

Guardians of the Range

Dedicated to the Multiple Use of Public Lands & the American Way of Life

Newsletter No. 94

February 2012



P.O. Box 472
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www.guardiansoftherange.org

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Todd A. Rhodes - Treasurer
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(Project / Allotment
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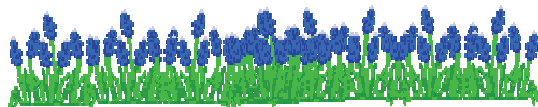
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**Annual Meeting
Saturday, February 4, 2012**

**Worland Community Cultural
Center**

1200 Culbertson, Worland

10:00 (registration)
10:30 to 3:00

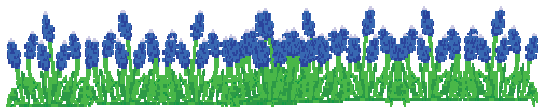
No host lunch \$12 provided by
Washakie Cattle Women

Speakers:

Steve Dondero
BLM District Manager for Cody,
Worland and Lander offices

Sue Wallis
State Legislator, point person on
successful efforts on horse slaughter
situation

Jim Pehringer
Wildlife Services, report on pilot
project on Sage-grouse predation



Board Positions

The Guardians Board of Directors
is accepting nominations of
Members who might like to serve
on the board.

If you wish to be considered for
such a position, or know of a fellow
member who might make a good
candidate, please contact:

Dana Kerns, President
at 655-9539

or

Bill Greer, Vice President
at 272-3723

for more information.

Terms of service begin in
February 2012.

SAVE THE DATE:

May 11, 2012

**2nd Annual
Wonderful Wyoming
Fundraiser**

**Old Sheridan Inn
Sheridan, WYO**

**"The judicial system is the most expensive machine ever invented for
finding out what happened and what to do about it."
Irving Jr. Kaufman, American Professor (1910 ~ 1992)**

Local Sage-Grouse Working Group Seeks New Member

Deadline: February 20

*News Release from the
Wyoming Game & Fish Department*

Cody ~ The Big Horn Basin Sage-Grouse Local Working group is seeking a new member to fill a vacant "public-at-large" position. Any resident of Big Horn, Hot Springs, Park, or Washakie Counties may apply.

The Big Horn Basin group is one of seven local sage-grouse working groups in the state established by the Wyoming Game & Fish Department. The group comprises local citizens representing groups interested in sage-grouse conservation. The role of the group is to develop and implement projects consistent with local sage-grouse conservation plans that benefit the species and reduce the likelihood of sage-grouse being listed under the federal Endangered Species Act.

Tom Easterly, working group member and wildlife biologist with the Department said the successful applicant will serve on the board as a regular member and will be expected to attend two or more meeting per year.

"The primary focus of the group in 2012 will be drafting an addendum to the 2007 Big Horn Basin Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan," he said. "Little homework or activities outside of participation in regular meetings would be required, unless the member is willing to take on added duties."

Interested persons are encouraged to submit a short letter of interest to Chris Pfister, Sage-Grouse Local Working group, 3900 Gooseberry Road, Worland, WY 82401 or lasher@wildblue.net. Letters of interest should include general background information of the applicant. The "public-at-large" vacancy is a volunteer position; however, reimbursement for travel is available.

To obtain more information regarding duties of a working group member, contact Tom Easterly at tom.easterly@wyo.gov or (307) 765-2742.

The Big Horn Basin Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan can be viewed at <http://gf.state.wy.us/web2011/wildlife-1000382.aspx>. ★

CRAIG THOMAS GUARDIANS OF THE RANGE ENDOWMENT

Supporting this endowment is a wonderful tax exempt way to show your support for the Guardians' effort, or to honor a family member or friend. We want to have a sustainable financial resource base to achieve our goals and objectives.

For more details, please contact a board member or Kathleen Jachowski (307)587-3723 or guardians@hughes.net.

