Stream Permitting in Gallatin County

Who Must Apply
Any private, nongovernmental individual or entity that proposes to work in or near a stream on public or private land.

Activities Requiring a Permit
Any activity that physically alters or modifies the bed or banks of a perennially flowing stream.

Applications Procedure/Timeline
If you are planning to do work on or near a waterway in Montana, one or several permits may be required.

A person planning a project in Gallatin County must submit a permit application to GCD prior to any activity in or near a perennial-flowing stream.

Once an application is accepted, a team that consists of a GCD representative; a Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks biologist; and the applicant may conduct an on site inspection. The team makes recommendations to the conservation district board, which has 60 days from the time the application is accepted to approve, modify, or deny the permit. Local rules apply. Currently, there is no charge for a 310 permit. GCD will only process applications relating to its 310 jurisdiction. Applications should be submitted to other authorizing agencies listed on form when necessary.


Gallatin County Natural Resource Concern Survey

Gallatin County residents! Please take our Natural Resource Concerns Survey. We will use it to prioritize resource concerns and implement it through our long range GCD Strategic Planning. The survey is on Facebook “Gallatin Conservation District.”
News Releases

Watson to Lead Natural Resources Conservation Service in Montana

Contact:
Tasha Gibby
406-587-6789

BOZEMAN, Mont., August 27, 2018 – Tom Watson recently assumed the position of state conservationist for USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Montana. In that job, Watson will be responsible for NRCS operations within the state, including the administration of conservation technical assistance to private landowners, conservation financial assistance programs, conservation easement programs, the Natural Resources Inventory, water supply forecasting, soil survey mapping, and the Plant Materials Center in Bridger.

Most recently, Watson has worked as an assistant state conservationist in Oregon, supervising the administrative and operational functions for the state. His NRCS career began at a local field office in Wyoming after graduating from the University of Wyoming with a range management degree. Watson grew up on a farm in western Nebraska and has spent his whole life connected to agriculture.

“I pride myself with being from the West and with that, an understanding of issues that often impact private land and producers,” Watson said. “I look forward to working with producers and the many conservation groups who have a stake in Montana’s future.”

Watson may be reached at the NRCS state office in Bozeman at 406-587-6811.

# # #

Running the Ranch

Posted by Tim Griffiths, Natural Resources Conservation Services in Farming Conservation

August 28, 2018

Pickup trucks, working dogs, cowboy hats, and running shoes. These were the diverse sights I registered as my eyes scanned the 100-plus crowd gathered under Montana’s Big Sky this past Saturday.

You could tell right away this wasn’t a typical ranching operation, and it certainly wasn’t going to be your normal run. It was a mixture of both, aptly named the Montana Ranch Run, now in its fourth year.

Organized by Kari Berg Marks and the Montana CattleWomen, the race serves as a bridge that links urbanites with rural America. The primary goal is to introduce a new audience, the running community, to the beauty of Montana’s farms and ranches as well as educate them about the importance of agriculture and private land stewardship.

The Montana Ranch Run is a 25-mile race that takes participants through three ranches, giving them a firsthand view of ranching in Meagher County. Tim Griffiths with the Natural Resources Conservation Service was one of the participants in the race this past weekend.
The 25-mile race was ran by two to five people, and posters were set up at the exchange points providing information on ranching.

Additionally, I believe the unpublished secondary goal is to have as much fun as possible in the process. As to accomplishing both, I can now personally attest.

The course runs approximately 25 miles through three multi-generation ranches and transects the Lewis and Clark National Forest in Meagher County, Montana. It’s organized into five legs that can be run solo or as a team of 2 to 5 members.

The landscape is as varied as the participants, and seamlessly links public and private lands that blend low elevation winter range with high mountain elk and moose calving grounds. Oh, and the course is run completely on dirt. Your feet never hit blacktop!

This year, USDA was provided an opportunity to help support last weekend’s run. I jumped at the chance to help create posters and outreach materials used throughout the race. The project proved almost as fun as the run itself as we discovered so many amazing facts to share like:

- Agriculture is Montana’s number one industry, valued at more than $4 billion annually. This is more than the value of gas and oil, mining, and the wood and paper products industries, combined.
- Montana ranchers provide 39 million acres of open space and wildlife habitat. This is an area larger than 18 Yellowstone National Parks
- Approximately half of all threatened or endangered species have at least 80 percent of their habitat on private agricultural land. This makes private landowners critical to successful species recovery.

