Golden Valley Soil Conservation District

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Beach, ND 58621

Phone: 701-872-4551
Fax: 877-478-4506

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conserving natural resources for our future

Please Note Spring Reminders:

- If your bank account information has changed, please let the NRCS office know. Incorrect information will delay your payments.
- If you are adding or losing land, please contact the FSA and NRCS office so we can update our records.
- If you have a new contract, please do not start any practices prior to the contact being funded.
- Prior to installation of any practices that are currently in a contract, please contact the NRCS field office staff to make sure the design is complete.
- Remember to contact FSA before doing any new breakings.

If you have any program questions or would like more information on programs available through the NRCS office, please do not hesitate to contact us at 872-4551, ext. 3 or stop by the USDA Service Center at 49 West Main Street Beach, ND.

Yard Trimmings Tips and Tidbits

Grass clippings don't cause thatch. Overfertilizing, infrequent mowing and improper watering cause thatch.

By "grass-cycling" – that is mulching, recycling or composting grass clippings – you can reduce each lawn's yard waste by 20 to 40 percent.

Leaving grass clippings on the lawn can generate up to 25 percent of the lawn's fertilizer needs.

You can make a positive environmental impact and reduce flooding by keeping yard trimmings out of streets, storm drains and landfills.

ND Division of Water Quality

918 E Divide Ave 4th Floor

Bismarck, ND 58501-1947

https://deq.nd.gov

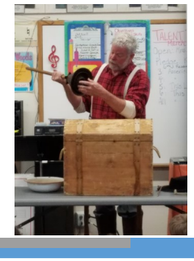
Golden Valley Soil Conservation District

Each year, Tom Gibson visits many schools to educate students on conservation. On April 4th, the Golden Valley SCD was able to host him to our area schools. This year the program was titled **"Water You Doing."**

In this program, a German immigrant named "Gunnar" takes students back to the early 1800's and portrays the captivating struggle to obtain adequate water. He shares what life was like for the settler and how their lives were dependent upon a good, clean and constant supply of water.

Tom Gibson has been a free-lance environmental educator/entertainer since 1986. He developed his first program, Pierre Bottineau, during the summer of 1983 and continues to portray the voyageur along with several other characters in his work to promote environmental education and awareness.
Tom has an Associate Degree in Wildlife/Forestry from North Dakota State University - Bottineau Branch (now Dakota College at Bottineau), and a Bachelor of Arts in Biology from the University of Minnesota, Morris.

Tom taught Wildlife Management, Parks and Recreation, and Environmental Education during a one-year appointment (1983-84) at North Dakota State University - Bottineau. He worked as a naturalist at Lake Metigoshe State Park in north central North Dakota for five summers, and developed and directed the Turtle Mountain Environmental Learning Center from the fall of 1985 through the spring of 1986. After leaving the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department Tom took his show on the road, entertaining audiences of all ages. He has added five more characters and six programs to his entertaining repertoire.



Attention:

The Golden Valley SCD will be seeding a hay crop on the District 1/4 along Hwy 10 this year. We will be putting this up for bids. Watch the newsletter or our Facebook page for more information. You can also call Sheila @ 872-4551 Ext 100

Tree Fabric Management

"The best time to plant a tree is twenty years ago. The second best time is now."

The SCD is offering a maintenance service. We will check the fabric in your tree rows and weed the holes for $25/hr. Contact Sheila @ 872-4551 Ext. 3 for more information

Tree fabric is a great way to manage weeds while establishing trees! It is low maintenance and assists greatly with tree establishment and growth. However, low maintenance does not mean no maintenance. Tree fabric breaks down very slowly in our arid climate.

We recommend inspecting your fabric once a year after snowmelt and before tree growth. Every 5 years you should create relief cuts with a box cutter on two or four sides of the tree trunk as needed. Care should be taken so as not to damage the tree. If the tree becomes girdled by the fabric (or other tree roots) and doesn't have room to grow the tree will suffer limited growth and may die altogether. A tree that becomes stressed due to girdling can grow around the fabric edge. This creates instability/weakness in the trunk and can result in premature death from winds and imbalanced weight.

If you have had trees planted with fabric five or more years ago and haven't taken a look, it may be a good time to check them this year and cut slits as needed.

