

# Shavano District

SERVING MONTROSE, GUNNISON, AND OURAY COUNTIES



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## New Soil Health Program in Dept. of Ag

On June 21, 2021 Governor Pollis signed into law an Agricultural Soil Health Program within the Department of Agriculture. It is a voluntary program administered by the Commissioner of Agriculture and the state agricultural commission. It gives the state agricultural commission the ability to establish:

- A system for monitoring the environmental or economic benefits of soil health practices;
- A state soil health inventory and platform;
- A soil health testing program; and
- Other programs the department deems appropriate or necessary.

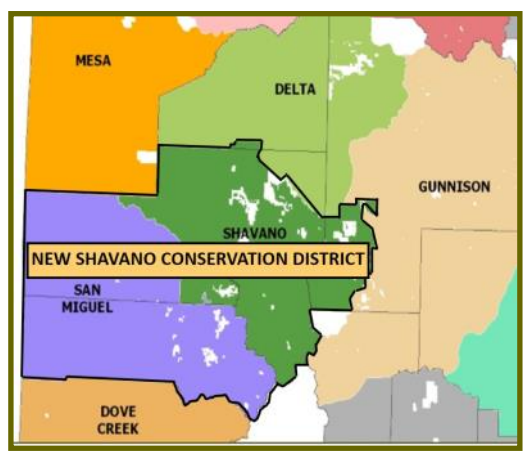
The department may also:

- Seek, accept, and expend gifts, grants, or donations;

- Administer and expend the money from public and private sources;
- Provide grants, loans, and other resources to perform soil health activities; and
- Cooperate and collaborate with other people.

The commissioner will appoint a soil health advisory committee, to represent different geographic areas, political diversity, and demographic diversity of the state and include agricultural producers of diverse production systems. This advisory committee will approve grants, make recommendations to the department, and assist in the development of the soil health program. The advisory committee is also authorized to solicit input, review proposals and agreements, and evaluate the soil health program.

Watch for more information on the Soil Health Programs official website—to be announced.



## Conservation Districts Consolidate

San Miguel Basin Conservation District and Shavano Conservation District will join forces to meet the natural resources conservation needs of landowners within their boundaries in the Delta, Gunnison, Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel Counties.

In a special election held May 4, 2021, landowners from the two districts voted to consolidate the districts, forming a new district, which will be known as the “Shavano Conservation District.”

Conservation districts are political subdivisions of state government which represent local landowners’ interests for developing conservation priorities. The Colorado Department of Agriculture’s State Conservation Board administers funding, offers leadership and statutory guidance to help them serve as local governments.

According to state statute, supervisors from the original boards will work as an “organization board” to identify the new districts’ first five-member board. This decision will be made within six months.



## SCD Annual Meeting & BBQ Banquet

Shavano Conservation District had a tremendous turnout for the Annual Meeting and BBQ Banquet on June 14, 2021 at the Elks Lodge in Montrose. Doug Flowers and Brody Flowers accepted Farmer of the Year awards, Daris Jutten accepted the Rancher of the Year award, and Nora Hammer, 5th grade teacher at Northside Elementary, accepted the Conservation Educator of the Year award. The evening also included a presentation from guest speaker Lowell King, a regenerative farmer from Fruita, CO. Penny Bishop, SCD District Manager, also led a brief Local Work Group Meeting. During the Local Work Group Meeting, producers were asked to identify their conservation concerns within our District.

The identified concerns will be used by the NRCS when developing the Farm Bill Conservation Programs in fiscal year 2021-2022.

### Farmer of the Year Award

The Farmers of the Year Award was presented to Doug Flowers and his son



Brody Flowers (left) and Doug Flowers (center) receive Farmer of the Year awards from Jerry Allen (right)

Brody Flowers. The pair are continuing the legacy of Doug's father who raised livestock on the Uncompahgre Plateau. Doug has an excavation and guiding business, but it was Brody's passion for farming that drew him back into agriculture. Doug and Brody have been farming together for the last eight years. They have grown a variety of crops, including beans, corn, and hay. The pair are known for having top quality hay.

Doug has installed at least 20 EQIP irrigation projects, for his own and other farms, to NRCS Standards and Specifica-

tions to replace open ditches with an underground water delivery system and gated pipe on the fields. He and Brody have reduced furrow erosion by more than 50% by using less water down the rows when irrigating. Jerry Allen, SCD Irrigation Water Management Specialist, said of Doug and Brody, "I have never seen anybody who could make a foot of water go as far as they do." Doug attributes their efficient irrigation water use to his team of irrigators that are attentive to the water, the plants, and the soil.

Doug and Brody have used technology to place fertilizer in the field so that less nitrogen is leached into groundwater. They have not used anhydrous ammonia fertilizer, which kills soil microbes, in ten years.

They have also utilized minimum tillage farming by planting into previous crop residue.

## Conservation Districts Consolidate

Cont. from front page, "Conservation Districts Consolidate"

"The two districts have historically worked together or on very similar conservation projects and educational programs through the years and understand the need of farmers, ranchers and small acreage owners in the area," stated Nikki Brinson, operations manager with the Colorado State Conservation Board. "All of the supervisors are committed to improving the opportunities and programs available to their constituents through this consolidation."

The creation of the new conservation district will increase landowners' conservation options in a variety of ways, including:

- Bringing more resources to area-wide conservation problems

- Improving consistency of programs offered by one conservation district
- Increasing the ability to leverage local, state and federal resources for conservation implementation and technical assistance

"The (conservation) districts perform a valuable service and the consolidation will allow the new Shavano Conservation District to strengthen existing partnerships and develop new ones in order to improve natural resource conservation practices in Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel counties and a small area in southern Delta county and southwestern Gunnison county", stated Brinson.



(L to R): Ken Lipton, SCD Board President, Bill Head, NRCS Engineer, and Daris Jutten, Rancher of the Year

## Rancher of the Year Award

Daris Jutten is the recipient of the Rancher of the Year Award. Daris - a fifth generation rancher - attributes the reason for his success to his family. His ancestors moved into the Colona area and started ranching in 1882. Daris continues the legacy by managing 350 – 400 mother cows, which are Angus based. Daris and his wife Nicki also have a small herd of registered Hereford cattle which are used to raise bulls for the ranch and to sell. The Juttens raise hay on 600 acres and corn on another 200 acres. It is truly a family operation and they do not hire any outside labor. Daris, his dad Jay, and brother-in-law Jeremy Castle do the labor. His wife Nicki, his mom Pam, and his sisters Erin and Kelsey pitch in whenever possible.

Over the past 25 years, Daris and the Jutten family have implemented a considerable number of conservation practices, including rotational grazing, installation of fences to better manage their livestock, weed management (both chemical and insect based), brush management, and seeding to improve both the quality and quantity of their forage. They also do soil testing and plant cover crops to improve their soil. Daris has installed water control structures, and over three miles of underground pipe, gated pipe, and concrete ditch to improve their irrigation systems. Daris and his wife Nicki Seehafer, a large animal veterinarian, are constantly improving their cow herd through careful selection, culling, crossing their Angus cows with Herefords for hybrid vigor, and the use of artificial insemination to improve genetics.

## Conservation Educator of the Year

The Shavano District Board selected Nora Hammer as Educator of the Year to recognize her accomplishments in conservation education. Nora is a 5th grade teacher at Northside Elementary. She has been teaching for 12 years, is Nationally STEM Certified, and recently completed a master’s degree in STEM Leadership from the American College of Education. Nora says she loves letting students explore, analyze, and create solutions to real world problems.