Just to clarify some misunderstandings...
Receiving this newsletter does not mean you are a member of the Guardians.
Payment of dues is what qualifies a membership. We send this newsletter to almost all permittees as a courtesy, in the hope those who have not joined the Guardians will soon do so.

William Woolston: Sage Grouse Initiative Range Conservationist

*News Release from the
Meeteetse Conservation District*

Meeteetse ~ The Meeteetse Conservation District welcomes William Woolston as the District's Range Conservationist to assist the NRCS in implementing the Sage Grouse Initiative.

Woolston grew up in the Sheridan, Wyoming area, serving as President & General Manager of the 10,368-acre Rice Ranch there. Under his management, the ranch was known for sound grazing management that ensured sustainable forage levels for livestock and wildlife, and suitable habitat for game birds including a resident population of sage grouse.

Woolston has experience working with NRCS, the Wyoming Game & Fish Department and other agencies on irrigation and farming projects, dam restoration, and creating wetlands for waterfowl habitat. He has demonstrated leadership experience and communication skills in bringing about solutions among individuals and groups with different goals, expectations, and points of view. Woolston has worked with groups including the National Western Stock Show, American Polled Hereford Association, Montana Polled Hereford Association, International Polled Hereford Breeders Futurity, Colorado-Wyoming Polled Hereford Association, Irish Hereford Prime Beef Program, and the Wyoming L.E.A.D. program.

As a recent graduate in Natural Resources from the University of Arizona with a Bachelor of Science, Natural Resources: Rangeland Ecology and Management, Woolston has up-to-date experience with range measuring and monitoring techniques.

The MCD believes Woolston's education and experience, coupled with his ranching background, give him the ability to work with their cooperators. Their goal is to develop grazing management plans and other practices to ensure suitable habitat and fulfill the objectives of the NRCS Sage Grouse Initiative; addressing threats to sage grouse and benefiting our rangelands and rangeland productivity.

For more information, contact William Woolston or Rory Karhu, Park County NRCS District Conservationist, at the Powell USDA Service Center, (307) 754-9301. ★

Direct from the Director: Value Your Vote

Needed: Quality Candidates to Run for Office

Needed: Quality Questions to Find Quality Candidates

The year twenty twelve is an election cycle year! While much of the immediate focus is on those running for President, other elected offices will also need to be filled. These 'other' offices are **every bit** as important as those at the national level.

Candidates running for County Commissioner (CC) and Conservation District Supervisor (CDS) are politically powerful arenas that need laser-like scrutiny **by the VOTER** if you are to elect candidates of quality, knowledge, leadership and commitment. It should not be assumed or presumed that because someone is campaigning that they know one cotton-pickin' thing about the position, its responsibilities, or the ramifications of the decisions they would make that would directly and indirectly affect your life and livelihood.

It should also not be assumed or presumed that candidates bring community, corporate, entrepreneurial or volunteer experience to their elected office. These types of involvements are what build the needed skill sets of civic maturity, understanding of an organization's framework, mission and goals; insight, prudence, demonstrated commitment of their time and attention, fiscal accountability to name a few.

Each candidate is not going to have all of these in every situation. However, if you are to get any value for your vote they should darn well have more than one of them. The candidate should be asked to be specific about their credentials/experience relative to these areas. Listen for real answers, not bumper sticker responses. We need elected officials who are thoughtful and reflective in their responses.

WHY ARE ELECTED OFFICIALS SO IMPORTANT? Because 'elected officials' are eligible under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations to seek and hold the legally recognized position of "cooperators" in the development of environmental documents. The term 'cooperator' does not apply to the general public---it's important to remember that. 'ELECTED' is the operative word. Cooperator status also means that those elected bodies seeking that level of involvement in the development of environmental documents **MUST** help to pay the costs (\$) to develop such documents. (The general public can make comments---BUT the general public is not eligible under NEPA to have 'cooperator' status.)