On average, USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service invests upwards of $8 million every day of the year into conservation systems that help producers stay productive and profitable.

The facts were incorporated into posters and displayed at the exchange points between legs, each of which also featured “agriculturally-inspired” treats. In fact, somewhere between the first and second exchange points, I had a hard time concentrating on running as I was vividly daydreaming about the homemade beef jerky that was waiting at exchange three. It was also nice to have so many of the local ranch families on hand, from helping at the exchange points to running the course themselves. Incredible people to say the least.

At the Montana Ranch Run, participants received a cattle ear tag as the finisher medal.

Runners also got to hear from Dusty Hahn, a rancher from a neighboring county who shared his compelling personal story of working lands and conservation and talked about the many ways that agriculture, fish, and wildlife are all thriving together in his community. His insights to success was clear as he eloquently stated, “We’ve accomplished all of our great deeds only through collaboration and cooperation.”

USDA, following those same principles, helped landowners in Meagher County apply conservation on 106,000 acres to improve water, forage and wildlife habitat in the last year and a half alone.

As I neared the end of the journey, I could see three little girls in summer dresses all lined up at the finish. They were local rancher kids, probably fifth or sixth generation, just doing their part to chip in to help mom, dad and the grandparents complete another day in the office. They were all smiles awarding the runners with their medals, or cattle ear tags in this case.

To be honest, it made my whole day. I also felt extremely proud to work for the Natural Resources Conservation Service, which prides itself on “Helping People Help the Land.”

Article source: https://www.farmers.gov/media/blog/2018/08/28/running-ranch
On August 9th, Trudy from the Manhattan Community Library visited the EOC to talk about the Manhattan Community Library. With many selections and genres of books, the Library encourages kids to stop by and check out some books that gets them outside and be more active.

There were many books about nature, especially rocks and minerals, on display for the kids to look through. They also wrote down the titles of their favorite books on canvas. During the Library Summer Reading Program “Our Library Rocks” they had kids make pet rocks. If you look around closely, you may spot some “pet rocks” around the EOC, too.
On the 17th, Nathanael presented on area native fish. He discussed the difference between native and non-native species and provided some information about each species. He emphasized the importance of protecting native species.

Miles Miller brought in crayfish, aquatic insects and fish that he had collected from the creek for the kids to observe.

Kids painted canvases for the 2018 Manhattan Potato Fest silent art auction. Proceeds benefit the Zach Babat Memorial Art Scholarship Fund. It was fun seeing the ideas that the kids came up with.
We displayed thirty-six canvases at the EOC on Saturday, August 19th during the 2018 Manhattan Potato Fest. Many parents stopped by and purchased their child’s artwork—the silent auction has brought in $378.00. All proceeds will benefit the Zach Babat Memorial Art Scholarship Fund. Thank you to everyone for their support for this worthy endeavor!

The theme for the artwork was Wildlife, Fish or Artist Choice. Kids chose acrylic paint colors and used stencils or stamps made from zucchini and allium blossoms or just free painted.

Bee Free Fiesta

A wonderful meal is planned: The menu includes Chips and Salsa, Tortillas, Fajitas made of Beef, Red and Green Bell Peppers, Onions, Refried Beans, Guacamole, Rice, and Lemonade.

But if all animal pollinators were to become extinct, which of the foods on our menu would be eliminated?

HINT: Some of the more common foods that we enjoy from animal-pollinated plants include tomatoes, onions, avocados, beans, green peppers, chili peppers, lemons, limes, oranges, berries, vanilla, sugar, almonds, watermelon, and apples.

Article source: Nature’s Partners: Pollinators, Plans, and You
www.nappc.org

Left photos: Josh from MSU Extension came by to talk to us about our native pollinators. He started the program with a walk around the garden and the kids were asked what kind of bugs did they see ... they answered bee, wasp, ladybug, ant, moth, etc. He asked them what they were doing ... they answered flying from flower to flower. They were pollinating! (except ant, of course).

