



Conservation News & Notes

Volume 021 Number 2 Spring/Summer 2021

319 Grant Funds Available



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QUOTE:

"Man takes root at his feet, and at best he is no more than a potted plant in his house or carriage till he has established communication with the soil by the loving and magnetic touch of his soles to it."

— John Burroughs

Canyon County is located within the Lower Boise River watershed, which is one of the high priority watersheds for Southwestern Idaho. The Lower Boise River watershed represents a physically complex network of river, tributaries, irrigation conveyances and drains that transport water from the headwaters of the basin at Lucky Peak dam to its mouth at Snake River near Parma.

The Lower Boise River flows northwest through Ada and Canyon Counties and is approximately 64 miles long from Lucky Peak dam to Snake River near Parma. The watershed drains approximately 1,290 square miles of mixed land uses, including rangeland, forest, agricultural lands, and urban areas. Major tributaries and drains include Five Mile Creek, Ten Mile Creek, Fifteen Mile Creek, Mill Slough, Mason Creek, Indian Creek, Conway Gulch, and Dixie Drain. Sand Hollow Creek and Lake Lowell are also important water bodies in the general geographic area of the watershed.

The Lower Boise River sub-basin is identified in the Idaho water quality standards as water body ID 17050114. Boise River is impaired for sediment bacteria and total phosphorus (TP) from about Middleton to the confluence with Snake River. Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for the Lower Boise River and a number of the tributaries and drains call for significant reductions to these pollutants in order to achieve the designated beneficial uses, which generally include cold water aquatic life, salmonid spawning in some segments, domestic and agricultural water supply, and primary and/or secondary contact recreation. Snake River directly upstream and downstream of Boise River also has water quality impairments and TMDLs that require major reductions in pollutants such as TP from Boise River and other tributaries.

A "Conservation Partnership" was formed between Lower Boise Watershed Council (LBWC), Canyon Soil Conservation District (CSCD), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and Ada Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). The LBWC applied for and receives grants from the General Fund Agricultural BMP's Program. This project is one of 10 federal or state nonpoint source pollution grants awarded since 2009 in an ongoing effort by the partnership to facilitate best management practices (BMP's) primarily on agricultural lands in the Lower Boise River watershed (several projects have also funded nonpoint source stormwater projects). The goal is to improve surface water quality in both Canyon and Ada counties and Snake River near the confluence with Boise River. Project applications are ranked using the "On Farm BMP's Ranking Criteria-319 Program" project ranking sheet. The ranking assists LBWC partnership in selecting projects that have a higher probability of achieving water quality improvement benefits.

If you have a project in mind you can go to our website (<https://www.canyonsoilconservation.org>), download a project application and submit to us or give Stan Hays a call to discuss your ideas at 208-779-3446. Participation is voluntary and offers opportunities to improve agricultural practices that benefit both operators and water quality.

Your Canyon SCD

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Mike Swartz, Chairman
Robert McKellip, Vice Chair
David Dixon, Sec./Treas.
Mike Somerville, Supervisor
Rex Runkle, Supervisor

Associate Supervisors:

Tom Johnson
Rich Sims
Matt Livingood

District Staff:

Lori Kent,
Administrative Assistant
Outreach
Stan Hays
Soil Conservation
Technician

NRCS Staff:

Tate Walters — Treasure
Valley High Desert Team Leader/
Caldwell District Conservationist
Erin Brooks — Caldwell
Resource Conservationist
Josh Chapman — Caldwell
Resource Conservationist
Martin Pena — Civil
Engineering Technician
Bobby Hilton — Civil
Engineering Technician
Ted Moyer — Civil Engineer
Rich Sims — CSCD
Associate Supervisor/Earth Team
Volunteer
Martha Schmidt — Soil
Conservationist
Benjamin Stiff — Range
Conservationist

District board meetings are held the first Thursday after the first Tuesday of each month. Meetings are open to the public. Call the office for exact times.

All programs and services of the Canyon Soil Conservation District are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, marital or familial status and political beliefs.

Canyon SCD Website
[https://](https://www.canyonsoilconservation.org)
www.canyonsoilconservation.org

NRCS report for Newsletter

I am thankful that as I write this, there are puddles outside my window. This spring has been unusually dry, and is cause for concern. I am thankful for the blessing of rain we had these past few days, and hope for some more! The NRCS Treasure Valley High Desert Team located in the Caldwell and Marsing Field Offices has been very busy this spring working with clients to write and sign conservation contracts that address a multitude of resource issues including soil erosion, water quality, soil health, forage quality, and invasive species management. Whether the office was closed, open or somewhere in between we've been doing our best to get out in the field with producers working to solve natural resource issues. We are excited to see progress being made regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and look forward to being able to return a more "business as usual" method of working. I am happy to report that currently, both offices are now able to allow visitors by appointment into our office building. If you require assistance, just give us a call and we'd be happy to set up an appointment to try to help you whether in the office, over the phone, or on the farm. —Tate Walters

