



## IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 TREE PROGRAM & PERENNIALS
- 1 HOLIDAY DISPOSAL ALTERNATIVES
- 2 WINTER WATERING TIPS
- 2 JAPANESE BEETLE UPDATE
- 3 ACME RECLAMATION PROJECT UPDATE
- 3 INVEST IN SHERIDAN'S NATURAL RESOURCES
- 4 COST-SHARE ASSISTANCE SPRING DEADLINE
- 4 USDA CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

## CALENDAR



- JANUARY 4** Monthly Board Meeting
- JANUARY 17** Office Closed  
MLK Jr. Day
- FEBRUARY 1** Monthly Board Meeting
- FEBRUARY 11** Cost-Share Application Deadline
- FEBRUARY 21** Office Closed  
President's Day
- MARCH 1** Monthly Board Meeting
- FEBRUARY -MARCH** Annual Watershed Meetings TBA
- APRIL 5** Monthly Board Meeting
- APRIL 15** Tree Program Order Deadline
- MAY 3** Monthly Board Meeting
- MAY 5-6** TENTATIVE Tree Pick-up



## 2021-2022 SEEDLING TREE PROGRAM

'Tis the season for ordering trees! The SCCD offers conservation grade seedling trees at a nominal price for conservation purposes such as living snow fences, windbreaks, visual screens, noise barriers, erosion control, and wildlife habitat.

Bare root seedlings are offered in lots of 25 and large tube seedlings in lots of 30. Large tube species were very limited this year and have sold out quickly. The nursery hopes to have a larger inventory of those next season. The District also offers a variety package which includes five each of five different seedlings.

To download a printable order form or to order through the online store, visit [www.sccdwy.org/tree-program](http://www.sccdwy.org/tree-program)



## NEW! PERENNIALS FOR POLLINATORS

This year, the SCCD will be offering perennials in partnership with Piney Island Native Plants. As with the conventional tree program, these are intended to be used as a conservation planting for pollinator habitat and will be sold in bulk quantities.

The District will be offering Blanket Flower, Rocky Mountain Penstemon, Smooth Aster, Western Yarrow, and Wild Bergamot (or Beebalm).

Perennials come in 10 cubic inch "cone-tainers" and are sold in lots of 28. A variety package will also be available and will include 5 of each species. Perennials are generally ready the week before Memorial Day.



*Piney Island Native Plants is a greenhouse and nursery producing locally-sourced, locally-adapted, containerized native plants for restoration, reclamation, and conservation-focused projects.*  
[www.pineyislandnatives.com](http://www.pineyislandnatives.com)

## HOLIDAY DISPOSAL ALTERNATIVES



After Christmas, consider some creative reuses of your old tree or wreaths. Trunks (with branches removed) could be used to edge a garden or strategically placed in the yard for birds or squirrels. Pine needles or chipped branches could be used as mulch in garden areas. Branches can be stripped and used as plant stakes for houseplants or vegetable seedlings. For the more crafty folks, there are many ways to incorporate slices of the trunk or branches into your favorite project (think coasters, ornaments, magnets...the list goes on!). Of course, taking the tree to one of the Sheridan Green Waste stations, where it can be composted or turned into wood chips, is always an option too.

## CITY OF SHERIDAN'S FALL PUMPKIN FESTIVAL



District Staff and Board members participated in the inaugural Fall Pumpkin Festival for the City of Sheridan. One of the purposes of the event was to encourage residents to use pumpkin drop-off locations so that they could be incorporated into the City's composting operations, instead of placed in the landfill. According to the City, over 400 people attended the event.



One of the issues Sheridan County has seen with our trees the last few years is dieback associated with winter desiccation. Branch dieback, leaf loss and full tree death can all be caused by winter desiccation. These “winter kill” events are associated with the warmer, drier winters that the region has experienced lately. As fall comes to a close and we turn off our sprinkler systems, it can be easy to forget that our trees, shrubs and other plants still need water in order to survive.

