

Morgan Conservation District

Est. 1955

200 West Railroad Avenue, Fort Morgan, CO, 80701

970-427-3362 • morganconservationdistrict@gmail.com • www.morganconservationdistrict.com

Winter 2022 Newsletter

Office Update

We are no longer in the office during regular business hours. If you need to contact us or pickup any supplies, please reach out at 970-427-3362 or 720-361-6418, or email us at morganconservationdistrict@gmail.com.

Conservation Tree Seedling Sales

Our Annual Conservation Tree Seedling Sale is now open! Trees will be available for pickup in May 2023 at our office on 200 West Railroad Avenue. Bareroot species are now available, and Large species will be available for purchase starting mid December. Here is our current inventory:

American Elm	Common Lilac	Peking Cotoneaster
American Plum	Eastern Red Cedar	Ponderosa Pine
Austrian Pine	Golden Currant	Rocky Mountain Juniper
Buffaloberry	Hackberry	Redosier Dogwood
Bur Oak	Hardy Apricot	Sandcherry
Colorado Blue Spruce	Honeylocust	Scotch Pine
Caragana	Milkweed (bundles of 10)	Wild Rose
Chokecherry	Native Cottonwood	



Trees are sold in bundles of 25 for \$40 including tax and Large are sold in bundles of 10 for \$40 including tax. Junipers are an excellent resource for windbreaks or snow fences, improving or building wildlife habitat, and assisting with soil and wind erosion. The District can assist in planning a tree planting or with tree care and questions, as well as providing tree planting supplies. Supplies include polymer to help with water retention and moisture control, fertilizer for nutrient supplementation, weed barrier fabric for weed suppression and moisture control, and staples for weed barrier fabric. Orders can be placed online, via email at morganconservationdistrict@gmail.com or phone at 970-427-3362 or 720-361-6418.

Grass Seed Sales

Did you know that we offer grass seed for sale? Seed can be used for CRP, pollinator plantings, or general erosion control and cover. We work with a local grass seed dealer to ensure timely delivery of all mixes. If you are interested in ordering a custom or pre-made mix, please contact our office!



Upcoming Events

February 1st: South Platte Water Update

February 1st: Annual Meeting

We will be hosting two landowner-focused workshops in the Spring!

The first one is a workshop series in the Spring focused on small acreage management! Topics include noxious weed management, water management, grazing and livestock management, drought resiliency, and ag accounting and operations.

The second one will be a workshop on tree care & planting, as well as how to manage diseases and pests.

We will also be hosting our Ag Water Bike Tour in April!

Be sure to follow us on Facebook @MCDFortMorgan for updates, or join our email list at www.morganconservationdistrict.com



Cost Share Boundary Fence to Graze Expired CRP

Grazing to Sustain Grasslands

Bird Conservancy of the Rockies and USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife are partnering with landowners to help transition exiting acres from the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) into a managed grazing system. We are offering a voluntary cost share program on the eastern plains of Colorado to help landowners purchase materials for boundary fence and/or water tanks to facilitate a managed grazing system on expired CRP pastures. Managed grazing supports livestock operations, rangeland health, and creates excellent habitat for grassland birds and other wildlife.

Benefits of Partnering

- Receive **70% cost share, up to \$22,000** per project for boundary fence materials and/or removable water tanks, and wildlife ladders, to implement managed grazing on expired CRP
- Boundary fencing increases eligibility to enroll with Farm Bill programs for further financial and technical assistance
- Improved ranch viability through a long-term grazing plan on expired CRP pastures
- Managed grazing creates excellent habitat for grassland birds and other wildlife.



Pair on the eastern plains, Photo by Rachel Belouin



Lark Bunting, Colorado State Bird, Photo by Ryan Parker

Qualifications



Wildlife-friendly fence for livestock and safe wildlife passage. Photo courtesy of NFWF

- Must currently own expired CRP field
- Collaboration on a 10 – year grazing plan for the CRP pasture(s)
- Installation of wildlife-friendly fencing for entire boundary area
- Compliance with NEPA & cultural clearances
- Allow wildlife biologist to conduct seasonal nesting survey prior to fence installation and photo monitoring after install, every 3-5 yrs.

This voluntary program requires landowner(s) to purchase materials and undergo cultural and NEPA clearances conducted by USFWS. Reimbursements will be paid after site inspection of completed work and within 30 days of Bird Conservancy receiving the funds from its grantor, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. All boundary fence must be installed by September 30, 2023 to receive reimbursement. This offer is for **supplies and materials only** and does not include the cost of labor.

