



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Natural Resources
Conservation
Service

Nevada

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Natural Resources Conservation Service

Accomplishments Report FY 2008



**Big Warm Spring
Duckwater Shoshone Reservation**

Helping People Help the Land

State Conservationist's Message

I am very excited to be here in Nevada as the new state conservationist for the NRCS. 2009 will be a year of new opportunities and renewed partnerships. We will be implementing the 2008 Farm Bill and hopefully bringing some new programs to Nevada.

This report of accomplishments for 2008 contains stories about conservation projects implemented by producers, Tribes, and partners here in Nevada. I hope you enjoy reading it.

Finally, I look forward to meeting all of you and would like to visit with conservation district supervisors and other partners whenever possible. I will be looking at ways to improve our relationships and services to customers and partners. If you have suggestions, comments, or concerns, I'd like to hear them. Rest assured, I'm here for the long haul and look forward to working with you for years to come.

Sincerely,



Bruce Petersen
State Conservationist



Fallon Farmer Creates Exceptional Wildlife Habitat

Rick Lattin of Fallon knows the importance of keeping his land productive and healthy, not only for his successful farm market, but for wildlife as well. Lattin used the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program to improve existing wildlife habitat around an oxbow located on his farm.

Cover and forage crops, as well as trees, were planted; cattle are used to manage the vegetation. Avian species, such as common egrets and wood ducks, are now benefitted by the additional understory and riparian tree plantings. Cover, forage, and nesting habitat doubled. Lattin's ultimate goal for the enhanced wildlife area is to create walking trails with interpretive signs to allow local school children to observe wildlife species in their natural habitat.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Persons needing this information in a different format should contact Liz Warner, Public Affairs Specialist.

Helping People Help the Land

Nevada NRCS Progress FY 2008

CONSERVATION MEASURES

Conservation Plans Written	175,441 acres
Soil Surveys	740,073 acres
Conservation Applied to Cropland	29,670 acres
Water Quality Improved	141,460 acres
Irrigation Efficiency Improved	33,015 acres
Conservation on Grazing/Forest Land	124,914 acres
RC&D Projects	29,447 acres
Local Businesses Created/Retained	9 no.

CONSERVATION PRACTICES

<u>Practice Name</u>	<u>Contracts</u>	<u>Amt. Applied</u>	<u>Amt. Spent</u>
Waste Storage Facility	3	322.6 ac.	\$ 401,177
Brush Management	30	4,846 ac.	\$ 293,061
Fence	30	152,544 ft.	\$ 273,354
Pipelines/Concrete Ditches	102	294,331 ft.	\$3,093,725
Irrigation Storage Reservoir	1		\$ 17,244
Pond	1	3 no.	\$ 4,500
Irrigation Systems	51	6,164 ac.	\$2,093,452
Irrigation Water Mgmt.	12	1990 ac.	\$ 6,107
Pipelines (livestock water)	21	41,448 ft.	\$ 113,671
Prescribed Grazing	11	18,275 ac.	\$ 91,377
Structures for Water Control	87	757 no.	\$ 279,934

TOTAL OF ALL PRACTICES 345 \$8,281,696

CSP PAYMENTS 44 \$ 396,935

It's filthy, it stinks and it's *good* for the environment

One of the newest and largest manure storage facilities in Nevada was built at the Perazzo Bros. Dairy near Fallon. The huge above-ground storage pond is 230 feet wide by 400 feet long and 7 feet deep, according to Albert Mulder, soil conservationist. The pond will hold approximately 2 million gallons of waste water from the 1,000 cows milked daily at the Perazzo's dairy. During irrigation season, the filtered water will be used to irrigate the Perazzo's hay and crop fields.

Before entering the pond, water and animal waste from the milking parlor has to pass through two concrete settling basins. The solid-liquid separation takes place in the settling basins by way of a weeping wall into a closet that contains a drainage tee pipe. Most solids are retained behind the weeping wall and the liquids pass through to the constructed weir and drain into the pond.

The Perazzo Brothers are following a coordinated nutrient management plan developed in cooperation with the NRCS. Lagoon water and dry manure is applied to their alfalfa fields based on the environmental conditions of the land. Soil samples are taken on each field before any manure is applied to make sure that conditions are safe.

The new storage pond is fully lined with a high density polyethylene flexible liner to prevent any seepage into the groundwater.

USDA and local conservation district employees worked with the Perazzo Brothers to secure approximately \$150,000 in federal EQIP funds to cost-share the project, according to Mulder. The Perazzo Brothers' share was roughly \$50,000.

This new environmentally-friendly animal waste facility is the first of several that are planned in the Fallon area.



Two large settling ponds catch the waste water from the milking parlor to separate the solids.



Filtered water from the monstrous lined pond is used to water hay fields.

First in the Nation . . .