Moist soils change temperature more slowly than dry soils, acting as a buffer against temperature swings for root systems. Moisture in the soil also allows plants to complete the physiological changes necessary for surviving through winter and waking up in the spring. Plant owners should keep this in mind this winter, especially January through March. If outside temperatures are above 40 degrees Fahrenheit for consecutive days and there is no snow cover on the ground it is very important that winter watering occurs.

Utilizing a hose or a bucket, plant owners should apply enough water to the site to keep the soil moist, but not overly wet. The top 6-8 inches of soil is the most susceptible to drying and this is where the majority of root systems are found. An important tool that every plant owner should own is a moisture meter. They are inexpensive, easy to use and they can quickly tell you if soil moisture is dry, moist or wet. Winter desiccation can be easily avoided as long as plant owners remain on alert for dry, warm spells during the beginning of the new year. A good winter watering plan will go a long way to keep our local trees alive and thriving next spring.

# JAPANESE BEETLE UPDATE

Article and photos courtesy of Clark Van Hoosier, City of Sheridan Arborist

In August of 2020, the City of Sheridan caught and confirmed the presence of Japanese beetle (*Popillia japonica*) in the community. This was the first Japanese beetle confirmation in the state of Wyoming. Japanese beetles are a non-native, invasive species that are known for causing extensive damage to plant materials. The adult stage feeds on over 300 species of plants and the larval stage actively feeds on grass roots causing damage to turf grass lawns. Trapping efforts occurred in fall of 2020 with 250 adult beetles captured. The majority of the adult beetles were captured in or around Kendrick Park.



In 2021, the City of Sheridan continued to monitor the Japanese beetle population. The 2021 season provided the first full year of population data as trapping efforts in 2020 began very late in the adult flying season. In total, 6,626 adult beetles were captured in 2021. The majority of the beetles captured this year were again located in traps near Kendrick Park. However, every trap that was placed throughout the town caught at least one adult beetle. This suggests that the population grew in size this year, but without a full season of trapping data from 2020 it is hard to say by how much. Trapping efforts in 2022 will provide a clearer picture of how the Sheridan Japanese beetle population is changing.

Even with the likely increase in population size, damage to plants within Kendrick Park remained very minimal. Linden, cherry, American elm and Virginia creeper seemed to be the preferred species for the adult beetles to feed on. No turf damage from larva was identified in 2021. It's possible that population levels may remain low enough throughout the next 1 or 2 years that homeowners won't notice much damage to their plants. However if the population explodes, homeowners may feel the need to protect their plants from the beetle.

There are a variety of different insecticide products available to combat Japanese beetle, but the decision to utilize these insecticides should not be taken lightly. Many of the products labeled for Japanese beetles can have detrimental impacts on pollinators and other beneficial insects. The most effective management strategy is to target the larva of the beetle while they are still in the soil. Healthy, well maintained plants are rarely killed by adult beetles, but can be impacted aesthetically. For this year, the best action that homeowners can take is to educate themselves about Japanese beetles at the resources below.

Colorado State University: Japanese Beetle Fact Sheet

<https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/insects/japanese-beetle-5-601/>

USDA: Managing the Japanese Beetle: A Homeowners Handbook

[https://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant\\_health/plant\\_pest\\_info/jb/downloads/JBhandbook.pdf](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/jb/downloads/JBhandbook.pdf)

Relative Susceptibility of Woody Landscape Plants to Japanese Beetle

<https://webdoc.agsci.colostate.edu/bspm/JapaneseBeetle/Held2004.pdf>



## INVEST IN SHERIDAN'S NATURAL RESOURCES

SCCD is one of the 34 conservation districts in Wyoming. Each district has a unique program tailored to meet the specific natural resource needs of its district.

The SCCD is funded primarily through federal and state grants with some support from local funding sources, including contributions from private citizens.

As a political subdivision of state government that uses donations solely for public purposes, your investment in the SCCD is considered a tax-deductible charitable contribution.

