

McKenzie County *Soil Conservation District*

NRCS & MCSCD Staff

Nikki Darrington

NRCS District Conservationist

Lloyd Alveshere

NRCS Soil Conservationist

Jaci Cargo

Business Manager

Kassi Makinen

Program Manager

Chauncey Axelson

District Technician

Mandy Hanley

NRCS Ultima Secretary

Board Members

Kent Pedersen

Clark Bohmbach

Darrel Minow

Kathy Johnson

Perry Ecker

**McKenzie County
Soil Conservation District**



**“CONSERVATION IS HUMANITY
CARING FOR THE FUTURE.”**

-NANCY NEWHALL

COME ONE!

COME ONE! COME ALL!

MCKENZIE COUNTY
SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT'S

Cowgirls Conservation

“OLD FASHIONED FUN!”

Friday, January 25th • Rough Rider Center • 5:00PM Social • 6:00PM Dinner

Register by January 16th to be entered into the
Grand Prize Drawing by sending a \$30
registration fee to Box 583, Watford City

Please call (701) 842-3628 Ext. 3
with any questions.

COME ALL!

We would like to introduce the keynote speaker for the 2019 Cowgirls N' Conservation! We are thrilled to have Lisa Mills join us from Atlanta, Georgia to give us a night of laughter!



Lisa Mills

After years of working in family and community partnerships through social service programs and nonprofit organizations, Lisa Mills sensed that something new was on her professional horizon. Not knowing what that could be she took some time away from her then current position in order to figure it out. It was during this time that Lisa had the accidental privilege of standing on stage at a women's conference where she was given the last-minute charge to "make people fall out of their seats laughing."

That event changed everything! For Lisa, it marked the beginning of being on the road and building a successful full-time comedy career and speaking business from the ground up. An accomplishment she credits to that one moment of insane courage years ago, while standing on that stage telling jokes and sharing hope with those amazing women.

Regularly asked how she comes up with laugh out loud material, Lisa responds, "Plain and simple, there is enough laughter in everyday life to keep us all in stitches if we will just look for it!" Lisa's unique blend of slightly skewed, southern-spun humor appeals to a variety of audiences. Convinced that there are more things that unite us than separate us, she brings all types of people together through laughter. Lisa's hilarious authenticity makes her a definite dynamo to any program.

Lisa is an award-winning comedian, motivational speaker, actor, and author. Her acting debut was working alongside network television's favorite military gal, Catherine Bell on the Lifetime Channel's hit show, *Army Wives*. As an in-demand keynote speaker, she is known for her message of Transforming Ordinary Into Extraordinary. Her always funny, laser-sharp wit has been featured on the Lifetime Network, NOW Network, Impact Network, Netflix, the Dove Channel, and iHeart Radio. She can be seen headlining venues around the country while touring and promoting her latest book, *Lord Did I Really Shave My Legs For This?*

Congratulations to the Jesse Monson Family, our 2018 Achievement Award Winner



Pictured Left to Right: Eric Monson, Linda Monson, Lander, Becka, and Jesse Monson

The McKenzie County Soil Conservation District is honored to select the Jesse Monson Family from Alexander as our 2018 Achievement Award Winner for their well- rounded conservation operation.

They have been minimum tilling for several years, using a diverse crop rotation with cover crops and hay land plantings. With this, Jesse has seen great improvements in the soil health on their cropland. Several tree plantings have been established to beautify the farmstead and enhance livestock protection. Tree blocks have been planted in cropland and pasture to protect cattle on the cropland in the winter and pasture in the spring. They have installed water pipelines, water tanks, and cross fences to improve grazing management with a 14 pasture summer grazing system, incorporating private and federal land. As well as water developments and seeding multi species cover crops to extend grazing into the fall and winter cropland. Jesse has attended several education workshops and its always willing to talk about conservation.

2018 Achievement Awards Banquet



Soil Quality Manager Award
Cameron Arengard

Tree Manager Award
LeRoy Rogness



Grazingland Manager Award
Russ Timmreck



Woman in Conservation
Colleen Pojorlie



2018 Achievement Awards Banquet



6th Grade Essay Winner
Brooke Rykhus

4th Grade Grocery Bag Winner
Kaylee Cloud



Kindergarten Coloring Contest
Winner
Avery Langowski

Earth Team Volunteers
Patrick Darrington and
Britney Barnet



6th Grade Education Day

Chauncey Axelson

6th Grade Conservation Day was, once again, a huge hit with the kids! Watford City, Alexander and East Fairview were able to attend this year, bringing the head count to 175 students!!