Connecting People, Birds and Land
www.birdconservancy.org

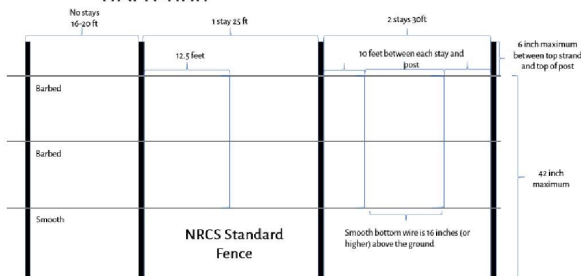


Cost Share Boundary Fence to Graze Expired CRP

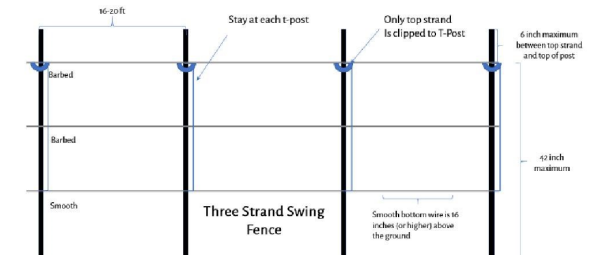
Fence Options and Specifications

Bird Conservancy and PFW collaborated with ranchers to design and select 6 cattle tested wildlife-friendly fences. Each fence is durable, proven to be low maintenance, visible to wildlife, and flexible for wildlife and debris to move across rangelands while containing cows, calves, and bulls.

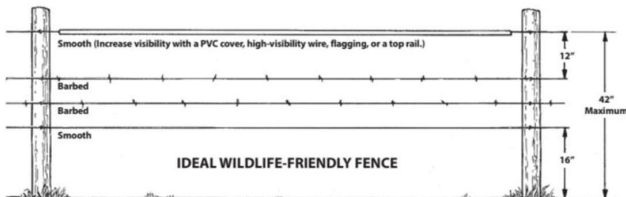
- All fence options have a smooth bottom wire at least 16 inches off the ground with the top wire at 42 inches or lower; wooden posts are trimmed to 48 inches or lower; braces should be placed every ¼ mile
- Select at least 12.5-gauge wire; 14-gauge for barbed; and 16-gauge or higher for ties
- Select new wire for 950 lbs. or 70,000 PSI
- Other fence materials and design decisions, including line posts and H-braces, are up to landowner discretion



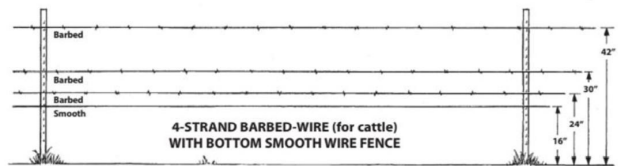
Option 1: NRCS wildlife-friendly fence with smooth bottom strand and top strands barbed



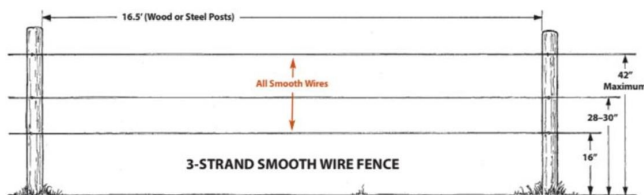
Option 2: Three strand wildlife-friendly swing fence with smooth bottom strand, top strands barbed (developed to allow tumbleweeds and debris to pass)



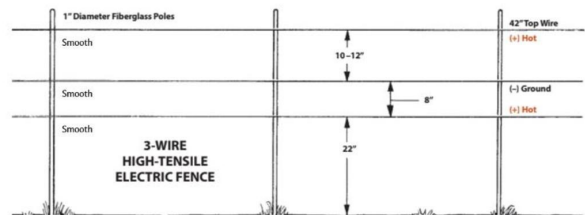
Option 3: Colorado Parks and Wildlife, wildlife-friendly fence with top strands smooth, middle strands barbed, and top strand with high visibility



Option 4: Colorado Parks and Wildlife, wildlife-friendly fence with smooth bottom strand and top strands barbed



Option 5: Colorado Parks and Wildlife, wildlife-friendly fence will all strands smooth



Option 6: Colorado State Parks and Wildlife, wildlife-friendly fence (suitable for bulls)

Contact Information

For more information or to enroll, contact Trent Delahanty at trent.delehanty@usda.gov/ 719-254-7673 ext. 3022 for southeast, CO or Renea Wilson at renea.wilson@usda.gov/ 970-427-3350 for northeast, CO.

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www.birdconservancy.org

USDA Requests Public Input on Implementation of Inflation Reduction Act Funding

WASHINGTON, Nov. 17, 2022 – USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will use the investments provided through IRA-funded conservation programs to support farmers and ranchers in adopting and expanding climate-smart activities and systems. NRCS asks for comments on how to target program benefits, quantify impact, and improve program delivery and outreach, especially for underserved producers. Comments are due Dec. 21, 2022. NRCS will identify immediate changes that can be made in fiscal year 2023 and will continue to identify and adopt additional changes in future years.

