THE CHINOOK

CODY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Welcome!

The Cody Conservation District (CCD) is committed to improving the quality of life in our district through good stewardship of our land, water, and natural resources. The CCD will achieve this goal by providing information, education, and technical services to its constituents.

Tree Program

Thank you to everyone who supported this year's tree program! We sold 2065 trees and pollinator plants this season! Didn't get the trees you wanted this year? Let us know if you want a high demand species here so we can reserve it as soon as the nursery allows: forms.gle/1WJ49jiFZudvV2D78

Join us for our next board meetings: August 7 4:30 P.M. September 4 4:30 P.M.

Do you have conservation ideas for our community? Reach out! We love partnering with people and communities to create habitat for wildlife, keep waterways healthy, and promote resource stewardship!

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Conserving natural resources for our future

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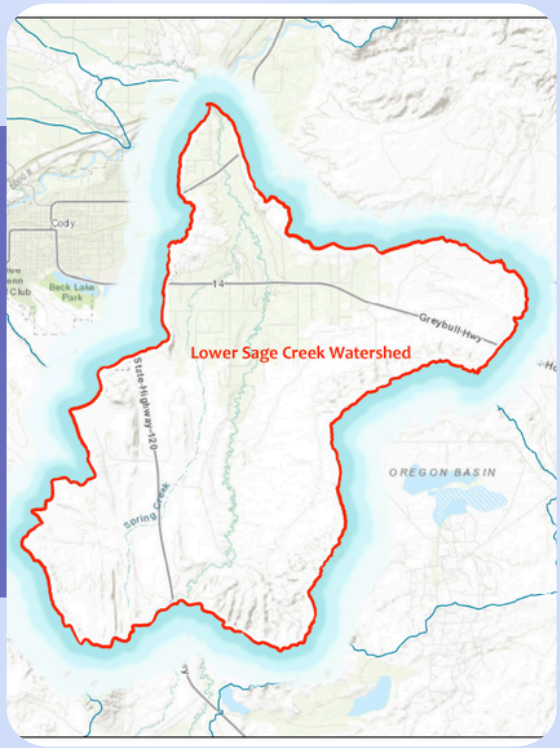


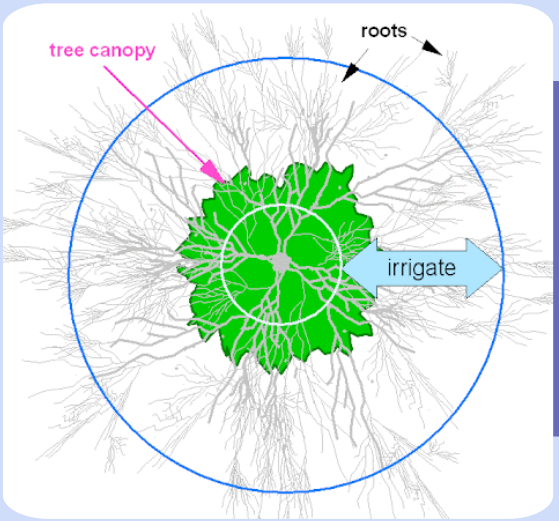
Lower Sage Creek National Water Quality Initiative

Funding now available for landowners near Lower Sage Creek for streambank enhancements, grazing improvements, and more!

Contact us at conservecody@gmail.com, or call us at 307.578.8335 for more information https://www.codyconservationdistrict.com/funding-now-available-for-landowners-near-lower-sage-creek

Summer Tree Care Tips from Bobbie

Thoroughly water your trees! 75% of their roots reside in the top 2 feet of soil, but if your water only penetrates 6 inches, they aren't getting enough. If water is limited, prioritize trees over lawns. Lawns can recover, but trees cannot. This season, limit your pruning to only diseased, damaged, or dead limbs. This is also an excellent time to inspect your yard with fresh eyes. Look for insect or wind damage, and consider inviting a friend to help examine each other's yards for a new perspective. This proactive approach ensures your landscaping stays healthy throughout the hot, dry summer.



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Upcoming Events

Please join us for the Chief Joseph Butterfly Count

August 2nd from 9:30 A.M. to 1 P.M.

catch and release butterflies for 3 hours to monitor population numbers, $3 fee to cover data submission costs

Sign up here: *https://forms.gle/rVnHb9kmPtr5FrWC8*

Come visit us at the Weeds, Wildlands, and More Expo in the Cody Auditorium on **August 7th from 4-7 P.M.**

Our next Art and Info Class is **August 8th from 3:45 P.M. to 4:45 P.M.** in the Children's Activity Room of the Park County Library. We will learn all about pronghorn!

RANCH DROUGHT MONITORING

Check out this handy tool to keep track of drought conditions near you. The Drought Center helps people, organizations, and institutions build resilience to drought through monitoring and planning.

https://www.ndmc.unl.edu/ranchplan/monitor.aspx

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Beaver Builders: Nature's Engineers

Beavers are ecosystem engineers. These creative rodents build dams out of trees and branches that they cut using their strong front teeth along with grass, rocks, and mud. Beavers are herbivores that love eating cambium, the nutritious inner layer underneath tree bark.

Beavers are a keystone species, which means many other animals, plants, and even people depend on the habitats they build. Their dams protect against erosion and help slow down water. This also helps keep the land around the dams wet and full of life. These are called riparian zones, lands along the edges of rivers, streams, lakes, and other water bodies.

A long time ago, there were millions more beavers in Wyoming, but their numbers went down because of the fur trade in the 1800s and early 1900s.

Did you know that beavers can help fight wildfires too? When beavers build dams, the riparian zones they create are like big, soggy sponges that don't burn easily. This can help slow down wildfires and protect our land.

Check out this video showing how these habitats respond to fires!

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Since beavers can be so helpful for ecosystems, they can help us with conservation work. The Cody Conservation District and other local groups build structures called Beaver Dam Analogs (BDAs) in streams and creeks. They can hold back water to create flourishing riparian zones that are perfect habitats for real beavers, but they aren't quite as skillfully crafted as what the beavers can make themselves.

We build BDAs using untreated wooden posts with flexible willow branches woven around them and reinforced with sod, sagebrush, and other natural materials. The Cody Conservation District has built BDAs on Sulphur Creek. These BDAs are one of the many ways we can protect our land and keep it healthy!

Learn more:

