Natrona County Rural Living Program

Historic Trails RC&D has partnered to bring this program to Natrona County, WY.

Project Activities:

- This is the sixth successful year (2011), for the Rural Living Program in Natrona County.
- Rural Living Team has offered five to seven workshops each year since 2005, to small acreage landowners to improve land management practices.
- Workshop topics include Forest Health, Weed Management, Mountain Pine Beetle Management, Renewable Energy Options, Solar Tours, Water-Wise Landscapes, Irrigation, Urban Water Saving Techniques and Grazing Management Tools.
- Grant funding through the Wyoming State Department of Water Quality, from EPA has provided funding each year for the Program.

Rural Living Mountain Pine Beetle Workshop

Project Partners:

- Natrona County Conservation District
- Natrona County Weed and Pest
- Natrona County Cooperative Extension Service
- Wyoming State Forestry
- Barnyards & Backyards - Rural Living Program
- NRCS
- Casper College
- CATC—The Bus
- Converse County Cooperative Extension Service
- Natrona County Commissioners

Historic Trails Resource Conservation & Development Background:

- The Resource, Conservation & Development (RC&D) program combines people, rural development needs, and opportunities with solutions. RC&D provides a vehicle for dealing with rural issues through citizen participation. It is as much a way of doing things—as a program.
- The Historic Trails RC&D works with communities for land and water management, community development, land conservation and renewable energy and conservation.
- Historic Trails RC&D has successfully attained funding each year for this program and assisted with program administration and workshop coordination.

2010 Historic Trails RC&D Current Project Activities

Rural Living Program:

2010 was the 5th successful year of the Rural Living Program in Natrona County where seven workshops were held. The workshops included forest health and Pine Beetle mitigation, weed management, urban water savings and harvesting, a Solar Tour and landscaping and construction BMP's in subdivisions. This year we added a new poster and e-mail list which continues to reduce the costs of implementing workshops.

Every year the local Team tries new ways to produce better and more cost-effective workshops to area residents. The urban landowner was a new audience included in 2010 with the 'Limit the Threat: Bark Beetle and Firewood' and the 'Urban Water Saving Techniques' workshops.

Weed Workshops are often held twice in a growing season

Tom Heald, speaker at the renewable energy display at the Agricultural Learning Center on the Solar Tour.

The Rural Living Team includes Lisa Ogden with Natrona County Conservation District, Brian Connelly and Dana Erdman with Natrona County Weed & Pest, Tom Heald and Ashley Garrelts with Natrona County Cooperative Extension Service and Shelly Anderson with NRCS. The Team has consistently provided excellent workshops and landowner visits to follow-up from the workshops to landowners in our area.

Second Annual Solar Tour - October brought a Solar Tour to residents for a hands-on education about small-scale solar and wind energy installations. The Tour started at the Meals on Wheels facility in Casper where a Solar Demonstration project is in the works, also an RC&D project. The Tour visits residences and businesses with renewable energy installations to hear from the landowner about their system.

Background:

- The Rural Living Program has been spearheaded through the Wyoming State Barnyards & Backyards Program, funded by the Environmental Protection Agency. The State offers funding to local areas for the Rural Living Program to conduct land management and natural resource workshops in different areas to improve water quality.

For more information, contact:

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