



Farm & Ranch Monthly Magazine

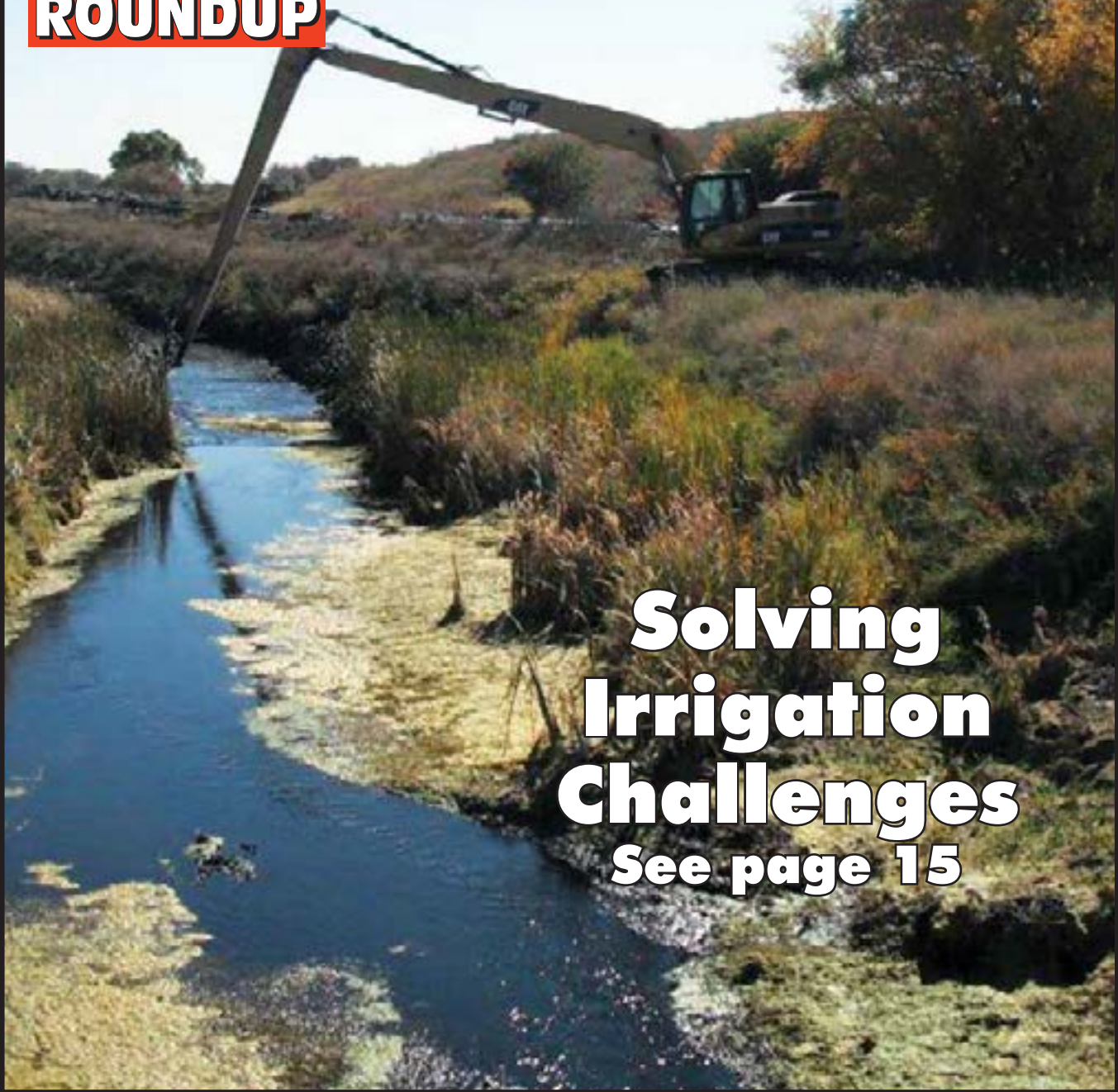
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A photograph of a yellow excavator with a long boom, positioned on a grassy bank and working on a narrow irrigation canal. The canal is filled with water and has some debris floating in it. The background shows a line of trees with autumn foliage under a clear sky.

