lets you work with NRCS online. Landowners and land managers, whether operating as individuals or authorized representatives of business entities, can track their payments, report completed practices, request conservation assistance, and electronically sign documents.

Conservation Client Gateway provides users the flexibility to determine when they want to engage with NRCS online and when they prefer in-person conservation planning assistance



North Dakota Conservation District Employees Association—Scholarship

The North Dakota Conservation District Employees Association (NDCDEA) established a scholarship for high school and college students interested in pursuing conservation education. The scholarship is open to high school seniors and college students who are residents of North Dakota and intend to or are currently pursuing an agricultural/natural resource management/environmental or related field at a two or four year university in the state of North Dakota. One scholarship will be awarded in the amount of \$1000.00.

Interested applicants are required to complete the application form and compose an essay of no more than 500 words on the topic chosen by the NDCDEA. Applicants will need to maintain at least a 2.5 GPA and be a full time student. Scholarship will be paid after the President of the Association receives the previous semester transcript. The \$1000.00 will be sent to the school of attendance unless the recipient is a graduating college senior, in which the scholarship monies will be paid directly to the recipient. If the scholarship winner does not maintain the 2.5 GPA, the second place qualifier will be awarded the \$1000.00. Applications and essays must be mailed by **March 2nd, 2018**. Essays will be judged by the NDCDEA board of directors. The scholarship winner will be notified following the selection.

2018 Conservation Studies Scholarship Topic:

“The Importance of Conservation to the Next Generation”

Please complete the application along with the written essay, and return them to the **NDCDEA**, c/o Pembina County Soil Conservation District, 600 Division Ave. S. Suite A, Cavalier, ND 58220 by **Friday, March 2, 2018**.

You can find the application form on our website at www.mcsd.com

All programs and services with the North Dakota Conservation District Employees Association are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, marital status or disability.

Now accepting 2019 EQIP Applications!

The goal of EQIP is to enhance natural resources, particularly through improvements to soil health, conservation of water resources, improving air and water quality, enhancing habitat and more. Landowners receive financial and technical assistance to implement conservation practices or conduct conservation planning. Popular conservation practices include livestock water developments, cross fences, prescribed grazing, grass plantings, shelterbelt renovation & plantings, cover crops, residue management, and nutrient management. Seasonal high tunnels and portable livestock windbreak fences are relatively new practices that are offered.

Please stop in to the NRCS Office to start Planning for 2019 EQIP Projects!

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Financial Assistance for Installing Conservation Practices

- Shelterbelts
- No-Till
- Pipeline
- Watering Facility
- Fence
- Solar Pump
- Nutrient Management
- Grazing System
- Water Well
- Erosion Control
- Tree Renovation
- Grass Seeding
- Wildlife Habitat
- Cover Crop
- Tree Planting



Tree of the Quarter Arnold Hawthorn (*Crataegus arnoldiana*)



The Arnold Hawthorn is a short, attractive tree that has a wide variety of uses. It has an attractive shape and produces white flowers in the spring, making it useful for a specimen tree. The flowers produce a red fruit that can be processed into jams and jellies, and is also utilized by a variety of birds and mammals, giving it wildlife value.

Arnold Hawthorn is well adapted to many environmental stresses and can handle a wide variety of soil types and pH levels, allowing it to be utilized in some areas that other trees cannot handle. It can reach 15-20 feet in height and width, and grows into a broadly rounded, dense tree. It should be noted that each branch contains many strong, sharp spines that can reach 2-3 inches in length. The Arnold Hawthorn is adapted to a wide variety of environmental stresses and soil conditions, although it does not tolerate high salinity or pH. It is suitable for soils in series 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

With the increased threat of the Emerald Ash Borer making its way to North Dakota we are constantly looking for tree species to plant in place of Ash trees. While the Arnold Hawthorn does not get the size of an Ash and can't handle as many soil types, it is definitely a tree to consider for your next planting.

Trees and Water

What a difference a year can make. This time last year we were dealing with nearly record amounts of snow and trying to remember how to cope with it all. Now we are looking back at what turned out to be one of the driest years in recent memory, and some sources are saying 2018 could be more of the same. With this in mind, everyone is looking for solutions to help increase the amount of water available as well as conserving the water they already have. The list of possible long term solutions includes planting trees.

In our January newsletter last year there was an article on using trees to manipulate snow accumulation and drifting, and that same idea is still relevant. There will always be some areas that we want to keep snow off of, but there are also some areas that we don't care how much snow accumulates. Those are areas where a windbreak could be planted to help change not only the amount of snow that accumulates, but the way in which it lays. A planting can be designed to cause the snow to pile up high in a relatively small area, or to spread out more evenly over a wider space. This in turn can increase the amount of water available in the spring during seeding.