If you have questions or concerns please contact the Golden Valley SCD 701-872-4551 Ext. 3

Please support our 2019 Sponsors!!!!

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There is a new way to support conservation in North Dakota, an organizational license plate! We are currently in the application phase of this exciting new venture– 50 applications along with necessary fees are being collected in order to put the plates into production. The cost of the plate is $25, with $15 of that fee coming back to ND Pheasants Forever to deliver our mission!! We encourage chapter leaders to sign up for a PF plate and help us spread the word to fellow volunteers and members.

Checks should be made payable to ND DOT– the application along with the fee can be sent to:

ND Pheasants Forever

Attn: Rachel Bush

PO Box 3935

Dickinson, ND 58602

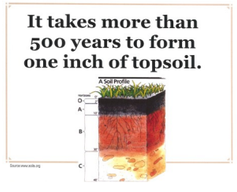
Any questions, contact Rachel or Renee!

Mowing Service Available

The Golden Valley Soil Conservation District is offering a mowing service. We have a 3 point rotary mower and are available to mow tree rows, lots, grain bin sites, driveways, fence lines, etc. This mower is ideal for keeping tree rows neat and tidy.

The District charges $50 per hour with a minimum of 1 hour, plus mileage when hauling the mower to the location.

If you are interested in this service, please contact the Golden Valley SCD office at 701-872-4551, ext. 3 and talk to Sheila.



Yard Trimmings in Waterways

Something as simple as grass clippings can cause big problems for waterways. Clippings and leaves are often blown and swept into streets. They wash down storm drains, ultimately reaching lakes and rivers, elevating nutrient levels, decreasing the oxygen content and killing fish. Leaves and grass on the surface of the water also block sunlight from reaching underwater vegetation, killing an important food source for fish.

Instead of blowing clippings away from lawns, you can rake yard clippings over lawns, and they naturally fertilize. Or give cuttings a new life. Most large cities accept yard waste at their recycling facilities and turn it into mulch. You can take the same recycling approach. Collect yard waste and turn it into compost or mulch. You can then use the new product on other lawns and save money.

Clippings break down, creating compost and adding humus to the soil. Increased levels of humus improve soil permeability, decrease erosion and provide nutrients that release more slowly than those found in commercial fertilizers, enhancing growth.

Our Water Keeping it Clean

North Dakota Department of Health Environmental Health Section

What's Your Water Quality Impact?

By Jim Collins, Jr., Environmental Scientist, North Dakota Department of Health

Every day you make decisions that affect water quality.

- Should I toss this garbage out the car window?
- Is it time to fix that engine oil or hydraulic fluid leak?
- Should I mulch my lawn or use it for soil cover in the garden?
- Should I plant a cover crop?
- How close to the water's edge can I mow or cultivate?
- Should I test the soil before I fertilize the lawn or field?
- How do I properly dispose of or utilize pet and livestock waste?
- Do I use sand, salt or leftover fertilizer to melt the walkway ice?
- Should I flush this unused medicine down the drain?

Each day North Dakotans, both urban and rural, answer these questions. What are your answers? Unfortunately, many people think, "It's just a little bit; it won't affect it that much" or "I'm a long way from the creek/lake."

Our state's streams, rivers and lakes are a collecting point for litter.

However, in each instance the effects can lead to water quality problems, such as harmful algal blooms, excess sedimentation and health concerns for aquatic life, pets, livestock, and humans.

To lessen your impact on water quality, you can:

- Have a garbage bag in your car and empty each time you visit a fuel station.
- If you find a fluid leak, fix it promptly.
- Use lawn clippings as a soil amendment in your garden or better yet leave them on the lawn. Clippings are an excellent source of nitrogen for the lawn and cheaper than fertilizer.
- Plant cover crops to keep bare soil at a minimum, saving soil and nutrients.
- Leave a buffer around streams and lakes to filter runoff.
- Always do a soil test to find out if fertilizers are needed.
- Pick up your pet waste and dispose of it in the trash or compost it. Livestock waste should be utilized as part of a nutrient management plan.
- Never use fertilizer to melt ice and use salt sparingly. Sand should be applied then swept up in the spring and can be reused.
- Dispose of leftover pharmaceuticals properly.

Leaving a buffer strip improves water quality.

