



Guardians of the Range

Dedicated to the Multiple Use of Public Lands & the American Way of Life

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**This month
the Guardians
celebrate the 100th
issue of our newsletter!
Thank YOU for your
support.**

Guardians at Work

State sub-committee on public lands and
natural resources - Thermopolis

Government Affairs Committee - Cody

Bighorn Basin Sage-grouse LWG
- Worland

DROUGHT Permittees - Heads Up Worland BLM Office

Moderate drought conditions currently exists and are expected to 'persist or intensify' according to the July 3, 2012 US Drought Monitor.

Livestock producers are encouraged to take action and monitor forage available, appropriately stock for drought, and remove livestock early if necessary.

Refunds for unused grazing can be issued as per 43 CFR 4130.8-2(b). Please stay in touch with your BLM range con so that they can verify in the field when animals are removed. The agency must verify that livestock are not present in the allotment before a refund can be processed. Please do not wait until the fall to notify the agency that you came off early. A refund cannot be processed under those conditions.

We encourage all producers to carefully monitor your range conditions. Some of the things to look for are: this year's growth, utilization levels, stubble heights, water availability, precipitation data, residual growth from previous growing seasons and Allotment Management Plan objectives.

An upside - if you will - is that dry conditions may make maintenance of your reservoirs a timely project to consider - please visit with your range con beforehand to be certain all required paperwork is on file!

Thank you,
The Guardians of the Range



"A vote is like a rifle; its usefulness depends upon the character of the user." ~ Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States (1858 - 1919)



Kathleen Jachowski, Executive Director
Field Work in Big Horn Basin - Stream Monitoring

Water

~ from the Bureau of Reclamation

The Bureau of Reclamation invites you to comment on its draft Rural Water Assessment Report and Proposed Construction Funding Criteria, which will be available online for 60 days. Comments are due by 5 p.m., (MDT), Sept. 10, 2012.

The report provides an assessment of rural potable water supply projects and programs in the western United States, reviews the status of Reclamation's rural water projects, presents Reclamation's plan for completing projects authorized before enactment of the Rural Water Supply Act of 2006, and describes newly proposed funding prioritization criteria.

Reclamation developed the draft report in response to direction from Congress in Section 104 of the Rural Water Supply Act (P.L. 109-451).

Reclamation developed the proposed funding prioritization criteria because the capability of rural water project sponsors to advance project construction far exceeds available federal funding. Faced with limited funding and multiple worthy projects, Reclamation determined that new prioritization criteria were needed to ensure its ability to help project sponsors make meaningful progress on projects that meet critical water supply needs. The proposed criteria, which are described in the draft report with greater detail provided in an appendix, will be used to formulate the President's annual budget request for authorized rural water construction projects, and to allocate additional funding that may be appropriated by Congress.

You can download the news release from Reclamation's website at <http://www.usbr.gov/newsroom/newsrelease/detail.cfm?RecordID=40124>.

Additional information on the Rural Water Program, including links to the news release announcement, the draft report, the Federal Register Notice of Availability, and instructions for submitting comments are available at <http://www.usbr.gov/ruralwater/>. ★

Forest Service Spends Millions to Grapple with Immediate Effect of Western Wildfires

~ By Associated Press, Published: July 13

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — Nearly \$25 million has already been spent to prepare for the immediate aftermath of this year's wildfires, putting the U.S. Forest Service on track for another possible record year of spending on burned-area recovery efforts.

So far, nearly all of the money is going toward building water bars, removing hazardous trees and spreading seed across hundreds of square miles in southern New Mexico. The state recorded both its largest and its most destructive wildfires in the last two months.

Neighboring Colorado is also having its worst fire season in a decade. Teams of biologists, hydrologists and soil scientists are on the ground there, analyzing what it will take to deal with post-fire flooding and other hazards.

Once their work is done, U.S. Department of Agriculture Undersecretary Harris Sherman said he expects spending to increase significantly.

"This is a very critical stage in the process," Sherman told The Associated Press in a phone interview. "Obviously if we can deal with potential flooding and erosion concerns early on, we will all be much better off."

Scientists weigh everything from weather forecasts and topography to the location of streams and the severity of the burn when determining how much will have to be spent on each acre to keep the damage from getting worse.

In New Mexico, about \$14 million in Burned Area Emergency Recovery funding has been spent on a lightning-sparked fire that raced across more than 465 square miles of the Gila National Forest. Another \$9 million is being spent on shoring up water ways and removing debris in the wake of the Little Bear Fire near Ruidoso, where more than 240 homes were destroyed.