Trees can also affect the available water supply by doing what we use them for the most: breaking the wind. If a hot summer wind is blowing across a crop field the result will be an increase in moisture lost, both from the plants and the ground itself. In a year like last year every little bit counts, so this is a feasible way to cut your water consumption on crop fields. Another way trees can help is reducing the water needs of cattle. The effects already listed can help increase the amount of grass and forage early in the season by providing more water, which in turn could give you more feed. On those hot, dry, sunny summer days, the shade a healthy windbreak provides can also provide a nice place for cattle to get out of the sun and keep a little cooler while they lounge around.

In short, there are a wide variety of ways a healthy windbreak can benefit you, as long as time is taken to make sure it is planned and implemented correctly. If this sounds like an option you are interested in contact us and we would be happy to discuss it further!



10' No-Till Grass Drill Available for Rent



Last year, the Morton County SCD purchased a 10' Truax Grass Drill. This wouldn't have been possible without the help of the ND Game and Fish Department and the US Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service Federal Aid funds under the Wildlife Restoration Act (CFDA# 15.611). With the help of these two agencies we can now provide this service to Morton County.

The cost is \$10/acre with a \$50 delivery fee, if applicable. If you would like to use the drill and/or get more information, please call the office at 701-667-1163 ext. 3.

Kuhn Manure Spreader for Rent

The SCD is renting a Kuhn Knight 160 manure spreader with vertical beaters to the producers of Morton County. Unlike horizontal beaters, vertical beaters give a more even spread (25-30 ft.) of livestock manure or compost over a field.

Manure and soil tests are recommended but no longer required for 2018.

Producers can lease the spreader for \$275/day. Clean-up and maintenance are the responsibility of the renter as well as any damages. The spreader has a capacity of 350+ bushels and a 160 HP tractor is recommended. Both the big and small 1000 rpm PTO shafts are available.

If you have any questions, or would like to lease the spreader, please contact the Morton County SCD at 667-1163 ext. 3.



Conservation Stewardship Program

This year one of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs changed quite a bit. The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) allows agricultural producers to earn payments for actively managing, maintaining and expanding conservation activities, all while they maintain the level of conservation that was in place at the beginning of their CSP contract.

The CSP program was started in 2010, and in 2017 the program was redesigned to give NRCS personnel the ability to evaluate management and provide estimated payments that can be understood. Now, each enhancement available to be chosen is tied directly to a conservation practice and has a per unit payment.

Through CSP, agricultural producers and forest landowners earn payments for actively managing, maintaining, and expanding conservation activities like cover crops, ecologically-based pest management, buffer strips, and pollinator and beneficial insect habitat – all while maintaining active agriculture production on their land. CSP also encourages the adoption of cutting-edge technologies and new management techniques such as precision agriculture applications, on-site carbon storage and planting for high carbon sequestration rate, and new soil amendments to improve water quality.

Some of these benefits of CSP include:

- Improved cattle gains per acre;
- Increased crop yields;
- Decreased inputs;
- Wildlife population improvements; and
- Better resilience to weather extremes.

While applications for CSP are accepted year round, applications **must be received by March 2, 2018 to be considered for this funding period.** However, you may still stop into the office or send in an application anytime, it will be accepted for the corresponding funding period. Applications that have been turned in before this date will go through the eligibility and evaluation process.

Contact the Mandan NRCS office at 701-667-1163, ext. 3 if you have any questions.



Morton County Soil Conservation District
2540 Overlook Lane
Mandan, ND 58554-1593
www.mcsd.com
Phone: 701-667-1163 ext. 3

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All Programs and Services of the Soil Conservation District are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, marital status, age, or handicap.



Sponsors

The Morton County Soil Conservation District would like to thank the following sponsors:

Flasher Farmers Union Grain—Flasher, ND
Mandan Moose Lodge—Mandan, ND
Agassiz Seed & Supply—Mandan, ND
Fraternal Order of Eagles—Mandan, ND
Pinehurst Veterinary Hospital—Bismarck, ND
Pheasants Forever, Inc.
Flasher Community Credit Union—Flasher, ND
Gartner Seed Farm—Mandan, ND
Western Cooperative Credit Union—Hebron, ND
Farm Credit Services of Mandan
Pulse USA, Inc.—Bismarck, ND
Runway Heating & Air LLC—Mandan, ND
Chesak Seed House—Bismarck, ND
Starion Financial—Mandan, ND
Dakota Community Bank—Mandan, ND
K2S Engineering Inc.—Ypsilanti, ND
Earth Energy & Water Systems, Inc.—New Salem, ND
PAN AG—Mandan, ND

Upcoming Events

February

6-7—KFYR Agri International @ Bismarck Event Center
13th—SCD Board Meeting @ USDA Service Center, Mandan
19th—President’s Day Holiday—Office Closed
21-23—HRM School @ Menoken Farm
28th—Soil Health Workshop @ BSC

March

2nd—CSP Application Deadline
8th—SCD Board Meeting @ USDA Service Center, Mandan

April

12th—SCD Board Meeting @ USDA Service Center, Mandan

“Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land.”
— Aldo Leopold