Nora’s class of 5th graders got in trouble for acting out while they had a substitute. As a result of their disrespectful behavior, the class wrote apology letters and were expected to spend some time doing community service for their school. What began as community service, sorting trash out of the school recycle bin, developed into a STEM Problem Based Learning Project, and ultimately into a school-wide recycling program. The students changed locations of the recycle bins to encourage recycling (rather than trash being placed in the bins), created an incentive program to encourage the younger graders to participate, and provided progress reports to teachers regarding their class’s success at keeping trash out of the recycle bin.

Nora’s 5th graders took on personal pride in seeing these materials recycled rather than going to trash and seeing the impact it had on the amount of waste from their school.

Nora assisted the students in setting up a program for new leaders to be chosen each year to continue the program after this set of students moved on.

Nora used conservation, not only to teach her students about natural resources and recycling, but to turn their poor behavior around into a school-wide project that they were so proud of that they passed it down to following grade-levels.

Nora not only taught her students how and why they needed to recycle - She instilled in them the value of stewardship, managing their resources responsibly and taking personal pride in caring for the land, water, and animals.



5th Grade Teacher of the Year Nora Hammer (center) receives award from Ken Lipton SCD Board President (left) and Mendy Stewart SCD Outreach Coordinator (right)



## Cover Crop Corner: Warm Weather Means Warm Season Cover Crops

By Philip Frank  
Green Cover Seed Representative

The heat has cranked up here in the Grand Valley, and along with it we are starting to crank up the warm season cover crops!

This means we are done with oats, peas, and barley, and moving into crops that love the heat, like sorghum-sudan grass, teff grass, millet, and more. These species like a minimum 60 degree average soil temperature, with no frost!

Here (left) is what a mix of Sorghum

Sudan grass, teff grass, soybeans, and hubam clover can look like by early August if planted in mid June. This field was planted June 18, and this was the first grazing.

Right, is the same field on October 3, after it was grazed once in August and allowed to regrow through the summer. A warm season mix like this makes wonderful cow hay, high value grazing in the summer, and excellent stock-pile grazing so you don't have to feed hay in the winter!

Note that these types of mixes can be planted from June until the middle of August, but will give maximum production and cover crop benefits if planted as soon as possible in June.



## New 'Soil for Water' Network Accepting Members

Soil for Water" is an initiative to catch and hold more rainwater in the soil, aimed to create a critical mass of land managers using regenerative practices that improve soil health and the water cycle.

The Soil for Water Network is a growing community of land managers who are trying regenerative practices, monitoring changes in their soils and vegetation, and learning together how to improve soils so they will catch and hold more water.

Soil for Water is run by the National Center for Appropriate Technology, a national non-profit organization, with funding from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Dixon Water Foundation, Meadows Foundation, and Jacob & Terese Hershey Foundation.

Soil for Water membership is free and open to any land manager who is:

- Involved in commercial livestock agriculture in the states of Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, or California.
- Interested in trying (or continuing) regenerative land management practices.
- Committed to monitoring changes in soils and vegetation over a period of many years.
- Willing to share their results and stories with other members of the network.

Please visit [SOILFORWATER.ORG](http://SOILFORWATER.ORG) to learn more and apply by clicking on the Network Enrollment tab! Or contact Kara Kroeger at [soilforwater@ncat.org](mailto:soilforwater@ncat.org) with questions.



# NRCS Offers Conservation Planning Assistance To Montrose, Ouray, San Miguel County Landowners - Sign up by *July 23*

Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel County landowners, there’s still time to contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Montrose field office and sign up for the Conservation Planning 1st Initiative. NRCS partnered with the Shavano Conservation District to implement the effort. Farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners are encouraged to sign up today or before the **Friday, July 23rd cut off**.

Requesting a Conservation Plan with NRCS is a great way to learn how NRCS can assist with

addressing any natural resource concerns or issues you have on your agricultural or forestry operation.

These valuable tools are the first step in moving forward with NRCS financial assistance. Landowners in Montrose, Ouray and San Miguel County can sign up for the conservation planning initiative by calling 970-964-3597 or by going to [www.co.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.co.nrcs.usda.gov) and completing the online Conservation Plan Request. Landowners are encouraged to sign up today or before the **Friday, July 23rd cut off**. USDA is an equal opportunity employer, provider, and lender.