**Solving
Irrigation
Challenges**
See page 15

A Way of Life Leads to Great Victory

By Brenda Mehling

Dedication and hard work is rewarded with great accomplishments, and few know this better than Watford City's 18-year-old rodeo competitor, Samantha Jorgenson. Among her many achievements, Jorgenson has claimed the title of NDRA Lady's All Around Champion the last two years, as well as the 2013 North Dakota High School Lady's All Around Champion.

For the Jorgenson family, rodeo is a way of life. "It's definitely a family thing," Jorgenson says about her training. Both her parents and her little sister all compete and train together. Jorgenson started with youth rodeos when she was only 8 years old, and has been riding horses, along with her family, her entire life. "We usually train at night," Jorgenson says. After her family finishes a long day of work on their ranch in Watford City, "the whole family does it together, and it is fun."

Jorgenson's favorite thing about rodeo is, "all the stuff you learn and the goals you accomplish." After having competed on a national level and at rodeos in different places, she has also enjoyed the opportunity to meet many great competitors from all over the country, including states like Arkansas.

While Jorgenson has competed and earned many achievements in various rodeo events, her favorite event is breakaway roping. In fact, Jorgenson placed at the national High School Finals rodeo last year in this event.

When asked about what rodeo has taught her, Jorgenson stated, "Rodeo has given me a good work ethic and kept me really busy." She also noted, "it's not like other sports where you just train yourself, you are responsible for the training and caring of your horses as well." This has undoubtedly taught Jorgenson a great deal about hard

work and responsibility.

This fall, Jorgenson began attending Black Hills State University in Spearfish, S.D. on a rodeo scholarship. The transition for Jorgenson of moving to college was made easier by being able to bring her horses along with her. She brought: Frosty, her barrel horse; her breakaway partner, Arnold; and her team roping horse, Squeaky. "They're my friends and I got to take my friends to school," she said smiling. When Jorgenson is not training and taking care of her "friends" she is studying Exercise Science with the goal of becoming a chiropractor.

Of all Jorgenson's accomplishments thus far, she is most proud of winning the NDRA All Around. The NDRA features the best competitors in the state of N.D. This is unlike the high school finals where she competes with her peers. Jorgenson said, "I compete with people that go to pro-rodeos." This made these particular wins spark a feeling of accomplishment for Jorgenson.

It is evident that there are many more victories in store for this young, dedicated competitor. Jorgenson now has her sights set on winning the breakaway for her college region, qualifying for the College Nationals Finals Rodeo, and starting Circuit finals, all while concentrating on her studies at Black Hills State University.



Jorgenson competes in a recent rodeo. (Photo by Craig Maley Photography)

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MSU Receives \$500,000 to Look For New Genes For Resistance To Wheat Stem Sawflies

By Evelyn Boswell

Scientists discovered some 70 years ago that they could fight wheat stem sawfly by growing a new type of wheat. The wheat had a solid stem instead of a hollow one, making it harder for females to lay eggs and leaving less room for larvae to grow.

Montana wheat farmers still benefit from that breakthrough, and Montana State University now has a new grant that could add weapons to their arsenal, said MSU wheat breeder Luther Talbert.

With a five-year \$500,000 grant from the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Talbert and his colleagues will screen 4,000 to 5,000 varieties of wheat that originated in areas of the world where wheat stem sawflies are a problem. The scientists will look for resistant traits that may be present in the wheat and then try to identify the genes associated with that resistance. New resistance genes will be incorporated into new varieties of wheat.

"I'm very excited. I have wanted to do this for several years," said Talbert, a professor in MSU's Department of Plant Sciences and Plant Pathology. "It's good that the USDA will give us the opportunity to do this. It's good that our colleagues in the wheat breeding community are willing to help out."

