

Hereford Natural Resource Conservation District



August, 2016 Newsletter

CONSERVING - PROTECTING - PRACTICING WISE USE



Photo by Kathy Morris

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CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

It has been a vision of Jack Ladd's since 2003 to stop the major erosion at Horseshoe Draw. Five years of planning hopefully are coming to a reality. There have been many hours of meetings and paper work, but worth the endeavor for a big project like this. We still have some T's to cross and I's to dot, but are very optimistic that the project will go through the final stages.

A BIG thanks to the following: 1) the Ladd family; the project is on the Ladd family ranch and they will lose use of some land for the cattle, 2) Arizona Water Protection Fund for the first grant to conduct a feasibility and design study, 3) Arizona Department of Environmental Quality Water Quality Improvement Grant Program grant for the construction of the project, 3) the generous donation to finish the financial side of the project, and 4) Arizona State Senator, Gail Griffin.

A big thank you to the Hereford NRCB Board for the many hours spent on this project while still conducting other activities. Rachel Thomas, Lucinda Earven, John Lohse, John Ladd and clerk Kathy Morris, as well as Pat Call and everyone from the county that have been involved.

The benefits of the project will stop the major erosion of sediment down to the San Pedro River, re-charge the aquifer, reduce E-Coli into the San Pedro River during the monsoon season and help with the crossing at Paloma Trail Road.



Working Together to Enhance Our Natural Resources

Hereford NRCD Horseshoe Draw \$2 Million Project Fully Funded

In November 2010, the Hereford Natural Resource Conservation District (HNRCD) recognized major erosion and sediment issues caused by flooding in the Horseshoe Draw area. Growing concern by the HNRCD and the local community prompted the need for an engineer from both Cochise County and a private, Phoenix-based firm to visit the area and provide recommendations. Based on those recommendations, the HNRCD submitted a grant proposal to the Arizona Water Protection Fund (WPF) in August 2013, to fund a concept and feasibility study. A little over a year later, the HNRCD was awarded a \$198,625 WPF grant to complete the study. The original Phoenix-based firm that assisted the HNRCD in 2010, HilgartWilson, LLC, was chosen to perform the work for the study.

The Horseshoe Draw watershed extends from the Sierra San Jose Mountains in Sonora, Mexico, to the San Pedro River in southern Arizona. The watershed is divided into 21 sub basins, based on “points of interest” within the entire watershed, such as junctions where washes branch off of the watershed. The feasibility study determined that a detention basin is an effective means of slowing the discharge rate to downstream waters, thus detaining surface water runoff. The new detention basin will be made up of an embankment 24 feet above the upstream basin, with a storage capacity of 49 million gallons and four pipes leading from the bottom of the basin downstream, enabling the water to drain from the basin within 24 hours.

During the final design phases of the study, the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) announced acceptance of applications for their Water Quality Improvement Grant Program (WQIG) in early February 2016. The HNRCD applied for the grant in order to secure funding to carry out the plan conceived by HilgartWilson to improve the Horseshoe Draw watershed. In May 2016, the HNRCD was approved for a WQIG grant of \$993,880, or 58.5% of the cost of the project. The remaining 41.5% of funds are being given by a private donor.

Through these watershed enhancements, the area will see a multitude of improvements including: the reduction of erosion and soil loss, and the healing of such loss; downstream, flood peaks will be reduced to prevent further road damage and property loss; sediment and pathogen transport, like E-Coli, to the San Pedro river will be lessened; and finally, there will be an increase in groundwater recharge to the Upper San Pedro River Basin aquifer. The benefits of this plan will resonate throughout the HNRCD area, the San Pedro River, and Cochise County, making for a better environment for the community, wildlife, and the natural environment as a whole. Without the improvements, we would see a steady decline in the health of the watershed, and be unable to reverse the damage done.



Photo taken at the top part of Horseshoe Draw where the detention basin will be built with the San Jose Mountains in the background. Note the dramatic erosion that is occurring as the existing channel bottom is being swept away downstream during storm events. This is about three miles upstream from the San Pedro River. Photo by HILGARTWILSON.