Marissa Markus

## New Soil Conservationists in Montrose

Marissa Markus is one of our new Soil Conservationists in Montrose. Originally from a rural farming town in New Jersey, Marissa has spent the last 12 years building relationships in Colorado and learning from Colorado’s diverse ecoregions.

Her background is in wildlife research, land management, and collaborative restoration. Marissa says, “Collaborative projects really altered my perspective on conservation work and who conservationists truly are. It is where I discovered my passion for helping others to help the land.” As a Soil Conservationist for NRCS, Marissa is looking forward to providing the technical assistance to those who are interested in protecting their livelihoods and their land.

Casey Harrison has permanently transferred from the Delta NRCS Field Office as a Soil Conservationist in the Montrose Office. Casey is a familiar face in the Montrose Office, as he has worked here from time to time over the last couple of years to help during



Casey Harrison

periods of staffing transitions and shortages.



Jamison Jewkes

Jamison Jewkes, the Montrose/Gunnison Resource Team Lead, is now working in-person from the Montrose Field Office. He began his new position in January, however, due covid traveling restrictions, Jamison had been teleworking from the Casper NRCS Field Office. While the Montrose Field Office doors are still closed to drop-in visits, you can make an appointment to meet Jamison or any of the NRCS staff.

## UWP Hosts Open Air Watershed Series July 28 & Aug 25

Uncompahgre Watershed Partnership is hosting an outdoor forum on July 28, titled “Water Scarcity & Conservation”, and on Aug 25, titled “The Future of Water”. Both will be held at Dennis Weaver Park in Ridgway at 5pm. The sessions are part of a 5 part open air series this summer with presentations by water-related professionals to discuss their organizations’ roles in the watershed, especially in the Ouray County area. The series is to initiate conversation for better understanding the Upper Uncompahgre River Water-

shed. The first three evenings in the series were held on Wednesday evenings in April, May, and June and covered Water Quality Monitoring & Remediation, Water Infrastructure & Managed Water Use, and Drinking Water & Wastewater.

For more information and to register for the July 28 and August 25 sessions, visit <https://www.uncompahgrewatershed.org/meet-your-watershed/>



## FSA Now Accepting Nominations for County Committee Members

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) began accepting nominations for county committee members on June 15. Elections will occur in Local Administrative Areas #1 and #3 for these members who make important decisions about how federal farm programs are administered locally. All nomination forms for the 2021 election must be post-marked or received in the local FSA office by **Aug. 2, 2021**.

Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in a USDA program, and reside in LAA #1 or #3 may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee. A cooperating producer is someone who has provided information about their farming or ranching operation to FSA, even if they have not applied or received program benefits. Individuals may nominate themselves or others and qualifying organizations may also nominate candidates. USDA encourages minority producers, women and beginning farmers or ranchers to nominate, vote, and hold office.

Nationwide, more than 7,700 dedicated members of the agricultural community serving on FSA county committees. The committees are made up of three to 11 members who serve three-year terms. Producers serving on FSA county committees play a critical role in the day-to-day operations of the agency. Committee members are vital to how FSA carries out disaster programs, as well as conservation, commodity and price support programs, county office



employment and other agricultural issues.

LAAs are elective areas for FSA committees in a single county or multi-county jurisdiction. This may include LAAs that are focused on an urban or suburban area.

Producers should contact their local FSA office today to register and find out how to get involved in their county's election. They should check with their local USDA Service Center to see if their LAA is up for election this year. To be considered, a producer must be registered and sign an FSA-669A nomination form or an FSA-669-A-3 for urban county committees. The form and other information about FSA county committee elections are available at [fsa.usda.gov/elections](https://fsa.usda.gov/elections).

Election ballots will be mailed to eligible voters beginning Nov. 1, 2021. To find your local USDA Service Center, visit [farmers.gov/service-locator](https://farmers.gov/service-locator).

