

South Central RC&D

SOUTH CENTRAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT



FY2013

ANNUAL REPORT

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of the South Central Resource Conservation & Development Council (South Central RC&D) is to address the needs and opportunities of the South Central RC&D area.

Vision

The vision is for the area to be viable through the wise use of natural and human resources.

Mission

The mission of the South Central Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc. is to provide technical assistance and personal representation of our four counties.

South Central RC&D Structure

In 1992 local citizens began discussing the Resource Conservation and Development program. Those involved were representatives from the conservation districts, extension offices, county governments, and non-profit organizations throughout the (4) four counties of Todd, Mellette, Jones and Tripp. In August 1992 the first application was submitted to the US Secretary of Agriculture but did not receive assistance. In June 1993 a second application for RC&D planning assistance was submitted and in February 1994 South Central RC&D was authorized by the USDA but there was no funding available for a federal coordinator. At the same time, Badlands RC&D, and Randall RC&D were looking for a new federal coordinator. Under the direction of the SD State Conservationist Dean Fisher, the three councils were able to acquire funding through a memorandum of understanding with NRCS. This would provide the flexibility for the Councils to hire its own staff. In June 2007 a federal coordinator was selected for South Central RC&D In December 1993 South Central RC&D received its designation of a 501c3 non-profit entity from the Internal Revenue Service. In April of 2011 the RC&D program nationally was eliminated from the federal budget. South Central RC&D is operating currently as a 501c3 non-profit organization.

The South Central RC&D council received its non-profit corporate status from the South Dakota Secretary of State in November 1992.

The Board of Directors consists of selected individuals from each paid sponsor to represent the following three categories

Category A = Individuals, non-profit groups and organizations

Category B = Townships, tribal communities, conservation districts and special purpose groups

Category C = Cities, towns, county and tribal governments

There are three representatives for each category from each county which equates to a 12 member board of directors representing the South Central RC&D area.

The council had 50 paid sponsors from ten categories including counties, municipalities, conservation districts, individuals, school districts, volunteer fire departments, emergency care councils, businesses, utility company, and non-profit organizations.

Committees:

Finance Committee

Darrell Daum
Leroy Hodge
Paul Thomas

Operations Committee

Dr. C. K. Kinsley, DVM
Paul Thomas
Rose West
Terri Grablander

Awards Committee

George England
Terri Grablander

FY 2013 State Association Delegates

Terri Grablander, *Appointee*
George England, *Appointee*
Jeannine Woodward, *Alternate*

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South Central RC&D

Declaration of the Area of Operation

South Central Resource Conservation and Development Council (South Central RC&D), serves the Counties of Jones, Mellette, Todd, and Tripp. Within the boundaries of Todd County lies the Rosebud Sioux Tribe Indian Reservation. Tribal lands are also located within Tripp and Mellette Counties. The total population of South Central RC&D area from the 2008 estimates is 18,854. The largest county is Todd with a population of 10,167. The smallest county is Jones with a population of 1,024. Within the area, 53.88% of the population is American Indian. There are several outlying American Indian communities in Mellette and Tripp Counties. Todd County and Rosebud Indian Reservation share the same boundaries. There has been a slow but steady decline in the population of Tripp, Jones, and Mellette Counties. Most of the population growth is shown in Todd County ($\approx 11\%$). The downward population trend is especially true in smaller towns and in rural communities with the exception of American Indian areas. The persistent economic depression in the area explains the lack of jobs and business opportunities and as a result the population decline. Mellette county remains fairly constant but Todd County has shown some growth. Agriculture is the principal industry in the area and most stable jobs are provided by governments, including school districts and health care. Other employers are services, retail and tourist trade.

The economy of the area is based on agriculture with livestock and wheat crop as main productions. Livestock production is the prime source of income with cropland used to produce livestock feed and winter wheat. There is a small number of irrigation systems operated on an individual basis. The native vegetation consists of cool season grasses such as wheatgrass, needle grass and sedges intermixed with warm season grasses of the blue stems, blue grama, side oats grama and buffalo grass. With the exception of the Badlands, most of the area is relatively smooth, rolling prairies cut at intervals by small tributary drainages and scattered buttes. The southern portion consists of Nebraska Sand Hills and the western area is the Badlands. The major water resources in the South Central RC&D area are the Little White River and the White River. Ogallala aquifer provides some of the area water for human consumption, livestock, and irrigation. The rural water systems provide water for human and livestock consumption.

South Central RC&D area is located in the south central area of South Dakota. It has a total land base of 3,378,632 acres. The office is located in Murdo (SD) which is 50 miles southwest from the state Capital in Pierre (SD), lying to the west 136 miles is Rapid City (SD) and lying to the east 215 miles is Sioux Falls (SD). Sioux Falls and Rapid City are the largest cities in South Dakota



Types of RC&D Assistance

South Central RC&D offers three types of assistance: Technical, Financial and Grant Process Facilitation.