Hereford NRCD Chairman, Jim Lindsey signing the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality Water Quality Improvement Grant. Photo by John Ladd.

Brush and Mesquite Management

There is a widespread invasion of woody species that dominate the landscape within the Hereford NRC. These woody invasives have displaced desirable grass species, altering ecological processes that promote healthy and productive grasslands.

For the years 2014, 2015 and to date 2016 there have been 9,880.2 acres of shallow root brush such as White Thorn, Tar Bush, and Creosote and 4,178 acres of mesquite within the District treated with herbicide applied by aerial treatment. This has improved the health of the land benefiting both livestock and wildlife.

The District's partners in this work includes the Arizona State Land Department, Iroquois Foundation, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Arizona Department of Environmental Quality.

Our New Mexico Neighbors

Caltron County, NM, a large county with just 3,500 residents and made up largely of public lands, has had trouble upon trouble since the release of Mexican Gray Wolves. With the help of their Congressman, Steve Pearce they eventually got an Inspector General's Report verifying numerous allegations of falsifications by US Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) and mismanagement of their Mexican Gray Wolf Recovery Program (MGWRP).

Caltron County's complaints included mismanagement of nuisance wolves, failure to communicate with the public, depredation-related impacts, and administrative management issues.

FWS responded by relocating a mid-level manager within the MGWRP).

San Pedro River Water Levels

A recent report by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) states streamflow and groundwater levels are declining in some locations along the San Pedro River near Sierra Vista.

"Results from the northern part of the Sierra Vista subwatershed suggest unsustainable conditions currently exist," said USGS hydrologist Bruce Gungle. "However, long-term management actions have resulted in positive, sustainable effects in some areas along the San Pedro River."

Mr. Gungle goes on to say, "Pumping throughout the Sierra Vista subwatershed captures groundwater that would otherwise go to the river. The hydrologic data indicate that pumping has resulted in decreased groundwater flow toward some reaches of the River."

Monsoon Skys = Green Grass



Photos by Kathy Morris

Thank You!

Hereford NRC Board of Supervisors would like to thank the following cooperators for their up-to-date dues and contributions.

Alice Butler

Art Thompson

Betty Richter

Dwight Babcock

Ed & Connie Evans

Jack Ladd

Jeri Ligon

Jim & Sue Lindsey

Joan Strom

Kale Kiyabu

Lucinda Earven

Marilyn Harris

Mike & Jeanie Hayhurst

Pat Call

Patty Leindecker

Rachel Thomas

Scott & Tony Arena

Theresa Warrell

Vincent Ogurek

New Ag Instructor at Tombstone HS

Tombstone High School has a new Ag instructor and FFA leader, Katie Swaim. Katie attended our August meeting and gave an overview of the FFA 2016/2017 program with a Power Point presentation that outlined the current projects, future goals, and the resources needed. The presentation is available at <http://www.herefordnrcd.com/ed-center.html>.

SAME FACES, NEW POSITIONS

During the August, 2016 regular meeting the District Board of Supervisors voted to change some of their positions. Your Board is now organized in this fashion: Jim Lindsey—Chairman, Lucinda Earven—Vice Chairman, Rachel Thomas—Secretary, John Lohse—Supervisor, John Ladd—Supervisor.

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BOARD MEETINGS
Third Wednesday of every month
9:30 AM
Sierra Vista Cochise County
Complex Conference Room
Hwy 92 and Foothills Drive, Sierra Vista

Note: Date, location and time is subject to change.
 We invite District Cooperators and the general public's attendance and participation.

Hereford NRCD
is on the World Wide Web!
www.herefordnrcd.com

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Advertisement: \$60 for 4 issues.
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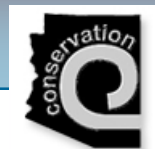
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HEREFORD NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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All programs of the Hereford NRCD are offered on a non-discriminatory basis, without regard to race, national origin, age, sex, religion, political belief, marital or familial status or handicap.