Peggy Lamb, an agronomist at MSU's Northern Agricultural Research Center in Havre, said, "Any steps that can be taken to better understand, select and breed wheat that will help growers in the sawfly-infested regions of Montana and the U.S. is huge. Funding from this grant will definitely bolster the wheat stem sawfly resistance research that Luther and his spring wheat breeding program have been working on for several years."

In addition to Lamb, Talbert's team on the new project includes MSU entomologist David Weaver; MSU molecular biologist Jamie Sherman; Terry McKeever, a farmer near Loma; Shiaoan Chao, a molecular geneticist at the USDA's Agricultural Research Service in Fargo, N.D.; and researchers at four international wheat breeding companies: Bayer CropScience, Limagrain Cereal Seeds, Westbred (Monsanto), and Agripro (Syngenta).

Lamb finds farms that have sawfly problems, then lays out an area for field trials, plants the seed that Talbert's group has packed, and maintains the plots. The field crews of Talbert and Weaver will collect field data from the sites. Weaver and his laboratory staff will process samples to identify any potential new mechanism by dissecting stems. Sherman's crew will help with genetic studies to identify the new genes for resistance. Syngenta will provide an observation nursery in western North Dakota to help the researchers screen and identify potentially new sources of sawfly resistance.

"Current resistance based on solid stem doesn't always hold up," said Syngenta Northern Plains Wheat Breeder Joe Smith. "Syngenta feels additional sources of resistance would be useful. This kind of research is good for Montana growers, but also could be useful for growers in neighboring states that are experiencing sawfly problems."

Lyle McKeever of Loma said MSU researchers have conducted wheat stem sawfly research on his farm for about 10 years. His son, Terry, will be involved in the upcoming study

by letting the scientists grow test plots of wheat on his farm.

"This area has some of the worst sawfly pressure in the state," said the younger McKeever.

Not sure why, Terry McKeever said climate, temperature and elevation could play a role. At any rate, wheat stem sawflies have invaded the family's farms since the 1970s. What started out as a nuisance has turned into major losses of yield.

"Solid stem helps a lot but those varieties don't have the yield potential that some of the hollow stem varieties have," Terry McKeever said.

Lyle McKeever said he reduced his problem by planting two varieties of solid stem wheat and planting spring wheat instead of winter wheat, but solid stem wheat isn't totally effective. In fact, he calls it semi-solid wheat because some wheat stem sawflies still make their way into the stems. Spraying isn't the answer either.

"You can spray for wheat stem sawfly," Lyle McKeever said. "But you have to spray about every other day each week because it keeps hatching."

Weaver said Montana growers estimate that wheat stem sawflies cause approximately \$75-100 million damage a year in Montana, making this insect the most destructive wheat pest in the state. Overall losses to this pest have been estimated at \$350 million for the entire Northern Great Plains.

Talbert added that, "Montana is the epicenter for wheat stem sawflies in our part of the world, so it's a bigger deal for us than most people."

Unless their life cycle is interrupted, adult female sawflies lay their eggs in the spring inside the wheat stem. During the summer, the larvae eat the inside of the wheat plant, disrupting the movement of sugar and water, weakening the plant and reducing yields. At the end of the summer, the larvae cut the wheat stems at the base so it can emerge the next year.

"That certainly appears to be the worst thing it does," Talbert said.

Weaver suggested that losses in grain weight due to feeding by the larvae might be quite a bit greater.

"It is certainly more insidious because growers can't see how much of the crop's potential has been stolen, whereas stems on the ground are very obvious," Weaver said.

The larvae live inside the wheat stubble during the fall and winter. In the spring, adults emerge from the stem, and the cycle continues.

Finding new resistant genes will be harder than detecting the gene tied to solid stems, but with new advances in molecular genetics, the outlook is promising, Talbert said. Weaver added that the new resistance targets for wheat stem sawfly should include everything from influencing female choices in laying eggs through compounds that kill the growing larvae.

Whatever the outcome, Talbert said he hoped the new project will have the same long-lasting impact as its predecessor.