https://www.fs.usda.gov/about-agency/features/firefighting-beavers

https://emilyfairfaxscience.com/research/firebeavers/

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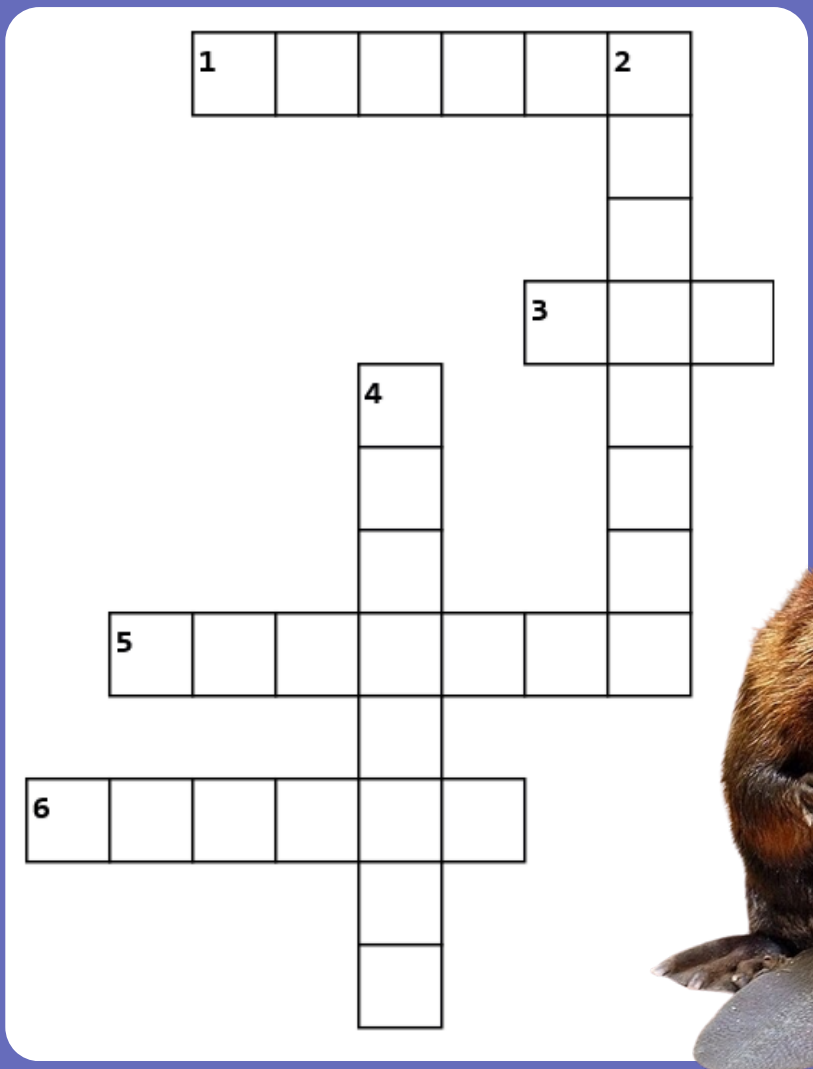

Across

1. The rodent that makes dams
3. Structure built by beavers
5. A process by which land is worn away by water, wind, or other natural forces
6. The flexible tree used to create beaver dam analogs

Down

2. Lands that occur along the edges of rivers, streams, lakes, and other water bodies
4. A species that an entire ecosystem depends upon

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Grazing Tactics and Your Horse

In the state of Wyoming, the most common small acreage large animal purchased is a horse. The average lifespan of a horse is 25 to 30 years, so how are these four-legged friends living out their days for up to 30 years or even 15 years if they are only moved to a ranchette for half of their lifetime?

Feeding and Grazing

Turning your horse out to pasture on five acres of grassland won't cut it even for a pleasure horse, especially in areas where it is known to be a more arid climate. All animals require certain nutrients and getting too much or too little of certain supplements can be damaging to their intestines and overall health; when in doubt, do not hesitate to reach out to your local large animal veterinarian. As a rule of thumb, your horse's appetite is ~2.5% of their total body weight.

The most accurate way to weigh your horse is to walk them onto a scale or weighbridge. If you do not have access to this, most feed stores have weight tapes. After obtaining your horse's weight, divide the total weight of the horse by 100 and then multiply by 2.5. This number is the amount of food your horse should be receiving on a daily basis.

Example: 1200lbs / 100 = 12 therefore 12 x 2.5 = 30lbs/day

While your horse should receive approximately this amount of food on a daily basis, there are a few pointers to keep in mind:

- If this is a newly obtained horse, start them off on a lower amount than this and work up to their daily recommended amount if they handle it without issue.
- Provide plenty of roughage. Most pleasure and trail horses do not need a large amount of grain; a mix of a scoop or two of grain at night plus good-quality hay or pasture grass is sufficient.
- When making any adjustments to a horse's diet, change it gradually. Whether it is the amount, brand, etc., sudden changes can cause a horse to colic or founder.
- Stick to a routine as much as possible—horses thrive on routine.
- Don't feed immediately before or after exercise; let the horse cool down.

In addition to the above, horses should always have access to clean, never frozen, water. Wyoming winters can be harsh, so break ice off the tops of water tanks and install tank heaters to ensure your horses can access the water.