Individual or business name

Mailing address

City, state, zip

Email address

Phone number

### CONTRIBUTION AMOUNT

- ☐ \$50    ☐ \$100  
☐ \$150    ☐ \$500  
☐ Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### CONTRIBUTION PREFERENCE

- ☐ Acme Power Plant Reclamation Project  
☐ Watershed Programs & Monitoring  
☐ Oil Recycling & Tree Program  
☐ Invasive Grasses & Range Monitoring  
☐ Information & Outreach  
☐ Anywhere needed

Please make checks payable to SCCD or donate online at [www.sccdwy.org](http://www.sccdwy.org)

## ACME RECLAMATION PROJECT UPDATE

Since 2017, SCCD has coordinated a community effort to address contamination at the former Acme Power Plant, on 5 acres adjacent to the Tongue River. The District recently submitted an application to the EPA to remove asbestos from the buildings. Award notifications are expected in late spring/early summer. If awarded, the grant would provide \$585,000 with an additional \$117,000 match, over a three-year period. In the meantime, the District will continue addressing other components as funding and other resources allow.



**Please respect fences and adjacent landowners by not attempting to enter the site. Anyone accessing the site (legally and illegal trespassers) has the potential to track contaminants to surrounding areas and/or injure themselves amid the debris.**

Detailed soil and groundwater assessments completed in 2020 documented asbestos and other contaminants in soils. A debris inventory, which identified large quantities of tires, scrap metal, wood, and other items, will allow the District and other partners to move forward with potential salvage and removal, in the summer/fall of 2022. Addressing the debris is needed prior to cleanup of soils.

Certainly, there has been some interest in preserving the building, especially from people who used to live and/or work out there. But, that came with an acknowledgement that only if it were structurally and economically feasible to do so. To that end, WDEQ provided funding to complete a structural survey, which indicated the building was structurally sound, though some repairs to the roof and brick (especially in the original structure) would be needed. A Market Study, currently underway, has identified some initial challenges related to the site location, the size of the building, and other development constraints.

Designs are being developed for removal/modification of the diversion structure in the Tongue River adjacent to the plant. A hydrologic interactions study was completed to determine potential interactions among the river, groundwater, and basement sumps.

In the coming months, the District will work with project partners to finalize the various reports that are currently in progress, initiate debris removal, as well as finalize plans and funding for removal of the diversion structure. All of the available reports and other information are on the project website:

[www.acmeprojectwyoming.org](http://www.acmeprojectwyoming.org)

### how you can help

- Make a donation to show support and match grant funds. Online donations are easy with the project website or you may send a check with Acme in the memo line.
- Provide input and feedback through attendance at update meetings and events.
- Share stories and ideas on the project website.





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The mission of the Sheridan County Conservation District is to protect Sheridan County's water and land quality through assistance programs, information and outreach, monitoring, and planning.

**SCCD's regular board meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month at 4 pm.**

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To unsubscribe from our mailing list, please email [jackie.turner@sccdwy.org](mailto:jackie.turner@sccdwy.org)

## SCCD COST-SHARE ASSISTANCE **SPRING DEADLINE**

The District is accepting requests for spring 2022 water quality improvement projects. The application deadline is **February 11, 2022**. Funding is available for projects that address potential bacteria contributions to waterbodies within the Tongue River, Goose Creek, and Prairie Dog Creek waterbodies. **Potential projects include fencing and water development, relocation of corrals or facilities, and replacement of eligible septic systems.**

Applications received by the deadline will be considered by the Board of Supervisors at the March meeting. At that time, the Board will prioritize and allocate funding resources so potential projects can be constructed in the spring or summer of 2022. Among other things, projects will be ranked based on their potential water quality benefit and readiness.

For more information, assessments, and applications, visit [www.sccdwy.org](http://www.sccdwy.org) or contact our office at 307-672-5820 ext. 3.



## USDA CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

This program is designed to help producers build on existing conservation efforts. A custom CSP plan can help identify opportunities to **improve grazing conditions, increase crop resiliency, or develop wildlife habitat**. The program provides compensation to agricultural producers for adopting additional conservation activities to expand on existing efforts. CSP can be used in combination with other USDA and/or District programs that provide assistance for structural improvements. To apply for the program, the local office will work with you to evaluate your current management system and the goals of your operation. If selected, the program offers annual payments for implementing those practices. For more information or to start the discussion, call our office. The next opportunity to enroll in the program will likely be summer of 2022; however, it isn't too early to start planning.