The students really enjoyed learning about S.W.A.P.A. Each station represented a different conservation topic; S is for Soil, W is for Water, A is for Air, P is for Plants and A is for Animals. Our speakers this year were Lloyd Alvethere a Soil Conservationist from the Watford City NRCS, Nikki Darrington the District Conservationist from the Watford City NRCS, Jared Andrist a Resource Conservationist from Minot, Cindy Zachmeier the Area Biologist for NRCS out of Dickinson and Kassandra Makinen our District Program Manager for the Soil Conservation District from Watford City.

The kids were able to make their own homemade bird feeder using pinecones, peanut butter and birdseed. The students were also able to meet Sammy Soil!

At the end of the day the teachers were all given tests for their students based off what they had learned that day. The Soil Conservation District graded each test which included the highest test score and the best essay. Our winner this year was Brooke Rykus from the Alexander Public School. It was a fun filled day for everyone involved!





We want to see all of your winter conservation photos for our Photo contest!
The winning photos are featured in our end of year calendar. Please send your
photos to [Kassandra Makinen](#) on Facebook or via email at
Kassandra.makinen@nd.nacdnet.net

Have a warm and cozy winter!

Beef Stew

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 lbs. beef stew meat
- 4 cups beef broth
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 garlic clove, peeled and chopped
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- Dash ground cloves
- 3 carrots, peeled and chopped
- 4 potatoes, peeled and cut into small chunks
- Handful of frozen peas
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch



Directions:

Sear meat in hot oil in Dutch oven or soup pot. (Do this in batches if needed to not overcrowd the pan.) Add in beef broth (You can add a little more later, if needed.), Worcestershire sauce, bay leaf, garlic, onion, salt, sugar, pepper, paprika and ground cloves.

Cover and simmer on low for 1.5 hours. Check occasionally to ensure liquid level remains almost to the top of the beef. (Add additional broth or hot water as needed.)

Remove bay leaf. Check and adjust seasonings. Add in carrots, celery, potatoes, and peas. (Again, if there doesn't seem to be enough liquid, stir in additional water or broth to maintain liquid level just below the level of beef/veggies.)

Cover and cook an additional 30 minutes or just until veggies are tender, but not mushy.

To thicken gravy (if needed), mix cornstarch with a bit of cold water until fully dissolved. (It should resemble a bubbling. Cook just a few minutes until broth thickens. Serve.

GET CONNECTED!

Looking to dive deeper into soil health? Check out 'Get Connected' for the latest



Search on YouTube!

Menoken Farm
Gabe Brown
Ray Archuleta
USDA NRCS



Twitter Finds!

Loran Steinlange – @FLOLOfarms
Alan Newport – @AlanNewport1
Jimmy Emmons – @jimmy_emmons
Sonny Perdue – @SecretarySonny

Our Water

Keeping it Clean

North Dakota Department of Health  Environmental Health Section

Precision Planning to Benefit the Bottom Line, Habitat and Water

By Jim Collins, Jr., Environmental Scientist, North Dakota Department of Health
John Pollman, Pheasants Forever

With harvest season nearing completion, a producer's thoughts will soon turn to, "What should I plant next year? Will my land be profitable?"

The North Dakota Department of Health's Watershed Management Program and the Pheasants Forever organization have partnered to bring precision agricultural planning to North Dakota. The pilot project is taking place in Ransom, Sargent, LaMoure and Dickey counties. A Pheasants Forever Precision Agricultural Specialist works one-on-one with producers, using data they collect on their farms during planting and harvest. The data are analyzed using a customized software program that provides agronomic and economic information. This information helps producers evaluate alternative management practices that could improve income on unprofitable acres. The North Dakota Game and Fish Department, Natural Resources Conservation Service and local soil conservation districts also are program partners that are available to provide financial and technical assistance to plan and implement alternative practices on the unprofitable acres.

For North Dakota producer Marcia Asche, the transition to a "precision agriculture" approach on her farm has been an eye-opening experience.

As a part of the family-owned Rosedale Farm, Asche grows corn, soybeans and spring wheat across 1,800 acres in Sargent County in the extreme southeast corner of the state. This is ground that Asche has come to know well over her lifetime, including those parts of each field that "just aren't as good as the others."

