Claunch-Pinto News
Spring 2010

RIPARIAN RESTORATION CONTINUES IN ABÓ

The Abó Arroyo Watershed suffers from sporadic erosion events that play a part in the increase in channelization, loss of native vegetation, increases in invasive plants and decreased water quality. The watershed as a whole is in need of restoration projects that slow the flow of water, and increase native vegetation.

This project's goals are to: reduce erosion and downstream sediments by installing structures to slow overland flow during severe storms; install structures to stablize steep slopes; enhance existing wetland and backwater areas within this watershed; restore riparian environments by reintroducing native vegetation to the riparian areas within the Abó Arroyo Watershed; and treating salt cedar resprouts.

In March, staff members from SWCA and Claunch-Pinto SWCD planted 750 Coyote Willows and 20 Cottonwoods along the Abó Arroyo near the Historic Scholle Bridge. The ground was slightly muddy, providing the perfect conditions for planting.

Before this project began, the site was covered by non-native Salt Cedar (Tamarisk). The planting of the Coyote Willow and the Cottonwood will stabilize the stream banks, reduce the flow rates of the stream during flooding events, which will reduce stream bed and bank erosion. In addition, these trees will shade the stream, which in turn will reduce water temperatures and evaporation, therefore creating a healthy habitat for wildlife.

Jeanne Welch from SWCA, Lesley Kingston, and Francesa Lucero from Claunch-Pinto SWCD, planting Coyote Willows in the Abó Arroyo near the Historic Scholle Bridge

In Memory Of...

ZELFA ATKINSON

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SUCCESSFUL SEEDING

For successful grass seeding it is suggested you purchase top quality seeds. There are two basic different kinds of grasses; the cool-season grasses and the warm-season grasses. To plant effectively break up the soil clumps first and keep the soil moist. Also level the areas where excess water collects. Plant the grass on a firm seed bed and spread the seeds evenly onto one small area at a time. Apply approximately 16 seeds per square inch. Seeds planted too close together will make grass weak by not allowing the seed to absorb enough nutrients. Cover your grass seeds lightly with about ¼-inch of soil. If applying fertilizer, follow directions closely. Keep the grass seed bed moist for at least two weeks to increase germination. Water lightly and frequently (at least once a day), until new grass comes in and is about 2 inches high. Then water the new grass regularly every other day to keep roots moist. Overwatering can cause bugs to eat at the grass, due to the root-system being too wet.

Grama Grass, Buffalo Grass, Wildflower Seeds, and the Maximilian Sunflower Variety are for sale at the Conservation District Office .

Noxious Weed Alert: Tamarisk aka Salt Cedar

Salt cedar, or tamarisk, is a native plant of southern Eurasia that appeared in the Southwestern US in the early 1800's, originally planted to reclaim eroded areas and to help stabilize soil in others areas prone to erosion. It was also sold commercially as an ornamental because it's very easy to grow in a wide range of conditions and it produces many clusters of tiny pink flowers on the tips of delicate thin reddish brown branches. Those very characteristics; adaptability, rapid growth rate, and prodigious reproductive capacity, make it a notorious invasive that can quickly establish extensive thick monocultures thereby choking out virtually all native vegetation.

The name salt cedar alludes to two aspects of the plant's foliage. First, the light green leaves are small and flat; quite similar to the scale-like leaves of cedar trees. Second those leaves may exude a salty solution that tends to make the soil conditions not conducive to the growth of other nearby plant species. Salt cedar trees typically grow between five and twenty feet tall and produce a long woody taproot capable of obtaining water from deep in the ground. New sprouts readily form from the root system as well as from stems that contact the ground. In addition to such vegetative propagation, salt cedar also reproduces from the countless flowers that release tiny seeds capable of immediate germination. Established plants tolerate flooding and are also extremely drought resistant.

This widespread invasive is a particular problem in riparian areas and the CPSWCD has led a major effort to control salt cedar in the Abó Arroyo (see article on page one). In early March, representatives from the District attended a forum on salt cedar management along the Rio Grande hosted by the Native Plant Society of New Mexico. We will continue our efforts to address salt cedar infestations and ask all of you to report any sightings of this noxious weed to the CPSWCD office. We will be happy to work with you to control salt cedar from your property.