He demonstrated the process of pollination with a white lily. He showed how the pollen made its way into the reproductive parts of the flower to become a seed, fruit or nut.

So, if we didn’t have any pollinators, could we still have a fiesta? Of course, but it would be just cheese, meat and tortillas with none of the fixings that make them yummy.

Right photos: Adam, our Farmers Market booth neighbor, was invited to come talk about honey bees. He showed the kids a beekeepers outfit, a portable bee box and its’ many parts, and a smoker used to calm the bees when working with them. He talked about how honey was collected and brought sweet treats—honey sticks and an edible honey comb. He also brought bee pollen that people tried. Interestingly, people tasted different things with the pollen, some thought it tasted like raisins and some said it had a citrus flavor.
You are receiving the next installment of the Gallatin County Water Supply Outlook. Please refer to this report to learn about current drought/flood conditions and drought/flood outlook for the Gallatin Valley. This report serves as a resource to aid in our resilience to changing weather and climate conditions. Happy September!

- Mitch Lassa
Big Sky Watershed Corps Member
MSU Extension - Gallatin County, One Montana

Snowpack
Gallatin River Basin

Snowpack Summary: As summer comes to an end, we can hopefully reflect on a summer well spent and look forward to a pleasant fall.

Due to lack of snowpack during the summer, this segment of the report has been abbreviated. Data is gathered from seven SNOTEL sites in Gallatin County.

After September 4, data becomes projections of potential snowpack levels.

Click here to access the 2017 Water Year NEP graph to compare current and previous snowpack conditions.

For current NEP graphs of other Montana river basins, click here.

For more information on how to read NEP graphs, click here. (Source: NRCS)

To access blue hyperlinks: Control + click mouse/keyboard

Streamflow
Gallatin River Watershed

Streamflow Summary: As of September 4, 2018, stream discharge in the Gallatin River is above normal. August saw a few significant rain events that helped keep discharge above normal. Current discharge at station 06052500 is 510 cfs - 101% of daily median discharge (504 cfs). At station 06048650, discharge is 59.8 cfs - 193% of daily median discharge (31 cfs). At station 06043500, discharge is 511 cfs - 106% of daily median discharge (483 cfs). The median is calculated from a data collection period of 101, 3, and 88 years, respectively.

For current flood conditions, refer to the USGS WaterWatch Map of Flood and High Flow Conditions.
Streamflow
Gallatin River Watershed

Graph of discharge (cfs) at Gallatin River at Logan MT from August 1, 2018 to September 4, 2018.

Graph of discharge (cfs) at Gallatin River near Gallatin Gateway, MT from August 1, 2018 to September 4, 2018.

Understanding Streamgage Data
Discharge — the volume of water flowing past a given point in a stream in a given period of time measured in cubic feet per second (cfs) (USGS)

Gage Height — the height of the water in the stream above a reference point (USGS)

Temperature — the temperature of a stream, in degrees Fahrenheit, recorded at a reference point

What is a streamgage?
A USGS streamgage is an active, continuously functioning measuring device located in the field that computes or estimates a mean daily streamflow or other set of unit values. USGS streamgages measure the elevation of water in a river or stream (the stage) which is then converted to a streamflow (discharge) using a curve that relates the elevation to a set of actual discharge measurements. The stage is typically measured every 15 minutes and data is transmitted to the USGS every 1 to 4 hours, after which stage and streamflow data is calculated and put on to the USGS website.

For more information, visit the USGS webpage on streamgages.

Reservoir
06050000-Middle Creek Dam (Hyalite)
Reservoir Elevation Graph

Reservoir Elevation Graph and supporting data for Middle Creek Dam (Hyalite) Reservoir. (Source: DNRC)

Reservoir Summary: As of September 4th, 2018, Middle Creek Dam (Hyalite) Reservoir elevation is 6,703.1 ft, which is below principal spillway crest elevation (6,721.0 ft). Reservoir volume is 6,420 acre-ft. Reservoir percent capacity is 50%.
Understanding Reservoir Data—Middle Creek Dam (Hyalite)

Middle Creek Dam (Hyalite), completed in 1951, is owned by the Montana DNRC and managed by the State Water Projects Bureau through a U.S. Forest Service Special Use Permit. The reservoir stores 10,184 acre-feet of water and provides irrigation water for 73 farms and ranches and drinking water for 2,000 households. The reservoir is also used for recreational purposes.

