

SALCHA-DELTA  
SOIL & WATER  
CONSERVATION  
DISTRICT



DATES TO REMEMBER

- December 24 & 25  
Christmas, Office Closed
- January 1  
New Year's Day, Office Closed
- January 8  
Board Meeting, 8:30 am
- January 21  
MLK, Jr. Day, Office Closed
- February 5  
Board Meeting, 8:30 am
- February 18  
Presidents' Day, Office Closed
- February 23  
Farm Forum

*Board meetings are usually scheduled for the first Tuesday of every month at 8:30 am in the Jarvis Building conference room.*



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# CONSERVATION CORNER

VOLUME 32, ISSUE 3

4TH QUARTER 2012

## DISTRICT RECEIVES FUNDING TO ASSIST WITH BISON RANGE MANAGEMENT

The Salcha-Delta SWCD received military funding for the 2012 field season to assist with the management of bison ranges within the Donnelly Training Area.

The objective is to maintain and improve the condition of forage on both introduced and native ranges for the Delta bison herd, and to reduce the occurrence of bison herds entering military training grounds. This management helps the military conduct live-fire training exercises on military ground, where the bison would otherwise forage and which often resulted in canceled or rescheduled training exercises.

The District provides agronomic recommendations and resource planning on both native and introduced ranges and ensures that the project is successfully completed each year.

During the 2012 field season, the District assisted the military with range management on 300 acres. Projects that were accomplished included aerial fertilizer application on remote native range, brush management on native range, and smoothing, seeding, and fertilizing berms on introduced range.

Each range is unique in its location, forage species, and utilization by bison and other wildlife species.



*Above*—A berm is lightly dragged by a SWCD employee on an ATV after grass was seeded and fertilized on the bison range.

Extensive time and planning is necessary before actual field management can take place each year. Management planning involves working around military training exercises, sensitive areas, such as rivers, lakes, wetlands and shallow soils, and working around the natural migration of the bison herd, as well as nesting dates of bird species. @

*By Meghan Lene, Agricultural Specialist*



## RECREATIONAL TRAILS INVENTORY

Last summer, the Salcha-Delta Soil and Water Conservation District received funding from NRCS to perform trail inventories within the District's boundaries. The purpose of the trail inventory project is to catalogue recreational trails in the District and assess them for resource issues, such as wetland degradation, soil erosion, use patterns, drainage issues, and others.

District employees Colin Barnard and Will Wright, along with occasional volunteers, hiked and used ATVs to inventory over 130 miles of trails within the District boundaries, spanning fifteen different trail systems (*bottom left*).

Using GPS units, Colin and Will tracked the center-line of the trails, as well as collected geo-referenced photo points of resource concerns and general features of the trail. These include stream crossings, culverts, benches, signs, restrooms, scenic overlooks, camping areas and public use cabins.



*Above left*—Red lines on the map indicate the inventoried trails.



*Above*—GPS equipment used in the trail inventory above McCallum Creek in the Alaska Range.

The collected information will be useful to not only assist NRCS in identifying areas for possible future rehabilitation projects, but also to the District. The District plans to utilize the information to create a Delta Junction area trail guide available in both booklet form and KML format, which can be downloaded and viewed in Google Earth. This will significantly increase available outdoor recreational opportunities for local residents and visitors alike. @

*By Colin Barnard, GIS Program Administrator*



*Above center*—Bryce Wrigley's ATV is stuck in the mud on a portion of Bluff Cabin Trail. This is a potential NRCS rehabilitation project in the near future.



*Above right*—A suspension footbridge on the Gulkana Glacier Trail near Summit Lake.



## DELTA FFA COMPETES AT NATIONALS

This past October, members of the Delta Junction FFA chapter traveled to Indianapolis, Indiana, to attend the 85th National FFA Convention. They were also one of forty-five teams participating in the National FFA Agricultural Technology and Mechanical Systems Career Development Event (CDE). Each team in the event competed with other chapters in their own state for the privilege of participating in the national event.