“Agriculture is at the forefront of the nation’s effort to address climate change, and we want to hear from people on the ground how to implement our programs to maximize climate benefits, promote equity and assist all producers,” said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. “From climate-smart agriculture, to supporting healthy forests and conservation, to tax credits, to biofuels, infrastructure and beyond, this legislation provides USDA with significant additional resources to lead this historic charge.”

The Inflation Reduction Act provided unprecedented funding levels for several of the existing programs that NRCS implements. The increased funding levels begin in fiscal year 2023 and rapidly build over four years, totaling these additional amounts:

- \$8.45 billion – Environmental Quality Incentives Program
 - \$3.25 billion – Conservation Stewardship Program
- \$4.95 billion – Regional Conservation Partnership Program
- \$1.4 billion – Agricultural Conservation Easement Program
 - \$1 billion – Conservation Technical Assistance

NRCS is asking for public input on how to best maximize benefits for climate mitigation, including targeting practices and programs that provide quantifiable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, NRCS is requesting feedback to help identify strategies and provide recommendations on how to maximize, target, monitor, and quantify improvements to soil carbon, reductions in nitrogen losses, and the reduction, capture, avoidance, or sequestration of carbon dioxide, methane or nitrous oxide emissions associated with agricultural production. NRCS is also seeking ideas for how to further streamline and improve program delivery to increase efficiencies and expand program access for producers, especially underserved producers.

Public comments should be submitted through this [Federal Register notice](#) by Dec. 21, 2022. If you have questions, contact NRCS.IRA.Input@usda.gov.

Correction: An earlier version of this news release listed the incorrect deadline. On Nov. 21, the deadline was corrected to Dec. 21.

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Draft Strategic Plan for Climate-Smart Natural and Working Lands

The State of Colorado, including the Department of Natural Resources, Department of Agriculture, Colorado State Forest Service, and Colorado Natural Heritage Program, developed the state's first ever draft Strategic Plan for Climate-Smart Natural and Working Lands.

This Strategic Plan identifies priority actions across Colorado's landscapes to reduce emissions, increase carbon sequestration, and create a climate resilient Colorado.

The Strategic Plan for Natural and Working Lands was a priority action in the 2021 Greenhouse Gas Pollution Reduction Roadmap and is meant to drive a broader strategic vision. The plan represents Colorado's first coordinated effort to address greenhouse gas emissions from natural and working lands.

The report highlights existing programs that support resilient natural and working lands and identifies the needs for both additional data and dedicated capacity to carry on this work. Many climate-smart land management practices have positive co-benefits for ecosystems and communities. These cross-cutting solutions include avoiding land conversion, supporting water-smart land management, and protecting wildlife habitat and biodiversity.

In partnership with the [Colorado Department of Natural Resources](#).

Learn more at the Colorado Department of Agriculture's website [here](#)

Background

Colorado's Strategic Plan for Climate-Smart Natural and Working Lands was identified as a near-term priority action to reduce GHG pollution in Colorado's [GHG Pollution Reduction Roadmap](#), published in 2021.

- The Strategic Plan summarizes actions, including existing programs, that enhance carbon sequestration and reduce GHG emissions from natural and working lands: croplands, rangelands, forests, grasslands and shrublands, wetlands and riparian areas, and urban green spaces. This work compliments climate action by other departments to reduce emissions from energy, transportation, industry, and other sectors.
- This plan is the first of its kind for Colorado, and highlights the need for further research and understanding of how our natural and working lands interface with the state's greenhouse gas emissions goals and climate resilience goals.

The Plan also recognizes that the state's natural and working lands are managed by a wide range of entities- from farmers and ranchers to local entities to the federal government- and all these land managers will need to work together to create a resilient Colorado. The final Plan will be released in early 2023.

Register for a webinar

The draft Strategic Plan for Climate-Smart Natural and Working Lands is now available for public comment for 30 days, closing at 5 p.m. MST on December 16, 2022.

Comments on the Strategic Plan may be submitted through [this Google Form](#).

Members of the public can also make verbal comments on two webinars. Each webinar will cover the same content. The sessions are free and open to the public but you must register to participate.

You can register for either webinar below:

Webinar and Comment Period on [Wednesday, December 7, at 5:30 pm](#)
Webinar and Comment Period on [Friday, December 9, at 10:00 am](#)

View the first draft of Colorado’s Wolf Restoration and Management Plan at a virtual meeting in December

DENVER – The draft Colorado Wolf Restoration and Management Plan will be available for review by the public for the first time on Dec. 9, 2022. Following the presentation of the Plan, the CPW Commission will discuss and take feedback from the public at five upcoming meetings around Colorado.