"The previous wheat breeding community's discovery of solid stems has saved growers many millions of dollars over the past several decades," Talbert said. "It's our goal to leave a similar legacy – identify new genes for resistance that will be equally useful in the future."

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COMMON GROUND

Major Fellowship Goes To Honey Bee Investigator at MSU

By Evelyn
Boswell

Earlier this year, Laura Brutscher helped young Montanans become “honey bee investigators” during a summer camp at Montana State University. The MSU graduate student has now received a major fellowship to expand her own honey bee investigations.

The Project Apis m.-Costco Fellowship will give Brutscher \$50,000 a year for three years to research honey bees and the pathogens that infect them. Her mentors as she continues studying the role of microbes in honey bee colony health and how they relate to the recent surge in honey bee deaths are Michelle Flenniken in MSU’s Department of Plant Sciences and Plant Pathology and Carl Yeoman in the Department of Animal and Range Sciences.

“I’m extremely glad and surprised I was awarded this fellowship,” said Brutscher, a doctoral student in microbiology and a Molecular Biosciences Program Fellow. “It’s definitely a great financial support, and it certainly adds fuel to the fire in terms of my drive to perform better research. I’m excited for the future opportunities to interact with beekeepers and other bee scientists and to share my findings with the beekeeping community.”

Flenniken said, “I’m grateful for the Project Apis m.-Costco Fellowship support and very happy that Laura was selected. She is a very deserving and dedicated student.”

It’s not unusual for businesses and nonprofit organizations to team up to address issues related to food production, Flenniken said. Project Apis m. – a title that incorporates the scientific name for the western or European honey bee -- is a national nonprofit that supports honey bee research, infusing more than \$2.4 million into research



MSU grad student Laura Brutscher has received a three-year fellowship to investigate honey bees and the pathogens that infect them. (MSU photo by Kelly Gorham).

programs over the last eight years. Costco recently partnered with the nonprofit and is using some of the proceeds from the sale of Kirkland Signature honey to support honey bee research, including the “Ph.D. Fellowship in Honey Bee Biology” awarded to Brutscher.

“It is a natural partnership between Costco, a business that sells a large amount of honey and food produced from crops that require pollinators, and Project Apis m., an organization that works directly with beekeepers and bee scientists to support efforts aimed at maintaining the health of this U.S. pollination force,” Flenniken said.

The committee that interviewed Brutscher consisted of a Costco representative, a Project Apis m. representative, a commercial beekeeper and two scientific advisers. They met Brutscher at the Costco headquarters in Issaquah, Wash., and selected her out of four finalists.

“I felt like we had a really good, friendly conversation,” Brutscher said. “The interview committee did ask serious questions about the feasibility of my research and how applicable it would be in helping the beekeeping community.”

Christi Heintz, executive director of Project Apis m.

Continued on next page.

and a member of the selection committee, called Brutscher a great young scientist who represents the future in bee research. She said Brutscher, in addition to having great potential to help solve challenges in the bee industry, is friendly, enthusiastic and has many qualities that will contribute to her certain success.

"Her capacity to help us with what ails the bee is tremendous," Heintz said. "We are pleased to have funding from Costco to help her pursue her exciting bee research. She's on the cutting edge."

Brutscher's research will incorporate both field and laboratory studies, including the use of advanced molecular biology techniques to identify which honey bee genes are most important for warding off viral infections. Her research will involve honey bee colonies in Montana-based commercial operations, as well as honey bee colonies at MSU.

For the studies involving commercial operations, Brutscher will work with one Montana beekeeper who trucks his hives to California every year to pollinate almonds. She will select study sites in Montana and then focus on 15 hives at each site. She will sample the hives to look for bacteria, viruses and fungi, and monitor the hives' health over time to see if there is a relationship between certain microbes and colony health.

"It's kind of neat being able to work so intimately with the bees in such a wide range of levels from the colony and individual bee down to the molecular level," Brutscher said.