Pheasants Forever is in these acres. They don't make economic sense to farm, yet they can become good upland bird habitat.

Recent technological advancements began to allow Asche to monitor crop yields in real time and provide hard data on how these acres were producing. She was shocked by the large discrepancy between the

dollars her farm was investing and what this ground was doing to benefit her bottom line.

"It was a tough lesson for us to see basically how we're throwing money away, and it raised a number of questions about what we should do going forward," says Asche. "Why would we want to continue to throw money into acres that aren't producing?"

Asche and her family now employ a number of precision agriculture techniques, including variable-rate fertilizer applications that help target in-field variabilities and focus dollars on those acres with the best return-on-investment (ROI). The software used in the "precision agriculture" approach generates color-coded maps — green (profitable), yellow or orange (break-even) and red (unprofitable) — that are used to develop a plan to improve farming practices.

In a boost to the future of habitat conservation, these same maps are now being promoted by Pheasants Forever and its partners to leverage federal and state habitat programs by targeting areas of low yields that producing negative ROIs.

Asche and Rosedale Farms, with the guidance of Pheasants Forever and the Wild Rice Soil Conservation District, is one of a



Is this part of the field dragging down profitability for the entire field? Most likely, it is taking the same amount of resources and giving little back in yield.

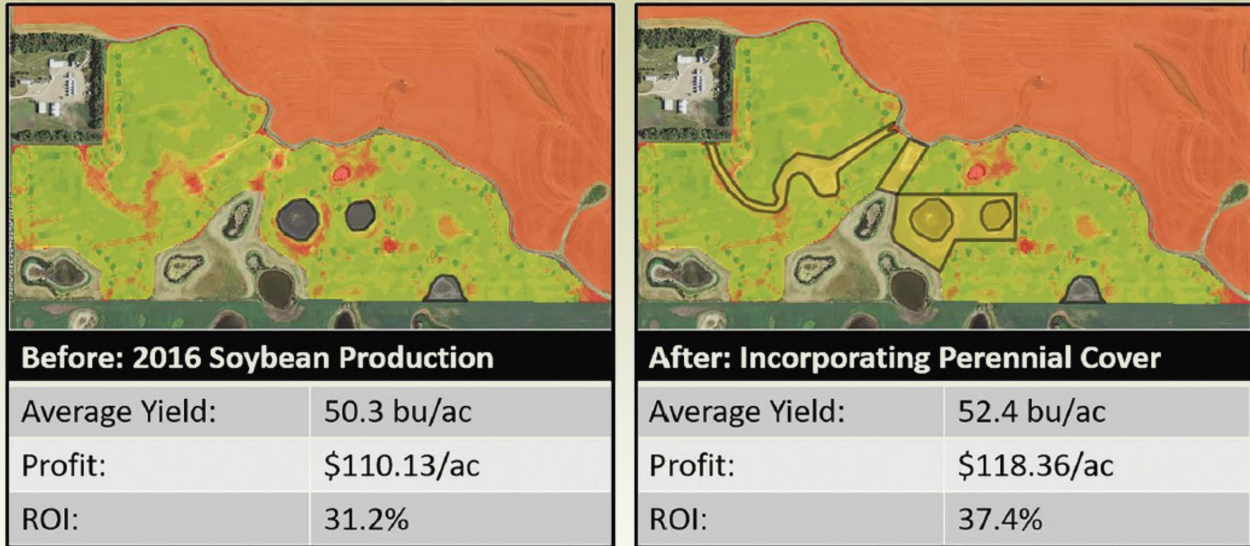


Figure 1. Adding habitat on 10 acres (areas in yellow) increased the return on investment by 6.2percent.

small group of operations in Asche’s county to couple habitat conservation with data generated from precision agriculture.

According to Ryan Heiniger, Pheasants Forever’s director of agriculture and conservation innovations, precision agriculture is data driven, it’s farmer-first, and the goal is to help producers improve their bottom line,” Heiniger, is also a fourth-generation farmer and 20-year veteran of conservation delivery. “With this approach, we talk first of the wisest use of input dollars on the best zones, and the outcomes of a better use of water, a better use of herbicide and a more sustainable use of natural resources,” said Heiniger. “The benefits to conservation are secondary, but the upside for habitat is huge.” Heiniger says the potential for coupling precision agriculture techniques and habitat conservation is significant, given that most producers already have the data needed to develop a plan.

Water Quality

There are several ways water quality is improved using precision agriculture, including:

- More efficient nutrient application, typically resulting in fertilizer inputs more closely matching crop production needs,

ensure most nutrients are used by the crop and less unused nutrients are available for transport to streams and lakes in runoff waters.

- Implementing practices that maintain cover on the soil surface and improve soil health can reduce runoff by improving infiltration rates and increasing water-holding capacity
- Some unprofitable cropland acres may have limited crop stands due to factors such as salinity and/or short-term flooding. Establishing perennial vegetation for forage production and/or wildlife habitat on these acres eliminates chemical and fertilizer inputs and keeps the soil covered throughout the year.

In Figure 1, one of the areas marked in yellow is a waterway that has been seeded back to grass, saving money on inputs and wear and tear on equipment.

The Dilemma

The crucial question producers must ask themselves is, “Why do I continue to spend resources on land that doesn’t add to my profits?” Unfortunately, that question is offset by the appearance to their peers that he/she is giving up, not farming all of the land in their care. However, if you could be more

profitable by only farming the best ground, adding a crop to the rotation, or a conservation practice, would you make the change?

In search of a producer’s perspective, the author asked the following question, “If someone would come to your farm and, using your cropping data, show you how to be more profitable the following year, would you let them visit with you?” In response were questions such as:

- What would I have to give up?
- Can I stay on the farm?
- How will it affect my crop insurance?

For answers to these questions and many more you may contact Melissa Shockman, Precision Ag and Conservation Specialist, at 701.709.0963 or mshockman@pheasantsforever.org. You may also call the North Dakota Department of Health’s Watershed Management Program at 701.328.5210.

North Dakota Department of Health
Environmental Health Section
Gold Seal Center, 4th Floor
918 East Divide Ave.
Bismarck, N.D. 58501-1947
701.328.5150
www.deq.nd.gov





Special Assignment Pizza

Through a great partnership with the local Farm Bureau our staff has got the opportunity the past few years to participate in Special Assignment Pizza. SAP is an education event held at the civic center in Watford City for all fourth graders in McKenzie County. Each staff member takes a station teaching the students how every ingredient that is on a pizza ties back to farming and ranching.

Kassandra Makinen showed the students a preview video to prepare them for the next seven stations. Lloyd Alvesshere taught the kids about wheat and how it makes the crust. Earth Team Volunteer, Britney Barnett explained how seeds from different plants make the oil that goes into different ingredients. Chauncey Axelson taught the kids where pepperoni and sausage pizza come from. Nikki Darrington visited with them about the best part, THE CHEESE, and how it is made from a dairy cow. Jaci Cargo was the highlight of their day as she served them a slice of pizza before they ventured back to regular class. Other booths such as sugars, vegetables, and nutrition were taught by volunteers from Farm Bureau, District 1 Cattlewomen's, and NDSU Extension.

We look forward to this day each year as it is truly eye opening to watch students learn just how important farming and ranching is in our community!



Do You Need Diversity?

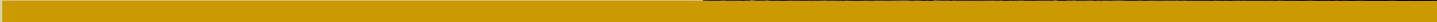
Lloyd Alveshere

Of the five soil health principles, I feel adding crop diversity may be the most important. Adding diversity to crop rotations is not just adding barley or oats to a continuous wheat rotation. It is adding different crop types to a rotation. The four crop types are cool season grass (wheat, barley, oats), cool season broadleaf (peas, lentils, canola), warm season grass (corn, millet, sudan/sorghum), and warm season broadleaf (sunflower, soybean).

In nature there is not one plant growing in our native prairies. Hundreds of plants, including grasses, forbs, and shrubs grow in close proximity to each other. This is how it evolved. All these different plants served different functions. They have different root systems. They fix nitrogen. They add carbon to the soil. They feed the biology with sugars. Why wouldn't we want this in the way we plan a crop rotation?

Adding row crops like corn, soybeans, or sunflowers and incorporating cover crops are good ways to add diversity to a crop rotation.

If you are interested in adding a row crop or diverse cover crop to your rotation, but don't have a planter or time to seed the crops, call the McKenzie County SCD and they can help. They have a 12 row 30" White planter, that will plant corn, soybeans, or sunflowers, and two John Deere No-till drills to seed all kinds of cover crops.





Kindergarten and First Grade Education

Nikki Darrington

Every year around this same time, I go into the classrooms of the Kindergarten and First Grade of McKenzie County. I read a book, and then teach them about the importance of soil conservation, trees, and all things natural resources. This year was an even more exciting year! I had the opportunity to bring along Sammy Soil herself! The kids REALLY enjoyed this fun addition in the Kindergarten classrooms. In the First-Grade classrooms I rolled out NRCS's newest gal, "Mini Microbe." With a new story, a color book for all to bring home, and a cute little poster of Mini, all were left smiling. It was a fun year to teach smiling little faces about conservation. With the stories and education came a coloring contest like every year. The winner of the Kindergarten coloring contest is Avery Langowski. She attends Watford City Elementary School and her teacher is Mrs. Cranston. The winner of the First-grade coloring contest is Brianna Rink. Her teacher is Ms. Brown. Congratulations! Thank you to the teachers and administration of McKenzie county for allowing us in your school and taking precious time with the kiddos, we really appreciate it.



Welcome Mandy!



Hi! My name is Mandy Hanley. I recently moved to Watford City from Billings, with my fiancé Charlie. I started working at the NRCS as an Ultima employee the beginning of November after working as an orthodontic assistant for four years. I am so excited for this career opportunity and cant wait to see where it takes me!

FSA UPDATE

Marcy Feilmeier

USDA Market Facilitation Program

USDA recently launched the trade mitigation package aimed at assisting farmers suffering from damage due to unjustified trade retaliation by foreign nations. Producers of certain commodities can now sign up for the Market Facilitation Program (MFP).

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will administer MFP to provide payments to corn, cotton, dairy, hog, sorghum, soybean, wheat, shelled almond, and fresh sweet cherry producers. An announcement about further payments will be made in the coming months, if warranted.

The sign-up period for MFP runs through Jan. 15, 2019, with information and instructions provided at www.farmers.gov/mfp. MFP provides payments to producers of eligible commodities who have been significantly impacted by actions of foreign governments resulting in the loss of traditional exports. Eligible producers should apply after harvest is complete, as payments will only be issued once production is reported.

A payment will be issued on 50 percent of the producer's total production, multiplied by the MFP rate for a specific commodity. A second payment period, if warranted, will be determined by the USDA.

We are taking appointments for MFP sign-up. To schedule an appointment, or if you have any questions, please give us a call at (701) 842-3628.

Take Time to Educate Yourself

Lloyd Alveshere

Things are changing so fast in agriculture, from new crop varieties to technology to equipment to management systems. Are you taking time to educate yourself? Please take time through the year to do so. It is one of the most important things you can do to improve your wellbeing and the profitability of your operation.

One of the new and interesting topics is soil health. Be it on cropland, hayland, pastureland, rangeland, or in your garden. The five soil health principles can be practiced everywhere and not just on cropland.

What are the five soil health principles?

1. Soil Armor

2. Minimize Soil Disturbance

3. Plant Diversity

4. Continual Live Root/Plant

5. Livestock Integration

Websites: These websites all have educational information and videos that are worth the time to sit and listen to the concepts and ideas.

menokenfarm.com – With the belief that the systems approach management at Menoken Farm enhances erosion protection, sunlight harvest, plant diversity, carbon, pollinators, beneficial insects, wildlife, salinity control, livestock forage and more.

ndglc.com – North Dakota Grazing Lands Coalition – Values are learning from the trials and experiences of peers; opening doors to grass management expertise; sharing alternatives and different perspectives; discovering common goals and objectives and generating new ideas.

soilhealthconsulting.com – With a mission to teach and apply time-tested, ecological principles and biomimicry to help others regenerate this living and life-giving ecosystem. In restoring the health of our soil, we can restore the health of our bodies, our farms, our communities, and our planet.

brownsranch.com – With a belief that faith, family and working with the natural resources that God has provided allows us a meaningful life. We enjoy using these resources to regenerate landscapes for a sustainable future.

Books: These are a few of the very interesting books on management of your whole operation, including soil, plant, animal, and human health.