Led by SWCD staff member and Delta chapter FFA advisor, Tammie Kovalenko, the Alaskan team was awarded a bronze emblem. Members also competed for individual awards with 166 other participants. Keldrake Wolf, Dawson Taylor, and Kristof Webb each received a bronze emblem. Hailey McNabb attended the convention to learn what FFA has to offer on a national level in veterinary sciences.

The agricultural technology and mechanical systems event is sponsored by the Bridgestone Americas Tire Operations as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.

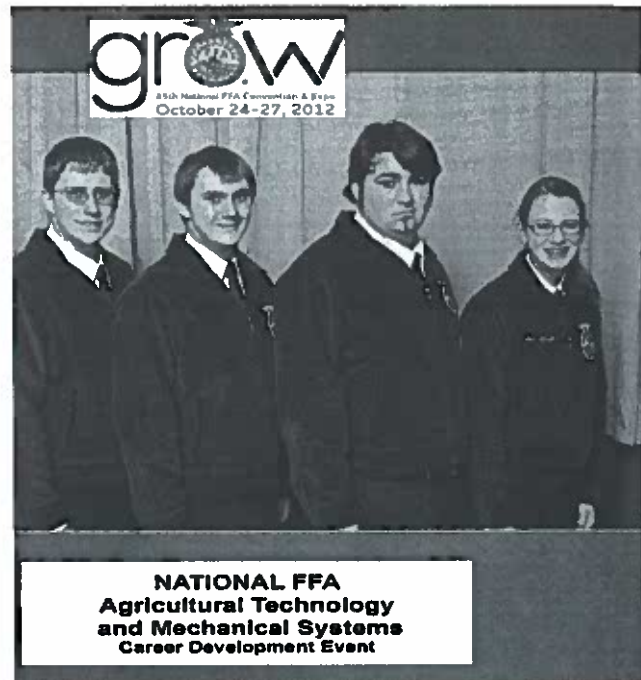
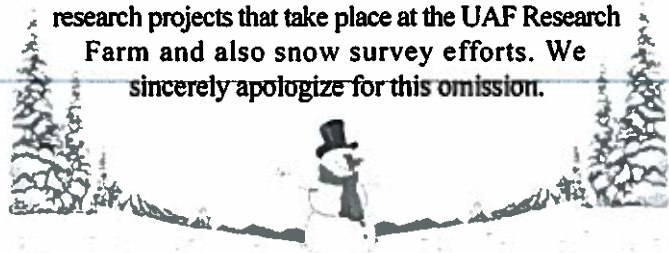
The National FFA offers twenty-five different Career Development Events, Agricultural Technology, and Mechanical Systems. CDE is just one of the competitive events that allows students to apply classroom knowledge to real-life situations.

Activities included in the event are a written exam, a team event, demonstration of problem-solving skills, and hands-on performance activities. Areas of emphasis include environmental and natural resource

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### Newsletter Corrections

In the last newsletter issue, *2012 Annual Report*, we unintentionally failed to mention that the District collaborates with NRCS on a majority of research projects. Additionally, NRCS provides a significant portion, if not all, of the District's funding for the research projects that take place at the UAF Research Farm and also snow survey efforts. We sincerely apologize for this omission.



From l-r: Delta FFA members who attended Nationals are Kristof Webb, Dawson Taylor, Keldrake Wolf, and Hailey McNabb.

systems, machinery and equipment systems, structural systems, energy systems, and electrical systems.

#### About National FFA Organization

The National FFA Organization is a national youth organization of 557,318 student members as part of 7,498 local FFA chapters in all fifty states, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. The FFA mission is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success through agricultural education.

The National FFA Organization operates under a federal charter granted by the Eighty-first United States Congress and it is an integral part of public instruction in agriculture. The U.S. Department of Education provides leadership and helps set direction for FFA as a service to state and local agricultural education programs. e

By Tammie Kovalenko, Conservation Education



## UPCOMING AG EVENTS

- **Agricultural Community Planning**  
January 15 or 17 in Delta
- **Greenhouse and Nursery Conference**  
January 24-25 in Fairbanks
- **Peony Growers Conference**  
February 13-15 in Fairbanks
- **Alaska Produce Growers Conference**  
February 19-20 (tentative) in Palmer
- **Delta Farm Forum**  
February 23 in Delta
- **Sustainable Agriculture Conference**  
March 12-14 in Fairbanks

## HARVEST WRAP UP CANCELLED

Due to a lack of agricultural research in the Delta area this past summer, the CES Delta District Office will not be hosting the annual Harvest Wrap Up in December.

