

# THE MONTANA CONSERVATIONIST

## Welcome to Elena Evans, the new Executive Director of the Montana Association of Conservation Districts:

In a personal message, Evans said, "I am honored to have the opportunity to work for the conservation districts and all of you. I continue to be impressed by the dedication and breadth of work undertaken by the districts. This work is vital to the state and I look forward to my role in advancing your goals. I also look forward to getting to know and learn from each of you." She can be reached via email at:

[eevans@macdnet.org](mailto:eevans@macdnet.org), or via her cell number **406-546-4714** or the MACD office number (**406-443-5711**).



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## Montana Watercourse offers scholarships for youth conservation education:

Summer youth camps are just around the corner and students in grades 5-12 in spring 2014, or who are entering grades 5-12 in fall 2014, who are planning to attend a water-related or natural resource-focused program, competition, or summer camps should consider applying for a [scholarship](#). Examples of qualifying programs include team competitions, after school programs, summer camps, conservation leadership schools, or range camps. Scholarships of up to \$300 can be applied to registrations costs, program-related fees, or travel. Awards are based upon need with special consideration given to youth from rural and underserved areas of the state. Scholarships are funded through a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency as part of Montana Watercourse's "[Classrooms to Careers Project](#)".



## Flathead Conservation District seeking candidates for Resource Conservationist position:

To apply for this position those interested should submit a letter of interest, resume, three verifiable references, and verifiable education and job experience. The full job description is posted on the [District's website](#) or can be picked up at the District's office located at 133 Interstate Lane, in Kalispell. Applications are due by **4:30 p.m. on March 31**. Please call **406-752-4220** with questions.

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## OF INTEREST TO CONSERVATION DISTRICTS:

### **Department of Natural Resources and Conservation releases its 2014 Model Floodplain Hazard Management Regulations:**

The official document incorporated relevant comments and suggestions from the public as well as several practicing local Floodplain Administrators. The new regulations have been posted on the Department's [Floodplain Management Program website](#). Also available are specific comments, responses to comments, and revisions. Questions regarding the regulations may be directed to [Laurence Siroky](#) (406-444-6816), Bureau Chief of the Department's Water Operations Bureau.



**Help Provide input for Local Conservation Practices Month! Please take our survey** <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LocalConservationPracticesMonth>



### **Videos on grazing strategies:**

Thank you to Sunni Heikes-Knapton, the Madison Watershed Coordinator, for sharing a series of vid-

eos that provide some great information on grazing strategies. There are 4 videos all together, but Sunni thinks one in particular is the best – [click here](#) to view it. [Click here](#) to see all of them.

### **Find out how drainage water management helps producers manage water on their fields:**

[Click here](#) to access a video that demonstrates how the practice can increase production, keep nutrients on the field, and send clean, filtered water downstream.



### **Rules to Implement the Natural Streambed and Land Preservation Act of 1975:**

For those interested, the revised adopted rules for the Flathead Conservation District are now available on their [website](#)!

### **Montana Salinity Control Association (MSCA) submits abstract for consideration at the 3rd International Salinity Forum to be held in Riverside, California June 16-18:**

The Association has been notified that their abstract entitled "Land Management For Dryland Salinity Control In Montana, Northern Great Plains" was accepted for an oral presentation, and will be working on the technical paper that will be published in the Proceedings. This is a prestigious recognition of the work MSCA provides and it will allow their work to be referenced in professional documents. Congratulations to Jane Holzer and her staff for representing Montana so well! [Click here](#) to find out more about MSCA. [Click here](#) to read the abstract.



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**REGISTRATION NOW OPEN !!**

**2014 MONTANA STORM WATER CONFERENCE**

## **Curbing the Flow: Positive Solutions for Storm Water Management**

**Holiday Inn Grand Montana, Billings, Montana**

**April 8 - 10, 2014**



Over 40 storm water experts share their knowledge through **general** and **breakout sessions**, **tours** to area storm water BMP's, a one-day **SWPPP Preparer Training** course, **vendor & exhibitor** hall, **evening reception** and more. All are designed to encourage networking with others involved in storm water management. Credits are offered.

**Keynote speaker**, Chad Pregracke, CNN's 2013 Hero of the Year, and founder of Living Lands & Water, shares his dedication to clean water as well as his storm water insights, and challenges us to make a difference.