Brutscher grew up on a dairy farm in Little Falls, Minn., where her main exposure to honey bees came from the commercial colonies that were kept near the family's sunflower fields. Since coming to MSU in 2012, her exposure

has increased. Not only does she research honey bees, but she helps maintain the honey bee colonies near MSU's horticulture farm. In June, she shared her knowledge with "high ability/high potential" students who took the Honey Bee Investigators class at MSU's Peaks and Potentials Camp. The summer camp is open to students entering fifth through seventh grade.

Flenniken said honey bees are a critical component of agricultural production, pollinating numerous crops, including almonds, apples, blueberries, citrus and melons.

"Interestingly, Montana is a beekeeping state," she added. "It ranked fourth in honey production in 2011 and has ranked in the top seven over the last decade. The wildflowers and some of the agricultural lands in the state provide important summer forage for honey bees."

State Entomologist Cam Lay said commercial beekeepers in Montana manage more than 180,000 colonies, most of which are transported to California to meet the demands of almond pollination each February.

He noted that Montana is the "summer 'rest and recovery' location for an awful lot of migratory beehives. Those are the guys that go to California every year to pollinate almonds. Many of them also make their way up the coast to Oregon and Washington to pollinate fruit trees, and then return to Montana for the summer."

Unfortunately, Flenniken said, "The U.S. pollination force has suffered increased annual losses since 2006."

According to the USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS), honey bee pollination is responsible for more than \$15 billion in increased crop value per year in the United States. However, the total number of managed honey bee

colonies has fallen from 5 million in the 1940s to 2.5 million today. From 2006 to 2011, annual losses averaged about 33 percent per year, with some of those losses attributed to Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD).

As a result, Brutscher and Flenniken are among the many scientists in the country who are conducting research to better understand the reasons for honey bee deaths. They are also working toward developing strategies to mitigate bee colony losses.

Brutscher and Flenniken gave presentations during the annual convention of the Montana State Beekeepers Association, Oct. 17-19 in Butte. Flenniken recently gave a Montana Institute on Ecosystems lecture on her findings.



Laura Brutscher (right, in full beekeeping suit) shows a hive frame to students who became "Honey Bee Investigators" during the 2013 Montana State University Peaks and Potentials Camp in Bozeman. (Photo courtesy of Laura Brutscher).

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WSC's Ag Department Prepares for 4th Annual Carcass Challenge

By Tieheena Shank

The Ag Department at Williston State College is getting ready for the 4th annual Carcass Challenge. Students in the program take calves donated from area livestock producers to Hovde Feedlot in Arnegard, feed them the same rations, and weigh and process them monthly and study the data. When they are ready to be processed, they are brought to Prairie Packing and sold as quarters, halves, or wholes. The proceeds fund the Ag Ambassador program.

The Ag Ambassador program helps communicate the importance of agriculture in our area. "Students interested in agriculture will go out in a leadership fashion and promote agriculture," said Kim Murphy, Ag instructor at WSC. "It's agriculture advocacy."

Those interested in donating a calf to the Carcass Challenge have from now until December 30th to do so. In addition

to supporting the Ag Ambassador program, a donation has many benefits for livestock producers, including gaining valuable data on the genetics of their calf. "When they are processed, we take the data and get quality grades on the carcasses," said Murphy. "We give out awards for the best gainer and the overall best carcass data."

Awards are given out during a special event hosted by the Ag Department called "Cowboy Christmas." This year's event will take place on December 7th. It is open to the public and donors receive free tickets to the event. Cowboy Christmas will include a prime-rib supper and live entertainment, and the National Finals Rodeo will be shown live on the big screen. Awards will be given out for last year's donors.

Those who donated to the 3rd annual Carcass Challenge are: Aaron and Shelby Jacobson of Noonan; Emmet O'Neil of Columbus; Bradley Rosenquist of McGregor; Jonathan

Enget of Stanley; Helen Glasoe of Wildrose; Mark and Shelley Ellis of Williston; Brandon Erickson of Powers Lake; Gary Tande of Battleview; Curt and Nancy Severson of Cartwright; Lynn and Nathan Hovde of Arnegard; and Lee and Kim Murphy of Williston.