Meet Mattie Schmidt Caldwell Soil Conservationist

**Rogueing a yarrow field, imagine:
30 acres of yarrow!!**



I grew up on the Palouse and got a range degree from the University of Idaho. My masters project focused on management of native Palouse Prairie. During my masters, I worked for a native seed farm on the Palouse. This past summer, I was an intern with the NRCS in Idaho Falls; this was my first experience with irrigated agriculture. I look forward to all that I have to learn, not only about irrigation, but also the diverse crops that are grown in the Treasure Valley.

Mission:

The Canyon Soil Conservation District is committed to providing quality leadership, information, education, technical assistance and financial assistance for the conservation and wise use of natural resources.

Canyon SCD NO-Till Drill

When properly used, no-till drilling will reduce on farm fuel costs, soil erosion from both wind and water, labor costs, in effect better water quality and water quantity.

For instance, a local producer with in the Lower Boise watershed followed a crop of grain after harvest with a four way mixture using peas, oats, turnips hairy veg, and volunteer barley grazed the growth off ,and will only chisel plow his field before planting a crop of corn. Usually, prior to planting, several tillage operations include a disking after harvest. Then, in the spring, two more passes with a disc or possible plow are made depending on compaction and soil type; Rolla harrow followed by planter. By using CSCD's no-till drill, this producer figured he saved a minimum of \$35.00 an acre in costs.

Many of the diaries in Canyon County are planting triticale after a harvested corn crop.

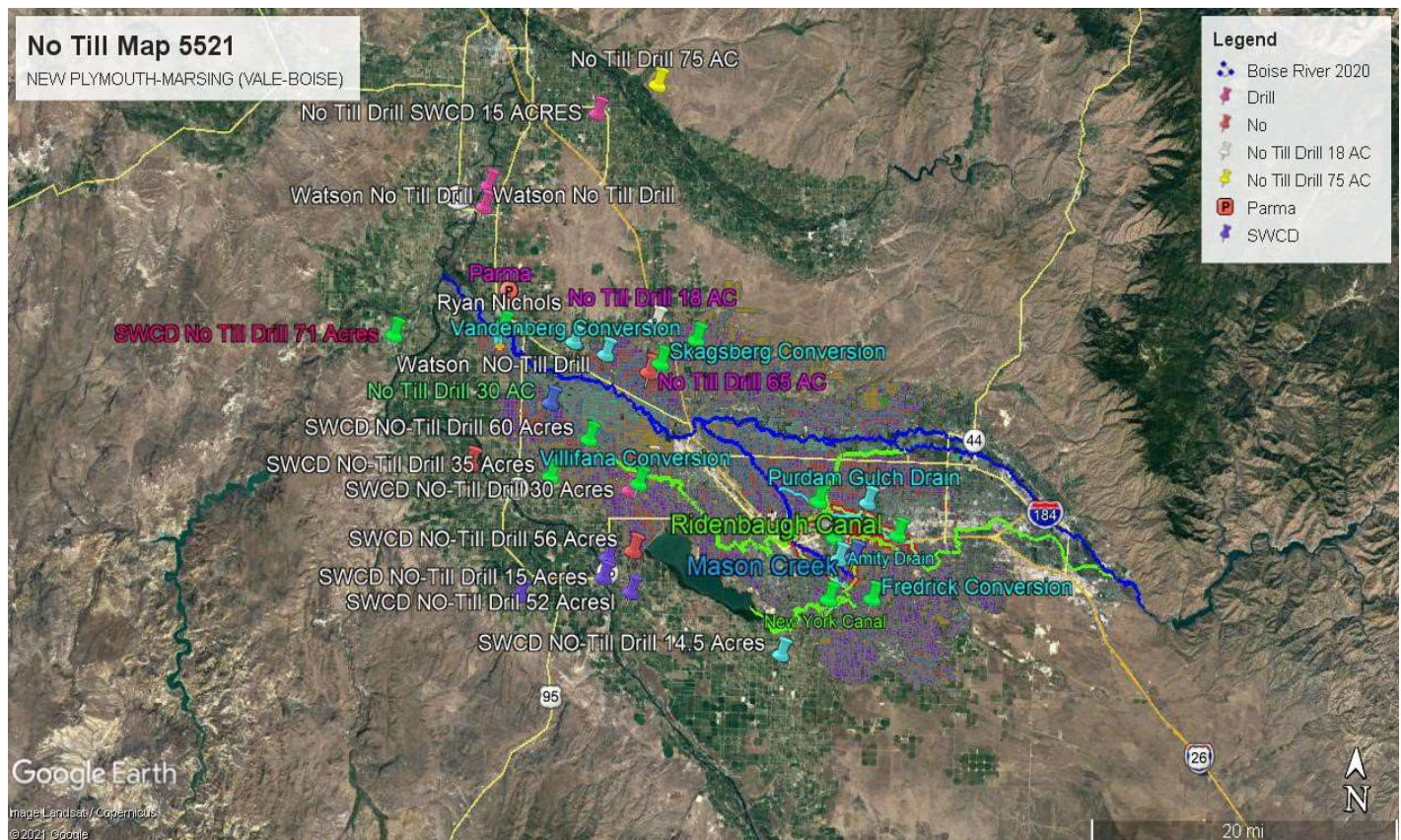
Then, in the spring, they will harvest this second crop prior to planting corn again, putting residue back into the soil making for better soil health.