**Register early and save!**

**Early Registration runs through March 14**

**Registration closes March 31**

**VISIT [Montana Storm Water Conference](#)**



**See conference agenda**



**Register for the conference**



**Learn about Lodging, Vendor/Exhibit Hall,  
Scholarships, Credits, Sponsorships,  
SWPPP Preparer Training**

**Questions? 406-994-6671 or [mtwatercourse@montana.edu](mailto:mtwatercourse@montana.edu)**

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## **Beaverhead & Ruby Valley Conservation Districts host streambank revegetation and bioengineering workshops in Dillon, April 8 through 11:**

The workshop will consist of a day in the classroom followed by a 2-3 day hands-on demonstration streambank revegetation project on the Beaverhead River. The classroom session will address the following topics, emphasizing case study successes and failures:

- ✓ Stream geomorphology and processes (Beau Downing)
- ✓ Riparian ecology and revegetation case studies (Tom Parker and Amy Sacry)
- ✓ Planting techniques and case studies (Chris Hoag)
- ✓ Project implementation and case studies (Jo Christensen)
- ✓ Permitting requirements and use of rip-rap (Jeff Ryan)



The field session will provide hands-on step-by-step instruction of site-specific considerations and how to properly install a bioengineered streambank revegetation or stabilization project.

Cost of registration is \$15 and includes lunch during the classroom session. Attendance will be limited to 100 people. Send an email to [beaverheadwatershed@gmail.com](mailto:beaverheadwatershed@gmail.com) to determine availability or register to attend. Please direct any questions regarding the workshop to [Matt Jaeger](mailto:Matt Jaeger) (406-683-9310).

## **Governor's Rangeland Resources Executive Committee (RREC) announces recipients of the 2013 Range Leader of the Year awards:**

Con-  
gratulations to Gold Creek rancher John Hollenback and Ann Fischer from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) on receiving this award.

Fischer's fellow NRCS employees nominated Fischer, noting that she provides exemplary leadership, inspires passion and initiates outreach. Fischer is a member of the Soil & Water Conservation Society and has 20 years of dedicated service to the NRCS. She is currently District Conservationist in the Baker Field Office. Fischer is a big advocate of soil health and works to promote the relationship between healthy rangeland and crop practices to soil health. She is a member of the Montana NRCS Soil Health Team and devotes time to educate professionals, youth and producers on this topic. Among her many accomplishments Fischer was awarded Producer of the Year at the Bowman/Slope Conservation District (North Dakota) in 2010. She was the keynote speaker at a no-till convention in France in 2011. And in 2013 she assisted in planning and teaching at the Montana Youth Range Camp.

The Deer Lodge Valley Conservation District nominated Gold Creek rancher John Hollenback for his years of dedication to Montana's rangelands. John has served on the board of supervisors for this group voluntarily for over 40 years. Hollenback has been operating his family ranch since 1957 and was once quoted in a newspaper saying, "Abused range concerns me, that's why I get involved". He has been involved in many aspects of rangeland management in Montana; he's been a leader forming groups and has promoted education in many different forms. Hollenback is a member of many councils and committees, two of the most notable are the Montana Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI) and the Rangeland Resources Executive Committee (RREC). He is a founding member of both groups; GLCI began in Montana in 1992 and the RREC was formed under the Rangeland Resources Program statute in 1977. With the Rangeland Resources Program, John helped begin the annual Montana Youth Range Camp. This event is still operating strong and teaching youth about the importance of rangelands. For his dedication to rangeland John was even awarded an Honorary Doctorate Degree from the college of Arts and Sciences at the University of Montana in 2010.



For more information on the Rangeland Resources Program, the Range Leader of the Year Award, or other grazing and range management efforts sponsored by DNRC, contact Heidi Crum at 406-444-6619, visit the [DNRC website](http://dnrc.mt.gov), or the Department's [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/dnrc.mt).

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## AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES NEWS

### Montana News:

AIS Grants Available from the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) ~ grants are for the control of aquatic invasive species. Visit [DNRC's website](#) for an application and general grant information. **Applications are due March 14, 2014.** Questions may also be directed to [Alicia Stickney](#) (406-444-0547).

Watercraft Inspectors Needed ~ [Click here](#) if interested in a summer field position at the Coram station, or other Watercraft Inspection Station.

Flathead Audubon's Conservation Achievement Recognition ~ Congratulations to Northwest Montana Lakes Volunteer Monitoring Network and Josh Gubits, an environmental scientist for the Whitefish Lake Institute for receiving this award. The award recognized their work on monitoring water quality, surveying and reporting aquatic invasive species, and promoting watershed stewardship in Northwest Montana. [Read More](#)

### Regional News:

Abstracts Available from the Flowering Rush Symposium ~ Held in conjunction with the Northern Rockies Invasive Plant Council, the symposium was a great opportunity to share research and management concerns about flowering rush. [Click here](#) to access the abstracts online.

Greater Yellowstone Area Invasive Species Meeting April 15 – 17 ~ The meeting will probably be held in West Yellowstone. Contact [Bryce Fowler](#) for more information.