Every year, staff from the Watershed Management Program samples streams, rivers and lakes across the state to assess the effects of your decisions on water quality. The program also partners with interested soil conservation districts to monitor local waterbodies to determine if restoration activities are needed.

For more information about the health of the state's waters, check out the *Integrated Section 305(b) Water Quality Assessment Report and Section 303(d) List of Waters Needing Total Maximum Daily Loads*. Every two years the department publishes this report and makes it available to the public. The current document may be found at www.tinyurl.com/NDIntRep.

North Dakota Department of Health
Environmental Health Section
Gold Seal Center, 4th Floor
918 East Divide Ave.
Bismarck, ND 58501-1947
701-328-5150
www.deq.nd.gov

Does Your Pasture Have What it Takes?

By Trisha Feiring, District Conservationist

Cattle have this innate ability to consume grass, forbs, and other green growing forage and convert it into a nutritious food source for us humans. As most of you know, there are 109 elements in the Scientific Chart of Elements, 92 of which are minerals. Did you know that a beef animal provides all 92 of these minerals in a bioavailable form? As the Nobel Prize recipient, Linus Pauling, stated, "You can trace every disease and every infection to a mineral deficiency from unequally yoked energy fields." I've sat and thought a lot about this statement and the impact it has on us, as humans. Does our grass have what it takes to provide the minerals needed in producing high quality beef?

Here is an excerpt taken from a paper titled, "Proper Mineralization of Beef Cattle for Optimal Health, Performance and Profit" by Bill Roberts.

Bioavailability is also a significant factor for mineral rich beef. Minerals occur in three forms in nature. Minerals in their pure form are called Elemental Forms. They are only 2 to 5% digestible and absorbed by man. Chelated minerals are bound in a complex, usually with a protein, that is as much as 35% digestible and absorbed. Colloidal minerals are those that have been incorporated in to a biological form in a plant or animal tissue that is as high as 98% digestible and absorbed by man. Properly fed beef has the preferred colloidal minerals for mankind. As noted previously, cattle that are raised on the green growing herb in an unrestricted environment as nature intended have a full complement of minerals available to them and therefore can yield a full complement to the people who consume that meat.

Dr. William Albrecht studied the effect of soil fertility and mineralization on animal and human health. What he learned is that animals have this amazing ability to seek out and select the nutrition that they need during different times during the year. Here is the problem. If the pastures that these animals are limited to by property lines or fences, do not have the nutrients available to satisfy the grazing animal, the health of that animal is then jeopardized and nutrient deficiencies may or may not become evident to the rancher.

High organic matter soils tend to mineralize quicker because of the increased biological activity in the soil. Soil workers such as bacteria, fungi, protozoa, nematodes, etc. are needed, along with plant residues, in order to break down rock and clay and convert it to water soluble nutrients that are available to the animal. When the land is abused due to overgrazing, under-grazing, erosion from wind and water, poor tillage practices, salt based fertilizers, leaching, etc., microbial life decreases and soil fertility also decreases. When soil biology is limited, so is the potential to increase the soil organic matter and soil fertility.

This leads me to my last point. When plant diversity decreases, the diversity in rooting depth decreases. When organic matter decreases, the amount of soil biology decreases. When the amount of soil biology decreases, the amount of mycorrhizal fungi in the soil decreases. Mycorryhizal fungi enhances the uptake of Phosphorus by the plant, therefore resulting in a plant with a higher amount of available phosphorus. Phosphorus is then put back in the soil through manure from livestock and the breaking down of plant residues. Soil microorganisms are once again the key component.

It is a well-known fact that western North Dakota has a shortage of phosphorus in the soil, which turns into a shortage for our livestock. There are several reasons why this may be occurring:

- A pH of more than 7.0 will restrict the availability of phosphorus to the growing plants.
- A shortage of organic matter in the soil.
- A shortage of soil biology due to poor soil health.
- A lack of plant diversity. Legumes are known for being high in calcium and phosphorus. Native plants, such as, Purple Prairie Clover, Leadplant, Groundplum Milkvetch, Silverleaf Scurfpea, Indian Breadroot, and many others are considered decreasers and start to disappear with any grazing pressure.

I firmly believe that if we improve the health of our soils through increasing the density of livestock and intensifying our grazing rotations, we will increase organic matter, improve mineralization of our soils and increase the availability of minerals, such as Phosphorus, to our livestock and also to ourselves.