A number of donors have donated a calf to every Carcass Challenge: Aaron and Shelby Jacobson, Noonan; Mark and Shelley Ellis, Williston; Curt and Nancy Severson, Cartwright; and Lynn and Nathan Hovde, Arnegard.

A special thanks goes out to all donors who have made the Carcass Challenge a success. Murphy would also like to thank Bradley Rosenquist, a former student who has been an important part of the success of the Carcass Challenge. "He is the reason this program is still going because he has found a lot of our donations and he picks them up and delivers them for us. He even donated a steer last year," she said. "He's been great."

More information on the Carcass Challenge can be found at www.willistonstate.edu, by calling Kim Murphy at (701)774-6226, or by visiting the WSC Ag Department Facebook page at www.facebook.com/wscag. For other information regarding Williston State College, visit www.willistonstate.edu, call (888)863-9455, or stop by 1410 University Avenue, Williston, ND.



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Rex Smelser helped start Pacific Hide & Fur in 1947 or 48, where Prewitt & Co is now. He retired in the 60s and his son Bill took over as manager.

In 1985 Bill was forced out of Pacific, due to his hearing. He and his son Bret both left and started Border Steel in Glendive. Bret's son Brady has worked full time since 2004 and is a partner in the business. Other shares are owned by Bret's sister Cindy Eleson, and his brother Todd's survivors. In the spring of '06, Border Steel opened its facility in

Plentywood, expanded to Williston in '07 and came home to Sidney in December 2011.

They are truly happy to be back in Sidney. According to Bret and Brady, they "do it all". From new steel, aluminum and stainless to all your ag and construction and recycling needs, Border Steel & Recycling can take care of you. They also handle new and used iron. "We're adding to what we already had to offer from our other locations and growing on that," Brady said. He added, "This gives us the opportunity to better serve our loyal customers and to build new ones. Competition is healthy, the winners will be public-the consumers." Border Steel & Recycling can be reached at 406-433-7737 or toll free at 1-855-810-2995.



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LYIP Completes Another Successful Irrigation Season



LYIP crews work to keep the canals free of plant growth and debris.

By Dianne Swanson

The ditches are drained and it's time for paperwork and construction at Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project (LYIP) according to project manager James Brower.

The accounts are being finalized, with personnel going through last year's audit and preparing for this year's. Staff has just finished verifying water assessment dues and new property owners. That information is given to the county courthouses so they can send out water assessments.

In addition to routine maintenance, LYIP crews will be working to repair an area of the canal south of the Savage beet dump. In August, a ditch rider noticed problems on a high bank. Russian olive trees had plugged a vertical drain, the canal started seeping, and what was a solid bank turned liquid. One vertical drain sloughed off plugging the Main Drain for the Main Canal that is supposed to take the seepage away and keep the Main Canal bank stable; but with such a steep bank and limited manpower, it was impossible to keep all the vertical drains clean. A crossing culvert plugged and all the water backed up, causing a major portion of the Main Canal Bank to crack off and start to sink. The LYIP heavy equipment operators worked hard for two days to remove the plugged culvert and clear out the deep drain.

Brower dropped the water levels by a foot for safety. The combined Joint Boards of the irrigation districts agreed that it was better to have rationed water than no water at all since the crops needed one or two last irrigations before harvest. "The farmers all shared and co-operated," Brower said.

Other projects on the agenda include replacing a drain and a lateral that were completely wiped out during the flooding of 2011. It is a large piping project, part of which will be funded by FEMA.

There are also old corrugated metal culverts which need to be replaced by poly or concrete ones. The Bureau of Reclamation

is also forcing the LYIP to remove all trees along the canals to help prevent future problems.

LYIP continues to use advancements in technology to make the project safer and more efficient. The latest project involved adding radio antennae to help monitor water levels in the canals. An alarm will go off if water levels get too high.

According to Brower, there are more priority projects than the district has the time or manpower to accomplish. They are currently hiring experienced heavy equipment operators and also need someone with ag experience to fill a ditch rider position.

"The Bureau of Reclamation said we're one of the best maintained irrigation districts in Montana, but we have a lot more to do," Brower said.