New on-board technology for Wake Sport boats ~ The Mussel Mast'R is new technology designed to save time and money by eliminating the need to decontaminate ballast tanks. [Read More](#)

Federal agencies develop consistent protocols for fire personnel ~ The protocols are intended to prevent moving aquatic invasive species between watersheds. [Click here](#) to read operational and technical guidelines.

Lake Powell/Glen Canyon National Rec Area ~ Officials announced that "thousands" of adult quagga mussels have been found from Glen Canyon Dam to Bullfrog Bay, some 95 miles up the lake. [Read more](#)

Bacterium for invasive mussel control ~ New York biologist studies bacterium (*Pseudomonas fluorescens*-strain CL145A) that kills invasive zebra and quagga mussels but leaves other mollusks unharmed. [Read more](#)



Megan Parker, co-founder of Working Dogs for Conservation Foundation and Pepin

Photo courtesy of the Foundation

### ***Say hello to Pepin, the latest offense against aquatic invasive species:***

Pepin is an 8-year-old Belgian malinois, and is one of the finest conservation canines in the world. Through the [Working Dogs for Conservation Foundation](#), Pepin has used his keen sense of smell to locate elusive endangered species, discover nonnative plants and invertebrates, and sniff out dangerous hazards like toxic chemicals or metal snares across 12 countries. And now he's come to the Flathead Basin to help in the ongoing battle to defend a pristine watershed against invasive plants and mussels that pose a constant and critical threat to the region's rivers and lakes. [Read More](#)

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## NEWS FROM OUR PARTNERS:

### **Check out what happened during the National Association of Conservation District's Annual Meeting:** [Click here](#)

to access NACD's website to find a press release template, pictures (available on their Flickr page), presentations, and much more. Among the many pictures should be one of Jeff Wivholm, our illustrious Board President, accepting the award for Karl Christian, DNRC.



### **Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) to host forestry workshops:**

First is a three-day workshop on **"Forest Insect and Disease Identification and Management"** scheduled for June 24 through 26, at the Flathead National Forest Supervisor's Office in Kalispell. The workshop will be from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. the first two



days and from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. the last day. Identification and management of forest insects and diseases will be discussed during indoor

presentations and multiple field trips. Attendance is limited to 35 people so those interested should register early.

Immediately following this workshop, will be a one-day workshop on June 27, focusing on identification and management of root diseases. This workshop will be held entirely in the field with attendees meeting in the morning to car pool to selected field locations to view and discuss common root diseases found in western Montana and northern Idaho. Students will be given ample opportunity to work through the process of identifying root diseases active on the site as well time to discuss management options at each location. Attendance is limited to 20 people so those interested should register early.

To register send an email to [Chris Hayes](#) that includes the following information:

- Course name
- Student name, address, email, and phone number
- Student position title and agency
- Accessibility/Special needs requests

Society of American Foresters CFE credits and Montana Department of Agriculture pesticide recertification credits will be available for those that complete the course.

### **U.S. Department of Agriculture publishes its long-term projections on the future of the land and the trade of foodstuffs between nations:**

Among this year's predictions are prospects for the soybean, which is becoming more important every year. Over the past 20 years trade in soybeans has pushed past wheat, corn, and oats. This trend is expected to continue into the future. So why are soybeans so popular? It's because they have so many uses. They can be crushed into a nutritious feedstock for beef cattle, have their oil processed into a form of biodiesel, and be used in various different industrial compounds. [Read More](#)



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**Scientists identify oldest known piece of our planet: Found in Western Australia, this tiny zircon crystal is 4.4 billion years old.** What does this discovery show? Well, it is evidence that the Earth's crust formed relatively soon after the planet itself was formed, suggesting that the early Earth was not as harsh a place as many scientists have originally believed. To put this into perspective, the Earth was formed 4.5 billion years ago with the crust forming 100 million years later. All this adds up to scientists believing that the Earth was potentially able to sustain life earlier than previously thought. Now for one more staggering statistic that puts even more perspective on this finding. Archeologists estimate that modern humans have been on the Earth for about 200,000 years. Maybe that time will also change with this new discovery. [Read More](#)



**Is the U.S. experiencing another golden age in agriculture:** That may be the case with many young people getting out of college and returning to the family farm or starting up one of their own. In Montana cattle outnumber residents and agriculture is king. And, the percentage of growth in total value outperformed the nation's. In-state products earned \$4.2 billion, a 51 percent increase over 2007; the national average was 32.8 percent. [Read More](#)



In a related article published in the [Bozeman Daily Chronicle](#), while Montana's producers are growing, a new report warns of agricultural land being lost to outside investors over the next 20 years. The report, **"Down on the Farm,"** published by the Oakland Institute, talks about institutional investors looking for ways to safeguard large sums of money by investing in agricultural property when existing farmers retire. Investment by younger farmers in our agriculture industry was never more important than right now!