## Disaster Assistance for 2021 Livestock Forage Losses

Producers in Montrose-Gunnison-Ouray Counties are eligible to apply for 2021 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) benefits on native pasture.

LFP provides compensation if you suffer grazing losses for covered livestock due to drought on privately owned or cash leased land or fire on federally managed land.

County committees can only accept LFP applications after notification is received by the National Office of qualifying drought or if a federal agency prohibits producers from

grazing normal permitted livestock on federally managed lands due to qualifying fire.

You must complete a CCC-853 and the required supporting documentation no later than January 30, 2022, for 2021 losses.

For additional information about LFP, including eligible livestock and fire criteria, contact the Montrose-Gunnison-Ouray County USDA Service Center at 970-249-8407 extension 2 or visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://fsa.usda.gov).

# USDA SERVICE CENTER CONTACT INFORMATION

## FARM SERVICE AGENCY

970-249-8407 x2

Direct Phone



**MIKE STEFFEN**, District Director      **964-3590**  
**JO TRICE**, Program Technician      **964-3596**  
**DEBBIE STEWART**, Program Technician      **964-3596**

### MONTROSE-GUNNISON-OURAY COUNTY COMMITTEE

**BRYAN DISTEL**, Chairperson  
**CHERRI COOPER**, Vice Chairperson  
**ERNIE ETCHART**, Regular Member  
**SARAH MCCONNELL**, Regular Member  
**TYLER HANSON**, Regular Member



## NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

970-249-8407



Direct Phone

**AMANDA JAMES**, Soil Conservationist      **964-3580**  
**CASEY HARRISON**, Soil Conservationist      **964-3577**  
**JAMISON JEWKES**,  
Montrose/Gunnison Resource Team Lead      **964-3588**  
**JEFF LONG**, Ag Engineer Project Leader      **249-8407**  
**JEREMY OMVIG**, Cultural Resource Specialist      **964-3593**  
**JERRY ALLEN**, Shavano IWM Specialist      **964-3575**  
**JOHN MILLER**, Civil Engineering Technician      **964-3576**  
**MARISSA MARKUS**, Soil Conservationist      **964-3581**  
**NANCY DEANS**, Program Support Assistant      **964-3570**  
**SARAH ERICKSON**, Soil Conservationist      **964-3578**



## SHAVANO CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Website: [www.shavanocd.org](http://www.shavanocd.org)

Direct Phone

**KEN LIPTON**, President      **626-3951**  
**LANNY DENHAM**, Vice President      **323-5461**  
**ROXI STEWART**, Secretary/Treasurer      **249-0706**  
**EDWARD ATENCIO**      **303-898-5855**  
**JACK BRUNGARDT**      **249-5081**  
**SHELLY MCLAUGHLIN-MALISH**      **424-4451**  
**STEVE HALE**      **209-0126**  
**SETH URBANOWITZ**, CSU Extension, ex-officio      **874-2197**  
**PENNY BISHOP**, Manager      **964-3584**  
**MENDY STEWART**, Education Coordinator      **964-3582**

## HOW TO CONTACT US

**Montrose USDA Service Center**  
**102 Par Place, Montrose, CO 81401**  
**PHONE (970) 249-8407**

Phone Extension

Farm Service Agency.....2  
Natural Resources Conservation Service.....3  
Shavano Conservation District.....3



## COLORADO STATE FOREST SERVICE

Web Site: [csfs.colostate.edu](http://csfs.colostate.edu)

### MONTROSE FIELD OFFICE — 970-249-9051

(Montrose, Ouray and San Miguel Counties)

535 S Nevada Ave, Montrose	Phone Extension
<b>JODI RIST</b> , Supervisory Forester jodi.rist@colostate.edu	132
<b>AUSTIN SHELBY</b> , Forester austin.shelby@colostate.edu	133
<b>SCOTT JOHNSON</b> , Forester scott.johnson2@colostate.edu	127
<b>TANYA BANULIS</b> , Forester tanya.banulis@colostate.edu	129