The goals and objectives that the South Central RC&D Council addresses in their five (5) year plan are:

Land Conservation

- ◆ Improve Rangeland, Grassland, Forestland and Cropland
- ◆ Improve Wildlife Habitat and Riparian Areas
- ◆ Increase Tree Planting and Innovate Shelterbelts
- ◆ Promote Energy Saving in Agricultural Practices
- ◆ Reduce Soil Erosion and Sedimentations

Water Management

- ◆ Safeguard Surface and Ground Water Quality
- ◆ Support Dams and Ponds Restoration and Construction
- ◆ Develop Water Resources and Improve Agri-Water Systems

Community Development

- ◆ Improve Economic Viability for Business and Job Creation
- ◆ Build a Future for Renewable Energy and Energy Saving
- ◆ Develop Sustainable Agriculture Businesses
- ◆ Enhance Community Education and Management Capacity
- ◆ Maintain or Expand Essential Community Services and Facilities

Land Management

- ◆ Control Noxious Weeds, Invasive Species, and Pests
- ◆ Increase Youth Involvement in Land management
- ◆ Enhance Recycling and Solid Waste Reductions
- ◆ Improve Water and Waste Disposal Systems

South Central RC&D

Council Activities

During fiscal year 2012-2013 South Central secured approximately \$409,709.05 from donations, grants, partnerships and other contributions including volunteer time and in-kind contributions for some of the projects proposed in the RC&D area. The council completed and officially closed 11 projects, accepted 14 new projects and expanded 59 businesses. A full report on the major projects is explained on the following pages.

Agencies South Central RC&D partnered with include: South Dakota Department of Agriculture, South Dakota Grassland Coalition, Natural Resource Conservation and Service (NRCS), Farm Service Agency (FSA), Jones/Mellette/Todd Conservation Districts, SDSU Extension Service, Master Gardeners and the Buy Fresh Buy Local Program

Mellette County Museum/Library



The Women's Club Library, nestled inside the Mellette County Museum, is only open two days a week but this year they have had 1,475 people visit the library. One thousand two hundred ninety-two books and 799 videos were checked out.

Most of the books and videos come from donations to the library. This year alone they had 1,918 books donated and 1,785 movies donated. How is this library operated? By volunteer power and lots of fundraisers. There are eleven volunteers who donated over 1,594-1/2 hours to clean, organize

books, and assist with other duties to keep the library running smoothly.

This year the newest addition installed were several new shelves to accommodate the additional books they have received. These shelves were made possible from memorial money donated from the Pat Adrian Family. Pat was a life long resident of the White River community and an avid reader and user of the library. Fundraising continues year round to keep the library/museum operating. They have bake sales, plant sales, brand-

ing parties and catered meals to groups meeting at the museum.

Wireless internet was recently installed to accommodate more meeting needs and they have a story reading time for the day care providers. At Christmas time Santa visits the museum/library that is nicely decorated with trees that have been decorated by different organizations in the community.

Additional wiring has been installed by a volunteer to accommodate all the Christmas trees that are decorated.

Parmelee Volunteer Fire Department

The dreams of a new fire hall in Parmelee is starting to take shape. In April of 2012 a ground breaking was held and bids were taken. After four different bidding requests, additional funding ac-

quired and a scaled down version was agreed upon a contractor was hired. In August 2013 work has begun. The ground work has been finished, water and sewer has been in-

stalled and the cement pad has been poured. The cost of the fire hall is around \$226,300. Much of the ground work for this project has been accomplished with volunteers.

Hamill Community

The community of Hamill may be small but they are very determined. When community members realized that some much needed repairs needed to be made to address the condensation issue in the Hamill Hall a committee was formed and contractors were contacted. A contractor from Platte, SD put a vinyl insulated coating on

the outside of the Hall but inside work will be done at a later time. The cost of the total repair project (inside and outside) will be around \$62,000. Fundraising for this project included gun raffles, beef raffles, South Dakota Community Foundation, Tripp County Foundation, Barger Foundation, South Central RC&D, along with many local donations contributed to the fundraising efforts. Volun-

teers do most of the work to the building which gets used for basketball games, voting, bountiful baskets, weddings, funerals and a host of other community events.



