

Colorado State Forest Service Nursery Tour



Figure 1. The entrance to the Colorado State Forest Service Nursery in Fort Collins, CO

This past month, on June 29th, the Colorado State Forest Service held a tour of their tree nursery in Fort Collins, CO; the same nursery where all of the seedlings for the tree sales are grown. The tour group consisted of about 25 people and lasted around 2 hours. The group toured the storage facility where they keep dormant trees, observed the germination area, witnessed the seed planting process and toured one of the greenhouses where the seedlings grow.

The manager of the facility, Josh Stoltz, re-iterated the fact that they want to show the versatility trees have instead of just being windbreaks and snow fences. He spoke of agro forestry benefits and how trees can play a big role with pollinators. They even showed the group an experimental project of repurposing unwanted tree logs (such as Russian olive) to house mushroom production. These logs have inoculated mushroom plugs inserted in to them, sealed with coconut wax, and watered

twice a week in hopes to produce shitake and oyster mushrooms. To find out more about the projects happening at the Forest Service visit their site at cfs.colostate.edu.

All of the seedlings produced through the nursery are germinated as close to the natural process as possible and they keep the trees in greenhouses with climates reflecting that as well. This benefits the trees, preparing them for the Colorado weather. The staff takes a lot of pride in their tree production practices and hope that it is reflecting in the final product.

Also, if you have any leftover plastic containers from last year's tree sales, the nursery will take them off your hands. Contact us at the Yuma County Conservation District to have them picked up or bring them into the office.

If you would like more information about the Colorado Forest Service, visit their website at cfs.colostate.edu. If you would like to see more images of the tree tour, visit our facebook page: Yuma County Conservation District.



Figure 2. Some of the seedlings ready to be sold

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“To be poor and be without trees, is to be the most starved human being in the world. To be poor and have trees, is to be completely rich in ways that money can never buy.” Clarissa Pinkola Estés, *The Faithful Gardener: A Wise Tale About That Which Can Never Die*

Tree Sales & Supplies

This year's tree sales have wrapped up but supplies are still in stock. Supplies range from weed barriers and drip lines all the way to goof plugs. It's time to start watering your trees with the oncoming heat; stop in and get your drip line supplies. Next year's tree sales will begin right after Thanksgiving and the deadline to place your order will be March 1st so start thinking about your tree needs today.



Figure 3. Tree seedlings ready for sale at the CSFS Nursery.



Figure 4. Sheila Brophy the new Yuma County Conservation District Manager

Hiring of New District Manager

Yuma County Conservation District would like to announce the hiring of Sheila Brophy as the District Manager. Sheila grew up on a farm which showed her the importance of mind-full land management and protection. Her background in natural resources stems from her education at CSU where she received hands on learning and gained plant identification skills. She also did seasonal work with the Jefferson County Open Space Natural Resource department expanding her knowledge on species identification, weed and tree management and habitat mapping.

Sheila is a native to Yuma, CO but now lives in Wray with her soon to be husband, Bryan Rogers. She has returned to the area that sparked her love for natural resources and hopes to be a great resource for conservation practices and information in the county. Stop by and see her at the office or contact her at 970-332-3107. Email address: yccd77@gmail.com

“A true conservationist is a man who knows that the world is not given by his fathers, but borrowed from his children.” —John James Audubon

Exploring Grazing Options Field Day at John Hardwick's

On June 17, 2016 John Hardwick, Yuma County Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Services hosted a field day for grazing options. Roy Roath, who has extensive knowledge about grazing along the front-range and plains, was the presenter at the event. Roy has worked as a CSU Extension Range Specialist and private consultant. He was also a professor at CSU working in the range and animal nutrition departments.

The field day started off with refreshments and rolls at the Vernon school in Vernon, CO and a quick introduction by Roy on Grazing Response Index (GRI), water management, productivity beneath the surface, diversity of grasses and forbs & nutritional values of grasses. The group toured parcels of land, owned by John Hardwick, consisting of CRP used for rotational grazing. Each stop (at the land parcels) showed participants how to help rehab CRP to improve grazing, how to improve soil health through grazing & how to utilize GRI evaluation after the area had been grazed.

Group participation highlighted different important aspects grasses and forbs have on CRP land and grazing such as using forbs, like four wing salt bush, during the winter months. Other conversations revolved around the palatability and grazing times of cheat grass and the attraction cattle have to yucca.



Figure 5. Observing CRP land that has not been grazed.

The field day wrapped up with lunch and deserts provided by Mary Ellen Hardwick and Charlotte Smith. If you would like to attend any future workshops and field days, contact us at the Wray NRCS building and be looking for our flyers.

“Be it deep or shallow, red or black, sand or clay, the soil is the link between the rock core of the earth and the living things on its surface. It is the foothold for the plants we grow. Therein lies the main reason for our interest in soils.”~ Roy W. Simonson, USDA Yearbook of Agriculture, 1957

Some key takeaway points from this workshop: 90 percent of productivity on a rangeland occurs underground, meaning we need to manage water capture and storage underground. Ground cover and plant litter helps lessen evaporation rate, attributes towards water infiltration, and helps to lower soil temperature increasing microbial diversity and interactions under the soil. The diversity of plant species on grazing land provides a green grazing season that lasts longer, provides higher nutritional levels for cattle and improves wildlife habitat. Every plant plays a strategic role on rangeland such as contributing nutrients to the soil, creating more porous soils with root production, providing cover and most importantly providing palatable food sources.



Figure 6. Finishing up the workshop with lunch at the Vernon School

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Margaret Lenz - President
Ron Brown -Vice-President
Dustin Wise – Secretary/Treasurer
Chester Zwirn - Member
Ron Richards -Member
Sheila Brophy - District Manager

NRCS Staff:

Gary Campfield - District Conservationist
Julie Elliott - Rangeland Management Specialist
Jake Prather - Conservation Technician
Chris McAfoos - Program Support Specialist

Species of the Month

Fun Facts:

1. Common Names: Gilia Beardtongue or Pink Plains Penstemon
1. Blooms from May through October
 - a. Depending on amounts of moisture
2. Shrub-like perennial
 - a. survives for more than two years
3. The older the plant, the more flowers it produces
4. Heat & drought tolerant
5. Prefers Sandy to Sandy Loam soils



Photo courtesy of Chris McAfoos USDA-NRCS Contractor in the Wray office.

“Penstemon ambiguus.” *Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center The University of Texas at Austin.*
Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, 2016. Web. 20 June 2016.

Trivia of the Month

What is our state grass?

For correct answer, stop in and see us at the Wray NRCS office or contact us at 970-332-3107 or email us at yccd77@gmail.com

UPCOMING EVENT

The NRCS and Yuma County Conservation District will be hosting a Cheatgrass Biological Control Meeting on the morning of August 22, 2016. The meeting will last about two hours. If you are interested, please contact us by August 12th at the Wray NRCS office or email us at yccd77@gmail.com

Check out our updated web page and Facebook page for future events happening within and around the district.

Website: <http://www.yconconservation.com/>
Facebook Account: Yuma County Conservation District

If you would like the next newsletter to be emailed to you, please call in and give us the address or email us at yccd77@gmail.com

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