Last year, the Forest Service spent a record total of \$48 million on burned-area recovery work. The funding comes from the agency's annual fire suppression budget.

The formula for recovery is just as complicated as the factors — drought, decades of fire suppression and climate change — giving rise to more severe fires in the West, experts say.

"With the kinds of intensity we've seen on some of the recent fires, there is, for all practical purposes, permanent impairment of the ecosystem," said Wally Covington, director of the Ecological Restoration Institute at Northern Arizona University.

He pointed specifically to last year's Las Conchas Fire near Los Alamos, which burned through hundreds of square miles of tinder dry forest, destroyed dozens of homes and threatened one of the nation's premier government laboratories.

Flooding from the Las Conchas burn scar still remains a concern.

Please see **Fire** on page 4

Direct from the Director: Pre-Grazing Information Comparison

~ by Kathleen Jachowski



Pre-grazing readings on the BNF, Upper Cold Springs pasture in the Forks Allotment. Left to right: Barton Stam, Range Specialist UW Extension; Kris Robertson, Guardian; Shawn Heinert, Range Staff BNF; and Bill Greer, Guardian.

Purpose of field trip was to gather pre-grazing information for comparison with post grazing readings. The Guardians encourage permittees in the Big Horn Basin to utilize the expertise of Barton Stam, Range Specialist with UW Extension/ Thermopolis office to assist them with collection of both annual use and trend data.

Additionally, Barton has experience with cooperative monitoring efforts, which can be pivotal in getting consistent and credible data into your permittee files.

Contact Barton Stam at: 307-864-3421 for further information.

Kathleen

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CRAIG THOMAS GUARDIANS OF THE RANGE ENDOWMENT

Supporting this endowment is a wonderful tax exempt way to show your support for the Guardians' effort, or to honor a family member or friend. We want to have a sustainable financial resource base to achieve our goals and objectives.

For more details, please contact a board member or Kathleen Jachowski (307)587-3723 or guardians@hughes.net.

Riparian Area Management

Check out:
BLM technical reference 1737-23 – Year 2011
Multiple Indicator Monitor (MIM)
of Stream Channels & Streamside Vegetation
<http://www.blm.gov/techreferences>

Join Guardians of the Range

LIVESTOCK OPERATORS

\$100.00 up to 50 head of cattle
\$2.00 / head 51 to 1,500 cattle
40 cents / head for sheep

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Fairness Fee: One-time \$500 fee

Applicable to any new livestock operator membership that needs help within 90 days of joining the Guardians of the Range.

You may join on line:

www.GuardiansoftheRange.org

To pay by check, please make checks payable to:
Guardians of the Range

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Guardians of the Range, P.O. Box 472, Worland, WY 82401

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SHOSHONE NF Secure Rural Schools Shoshone River Project

Your Executive Director, Kathleen Jachowski serves on the Resource Advisory Council (RAC) for the Shoshone NF's Secure Rural School effort. Monies for this effort stem from national legislation passed several years ago to help counties compensate for the declining dollars from timber sales.

Projects help local business interests as they carry out approved projects. The RAC recommends projects for funding to the Forest Supervisor. All project are either on or close to the national forest. Roads, watersheds, fisheries and many other resources benefit from these projects.

The Shoshone River Project will result in the removal of old car bodies and car parts out of the Shoshone River, which are strewn along the riverbank on private, BLM and USFS lands.

Many private landowners and businesses have contributed to the RAC monies to implement this project. All RAC projects require partnership with other organizations, either with cold hard cash and/or in-kind work.

We will have pictures later in the fall after some of this year's work has been completed. ★

Fire continued from page 2

On Wednesday night, a wall of water rushed down Santa Clara Canyon, washing away months of restoration work done by Santa Clara Pueblo and government contractors.

"Our prayers are that it does not get any worse than what it is," Pueblo Gov. Walter Dasheno said.

In the canyon, post-fire flooding has moved car-sized boulders and toppled trees as if they were toothpicks.

"Until you're on the ground and you see it, you can't gauge how much stress it's placing on our families," Dasheno said, explaining that the pueblo sits at the mouth of the canyon. Sherman was aware of the flooding near Santa Clara, but said there have been no reports of major flood damage related to the recent string of fires in New Mexico and Colorado.

Aside from those two states, Sherman said burned-area response specialists are working in Arizona, Nevada, Utah and Wyoming. Contracts are being finalized for seeding and mulching, roads and trails are being stabilized, culverts are being prepped for higher flows of water and warning signs are going up.

On the massive Whitewater-Baldy Fire in southwestern New Mexico, seeding started Thursday on more than 26,000 acres and straw mulch will be spread over another 16,000 acres. ★