2013 Ranchers Workshop

The 34th Annual Ranchers Workshop was held on Tuesday, January 15, 2013 at the Community Events Center in White River, SD. The main speaker for the day was Jolene Brown, CSP Professional Speaker, and Champion for Agriculture. Brown lives on a farm in east central Iowa and has been speaking professionally for agriculture for over 20 years. Brown addressed the human side of agriculture during her presentation entitled "The Top Ten Stupid Things Families Do to Break up Their Business". Brown gave the attendees the tools they need to improve their productivity,

profitability and family relationships. She discussed in-laws, off-site family and estates, transition of the family business and the importance of communication and meetings. In the afternoon Brown moderated a panel of experts including an accountant-Gary Fenenga, a lawyer-Patrick Goetzinger and a financial Advisor-Casey Berndt, giving attendees answers to questions about the financial, and legal avenues to think about when trying to pass the farm onto the next generation. Dr. Travis Van Anne, Professional Service Veterinarian from Boehringer-Ingelheim Vetmedica (BIV), Inc

spoke on Drought Issues and Pasture Health.

The Ranchers Workshop is coordinated by Mellette and Todd County Conservation Districts, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRSC), Mellette/Todd County Farm Service Agency (FSA), South Central Resources Conservation and Development Council (South Central RC&D) and the Rosebud Extension .



Housing Meeting



Approximately 50 people attend a public housing meeting on November 5, 2012 at the Turner Community Center in Murdo, SD . Attendees from five different communities were present.

A panel of experts representing federal, state and local agencies were available to answer questions. The panel consisted of :

Mark Lauseng: *Executive Director for the South Dakota Housing Development Authority,*

Roger Jacobs: *Field Office Director for Housing and Urban Development(HUD)*

Greg Henderson: *Executive Director for Planning & Development District III*

Marlene Knutson: Ex-

ecutive Director for *Central South Dakota Enhancement District*

Paula Corcoran: *Loan Specialist from Rural Development*

Bill Hanson: *Rural Housing Collaborative*

and

Joy McCracken: *NeighborWorks Dakota Home Resources & Dakota Land Trust*



Main Street Project

The Mission Chamber of Commerce partnered with South Central RC&D to assist the community to develop a park in an open Main Street lot purchased by the city seven years ago. Several organizational meetings were held and grant funding was applied for to cover the cost of the trees and

grass seed .

Two Boy Scouts, working on their Eagle Scout Badges, measured the lot, put up a wrought iron fence, planted the grass and will be assisting with the installation of an irrigation system. The Hidden Timber 4-H club assisted the Scouts with planting nine trees

in the park. The Todd County Conservation District donated time, and equipment to till the ground before planting and Cherry-Todd Electric donated wood chips for mulch. Future plans include installing a flag pole and building a stage for local music concerts.



Soil Health Workshop

Even with all the precipitation the county has been receiving lately, managing drought and healthy soil were topics discussed at the Soil Workshop held this past week in Murdo. Thirteen were in attendance for the workshop held June 17th at the Dan Parish Center. Mitch Faulkner showed the group how to utilize the Drought Monitor as another tool to help producers with management decisions. This can be found at <http://www.sd.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/>

[Range Pasture.html](#). Robert Fanning discussed soil formation, ways to increase carbons in the soil, and the importance of soil microorganisms. Both speakers touched on the four important factors for healthy soil: Soil Organic Matter, Soil Infiltration, Soil Biological Activity and Aggregate Stability. Ryan Willert did a rain fall simulator presentation to show the importance of having residue on cropland and the effects that overgrazing can have on

grass root formation on pasture land. The Nix Ranch tour was rained out.

A light lunch was sponsored by the Jones County Conservation District and First Fidelity Bank. The workshop was sponsored by: Jones County NRCS, Jones County Conservation District and South Central RC&D.



Todd County Environmental Fair

Two hundred and twenty-two 5th graders attended the Environmental Fair in Mission sponsored each year by the Todd County Conservation District and Rosebud Extension. The youth learn about different aspects of the environment they live in. Presenters this year included Nathan Kafer, South Dakota Department of Agriculture Division of Resource Conservation and Forestry-State Forester entitled "Every Tree for Itself", Lealand Schoon and Tyrell Tucker, Mellette/Todd County Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) presented "Farm Animal" and explain

what product farm animals produce the we use every day like milk, eggs and wool. Kodi Blotsky South Dakota Cattle Women-talked about the different uses of beef cattle. Ken Graupman, South Dakota Science and Discovery Center-talked about water and had the youth do a hands on experiment. Nathan Jones-NRCS Soil Scientist let the students go through the "worm tunnel" and emphasised the benefits of soil health. Valerie Mitchell, SDSU Extension

and Jewell Bork, South Central RC&D, played a trivia game on "From Plate to Table Where Does Your Food Come From". The National Park Service presented on water conservation, and Brett Bowser from the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) talked about wildlife and showed the students different furs and animal skulls.