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Grazing Strategies

The duration of grazing tends to fall into four major grazing systems. These four strategies are continuous grazing; rotational grazing; high-intensity, short-duration grazing; and upside-down grazing. Each grazing system is susceptible to overgrazing and creating an unhealthy pasture, typically seen when more horses are grazed than the pasture can support. Once the forages of a pasture are utilized, horses should be removed from the pasture and fed supplemental hay and feed to keep a pasture from deteriorating.

Continuous grazing is when there is one large pasture grazed for the year. This system is usually the cheapest to maintain in terms of fencing, water, and labor to manage the system. Even though this is the cheapest system, it is the least productive of the systems because the grasses are not allowed to rest and recover from grazing. Most of the time, these pastures can have a lot of variability of use within them. Some examples of this would be little to no vegetation around water holes and under trees, desired vegetation that is heavily grazed, and areas of standing grass because of grass species selectivity. In Wyoming, these pastures tend to be the unhealthiest and usually turn into one giant dry lot with sparse to no forage growing because there are not enough acres to produce enough forage for the number of horses needing to graze.

Rotational grazing is when one large pasture is broken up into multiple pastures and the horses are systematically rotated amongst the different pastures. An example would be breaking the pasture into four equal-sized sections and then allowing the horses to rotate from one pasture to the next every month or once a pasture is grazed to a certain height. Make sure that the same pasture is not grazed at the same time of year, year after year. This system has moderate expenses for infrastructure improvements, like cross-fencing and water installments, and minimal labor in rotating horses and managing pastures. The infrastructure can be permanent fencing like barbwire or woven wire fences, or temporary fencing, like electric fencing. This system tends to be in the middle for all aspects of grazing systems, typically moderate expense, moderate forage production, minimal to moderate labor requirements, and provides relief from grazing pressure for grasses to recover and continue growing.

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Grazing Strategies

High-intensity, short-duration grazing is similar to rotational grazing except the pasture sizes are considerably smaller (half an acre to two acres in size), and the time spent in each pasture is shorter than a month. This system tends to create many small pastures that can take a day to two weeks to graze and then the horses are moved to the next pasture. In most cases, the pastures are sized to the desired days of grazing. This system tends to have the highest production possible for the property, and the highest cost for infrastructure improvements and labor demands. This system also tends to have the highest forage production because the grasses are grazed quickly and provide numerous days of rest to recover from the grazing. The high infrastructure cost and labor demands are due to all the fencing that is needed and frequent movement of the horses to the next pasture. This system tends to use a combination of permanent fences and temporary electric fences, with a significant time being spent moving temporary fences and water. Water availability for the horses in each pasture tends to be a significant issue in making this a functional system.

Last, upside-down grazing is when a pasture is only grazed during the dormant season. This system allows the pasture to grow forages throughout the entire growing season, then the horses graze when the season is dormant. An example of this for Wyoming would be grazing the horses between November and February, then feeding hay between March and October. Because this system grazes the grasses in the dormant period, the forage can be grazed down near the soil. This grazing does not impact the roots or grasses, if the horses do not graze into crowns damaging them or digging up the roots when the soil thaws out. This system is inexpensive in terms of infrastructure cost or labor demands during the grazing period and is very productive since the forages are allowed to complete their growth and development phases (maximum production). However, high-intensity short-duration grazing is more productive because the grasses can regrow, producing more forage. This system works well at keeping healthy, vigorous pastures when there are not enough acres to support the number of horses.

Remember, happy pastures and clean water equal a happy and healthy horse.

Makayla Getz is the UW Extension Educator for Agriculture and Natural Resources serving Park County, WY. She can be reached at mgetz@uwyo.edu or (307) 527-8568.

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Get To Know Us

We've got some new (ish) faces around the office these days. Olivia is sticking around Cody after two years with the Wyoming Service Corps. Kennedi, a Meeteetse native, is doing a summer internship with the Cody and Meeteetse Conservation DIstricts. Kennedi is studying Conservation Biology at Superior State University.

Board Members

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Bobbie Holder
Vice Chair | Urban
Joe Kondelis
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