Trash & Climate Change

The United Sates produces 251 million tons of solid waste. One third of that is from packing and containers. Another 25% is from food and yard waste, 25% is from newspapers and nondurable items, 17% is from kitchen appliances. Of that, 55% goes into landfills, 31% is recycled and 14% is made into energy. There are many key problems with landfills.

- They release greenhouse gases such as methane
- They use valuable fuel resources
- There is leaking from closed landfills

The greenhouse effect is a common term given to the phenomenon whereby certain gases (eg. carbon dioxide, methane) build up in the lower atmosphere and prevent heat from the Sun's rays from escaping into space. This trapped heat can accelerate global warming because it adds to the overall temperature of the earth's surface. Two of the most effective ways for us to reduce the greenhouse gas, methane is to compost and recycle, since this will reduce what ends up in a landfill.

For more info on reducing greenhouse gases, go to: www.charityguide.org/volunteer/fifteen/greenhouse-effect.htm

Biofuels Research

KL Energy Corporation in Upton, Wyoming is a leader in establishing efficient methods for turning wood waste into biofuel. This company hopes to demonstrate the viability of wood waste as an alternative fuel source, which in turn will create jobs and reduce oil dependence. The Obama administration has earmarked $49 million of the stimulus funding for the development of wood-to-fuel projects. The government seeks to create a market for the removal of wood waste and low value trees from federal forest lands. It is estimated that by 2022, ethanol production will be at least 36 billion gallons yearly, which includes 16 billion gallons from cellulosic ethanol such as that produced from wood waste, trees, grasses and other plants more easily grown than corn.

There is also a growing number of start-ups that are betting for the success of investing in new biofuels such as Algea Fuel.

ALGAE FUEL, also called algal fuel, oilgae, algaeoleum or third-generation biofuel, is a biofuel which is derived from algae. During photosynthesis, algae and other photosynthetic organisms capture carbon dioxide and sunlight and convert it into oxygen and biomass. Up to 99% of the carbon dioxide in solution can be converted, which has been shown to occur in a large-scale open-pond system.

PetroAlgae a company based in Melbourne, Florida plans on testing a commercial system as early as next year. This company has licensed strains of freshwater algae bred by Arizona State University. They are developing the bioreactors and harvesting methods to grow the algae on a large scale.

This algae, harvested from open-pond farms, can be converted to oil that can then be refined into biodiesel. The remaining materials can be sold as a high-protein animal feed. Algae needs a source of carbon dioxide to grow, so companies pursuing this area of biofuel production will be seeking to establish joint ventures with utility companies looking to reduce their carbon emissions.

Laws that are being debated could change the power companies current ways of doing business. These companies will have a lot more renewable energy and will be reducing their CO_2 emissions. Utility companies will be happy to have working partners available to take away their CO_2.

Mountainair has been working with Green Level Power to build a new sewage waste complex which will create biofuels from the town's wastewater through algae-based technology while eliminating solid, liquid and exhaust pollution from this facility.

Companies are pursuing algae since its potential as a fuel is so promising; it's a non-fuel crop, removes large amounts of carbon dioxide from the air and grows quickly. Algae also has a relatively high energy density compared to soybeans. Studies show that algae can produce up to 60% of their biomass in the form of oil. Because the cells grown in aqueous suspension where they have more efficient access to water, CO_2 and dissolved nutrients, microalgae are capable of producing large amounts of biomass and usable oil. The more efficient this process becomes the larger the profit. Regional production of microalgae and processing into biofuels could provide economic benefits to rural communities. For more info go to:

http://en.wikipedia.org/Algae_fuel

A Brief History of Arbor Day

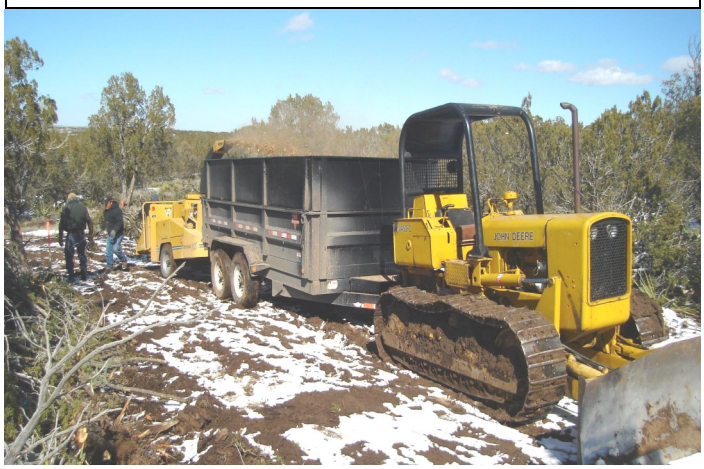
The word Arbor comes from the Latin feminine noun arbor, which means tree. Arbor Day is a celebration in which individuals plant trees annually. It began in the state of Nebraska as an idea thought up by journalist Julius Sterling Morton on how to improve the landscape during the late 1800's. At that time– much the same as now, trees were needed for building material, heat, windbreaks, to hold soil in place, shade, and to improve landscaping. Morton became a member of Nebraska's State Board of Agriculture where he was able to propose a special day set aside for tree planting and increasing the awareness of trees. The first Arbor Day was held in Nebraska on April 10, 1872, where more than one million trees were planted! In 1884 Nebraska made Arbor Day a legal holiday to be held on April 22nd, the day of Morton's birthday. Today Arbor Day is a National holiday and is even celebrated in other countries. Each state has a particular date on which Arbor Day is held; for New Mexico it is the second Friday in March. One way to celebrate Arbor Day is by planting a tree. Local bare-root trees can be purchased by contacting the East Torrance SWCD at 505-384-2272 ext. 3 or the Edgewood SWCD at 505-832-1111. Two low water consumption trees that can be locally grown are the American Plum and the Chokecherry. Awards are even offered that recognize individuals who have dedicated great effort to tree planting, nomination categories and additional information about Arbor Day can be found on http://www.arborday.org.

Board Elections & New Center Update

Claunch-Pinto SWCD Board Elections

The canvassing board for the Claunch-Pinto Soil and Water Conservation District, certify that since no more than one candidate has filed a declaration of candidacy for district supervisor position #2 and position #5, and there being no other questions on the ballot, the election has been canceled in accordance with Title 21, Chap 9, Para E, of the SWCC supervisor election rules. Those individuals that have applied for, or received absentee ballots for this election will be contacted by the election superintendent.

New Conservation Center Update



Even with the delays due to severe weather, work on the new Conservation Center made progress last month. Padilla Construction finished laying out all of the improvements to be completed on the site. All necessary trees were cleared and grubbed, including those to make room for utility lines. The water main has been hooked-up and a meter is being added. Over the next few months a culvert will be installed at the entrance and work will continue on the utility lines.

With the exception of Holidays and inclement weather, the Claunch-Pinto Soil and Water Conservation District regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors will meet on the first Friday of each month at 8:00 a.m. at the Mountainair United Methodist Church, Fellowship Hall, located at the corner of Sunset and Third Street in Mountainair.

2010 REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE

May 7, 2010	September 3, 2010
June 4, 2010	October 1, 2010
July 9, 2010	November 5, 2010
August 6, 2010	December 3, 2010

CURRENT BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Felipe Lovato, Jr.—Chairman

William Caster—Vice Chairman

Richard Shovelin, Secretary/Treasurer

Jerry Melaragno

Dan Williams

LeRoy Candelaria

J. Brian Greene

District Employees:

Dierdre Tarr, District Manager

Vernon Kohler, Field Engineer

Karen Smith, Administrative Assistant

Alice Hennessy, Bookkeeper

Janice Anaya, Assistant Bookkeeper

Student Staff: Gabriel Ramirez, Franchesca Lucero, and Lesley Kingston Volunteer Staff: Joanne Koski

NRCS DISTRIC CONSERVATIONIST

Louis King

SERVICES AVAILABLE FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Cost-Share Programs—Subdivision Reviews—Vegetation Identification—Licensed Pesticide Applicators

Handout Information On—Rangeland Management, Wildfire Risk Reduction, Noxious Weed Management, Noxious Weed Calendar, Children's Conservation, Watershed Health, Soil Erosion Control

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

Wood Chipper (Please call to reserve and rent this machine)

Buffalo and Blue Grama Grass Seed

Mountain Valley, Southwest & Maximillan Sunflower Seed

Ollas (Terra Cotta jars used for sub-surface irrigation systems)

Field Guide to Plants & Animals of the Middle Rio Grande Bosque

GO TO OUR WEBSITE www.claunchpinto.org

OR CALL (505)847-2243 FOR MORE INFORMATION

CONSERVATION TIPS

RECYCLING

Become an avid recycler. On average, recycling creates five times as many jobs as landfill work (EPA). Because landfills filled with our garbage produce potentially harmful greenhouse gases, recycling is a great way to start to fight global warming. These simple actions can make a big difference and recycling will reduce the garbage accumulating in landfills.