Fitness and Recreation Trail

The city of Murdo received a grant from the Recreational Trails Program in the amount of \$17,848 to build a walking trail around the park dam. The grant will cover 80% of the trail cost with the remaining coming from the community. Bids will be opened up in the spring of 2014. The city of Murdo partnered with the

Central Enhancement District and South Central RC&D to submit the grant. The Jones County Turner Youth have committed money toward the trail and will be landscaping around it once completed. The engineer for the project allowed the youth to help stake out the trail and included them in some of the trail design.

Lewis & Clark Watershed Project

The Lewis & Clark Watershed project was started in July 2006 with Section 319 Clean Water Act funds. This following a two year water quality assessment that was conducted. Since that time more and more acres are added to help reduce sediment and pollution of all lakes and streams in the watershed area. The reduction in contaminants are obtained by installing Best Management Practices (BMP's).

In March of 2008 the watershed acreage in the west river counties of Gregory, Tripp and Todd Counties were added to the project. At that time seven east river counties, three west river counties and eleven Conservation Districts were involved with Project Implementation. The project has continued to grow since that time.

The 319 grant funds are used as a cost share to assist with fencing, pipelines, tanks, trees, well cost, solar pumps and Ag Waste systems. By providing other watering alternatives and keeping animals out of the riparian areas and reducing animal runoff will aid in less water contamination. In the last year \$323,683.11 in grant funds have been distributed in the Tripp and Todd Counties.



Financial Management

South Central RC&D offers Financial Management Services to assist small non-profits as a 501c3 or to administer their funds. South Central RC&D administers funds for four different groups.

Murdo Area Market

This was the first year for the market. Being newly organized and needing help with grant writing and fi-

ancial management, South Central RC&D was contacted. South Central helped write and obtained grant funding to get the market off the ground. Experts from South Dakota Extension Service were Skyped into meetings and helped the group write by-laws and provided guidelines to laws on proper food labeling and licenses needed by the vendors. An additional grant

was received from the Buy Fresh Buy Local program to purchase promotional items. The market met every Tuesday from June 11th to September 27th. Seven vendors were the heart of the market. Attendance varied from 30-120 people. Items at the market included baked goods, fresh produce, Watkins, hand crafted items and western bling items.



Badlands/South Central Enterprise Facilitation

This was the final year Badlands/South Central Enterprise Facilitation (BSCEF) had Rural Development R-Bog funds available to host educational workshops. They were able to host four workshops reducing registration costs for the participants. The four workshops hosted were: Train Your Livestock to Eat Weeds, two separate Annie's Workshops one in White River and another in Winner and a Level 1 & Level 2 Farm & Ranch Management Program. The following page talks about the workshops.

Training Livestock to Eat Weeds

The South Dakota Grassland Coalition partnered with BSCEF and South Central RC&D to bring Kathy Voth to the area. For more than a decade, Kathy has researched and worked with livestock as a land management tool. She has successfully trained cattle to eat weeds as part of an overall grazing program for numerous projects.

Kathy believes that animals are a good solution for weed management, so she decided that if cattle ranchers weren't interested in goats or sheep, she'd figure out how to turn their cattle into weed managers. Using discoveries made by researchers at Utah State University, and decades of animal behavior studies, she put together a very logical set of steps for teaching cows to eat weeds.

During Kathy's presentations, she shared her knowledge and provide tips to help producers make landscape managers out of their livestock.



Annie's

SDSU Extension instructed two Annie's Projects, one in White River and another in Winner. Annie's is a six-week course where women will learn how to develop financial records, develop key communication skills, have the opportunity to ask questions about retirement and estate planning, expand marketing knowledge, all while having fun in a supportive learning environment. Annie's Project was designed to empower women by providing detailed ranch management information and build networks between women.

The White River Annie's group extended their education further by hosting a Pasture Walk in June. The group invited the public to Brett and Gina Strain's ranch for the walk. Under the guidance of Lealand Schoon, Mellette County NRCS and Roger Gates, SDSU Extension Range Management Specialist, the participants learned how to identify common forbs, and grasses. Schoon shared the rainfall simulator and how cover, litter, and bare ground affect infiltration and runoff of water.



Farm & Ranch Management

Mitchell Technical Institute (MTI) was contacted to host a sign up period for their Level 1 and Level 2 Farm and Ranch Management Program within the BSCEF area. Two participants signed up for the Level 1 program and four signed up for the Level 2.

The Level 1 program is a 5 week program that instructs producers on critical farm record keeping and meets the Borrowers Training that Farm Service Agency (FSA) requires of their producers acquiring loans. The Level 2 training takes a year to complete. The instructor will work one on one with the producers helping them set up their farm records with the Easy Farm record keeping software. With the use of this software producers will be keeping detailed records making it easier to determine break even points to aid in making better management decisions, develop needed tax reports, and develop an increased knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of their farm and ranch business.



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