Dirt to Soil; One Family's Journey into Regenerative Agriculture by Gabe Brown

A Soil Owner's Manual; How to Restore and Maintain Soil Health by Jon Stika

How Not to go Broke Ranching by Walt Davis

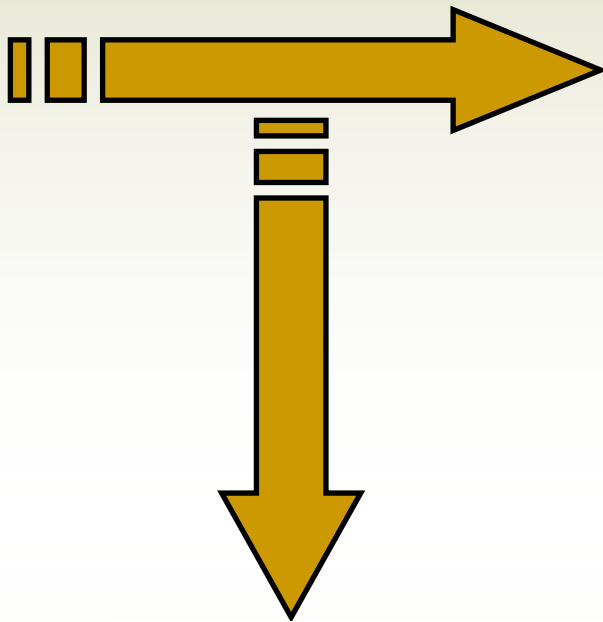
Ranching Full-Time on 3 Hours a Day by Cody Holmes

Growing a Revolution: Bringing Our Soil Back to Life by David Montgomery

Enclosed are agendas for two very good meetings. If you go to one or two meetings this year, please consider these two. These groups are bringing in some very powerful speakers.

If you have any questions or would just like to talk, please contact our office. We are learning all the time also and would be glad to visit.

Two outstanding educational opportunities taking place in Bismarck!



Farming and Ranching for the Bottom Line

February 26 & 27, 2019
BSC National Energy Center for Excellence

HEALING THE LAND & OURSELVES WITH LIVESTOCK

FEATURED TOPICS

FEBRUARY 26
Cover Crops
Weather Crystal Ball
Bale Grazing
Area IV Farm Research
with Keynote Speaker
Temple Grandin

FEBRUARY 27
Food and Flavor
Grazing Profitability
The Banker's Perspective
Farm Couples Panel
with Keynote Speakers
Mark Schatzker & Greg Judy

Evening Social | 5-7 pm on Feb 26
Sponsored by the North Dakota Stockmen's Association

There is no cost to attend this event. Please RSVP by Feb 19th. To register, call or email Cindy at 701-250-4518 ext. 3, or lucinda.makedonski@nd.nadnet.net
A block of rooms have been set aside at the Hampton Inn and Suites in NW Bismarck. Please call (701) 751-5656 to make a reservation

SAVE
the Date

North Dakota Grazing Lands Coalition

Winter Conference

Wednesday, January 16

Ramada Hotel, Bismarck

Regenerating Land, Livestock & People

Tentative Schedule

<p>9:30 a.m. Welcome</p> <p>9:45 a.m. Ruminant Reality: Diet Human Health and the Environment Dr. Peter Ballerstedt, Forage Product Manager, Barenbrug USA, Corvallis, Ore.</p> <p>10:45 a.m. Break</p> <p>11:00 a.m. 3 Keys to Easy Keeping Cows Steve Campbell, Rancher and Consultant, Parma, Idaho</p> <p>Noon Lunch</p> <p>1:15 p.m. Innovative Farming and Ranching Practices Donn Nelson, Fullerton, N.D.</p>	<p>2:15 p.m. Break</p> <p>2:30 p.m. SOIL, Plant, Animal, Human Health Steve Campbell</p> <p>3:30 p.m. Extraordinary Outcomes of Voluntary Conservation 2018 Leopold Award Winner</p> <p>4:30 p.m. Q & A with Speakers</p> <p>5:00 p.m. Social</p>
---	---

Registration opens Dec. 3.
\$50 per person / \$30 for NDGLC members
Save money by joining when you register at
www.NDGLC.com or by calling NDGLC at 701-355-4458.
NDGLC Room Block: Ramada Hotel, Bismarck 701-258-7000 (deadline Jan. 2)

PRINTING SPONSORED BY USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
All programs and services of the NDGLC are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap.

McKenzie County
Soil Conservation District
PO Box 583
Watford City, ND 58854

PRSRT STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
Watford City, ND
Permit No. 3

Current Resident OR:

New Tree Shed Location!

**Just a reminder that our NEW tree shed location is
624 Hwy 1806
Watford City, ND 58854**

All programs and services of the Soil Conservation District are offered on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, marital status, age or handicap. USDA is a equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.