After spending \$22 million building and upgrading the fish screens at the Intake diversion to protect the pallid sturgeon, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks started lobbying the Montana leadership, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the Corps of Engineers to have the entire diversion weir removed. It would turn LYIP into a pumping irrigation proj-

Continued on next page.

ect which would require \$2.2 million in electricity per year. "Our power grid was built for small rural communities, not huge projects like this," Brower said. "Plus it would generate millions of pounds in additional carbon footprint."

In a remarkable show of unity, reinforced by a comprehensive economic study done by Kjeld Johnson showing an economic loss of \$5.2 billion dollars over 10 years caused by unreliable irrigation, LYIP board members, and government entities from Montana and North Dakota, and the Bureau of Reclamation have successfully fought back. At the heart of the matter, the Corps has been told they can only spend the allocated funds at Intake, not anywhere else. Plans now call for a diversion stream to help preserve the sturgeon and still maintain reliable water for agriculture. Brower specifically had praise for State Representative Matt Rosendale who is also the chairman of the Intake Irrigation board. "He didn't just attend meetings, he knocked on doors in Helena and D.C. He lobbied the Montana leadership and agencies and directly worked with those and federal agencies and encouraged them to support LYIP and the local communities, farmers, businesses and economies." Meetings continue every 2 weeks discussing the best options for the district while meeting the endangered species obligations. LYIP is also confident, with assurances from the Corps and the Bureau of Reclamation, that they will be able to add rock at the top of the diversion next year, ensuring a better flow of water for the season.

Brower has worked with 7 other projects in the past 16 years and says he has never worked with such a good irrigation board. "They always co-operate for the good of the water users and the irrigation project as a whole," he said. During the worst of the FW&P negotiations, farmers would leave their combines to attend meetings in Billings to let people know just how important the project is to the communities. "They keep their heads, they're always professional and polite. They don't always agree, but they always work together and concede to what's best for the users," Brower stated. When meetings involved assessment levels, the overwhelming consensus was to NOT raise assessments. After looking at the budget line by line and discussing the obligations of the district, the board agreed to raise the as-



The staff at Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project includes, L to R, Lois Stephens, map tech; Cindy Nygaard, administrative assistant and James Brower, project manager.

essment a little to keep everything sound financially and fix things as they need to be. "They set personal agendas aside for the good of the water user," Brower said. "I've never seen a board consistently analyze and think things through, present their different ideas and then agree to do what's best for the water users," Brower said.

Brower finds his job at LYIP very satisfying. "It's a non-profit. We feel we're doing a real community service, providing safety to the community in our operations," he said. "The operators work sometimes long hours on repairs to provide safety to the community and water to the users."

After 2 years, Brower is proud to be a Montanan. "I always was at heart. I was just born in the wrong state," he said. "These are good neighbors who co-operate with each other. When someone is sick or hurt, they take care of each other. I hope to spend the rest of my life here."



A crack in the road on the canal bank shows some of the damage caused last summer.



Part of the canal bank south of Savage sloughed off in August, causing problems for LIYP and reduced water for irrigators.

House & Garage/Shop Auction

Sun, Nov 17 • 2 pm | Glendive, MT

LOCATION: From Merrill Ave, go under the Underpass behind the EPEC for 1 1/2 blocks (306 E Barry Street) Auction will be held at the property.

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TERMS: Cash. 10% down sale day, the balance due at closing approximately 30 days from sale date at the office of First American Title Holding Company, 204 N Kendrick Ave, Suite 205, Glendive, MT (406)365-5482

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Your bid is considered acceptance of the terms of this auction. If you, the Buyer fails to close, the down payment is non-refundable. If the Seller fails to close, 100% of the down payment will be returned. At this time, there is no known reason that the Seller would not be able to close. All funds are held in the escrow account of First American Title Holding Company, 204 N Kendrick Ave, Suite 205, Glendive, MT (406)365-5482

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Historic Saddlery Makes Saddle For National Finals Rodeo

Submitted by Bo Wagner

For years, Connolly Saddlery was known for their custom hand-made saddles. The detailed tooling and integral craftsmanship were sought after and quickly became well known throughout the country. In 1978, with the retirement of the head saddle maker, Connolly Saddlery stopped making custom saddles. However, 34 years later the Connolly stamp is being tooled into quality leather again.