Background

State statute 33-2-105.8 directs the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission to:

- Develop a plan to reintroduce and manage gray wolves in Colorado;
- Take necessary steps to begin reintroduction no later than Dec. 31, 2023, on designated lands west of the Continental Divide; and
- Pay fair compensation for livestock losses caused by gray wolves

Beginning in April 2021, CPW contracted with Keystone Policy Center to conduct the public involvement effort.

CPW worked with Keystone Policy Center to hold 47 public meetings in 2021, collecting feedback from more than 3,400 Coloradans.

Additionally, CPW appointed two advisory bodies: a Technical Working Group (TWG) (contributes expertise towards the development of conservation objectives, management strategies and damage prevention and compensation planning); and a Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) to provide recommendations to staff and the CPW Commission as they took on the drafting of the Plan.

Following the Dec. 9 presentation of the draft Plan, the CPW Commission will discuss and take feedback from the public at five upcoming meetings around Colorado.

“All Coloradans interested in wolf restoration should plan to virtually attend this presentation or view the recording online at a time that is most convenient for you,” said CPW Acting Director Heather Dugan. “Whether you’ve already submitted your feedback to CPW as one of the more than 3,400 Coloradans we heard from at public meetings over the past year or not, we’re encouraging you to look at the draft plan and submit your input at a public meeting in January and February,” Dugan said.

Dec. 9, 2022 – Presentation of the Draft Plan (virtual meeting)

Zoom/YouTube – 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

The draft Plan will be posted online at wolfengagementco.org on Dec. 9, 2022. At the Dec. 9 virtual Commission meeting, CPW will walk through the draft Plan. Time will be provided for Commissioner questions. A form for public comment will be posted at wolfengagementco.org on Dec. 9 and will remain open through Feb. 22, 2023.

Visit [CPW’s Stay Informed page](#) and sign up for the Wolf Reintroduction eNews to stay up to date with CPW’s Wolf Restoration efforts.

Smoked Pumpkin Cheesecake

By Colorado Proud & Chef Jason K. Morse, C.E.C., 5280 Culinary, LLC and Ace Hardware Grill Expert

Follow along at <https://youtu.be/naONHMDW3m8>

Yield: 1 Cheesecake (serves 10) | Prep Time: 15 minutes | Cook Time: 60-75 minutes plus 4 hours resting time

Ingredients

CRUST INGREDIENTS

- 2 cup Gingersnap Cookies Crushed fine
- ¼ cup Sugar, Brown, Dark not packed
- ½ stick Butter, Salted Melted

FILLING INGREDIENTS

- 3 pkg Cream Cheese, 8oz Blocks Softened to room temp
- 15 oz fresh pumpkin, pureed (or use canned pumpkin)
- 4 ea Eggs, Large, Whole
- 1 ea Eggs, Large, YOLK ONLY
- ¼ cup Sour Cream
- 1 ½ cup Sugar, Granulated Cane Sugar works great
- 2 tbsp Flour, All Purpose
- 2 tbsp Vanilla Extract or Paste
- 2 tsp Pumpkin Pie Spice
- 2 tsp Salt, Smoked

Directions

Wash all tools prior to use

Clean and sanitize all cutting boards and prep surfaces prior to use

Read all manufacturer's instructions before using grills, or any cooking tools

Clean out Traeger as needed and change drip tray liner

Place bottom grill grate into the upper position (if you have an Ironwood)

Fill pellet hopper with Ace Reserve Blend Pellets

Set Traeger to 350° F, hit enter and hit ignite

While Traeger is heating up:

Lightly spray a 9" springform pan with cooking spray

Prepare the Cheesecake as follows

FOR THE CRUST:

1. In a medium mixing bowl, add the crushed gingersnap crumbs, melted butter, sugar and smoked salt. Mix well until all
2. Spray the bottom and sides of your pan using a non stick cooking spray
3. Press this mixture into the bottom of a 9" Springform pan

FOR THE FILLING:

1. In a large mixing bowl, add the Cream cheese and allow to soften for 20 minutes
 2. Using a hand mixer with paddles, beat the cream cheese until smooth
 3. Add: Pumpkin Puree, eggs, egg yolks, sour cream, cane sugar, flour and vanilla paste
 4. Beat until smooth
 5. Pour the cheesecake batter into the pan, over the gingersnap crust
 6. Allow the batter to settle, jiggle pan to help filling settle down
 7. Place in the Traeger, on the grill grate, uncovered and cook for 45 minutes, check the cheesecake and continue to cook
 8. Cheesecake should have a firm center, with a slight amount of wiggle, but nothing wet or runny
 9. Using heat proof gloves, carefully move the cheesecake onto a cooking sheet and transport into the kitchen
 10. Cool at room temp for 1 hour
 11. Place in fridge and cool in fridge for 3 hours or until cheesecake has cooled completely and firmed up
 12. When slicing cheesecake, use a thin bladed knife and wet the blade to help slide thru the cheesecake easier and not rip
- Serve with fresh whipped cream and devour

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