Cooperator status means these officials have a right and responsibility to see that sound, credible and complete information is integrated into the document AND reflected in the decision making process. Cooperators must be able to THINK, SPEAK, AND RESPOND while in these meetings and in follow up deliberations and correspondence. These offices (CC & CDS) must be fielding people into these discussions and deliberations with some previous knowledge of federal land policies AND WHO KNOW HOW AND WHEN TO SPEAK UP IN A MEETING and HAVE THE COURAGE TO DO SO. We cannot afford the luxury of elected officials taking two and three years to really learn and understand the magnitude of these federal land involvements.

This is 2012, not 1951 when a conversation over a cup of coffee brought both clarity and action to land stewardship. So---value your vote-----know your candidate before you vote!

Kathleen

Kathleen Jachowski, Executive Director
307.587.3723 guardians@hughes.net

Join Guardians of the Range

LIVESTOCK OPERATORS

- \$100.00 up to 50 head of cattle
- \$2.00 / head 51 to 1,500 cattle
- 40 cents / head for sheep

BUSINESSES, INDIVIDUALS & ASSOCIATIONS

without federal grazing permits:

- | | |
|--------------|------------------------------|
| \$25 - \$100 | WRANGLER |
| \$250 | RANGE RIDER |
| \$500 | TOP HAND |
| \$1,000 | GUARDIAN of the RANGE |

Fairness Fee: One-time \$500 fee

Applicable to any new livestock operator membership that needs help within 90 days of joining the Guardians of the Range.

The Board of Directors recently voted to adopt a special one-time \$500 Fairness Fee (FF), or 'catch up' fee, to cover situations where a permittee chooses to join only because they need help on an immediate issue. The FF recognizes the time, money and effort of past supporters who made it possible for an organization like the Guardians to be right at the end of the telephone and ready to step in immediately to help. The FF is appropriate and respectful of the past and ongoing support and organizational vision of current members. The FF is payable concurrent with initial dues.

You may join on line:
www.GuardiansoftheRange.org

To pay by check, please make checks payable to:
Guardians of the Range
mail to:

Guardians of the Range, P.O. Box 472, Worland, WY 82401

PSRT STD
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Permit No. 16



From: American Farm Bureau
www.fb.org

Clean Water Act Jurisdiction

Issue:

The Clean Water Act (CWA), enacted in 1972, limits federal jurisdiction to “navigable” waters of the United States. The U.S. Supreme Court, in 2001 and 2007, reaffirmed those limits. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), through regulations, guidance and other means, is seeking to expand its authority beyond the limits approved by Congress. Farm Bureau opposes proposals to fundamentally change the CWA by expanding jurisdiction of the federal government to intrastate waters, including groundwater, ditches, culverts, pipes, desert washes, sheet flow, erosional features, farm and stock ponds, and prior converted cropland.

Background:

Navigable Waters

Two Supreme Court decisions over the past decade have reaffirmed that “navigable waters” under the CWA does not extend to all waters. Legislation to overturn those decisions – despite aggressive lobbying campaigns by environmental groups – has failed to reach a vote on the floor of either the House or the Senate. That has happened primarily for two reasons. First, bipartisan leaders continue to strongly support the structure and goals of the CWA and do not want

to see EPA intrude on traditional state prerogatives relating to land use planning and economic growth. Second, the legislation aggressively pushed by environmental groups would allow EPA to use the CWA to regulate activities even on dry land and even when those activities are not connected to interstate commerce. Such an over-reach goes well beyond anything contemplated by the framers of the 1972 law.

Legislative/Regulatory Status:

EPA has proposed a guidance document that attempts to do by itself what Congress has not authorized it to do in legislation and is seeking to establish regulatory control over virtually all waters. Such a shift in policy would mean that EPA could regulate any or all waters found within a state, no matter how small or seemingly unconnected to a federal interest. Such a boundless approach would give the federal government new authority over many traditionally state and local decisions, such as the regulation of ephemeral drainages, small and isolated depressional wetlands, roadside ditches, and potentially groundwater. Congress should not permit the agency to adopt such an approach.

AFBF Policy:

Farm Bureau believes federal CWA authority should be limited to navigable streams and flowing waterways that have continuous flow.