**NASA partnering with California water officials to assess and manage drought:** NASA scientists are deploying satellite and other airborne technology to get a bird's eye view of the state. Data and pictures will help assess the snowpack and ground water levels to help manage the record drought. Satellite images will show how many fields farmers have chosen not to plant and where land is sinking as a result of excessive pumping of water. Governor Brown has directed state officials to form these partnerships as part of the drought emergency declaration made this past January.



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# Calendar

March thru April

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**March 13 ~** Navigating Water Rights Issues, Miles City Community College, for more information contact [Nikki Sandve](#)

**March 17 ~** Saint Patrick's Day

**March 24 ~** MACD Executive Committee Call, for more information contact Jan Fontaine (**443-5711**)

**March 27 thru 27 ~** 15th Annual Association Of Montana Floodplain Managers Conference, Billings Hotel & Convention Center

**April 1 ~** April Fool's Day

**April 8 thru 10 ~** 2014 Montana Storm Water Conference, Billings, for more information visit [Montana Watercourse](#)

**April 14 ~** MACD Conference Call, for more information contact Jan Fontaine (**443-5711**)

**April 22 ~** Earth Day

**April 25 ~** Arbor Day

**April 27 thru May 4 ~** NACD's Soil and Water Stewardship Week, visit [NACD's website](#)

**April 28 ~** MACD Executive Committee Call, for more information contact Jan Fontaine (**443-5711**)

**April 28 thru 29 ~** Montana Envirothon in Lewistown, for more information contact Jan Fontaine (**443-5711**)

**May 5 ~** Cinco de Mayo

**May 12 ~** MACD Conference Call, for more information contact Jan Fontaine (**443-5711**)

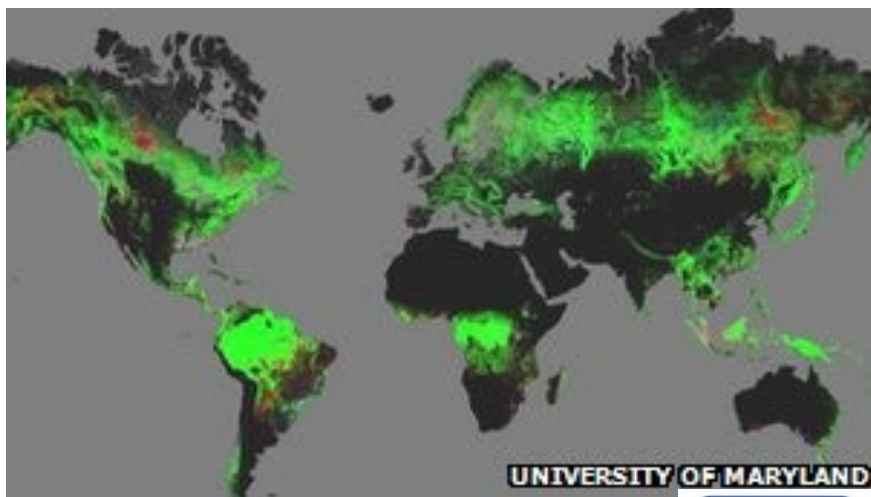
**May 11 ~** Mother's Day

**May 17 ~** Armed Forces Day

**May 26 ~** Memorial Day

**May 27 (Tuesday) ~** MACD Executive Committee Call, for more information contact Jan Fontaine (**443-5711**)

**New online tool helps track tree loss:** Global Forest Watch (GFW) is backed by Google and over 40 business and campaigning groups. Using information from satellite images and on-the-ground data, this tool provides almost real time tracking of tree loss events around the globe. There is much more awareness of the impacts deforestation has on our planet and the scale of forest loss since 2000 is significant. According to data from Google and the University of Maryland more than 560 million acres of trees have been lost between 2000 and 2012. But it is difficult to get accurate information. In the same time that some forests were being impacted, around 497,000 square miles of new forest was planted. To tackle the dearth of reliable and up to date information, the US based World Resources Institute (WRI) has led the development of GFW, using half a billion high resolution images from NASA'S Landsat program. [Read More](#)



The Montana Association of Conservation Districts has joined Facebook. Please like us and share your photos and events!

<https://www.facebook.com/MontanaAssociationofConservationDistricts>





Montana Association of Conservation Districts

**MONTANA CDs: LOCAL COMMON SENSE CONSERVATION**

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Please send your thoughts as to how to improve **The Montana Conservationist** to [tmc@macdnet.org](mailto:tmc@macdnet.org)

Unless specifically requested, **The Montana Conservationist** is not sent to CD Supervisors. MACD relies on District Administrators to forward **The Montana Conservationist** to the Board Chair, Supervisors, Associate Supervisors and CD Staff. Thank you.

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