In place of this event, the extension service is planning to offer an **Agricultural Community Planning** event scheduled for the third week in January (either the 15<sup>th</sup> or the 17<sup>th</sup>). Detailed information will be made available once the agenda has been confirmed.

Please contact the CES office for more information at 907-895-4215.



**Save the dates**

**Thursday, January 24 and Friday, January 25**  
**Pike's Waterfront Lodge, Fairbanks, Alaska**



*Special Guest: John Bagnasco* — John will be talking about grafting vegetables. He has been in the gardening industry for over 35 years, starting with a horticulture degree from Michigan State University and followed by a stint at Frank's Nursery and Crafts in Detroit. He is president and host of the GardenLife Radio Show, author of *Plants for the Home Vol. 1* and he breeds roses.

Watch your email for registration information!



## Alaska Greenhouse & Nursery Conference



For more information, contact UAF Cooperative Extension Service Tanana District at 907-474-1530.  
[www.uaf.edu/ces](http://www.uaf.edu/ces) • 877-521-5211

**Master Gardener Classes**  
with instructor Steven Seefeldt, Ph.D.  
Tanana District agriculture and horticulture agent

**SPRING 2013 CLASS**  
**February 19 to April 11**  
Tuesdays, 6–9 p.m./Thursdays, 6–9 p.m.  
(No classes spring break week, March 18–22)

Location  
UAF Cooperative Extension Service  
Tanana District Classroom  
724 27th Ave., Suites 2 & 3  
Fairbanks, Alaska

Registration Fee  
\$150 with 40-hour volunteer commitment  
(includes *Sustainable Gardening, The Alaska  
Master Gardener Manual*)

Questions & Information  
907-474-2423 or 1-877-520-5211  
ssseefeldt@alaska.edu  
www.uaf.edu/ces



# Merry Christmas



*from the staff at the  
Salcha-Delta SWCD!*

## BOARD ELECTION RESULTS

Two SWCD Board of Supervisors seats were up for election last month. Seat nominations were submitted to the Department of Natural Resources. As a result, Phil Kaspari was reappointed to Seat D and Gary Sonnichsen was reappointed to Seat E. Both seats are three-year terms, expiring on December 12, 2015.

## Alaska Peony Growers

### Winter Conference

February 14 & 15, 2013

Growing Peonies—From the Ground Up

Preconference: New & Intermediate  
Growers School and tours

February 13

Westmark Fairbanks  
Hotel and Conference Center  
Fairbanks, Alaska

Registration information can be found at  
<http://alaskapeonies.org>

For more information, contact

Marji Illingworth at  
[marji@northpolepeonies.com](mailto:marji@northpolepeonies.com)





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[www.facebook.com/salchadeltaswcd](http://www.facebook.com/salchadeltaswcd)

## Happy Holidays



Conservation Corner is published on a quarterly basis. Call (907) 895-6279 or email [violetaswcd@wildak.net](mailto:violetaswcd@wildak.net) to receive this free publication either by mail or email, or if you wish to be removed from the District mailing list.



## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

### Chair

Rex Wrigley

### Vice-Chair

Scott Schultz

### Treasurer

Phil Kaspari

### Members

Gary Sonnichsen

Shelly Tappen

## STAFF

Bryce Wrigley, *District Manager*

Jeff Durham, *Program Administrator*

Colin Barnard, *GIS Program Administrator*

Meghan Lene, *Agricultural Specialist*

Earl McNabb, *Projects Manager*

Chuck Mancuso, *Agriculture Program Coordinator*

Tammie Kovalenko, *Conservation Education Coordinator*

Gary Cooper, *Water Quality Program Coordinator*

Violeta Vorobyov, *Administrative Assistant*