In 2012, for their 100 year anniversary, the current owners Dave & Barb Wagner, re-launched the Connolly Saddle. The same level of quality and custom craftsmanship has been revived into the twenty-first century.

"Growing up everyone knew the high standard of the Connolly saddle and we spent years working to bring that standard back," says Dave Wagner. "We couldn't be more proud of the saddles."

The quality and appeal of the Connolly saddle hasn't taken long to get noticed since its re-introduction. This past summer, the Women's Professional Rodeo Association (WPRA) extended an invitation for Connolly Saddlery to be a part of their saddle program that gives a custom-made saddle to the top 15 Barrel Racers in the world at the NFR in Las Vegas.

"We are extremely honored to be a part of this program. Obviously, there are only 15 saddlerys in the country that get asked and we're humbled that our saddle will be a part of the National Finals Rodeo in Vegas," stated Wagner.

The saddle is currently on display at the Connolly store



located in Billings, MT until it will be taken to Las Vegas in December.

Stockmen's Association Pledges Reward In Horse Case

Submitted by Jason Zahn

The North Dakota Stockmen's Association (NDSA) will "pony-up" up to \$10,000 for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for striking and dragging a Shetland pony to death near Bottineau, N.D., in late September. The 84-year-old cattle producer organization's reward is in addition to a second reward fund being administered privately by the horse's owner, Dave Boppre. The Turtle Mountain Veterinary Service of Bottineau is a collection point for private dona-

tions. "Animal stewardship is a priority for North Dakota stockmen," said NDSA President Jason Zahn, a Towner, N.D., cow-calf producer. "Ranchers are committed to helping solve this senseless crime, and we are hopeful that the reward will be a catalyst in making that happen." People with information should contact Steve Watson at the Bottineau County Sheriff's Department at (701) 228-2740 or NDSA East River Fieldman Fred Frederikson, who is assisting with the investigation, at (701) 290-3993.

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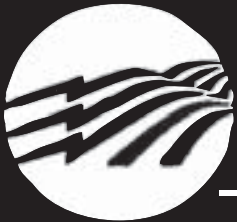
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Livestock Producers Urged to Document Losses

Submitted by Brad Olson

Livestock producers that suffered losses due to natural disaster are urged to keep thorough records of all losses, including livestock death losses, as well as expenses for such things as feed purchases and extraordinary costs because of lost supplies or increased transportation costs.

USDA Farm Service Agency State Executive Director Aaron Krauter said that both versions of the pending Farm Bills contain a reauthorization of the lapsed disaster programs such as the Livestock Indemnity Program that are retroactive for losses occurring from October 2011. "We're optimistic that a Farm Bill will be passed and we'll be able to provide that strong safety net for producers," Krauter said. "While we can't accept documentation in FSA offices until the programs are reauthorized, it's extremely important that farmers and ranchers affected by adverse weather events keep thorough records of their losses."

Owners and producers should record all pertinent information of natural disaster consequences, including:

Documentation of the number and kind of livestock that have died, supplemented if possible by photographs

or video records of ownership and losses;

Dates of death supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts;

Costs of transporting livestock to safer grounds or to move animals to new pastures;

Feed purchases if supplies or grazing pastures are destroyed;

Crop records, including seed and fertilizer purchases, planting and production records;

Pictures of on-farm storage facilities that were destroyed by an adverse weather event; and

Evidence of damaged farm land

Producers with damaged farmland should contact their local FSA office regarding the Emergency Conservation Program, and producers with private forest land should contact FSA regarding the Emergency Forest Reserve Program.

FSA's authority to operate the five disaster assistance programs authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill, including SURE, LIP, ELAP, LFP and TAP expired on September 30, 2011.



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