### GUNNISON FIELD OFFICE - 970-641-6852

(Gunnison and Hinsdale Counties)

**106 Maintenance Drive, Gunnison, CO 81230**  
**SAM PANKRATZ**, Supervisory Forester  
**MIKE TARRANTINO**, Forester  
**KYLE KLEVE**, Forester  
**CURRIE NOWELL**, Administrative Assistant, phone 719-687-2951



## WEST REGION WILDFIRE COUNCIL

Phone 970-615-7300    [www.cowildfire.org](http://www.cowildfire.org)

**510 S Cascade Ave, Montrose**

**LILIA FALK**, Director of Finance & Agreements      [Lilia.Falk@COWildfire.org](mailto:Lilia.Falk@COWildfire.org)  
**JAMIE GOMEZ**, Executive Director      [Jamie.Gomez@COWildfire.org](mailto:Jamie.Gomez@COWildfire.org)  
**COURTNEY HAYNES**      [Courtney.Haynes@COWildfire.org](mailto:Courtney.Haynes@COWildfire.org)  
Wildfire Mitigation Specialist - Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray,  
and San Miguel Counties

## Dates to Remember

<b>Now</b>	<b>Report any crop or livestock losses/adverse weather conditions to the county office within 15 days of the event.</b>
<b>July thru Sept. 2021</b>	<b>Contract implementation and plan development for FY 2022</b>
<b>July 21, 2021</b>	<b>Deadline for NRCS Conservation Incentive Contracts (CIC)</b>
<b>July 23, 2021</b>	<b>Deadline to sign up for NRCS Conservation Planning 1st Initiative</b>
<b>July 28, 2021</b>	<b>UWP Open-Air 'Meet Your Watershed Series', 5-6pm, Ridgway</b>
<b>August 1, 2021</b>	<b>FSA Farm Reconstitution Requests Due (for ARC/PLC in that FY)</b>
<b>August 2, 2021</b>	<b>Nominations Due for FSA County Committee Election</b>
<b>August 10, 2021</b>	<b>Shavano CD Board Meeting, 7:00pm</b>
<b>August 25, 2021</b>	<b>UWP Open-Air 'Meet Your Watershed' Series, 5-6pm, Ridgway</b>
<b>August 28, 2021</b>	<b>Ridgway RiverFest, Rollans Park, Ridgway</b>
<b>September 6, 2021</b>	<b>Labor Day—Office Closed</b>
<b>September 14, 2021</b>	<b>Shavano CD Board Meeting, 7:00pm</b>
<b>September 30, 2021</b>	<b>Deadline to sign up for CRP in FSA</b>
<b>November 1, 2021</b>	<b>FSA County Committee Election Ballots begin being mailed out</b>

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of Discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).

**Reasonable accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment to attend or participate in meetings or events sponsored by the Farm Service Agency. If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in one of our meetings/events/functions, please call the FSA county office and we will be happy to make any needed arrangements.**



## NACD Turns 75

As the National Association of Conservation Districts celebrates its 75th Anniversary this year, they are releasing a special monthly newsletter highlighting conservation districts' successes over the years.

Entitled "Diamonds Out of the Dust: 75 Years of Conservation District Success Stories," this monthly newsletter features stories submitted by conservation districts and state/territory associations across the nation.

The June edition, highlighted Clermont Soil and Water Conservation District's Conservation Innovation Grant, Amy Seiger's recognition through the National Regenerative Agriculture Woman of the Year Award and Porter County Soil and Water Conservation District's assistance to local schools.

You'll also hear from Sam Casella, president of the New York Association of Conservation Districts, and his thoughts on the importance of conservation, conservation districts and NACD.

Learn more about the NACD 75th Anniversary campaign and view all past newsletters at <http://www.nacdnet.org/nacd75/>