For more information, visit the Montana DNRC State Water Projects Bureau webpage.

US Drought Monitor

Montana Counties Drought Map

Drought Monitor Summary: As of August 1st, 2018, the Montana Counties map indicates that Lincoln County is experiencing severely dry conditions (D2), with surrounding northwestern and northern counties experiencing moderately dry (D1) and slightly dry conditions (D0).

Ten southcentral Montana counties are experiencing slightly moist conditions. The U.S. Drought Monitor map - released more recently on August 28th, 2018 - indicates similar severe (D2) and moderate (D1) drought conditions, with a good portion of the state experiencing abnormally dry (D0) conditions.

Understanding Drought Data—How is drought measured?

Drought is quantified through a number of factors including precipitation, wind, streamflow, and soil moisture measurements. Drought is categorized into drought intensity designations based on percentiles, e.g. D2, D3, D4.

For example, D4 drought occurs when precipitation, streamflow, and soil moisture measurements are at percentiles of 0-2, meaning that these are extremely low measurements and should only occur 0-2 times in 100 years. Please visit the US Drought Monitor website for more information on drought classification.

What is the Montana Drought Impact Reporter?

The Montana Drought Impact Reporter (MDIR) is an interactive web-based mapping tool designed to compile and display impact information in near real-time from a variety of sources such as media, government agencies, and the public. The MDIR is vital in order to ground-truth national trends at a local level.

Please visit the Montana DNRC webpage on Drought Management to access the MDIR and report current conditions in your area.
To promote and guide the conservation and management of natural resources in Gallatin County.

DISTRICT SUPERVISORS
John Venhuizen, Chairman
John Schutter, Vice Chair
Sherwin Leep
Jason Camp
Loren Blanksma

URBAN SUPERVISORS
Bob Logar
Michael Hansen

ASSOCIATE SUPERVISOR
Doug Espelien

DISTRICT STAFF
Mary Hendrix, Administrator & Editor
Leia Miller, Youth Education Coordinator
& Newsletter Contributor
Nathanael Johns, Summer Intern
& Newsletter Contributor

310 CONSULTANTS
Mike Rotar, RESPEC
Matt Johnson, RESPEC
Dave Moser, MT FWP

NRCS FIELD OFFICE
Justin Meissner, District Conservationist, Townsend
Bozeman/Townsend Shared Management Team
Christopher Mahony, District Conservationist, Bozeman
Shawna Taylor, Soil Conservationist
Marvin Hansen, Soil Conservation Technician

UPCOMING EVENTS, DEADLINES AND WEBINARS

September 2018

September 5, 2018 - September 6, 2018  Montana Range Tour
September 5, 2018 - September 5, 2018  Lavina Field Day
September 11, 2018 - September 13, 2018  Noxious Weed Management Certification Workshop Level I
September 13, 2018 - September 14, 2018  Farm to School Summit
September 24, 2018 - September 27, 2018  National Association of State Foresters Annual Meeting
September 25, 2018 - September 25, 2018  Rangeland Analysis Platform: Introducing a free, online tool to help manage and monitor western rangelands

October 2018

October 2, 2018 - October 4, 2018  Women Stepping Forward for Agriculture Conference
October 5, 2018 - October 7, 2018  Young Ag Leadership Conference
October 10, 2018 - October 12, 2018  2018 Watershed Symposium
October 15, 2018 - October 18, 2018  Restoring Resilient Communities in Changing Landscapes
October 15, 2018 - October 19, 2018  Armed to Farm Veteran Training
October 17, 2018 - October 20, 2018  35th Annual Montana AWRA Conference
October 26, 2018 - October 28, 2018  AERO 2018 Expo and Annual Meeting
October 26, 2018 - October 27, 2018  2018 Montana Farmers Union Annual Convention

To access blue hyperlinks: Control + click mouse/keyboard

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250 - 9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).