After wheat harvest in July, CSCD received another request for the use of the no-till drill, and again, after beans and beets, planted with drill. After beet harvest, this field was planted last fall with CSCD's no-till drill.

The CSCD no-till drill planted a total of 484 acres during the fall of 2020 and another 289 this spring of 2021, for an overall acreage of 773 acres with continuing monitoring of fields from New-Plymouth-Marsing and from Vale to southeast Boise.



Canyon County Producers Usage of Canyon SCD No-Till Drill



Caldwell Service Center —The People's Garden

Thanks to Rich Sims, CSCD Associate Supervisor/NRCS Earth Team Volunteer, we are able to continue our annual gardening. Each year we donate the produce to Metro Community Services or The Salvation Army-Caldwell Corps. Last year we donated a total of 386 lbs. was donated from our garden. Also we donated 41 lbs. of potatoes and 17 protein drinks.



Rich planted the garden on May 8, 2021. Tomatoes, squash and cucumbers were our choice of produce to plant. Rich also, installed new dripline, weed guard, hoses, timer and put straw down around the plants for protection.



Located below are pictures of our pollinator garden. Last year, even though we were unable to water the pollinator garden on a regular schedule (due to Covid) a few of the plants survived. We are watering the pollinator garden using a hose, sprinkler and rain.



Meet Benjamin Stiff Caldwell Range Conservationist

Greetings everyone, my name is Benjamin Stiff and I have recently started as a Rangeland Management Specialist in the Caldwell Field Office with the Natural Resource Conservation Service. I am originally from North Carolina where I joined the United States Air Force. I served in multiple duty locations around the world while working as an aircraft mechanic on F-16, F-15, and A-10 aircraft. My travels brought me to Mountain Home Idaho where I fell in love with my wife Hailey, the Treasure Valley area, and the wide-open spaces. Eventually, I made the decision to separate from the military and pursue higher education, where I attended the University of Idaho double majoring in Rangeland Conservation and Wildlife Resources and graduated in December of 2020.

Fortunately, Hailey and I were able to return to southern Idaho after my graduation with this position where we hope to soon plant some roots of our own and stay in the treasure valley for some time. When we're not working we enjoy camping, volunteering in the community, bird watching, traveling, cooking/dining out, and painting. I've always had a love for the outdoors, and I am truly grateful for the opportunity to work in natural resources.



Grants Available through 319 Funds to Implement the Lower Boise River TMDL

The Lower Boise Watershed Council and Canyon Soil Conservation District formed a partnership in 2009 to address sediment and nutrient runoff to the Boise River watershed. We currently have 319 funding available. This funding provides up to 60% cost share to install Best Management Practices (BMPs) which decrease runoff. Implementation of these practices has been successful in decreasing sediment and nutrients in the Boise River watershed but more work needs to be done!

If you have a project in mind you can go to our website (<https://www.canyonsoilconservation.org>), download a project application and submit to us or give Stan Haye a call to discuss your ideas at 208-779-3446.

Participation is voluntary and offers opportunities to improve agricultural practices that benefit both operators and water quality.



NRCS EQIP Project

From Mattie Schmitt including photos

This EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program) involves hedgerow planting. The Landowner is raising ostrich for meat. The birds are kept "breeding groups" (about 10 birds each) in separate pens to keep territorial breeding males isolated. The hedgerows will reduce the territorial behavior of breeding males between two pens. The hedgerows will consist of sagebrush, bitterbrush, basin wildrye and juniper.



Coming Events . . .

Due to no public access to USDA Buildings/stay at home order — meetings will be held remotely until further notice.