- **Each ton (2000 pounds) of recycled paper can save 17 trees, 380 gallons of oil, three cubic yards of landfill space, 4000 kilowatts of energy, and 7000 gallons of water.**
- **It takes 70% less energy to recycle plastics than to manufacture plastics from raw materials.**
- **Using 100% post-consumer recycled paper for your printer and copy machine keeps 5 pounds of carbon dioxide out of our atmosphere per ream of paper.**
- **Every ton of paper recycled saves more that 3.3 cubic yards of landfill space (American Forest and Paper Association).**

For more info go to:

A Recycling Revolution.com

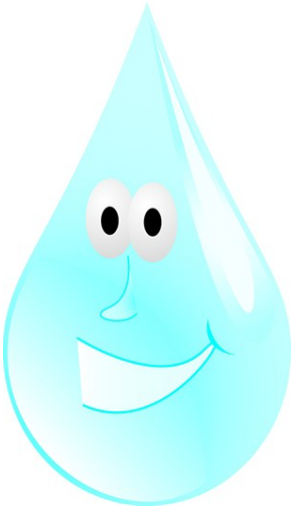
or visit ww.recyclenewmexico.com

NEW CHIPPER INSTRUCTIONAL DVD

A new sixteen minute DVD is available for viewing (at no charge), on the use and safety of the two wood chippers the District has available for rental. It is a requirement to view this information before renting a chipper from the District. Even if you have already seen the old video version, we strongly suggest you stop in and take the time to review this new, updated version.

If you are interested in renting one of the chippers from the District, they are available for $150 per day with pick-up from the District, weekdays after 2:00 p.m. and returns to the District weekdays by 9:00 a.m. For additional information or to be added onto the chipper rental schedule, call 505-847-2243.

WATER SAVINGS



Water conservation has become an essential practice in all regions, even in areas where water seems abundant. In addition to saving money on your utility bill, water conservation helps prevent water pollution in nearby lakes, rivers and watersheds. Conserving water can also extend the life of your septic system by reducing soil saturation.

And the smaller the amount of water flowing through these systems, the lower the likelihood of pollution.

Here's a few tips for water conservation in the home:

- **Don't use the toilet as an ashtray or wastebasket**
  Every time you flush a cigarette butt, facial tissue or other small bit of trash, five to seven gallons of water is wasted.
- **Insulate your water pipes**
  It's easy and inexpensive to insulate your water pipes with a pre-slit foam pipe insulation. You'll get hot water faster plus avoid wasting water while it heats up. While waiting for the water to heat up, go a step further and place an empty bucket under the faucet. Use this bucket of water for plants, bird baths, and pets.
- **Keep a bottle of drinking water in the fridge**
  Running tap water to cool it off is wasteful
- **Use a broom, not a hose, to clean driveways and sidewalks**

Claunch-Pinto Soil & Water
Conservation District

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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MOUNTAINAIR, NM 87036

We're on the web!!!
www.claunchpinto.org

Contributing writers in this month's news-letter: Lesley Kingston, Franchesca Lucero, Jerry Melaragno and Gabriel Ramirez , Karen Smith, and Cody Stropki

MISSION STATEMENT: Develop creative conservation impacts that encourage quality improvements of our Natural Resources & build respect among the people we serve.

YOU ARE INVITED TO A FREE WORKSHOP

THE BENEFITS OF COMPOSTING

TAKE THOSE KITCHEN SCRAPS AND
TURN THEM INTO GOLD FOR YOUR GARDEN

SATURDAY, MAY 22, 2010 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.

At APLINE ALLEY 210 NORTH SUMMIT AVENUE, MOUNTAINAIR

(Lunch Is Not Provided)