Hispanic Arborist Safety Training Seminars Conducted



Safe tree trimming techniques were taught in Spanish.

The High Desert RC&D Council offered two safety training seminars to the Latino 'green' industry in 2008. The seminars were conducted entirely in Spanish by a certified arborist. They were the first seminars of their kind offered to the Latino community in the country.

Tree work in the Las Vegas area is performed by over 150 arbor/landscaping companies and over 60% of the labor force is Latino. Based on surveys conducted by Nevada Cooperative Extension, most of these laborers do not possess the education or language skills to perform their jobs safely. Workers die from tree trimming accidents, often trapped in the tree canopy where emergency medical services cannot reach them.

The seminars were funded with a Nevada Division of Forestry grant of \$3,855 and matched with \$15,916 of private dollars for a total project value of \$19,771. The grant was matched at \$4 private to every \$1 federal. A total of 537 volunteer hours were donated, valued at \$10,477. Partners included U.S. Forest Service, Nevada Division of Forestry-Urban & Community Forestry Program, Nevada Shade Tree Council, Southern Nevada Arborist Group, Arbor Plus (Latino-owned company), Star Nursery, Southwest Trees and Turf, and Southern Nevada Water Authority.

The High Desert RC&D Council and partners plan to conduct additional training sessions in 2009. For more information, contact Teri Knight, RC&D coordinator, at 702-262-9047 x108.

Partnership Helps Conserve a Rare Fish and a Way of Life for Nevada Tribe

The Duckwater Shoshone Tribe, with assistance from NRCS and in cooperation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, has completed a number of projects to protect wildlife, improve environmental conditions, and increase social and economic values.

Home to 150 residents, the 3,850-acre Duckwater Shoshone Reservation is an isolated rural reservation that contains the largest thermal spring in Nevada. Big Warm Spring is a unique hydro-geologic system that is not typical of most arid climates. And, with a water temperature of 94°F (34°C), Big Warm Spring is considered the most important habitat for a threatened species, the Railroad



Valley springfish (*Crenichthys nevadae*). In 2002, the Tribe began working with the FWS to begin recovery actions for the springfish. In 2003, the Tribe, FWS, and NRCS joined forces to restore Big Warm Spring.

NRCS has provided technical

and cost-share assistance for almost 44,000 feet of fencing, 24 acres of trees and shelterbelts, pest management, 2600 feet of pipeline, watering facilities and structures for water control, over 300 acres of range plantings, wetland enhancement of 26 acres, and wetland wildlife management on over 400 acres.

Other partners helping with this collaborative process include individual Tribal business owners, the Nevada Department of Wildlife, Bureau of Land Management, US Geological Survey, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and State Water Engineer's Office.

New Irrigation System Saves Water and Time

In 2006, Jerry, Janet, and Luke Lancaster requested assistance from NRCS to conserve irrigation and livestock water on their ranch in Grass Valley near Austin, Nev. Their existing steel pipeline was leaking badly, wasting valuable water that was needed for crops and cattle. NRCS worked with the Lancasters to design and install a 15 inch gravity fed pipeline, turbulent fountain, and four new livestock watering facilities.

The turbulent fountain (*below*) prevents floating debris, seeds and other foreign objects from entering the pipeline and clogging the nozzles. Janet is particularly pleased with the new system. "I no longer have to clean the nozzles out on the wheelines!" she said.



They are also saving about 279.21 acre feet of water per year.

The Lancasters applied for cost-share assistance under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. The total cost of the project was over \$350,000. EQIP covered 75 percent of the cost.

Historic Ranch on Carson River Protected Forever

More than 290 acres of farmland along the Carson River near Fallon have been preserved under the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program, thanks to Nevada Question 1 funding, the Trust for Public Lands, and Churchill County.

Rambling River Ranches is a historic property that has been farmed since 1916. The Frey Family purchased the ranch in 1963. The property is now protected under three easements. Conservation easements permanently preserve land for agricultural productivity, preventing them from being developed for other uses. Many properties along the Carson River Corridor have been converted into urban development, something the Frey Family didn't want to happen to their ranch.

The purchase price for the easements was about \$5 million. To ensure the easements will be enforced in perpetuity, Norm Frey donated \$250,000 to the Lahontan Conservation District.

In return for the payment, the Frey Family forgoes any future development other than what is stipulated in the conservation easements, which is farm-related structures and one home on each farm unit for Norm's sons. The property can be sold for profit, but the buyer will not be able to develop the land outside of the conservation easement agreement. "The conservation easement runs with the land," said Norm Frey. "Water rights also stay with the land."

Earlier this year, Frey hosted 120 third and fourth grade students from E.C. Best and Lahontan Elementary Schools to learn about water conservation and the importance of protecting habitat for wildlife.

This conservation easement is a win-win situation for everyone.