District Board Meeting

Conference Call

For more information
contact 208-779-3443

7:00 to 9:00 PM

July 8

August 5

319 TAC Meeting

WEBEX Meeting

8:00 AM to 10:00 AM

June 1

June 29

August 31

Lower Boise River Watershed Advisory Group

WEBEX Meeting

For more information
contact 208-779-3443

1:00 to 3:00 PM

June 10

July 8

August 12

Canyon County Fair "Find Your Fun"

July 29—August 1

Caldwell

Kids Connection. . .

Craft Stick Dragonfly

There is something very delicate and innocent about a dragonfly, isn't there? They are pretty hard to catch, but thanks to CRAFT STICK DRAFONFLY, you can hold one in your hands.

Materials Required: Colored Craft Sticks (or just paint plain sticks), Pipe Cleaners in different colors (thick or thin varieties), Sharpies, Googly Eyes, Glue.

1. Start by getting their wings ready. Pick up pipe cleaners in colors of your choice and fold them into wings
2. Make another set and join them together by twisting the ends to secure them in place.
3. Stick the wings on the back of you craft stick. Use enough glue to secure the wings but not so much that they slide right off!
4. Stick on a pair of google eyes-use small ones, large on or the pretty ones with lashes for a girl dragonfly! Then decorate your dragonfly with Sharpies.
5. That's it! See example



Pom Pom Caterpillar Craft

Materials Required: Foam sheet in assorted colors, Pom poms (Large & Small sizes)

Pipe Cleaner, Foam Circle cutout in various colors, Craft Stickers, Straws. Strong Glue-like fevicol/glue gun, Googly Eyes. Single Hole Punch, Scissors.

1. First make sure you have all materials on hand. Using scissors, roughly cut the foam sheet in to long rectangular strips about 2 inches wide. We cut along the long edge of an A4 foam sheet
2. Accordion fold along the velvety edge and press really hard to form a zig zag shape
3. Use a paper punch to make holes in the center of each fold. Using a long pipe cleaner slowly string it through end to end. (You might need help for this step)
4. First stick the big pom pom as the face. Add a nose & googly eyes. Then twist a pipe cleaner as an antenna. Stick two pom poms atop the antenna and then place stickers on the back (You may use pom poms instead of stickers)
5. That's it! See example



Ladybug Button Art Craft

Ask your grandmother or mother if they have buttons or buy at dollar store.

Materials Required: Red button in different sizes (try a few beads too), black buttons (or paint them), glue dots (sew them on), green craft foam (or other working surface), pencil

1. Start by drawing a ladybug on your working surface with a pencil (or marker)
2. Add glue on the buttons—glue dots really are perfect for this project, you can just pop a nice number of buttons on the tape and take them as you need them.
3. Stick button on the foam (the glue sticks nicely but it is a bit wiggly, so you can easily squeeze buttons together)
4. Work your way with the red buttons, making the body of the ladybug (cover the whole body red, add the black spots at the end so that they are elevated). Once you've glued on all the red ones, make the black head and antennae.
5. That's it! See example





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Orecchiette with Breadcrumbs, Pancetta & Cauliflower

From: Lidia's Italy at Home

Recipe Spot . . .

Ingredients Needed:

- 1 1/2 Cups Low-Sodium chicken broth (or Homemade)
- 2 Tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling.
- 4 ounces pancetta, cut into small cubes
- 3 medium leeks, halved lengthwise & sliced, white & little green parts only (about 2 cups)
- 1/2 medium head cauliflower, stalks removed, florets & tender leaves cut in to 1/2 inch pieces (about 3 cups)
- Kosher salt
- Pepperoncino
- 1 lb. of Orecchiette Pasta (any type of pasta works) or skip pasta all together and have a side dish
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh Italian parsley
- 1/4 cup fine dry breadcrumbs, or as needed.



Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil for the pasta. Heat the chicken broth in a small sauce pan just to simmer and keep warm.

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. When the oil is hot, add the pancetta and cook, stirring occasionally, until the pancetta has rendered some of its fat and is lightly browned but still soft in the center, about 4 minutes. Add the leeks and cook until just wilted, about 3 minutes. Stir in the cauliflower and cook, stirring occasionally, until the cauliflower is wilted and begins to brown, about 4 minutes. Season lightly with salt and a generous pinch of pepperoncino.

Pour the chicken stock into the skillet, bring to a boil and lower the heat so the sauce is at a lively simmer.

Cook until the vegetables are tender and the liquid is reduced by half, about 5 minutes.

Meanwhile, add the orecchiette to the boiling water and cook until al dente. When the pasta is done, remove with a spider directly to the sauce. Add the parsley and breadcrumbs, and toss to coat the pasta with the sauce. Let simmer a minute, until the breadcrumbs thicken the sauce. Adjust the consistency of the sauce by adding more breadcrumbs if it is still too soupy, or a little pasta water if it is too tight. Remove the skillet from the heat, drizzle with a little more olive oil, toss and serve.

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