

Central Bingham Conservation District



Blackfoot, ID 83221

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Top 5 Priorities

1. Water Resources & Quantity
2. Soil Erosion & Soil Health
3. Water Quality
4. Pest Management
5. District Operations

FY 2021 Revenue

- State	\$10,500.00
- County	\$ 3,000.00
- Tree Sale	\$118,843.17
- Match Funds	\$ 4,887.28

Central Bingham 2021

Central Bingham held it's annual Tree Sale in April. The money that is earned from this is used throughout the year to help with Youth Education and Outreach throughout the District. With the ongoing local building boom, we sold a record number of trees and bareroot stock. There were more windbreak plant sales than ever before, as landowners continue improving their property.

The district received funding with a grant from DEQ, helping a landowner/producer with removal of Russian Olive trees that are invading on their pasture and rangeland. (see attached story) It allowed us to purchase equipment that we will be able to use in our District when this project is finished. The landowner will continue working on this project with a proposed Phase 3. We feel very fortunate to have participated in this Conservation Project. We finished up the grant and held an outreach demonstration and workshop. County Commissioners and other representatives, along with University of Idaho Extension employees were on hand to add their perspective on the project. We are looking for opportunities for more tree removal projects in the future.



Russian olive control and managing working landscapes

Bingham County ranchers, farmers, and land managers face a difficult problem. Their challenge is controlling Russian olive, a fast-growing tree native to Eurasia.

This tree tolerates a wide range of soil and moisture conditions and was originally introduced to the United States for use in landscaping, shelterbelts, and wildlife habitat. We now know that because of its invasive nature it can interfere with agricultural practices and displace native riparian vegetation. Once established, it is difficult to control and nearly impossible to eradicate. Efforts to control unwanted Russian olive have included cutting, burning, spraying, girdling, and bulldozing. Most efforts have had limited success.

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game has been routinely controlling Russian olive on wildlife management areas for more than 20 years. More recently, private landholders have gotten in on the action. This is an account of one local ranch family's efforts to deal with this invasive tree.

George and Debbie Oleson's ranch lies along the Blackfoot River. Much of the area is dotted with wetlands and beautiful stands of native grasses and shrubs, but high densities of Russian olive are crowding out native species and otherwise negatively impacting the landscape. Debbie recognizes the value of this tree to wildlife and in providing shade for livestock but she also understands that their ranch clearly has much too much of a good thing.

The Olesons decided something had to be done. They applied for a grant from the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality through the Central Bingham Soil and Water Conservation District. The grant was approved allowing the purchase of tree removal equipment to aid in Russian olive control. They are currently working to control Russian olive on a 230-acre pasture adjacent to the Blackfoot River. Debbie said she has two goals; reduce the impact of Russian olive on the landscape by tree removal and minimize damage to the land caused by these management activities.

The Olesons selected



JACK CONNELLY PHOTO

Debbie Reid-Oleson demonstrates application of herbicide to a cut Russian olive stump.

multiple areas throughout the pasture to focus tree removal efforts, allowing them to prioritize work and assess their progress. University of Idaho Extension educator Ron Patterson and Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission Water Quality Resource Conservationist George Hitz serve as technical advisors. Ron spent several years working on Russian olive control in Utah so he brought valuable experience to the project.

The new equipment uses a shear to remove trees up to 8-9 inches in diameter; larger trees are either left or cut with a chainsaw. Although saplings are controlled by applying herbicide directly to the bark, control of larger Russian olives is a two-step process. First, trees are cut and then glyphosate is immediately painted on the stumps. Failure to apply herbicide results in the tree resprouting. Dead wood is piled and burned during winter. Debbie explained that using this approach pretty well ensures there will be no non-target plant deaths. George and Debbie's son Shawn runs the tree removal equipment, helped by his son Ira.

During a recent field trip, removal techniques were demonstrated to other interested ranchers and county officials. Debbie also showed



JACK CONNELLY PHOTO

Central Bingham Soil and Water Conservation District administrative assistant Kerry Christiansen (left) and Bingham County Commissioner Whitney Manwaring (right) listen to a discussion of Russian olives.

attendees how fast cut trees resprout if an herbicide is not applied. Debbie told the crowd that Russian olive control efforts are labor intensive. About 600 hours of work have gone into their project over the last year, with many more years of work to come. The Olesons have planned a 10-year program of Russian olive removal. Future plans call for reintroducing native cotton-

wood and willow. Because the area is grazed by cattle, deer, and elk, these reintroductions will have to be carefully planned and implemented to allow plant survival.

Despite the inherent difficulties, Debbie maintains a positive, determined, and enthusiastic outlook; I suspect her attitude will help win this battle.

Jack Connelly has lived in

Bingham County for over 40 years. He is an avid outdoorsman and has hiked, camped, hunted, and fished over much of the U.S. as well as parts of Europe and Asia. Connelly worked as a biologist for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game for over 30 years. He now enjoys retirement with his wife Cheryl raising chickens and bird dogs at their home in Blackfoot.

**IDAHO SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

**PERFORMANCE
REPORT
CERTIFICATION**

DISTRICT: Central Bingham

FOR YEAR:

2021

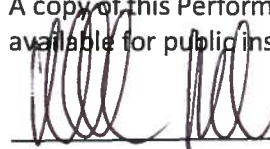
DUE :

2021
December 20,

CERTIFICATION

On behalf of my local Board of Supervisors, I hereby certify that the attached Performance Report is true and accurate, and further submit said Report for the above named District and fiscal year.

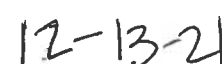
A copy of this Performance Report shall be kept at the District office and is available for public inspection.



Board Supervisor Signature



Printed Name



Date

208-690-3525

District Telephone

cbswcd@ida.net

District Email Address

FOR SWC USE ONLY:

DATE OF CONFIRMATION: