



The Steward

BROADWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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Hello Broadwater County Community! It's time for the Broadwater Conservation District newsletter, The Steward! The purpose of our newsletter is to inform the community of all BCD endeavors, community events and projects, and to celebrate conservation efforts throughout the community.

Deep Dive: A Month's in Review

This edition of *The Steward* provides a look into what the Broadwater Conservation District has been up to over the months of April, May, and June. BCD is very excited to be sending out another newsletter to inform you of our endeavors and exciting new information! With all that we do, we always try to put into practice our motto "Local Common-sense Conservation".

We want to thank each and every one of you that has helped us throughout this past year gain some traction within the community through education & outreach events and different projects! Without the guidance from our partners, board, and the community, we would not be able to partake in helping preserve this place we call home and all the resources it provides.

Happy Montana Rangeland Appreciation Month!



June is Montana Rangeland Appreciation Month! In 2023, the month of June was officially appointed Rangeland Appreciation Month in Montana. Rangeland makes up most of Montana's landscape and therefore plays a crucial role in the overall health of our environment. The primary purpose of Rangeland Appreciation Month is to promote education and spread awareness about the ecosystem goods and services rangelands provide. For example habitat for our wildlife, forage for our livestock, and having a big role in the health of our watersheds.

At Broadwater Conservation District, we know how important keeping the native lands of Montana preserved is to everyone in Broadwater County, whether you are a producer or an avid outdoorsman. We're here to support you with preserving the Montana landscape and provide resources to learn more about the importance of the rangelands that we all enjoy!

Be sure to follow us on social media to keep informed of our endeavors. If you'd like to learn more about Rangeland Appreciation Month, please visit: <https://www.mtrangelands.org/>



Broadwater CD

Check out the BCD website: <https://broadwatercd.org/>

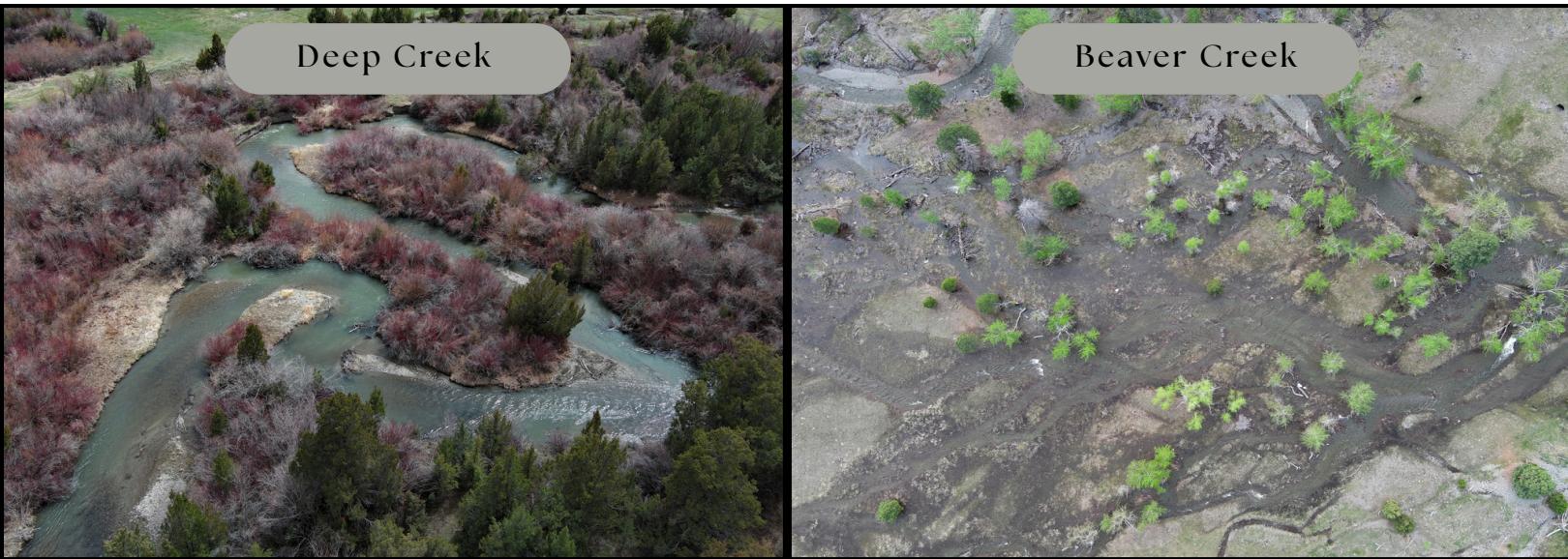
BCD Flies Drone for the First Time



In November of 2024, BCD was able to purchase a drone to help us complete the Deep Creek 10-year milestones as well as to use for future projects. At the end of April, we finally got to fly our drone for the first time. The picture on the left is of Denise Donnelly, the BCD District Administrator, flying the drone. We are amazed at this capability of this tool and the quality footage it takes.

What benefits do drones provide?

Drones capture detailed photos and videos of watersheds from views that humans cannot. This allows for more precise observation of land use, vegetation cover, erosion patterns, and stream morphology. This tool allows us to better understand the characteristics that make up a specific watershed. Having this ability makes us more effective when coming up with plans to improve the health and productivity of a watershed.



Since our test flight, we have flown over reaches 1 - 14 of Deep Creek to help assess the riparian vegetation cover. We also have flown over Beaver Creek, starting on state land up in the Elkhorns and finishing where Beaver runs into Canyon Ferry. The photos from the drone put it into perspective how imperative it is that we begin restoring this once flourishing waterway.

Contact us: broadwatercd@gmail.com



BCD got a shed!

Thanks to the dedicated work put forth by Clint Watson and the students at Townsend High School, Broadwater Conservation District was able to get a shed! This 12 ft by 16 ft shed will hold our rental equipment and outreach supplies.

Also, a huge thanks to our Project Consultant, Denise Thompson, for facilitating this project start to finish!

BCD Pollinator Plot

We had the opportunity to plant a pollinator plot this year in front of the Forest Service building and are so excited about it! The pollinator mix we planted is a mix of Montana natives that not only provide food for pollinators but promotes the natural beauty of our native plants.

Why are pollinator plots important?

Pollinator plots provide vital habitat and food sources for pollinators like bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds, just to name a few. These critters are essential for the reproduction of many plants, including crops. Planting pollinator plots or gardens help sustain biodiversity, support the health of ecosystems, and contribute to our food security.



Fun Fact:

Almost 40 agricultural crops grown in Montana rely on pollination by Montana's vast variety of pollinators, ([MT NRCS](#)).

Townsend Ag Day: A Day Learning about Aquifers



BCD had an amazing time at this year's Townsend Ag Day! It was awesome to see how much the kids enjoyed each and every station! A big shoutout to all the groups who led a station - the activities were all engaging and education. Thank you to all who help facilitate this event!

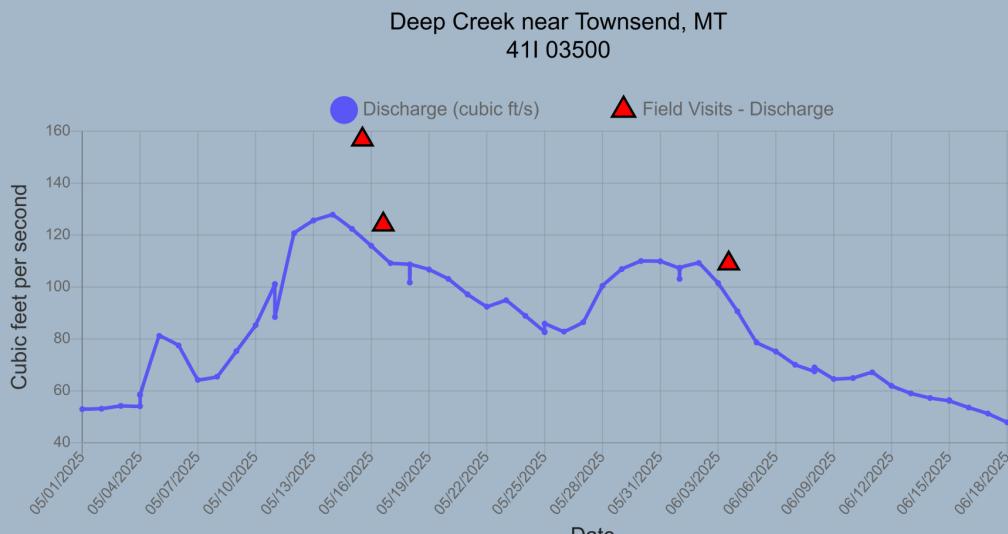
At the BCD station, students got to learn about the important role aquifers play in our community and how to properly use the essential resource it provides.

Students were divided into 4 main categories of water users in Montana: Farmers, Ranchers, Residential, and Industry. For our activity, we created model aquifers to demonstrate the decrease

in the water level when there are multiple wells pulling from the same water source. In the containers, we piled rocks around the edges and had a lower point in the middle to represent a pond (surface water). Each container had four interactive wells (modeled with soap dispenser pumps). Students were given a name tag with one of the 4 water user types. As the kids pumped water, they observed the water levels decrease in real time. They also got to see aquifer recharge through "rain" events (pouring cups of water back into the container). Students' key takeaways included understanding how water systems are interconnected and learning about the importance of sharing natural resources.



Restoring Our Waters: Deep Creek Project Progress & News



Source DNRC Stream Gauge on Lower Deep Creek Rd.

Up next on Deep Creek: noxious weed mapping using EDDMapS, with support from the BSWC cohort! Check out the EDDMaps app as a helpful tool to identify noxious weeds and map them on your property!

Peak runoff appears to be behind us, with flows in Deep Creek steadily decreasing over the past two weeks. Our Big Sky Watershed Corps member has been busy with summer monitoring activities—assisting local stream monitoring volunteer Jim Beck and partnering with the NRCS to conduct riparian assessments along Deep Creek.



<https://www.eddmaps.org/>

Bringing Back the Flow: Beaver Creek Updates



Over the past few months, BCD has been making many strides towards creating a Watershed Restoration Plan (WRP) for Beaver Creek in hopes to build upon the successes of Deep Creek. We have had meetings with partnering agencies as well as conducted landowner interest surveys to gain a better understanding of the condition of this stream and brainstorm what components a restoration plan may involve. We are planning to have a landowner meeting in July!



Back in 2016, Big Sky Watershed Corps Member Katie Mumford created what is known as the Broadwater County Drought Resiliency Report. This report was created to keep track of how our county is doing with drought resilience. Informing the community of precipitation, soil moisture, temperature, streamflow, snowpack, and ground & reservoir water levels data throughout the year. This ensures we are as prepared as we can be for the upcoming year by taking proactive measures, if needed, to mitigate the negative impacts of drought on our water supplies, agriculture, ecosystems, and overall societal well-being by water conservation measures and land management practices. This report includes a 26 page informational overview to help us understand why the data BCD tracks is relevant to the Drought Resiliency Report. In addition, BCD will be sending out a quarterly report that evaluates the most recent monthly data to help inform all of Broadwater County's drought resiliency throughout 2025.

The following page has the second Broadwater County Quarterly Drought Resiliency Report 2025! Hope you enjoy and find the information useful! To view the full report, please visit our website: broadwatercd.org or contact our Project Coordinator at hannahoverbybcd@gmail.com for a copy of the report!

Broadwater County Drought Resiliency Report



Fun Fact:

MONTANA IS HOME TO THE WORLDS SHORTEST RIVER, THE ROE RIVER IN GREAT FALLS. THIS RIVER WAS RECOGNIZED AS THE SHORTEST RIVER IN 1989.

Above-average temperatures are likely to persist across much of the U.S (noaa)

Deep Creek 2025

Broadwater County Drought Conditions

Based on the U.S. Drought Monitor, Broadwater County currently has a D0 classification or is considered "Abnormally Dry". This means Broadwater County is experiencing a lack of precipitation, but not severe enough to be considered drought.

Broadwater had a LARGER snowpack this year, but due to the higher temperatures the snowpack melted faster increasing the SWE

BOULDER MTN.	Snow Depth (in)	SWE (in)	TIZER BASIN	Snow Depth (in)	SWE (in)
April 1, 2025	58	18.9	April 1, 2025	26	7.4
April 1, 2024	45	13.0	April 1, 2024	19	5.9
May 1, 2025	49	18.4	May 1, 2025	6	2
May 1, 2024	35	11.5	May 1, 2024	0	0
June 1, 2025	0	0	June 1, 2025	0	0
June 1, 2024	2	0.3	June 1, 2024	0	0

Canyon Ferry Storage Capacity is BELOW that of last year but is still meeting Median Capacity Storage

Canyon Ferry Reservoir							
DATE	Current (KAF)	Last Year (KAF)	Median (KAF)	Capacity (KAF)	Current % Capacity	Last Year % Capacity	Median Capacity
April 1, 2025	1452.2	1553	1446	2043	71%	76%	71%
May 1, 2025	1494.2	1642.4	1461	2043	73%	80%	72%
June 1, 2025	1699.1	1737.9	1646	2043	83%	85%	81%

As we finish the first few months of the year, let's continue to remain strong stewards of the land and prepare to be more DROUGHT RESILIENT as we raise our crops, provide food for others, tend to our critters, our gardens, and responsibly use the natural resources that surround us. The Drought Resiliency Report will be included in our quarterly newsletter and can be found on our website, www.broadwatercd.org. If you would like to receive BCDs quarterly newsletter, please visit our website and sign up today!



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Succession Planning



Succession planning is a popular topic all around Montana. The importance of transferring family farms and ranches is ever growing and with it comes its own set of challenges. Not only is succession complex in the economic and legal sense, but also with family social dynamics. Broadwater Conservation District luckily was able to have Elaine Froese, a succession planning expert from Canada, come to Broadwater County for a workshop at the beginning of 2025. The workshop was titled Finding Fairness in Farm Transition and was aimed at answering the question of how to manage your family's expectations about inheritance. For those who attended, Elaine gave helpful tools and tips to help with communication and conflict resolution to secure the future of local farms and ranches. If you are interested in learning more about navigating your family dynamics and the best way to start succession planning, please feel free to contact us for her material!

For the economic and legal side of succession, MSU Extension Estate Planning is a fantastic resource for those wondering about additional Estate Planning resources including how to plan with family members that have Alzheimer's & Memory Loss, family members who pass away without a Will, the Corporate Transparency Act, and information on inheriting Indian Land.

If you have specific questions about Estate Planning, please contact Marsha Goetting, the MSU Extension Family Economics Specialist. She is extremely knowledgeable and very helpful. Her contact information is down below:

Marsha Goetting Ph.D., CFP®, CFCS

[406-994-5695](tel:406-994-5695)

marsha.goetting@montana.edu

Montana Envirothon



Montana Envirothon is an annual natural resources competition for high school students from across Montana. It challenges young minds on their knowledge and problem-solving skills in areas of forestry, soils, wildlife, aquatic ecology and current environmental issues. The competition includes both oral presentations and written tests. The team that wins advances to the North American Envirothon to compete with teams from all around the world.

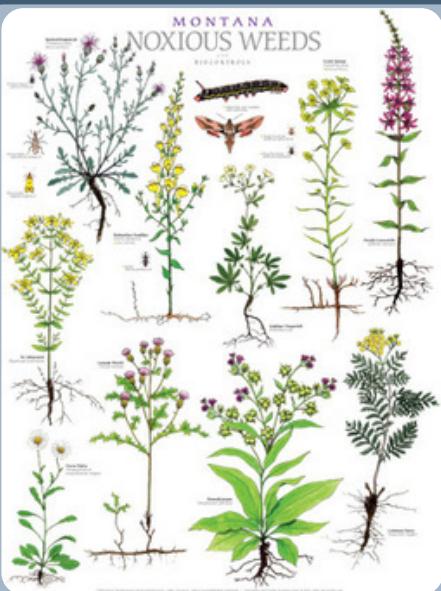
Why is this important?

Envirothon provides a way for the next generation to gain knowledge and experience with important topics that are essential to protecting and preserving our environment. BCD is very excited to announce that we will be starting up an Envirothon team for 2026 in partnership with Jason Thomas (BHS Science Teacher) and STOKE (Science, Technology, Outdoors, Knowledge, and Entrepreneurship) to give the youth in Broadwater County the opportunities that competing in Envirothon provides.

Noxious Weed Awareness

Noxious weeds are detrimental to the Montana landscape. They displace native plant species by outcompeting them through their ability to grow much quicker than our native plants and their prolific seed production. This increases soil erosion because these weeds reduce the density and effectiveness of root systems that stabilize the soil. This in turn decreases the amount of wildlife habitat there is.

It is important that we are aware of what these weeds do to our environment. If you are interested in learning more, please visit <https://agr.mt.gov/Noxious-Weeds>



Broadwater Conservation District Community Rentals

Electric Fencing

BCD has 3 sets of electric fencing that can be rented. It is \$5 per day to rent. The specifications of a set of electric fencing is listed below:

- **Speedrite S500 Solar Powered Fence Charger**
 - Powers up to 48 km / 30 miles, 100 acres of fence
- **Speedrite Extreme Poly Wire 800 meter**
 - 2640 ft
- **Speedrite Wire Spooler**
- **Pigtail 34" white**
- **Speedrite Bungy Gate 11' – 23' wide**

Tree Planter

BCD has a tree planter that is loaded onto a trailer. You will need a 2" ball and a 6 – prong round or 4 – pin flat plug-in to haul. Will need at least a 40 HP tractor to pull the planter. Tractor needs a 3 pt hitch.

- **\$0.04 per tree up to 1,000 trees**
- **\$0.02 per tree over 1,000 trees**

Note: This tree planter is over 20 years old

Fabric Layer

Fabric Layer – \$0.01 per foot

MSU Extension: NO – TILL DRILL RENTAL

Broadwater County MSU Extension is offering county residents a NO – TILL DRILL for lease.

- **Crustbuster 4613 (13 foot, 7.5 inch spacing and a legume box)**
- **Cost: \$12 / acre with a minimum of \$250.00**
- **Maximum of 200 acres**
- **\$500 security deposit to hold for requested dates**
- **Drill requires a tractor with at least 80 HP**
- **To tow from storage (currently at fairgrounds), you will need a tractor or at least a 3/4 ton pickup**
- **You are required to have help taking the drill across the Toston Bridge**

Please call the MSU Extension Office at (406)266-9242 or (406)439-8863 (Allison Kosto's Cell Phone) for more information

310 Stream Permitting: It's Free, Easy, and the Law

Planning to do work in or near the banks of a perennial stream? You'll need a 310 permit! This permitting process helps protect our local stream and rivers.

Activities subject to permit include, but are not limited to:

- channel changes
- clearing brush or trees along the stream or river
- boat ramps
- roads crossing creeks
- new diversions
- rip rap & stream bank protection
- dams or reservoirs

It's simple and free- obtain your permit easily through our website or by stopping by the Conservation District Office. In case of emergency action, please notify the Broadwater CD via an emergency form within 15 days. Learn more about the 310 process on our website.

Be advised that you are in violation of state law if you perform any of these activities without obtaining a 310 permit. *310 permits are free of charge and are generally valid for one year after the date of issuance.*

BCD Monthly Board Meetings

For those of you who may be interested in learning more about what Broadwater Conservation District is doing within the community and how the Board of Supervisors works, please don't hesitate to join us at our monthly Board Meetings as they are open to the public! Our Board Meetings are held the 3rd Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. We would love for you to join!



<https://broadwatercd.org/>



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BroadwaterCD



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