

Spring 2016 Newsletter



Spring and Summer Opportunities for Cooperators

Spring is here and it's time to begin thinking about Fairbanks Soil & Water Conservation District's summer programs! Information about these programs can be found within this newsletter. Additionally, FSWCD is seeking input from our cooperators (you!) to help set our conservation priorities and update our Strategic Plan. Please fill out the survey found within this newsletter and mail it back to FSWCD. Completed surveys will be entered in a prize drawing! On May 16th, 2016 we will be celebrating the 50th anniversary of Alaska Arbor Day! There will be a public tree



planting and celebration downtown. Trees will also be planted at schools across the state. The Visitor Industry's Walk for Charity will occur on May 13th at 6pm. Sign up to walk and graze (delicious food samples are available at booths along the way) and support Alaska Agriculture in the Classroom!

Free site visits are available for cooperators. Site visits can include taking soil samples, identifying invasive plants, and answering questions about a home-owner's natural resource concerns

At the 2015 Charity Walk, over \$19,000 was raised for 44 local non-profits! Participant registration will begin in April. Make sure to choose Alaska Agriculture in the Classroom when you sign up!

Charity Walk contact:
907-459-3758 or cgadapee@explorefairbanks.com

March 21, 2016

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'Spring Fling' April 30, 12-4pm at JP Jones Center

The FSWCD 'Spring Fling' Cooperator Gathering is a chance for all cooperators, friends, partners, and other interested folks to celebrate spring, learn about FSWCD and partners' summer projects, enjoy a BBQ, games, music, petting zoo and attend free workshops!

Barbecue 12-1pm

Workshops 1-4pm

- How to build a Flow-Through Planter
- Composting with Worms
- High Tunnel Basics
- More workshops TBD

Partner organizations including the UAF Cooperative Extension Service and the Tanana Valley Watershed Association will participate too. Contact us for more info or to reserve a booth space or presentation time.



FSWCD Soil Testing Program Continues

The FSWCD Soil Testing Program provides an analysis of key soil properties plus fertilizer recommendations for a fee of \$35 per sample. Compost can also be analyzed for a fee of \$45. For instructions on how to take the samples and for additional questions, call **479-1213 x108** or email fairbanksswcd@gmail.com.

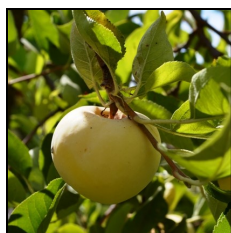
Concerns mount across the state as budgets are cut and many important programs are being eliminated or severely restricted. The UAF Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station Soil and Plant Analysis Laboratory has now been closed due to budget cuts. While this is bad news for our state, it does not directly

impact the FSWCD Soil Testing Program. Our samples are shipped to Brookside Laboratories for analysis- and they will continue to be. Brookside Laboratories offers affordable, comprehensive soil analysis packages. They have a solid record of providing high quality data and customer service.

2016 Tree & Shrub Sale

The Tree Sale will be held on **Saturday, May 21st 2016 from 11-4** at the Tanana Valley State Fairgrounds Kiwanis Hall. Pre-order your trees and shrubs early for the best selection! More information about each variety is available on our website home page: www.fairbankssoilwater.org. Local vendors will also be present with a variety of trees, shrubs, and native plants.

Below are some **new varieties** we are offering this year:



Antonovka Apple, *Malus 'Antonovka'*

Description: A Russian apple rootstock that produces large yellow apples that are good for cooking or juicing. 25' to 35' tall at maturity.

Landscaping: Wide soil adaptability. Protect from moose browsing. **Zone 3**

Source/Size: Raintree Nursery/bare-root with 3/16 to 1/4" caliper stems



Kiska Raspberry, *Rubus idaeus 'Kiska'*

Description: A hardy raspberry variety developed by UAF for local climates.

Landscaping: Raspberries prefer full sun and well drained soil. Trellising increases yields.

Zone 1

Source/Size: Moose Creek Farm/12-24" bare-root



Roseroot, *Rhodiola rosea*

Description: A hardy arctic succulent that requires little care. A great addition to a rock garden, and has medicinal uses.

Landscaping: Does best in full sun and well drained soil. Can tolerate some drought.

Zone 2

Source/Size: Alaska Rhodiola Products/small plug

We are looking for **volunteers** to assist with this year's tree sale. Volunteers who help for at least 2hrs will be rewarded with 5 free trees or shrubs that are left over at the end of tree sale day. Adults and kids (age 10+) are welcome to volunteer. Please contact Jessica to sign up at 479-1213 x108.

Vendors of local plants should also RSVP for the event by calling our office.

2016 FSWCD Tree Sale Order Form

Common Name	Price	Qty.	Subtotal
Antonovka Apple	5.00		
Amur Maple	5.00		
Bearberry	3.50		
Birch ¹	5.00		
Dwarf Russian Almond	5.00		
Kiska Raspberry ^{1,2}	7.00		
Late Lilac	5.00		
Iris ¹	5.00		
Red Osier Dogwood	5.00		
Red Rugosa Rose	5.00		
Roseroot (Rhodiola) ¹	3.50		
Saskatoon Serviceberry	5.00		
Siberian Larch ¹	5.00		
Silverberry	5.00		
Tundra Rose	5.00		
White Spruce ¹	5.00		

¹Grown in Alaska

²Limited availability

Order Total: _____

-10% Cooperator Discount Total: _____

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Phone _____

All sales are final. Make checks out to: FSWCD. Order form and checks can be mailed to the FSWCD office. Cash and card payments will be accepted at the FSWCD office. Pre-orders must be received by **Monday, May 9th**.

Please complete the survey on page 5 and mail it with your tree sale order! Participants will be entered in a prize drawing!

Chena River Riparian Zone Enhancement Cost-Share Available Soon!

This Streambank Riparian Buffer Zone program is intended to help mitigate further degradation of the Chena River and associated sloughs through education, outreach, and restoration along the Chena corridor through the Fairbanks and North Pole areas. This program is an extension of the former Salmon and Soil program that provided soil testing and fertilizer recommendations for private landowners that border the Chena and associated sloughs. The program will continue to provide soil testing and fertilizer recommendations, along with a workshop and demonstration. The workshop and demonstration will show attendees some buffer zone revegetation techniques that



An enhanced riparian zone that has been planted with native species (above).

enhance salmon habitat while providing a buffer zone between lawn and streambank. Over the past 3 years, this program has provided free soil testing and

recommendations to more than 60 landowners along the Chena river and sloughs. These participants will be contacted for further follow up, soil testing, and an invitation to the workshop scheduled for July 2016. We would like to provide soil testing services for an additional 40 or more landowners this year. Hands-on restoration demonstrations and cost-share will be offered for up to 5 private landowners.

Save the Date!
July 14-15, 2016 Riparian Zone Workshop
 6-8:30pm each day
 Call 479-1213 x107 to RSVP

Alaska Ag in the Classroom Educator Workshop

The Agriculture in the Classroom Educator Workshop: Enhancing Agriculture Literacy for Regular Education, Gifted and Special Education Teachers will be held at **UAF May 31st- June 3rd, 2016** and in **Palmer from June 7th-10th, 2016**. This course offers Agricultural Literacy training through fun, hands-on study and investigation of agriculture education resources. The course is designed to assist both new

educators and seasoned educators who want to expand their classroom offerings as they learn how to integrate agriculture lessons into their classrooms. The course will visit locations around Fairbanks and Palmer including local farms and agriculture businesses. The cost for the workshop is \$196 for one credit and \$202 for 2 credits. **Register at www.uaf.edu/summer/registration/** or contact Melissa

Sikes at [907-479-1213x105](tel:907-479-1213x105) or fairbanksswcd@gmail.com for more info. Please visit the AK AITC website at www.agclassroom.org/ak for lesson plans and more information about the Agricultural Literacy resources available.

Teachers on a hay ride at a previous Agriculture in the Classroom Educator Workshop



Welcome to FSWCD's New Employees

FSWCD has hired 4 seasonal employees:

Lindsay Cameron-
Natural Resources Education Assistant

Lindsay has a Bachelor of Arts in Geology and has diverse work experience ranging from teaching English in Thailand, to working as a Fish Technician for Alaska Fish & Game, to working as a Mudlogging Geologist in remote Kenai Peninsula and North Slope locations. Lindsay is excited to work in natural resources conservation. She will be assisting Melissa Sikes with FSWCD's education programs and also helping with other programs as needed.

Joe Mettler-
Natural Resources Technician

Joe has a degree in Crop & Weed Science and a background in agriculture/natural resources management. He has worked in Washington, Montana, and most recently at Basically Basil farm in Fairbanks. Joe will be helping to implement our Soils, Agriculture, and Forestry programs.

Naomi Rambo-
Invasive Species Technician

Naomi has a wide range of experience working in natural resources, education, and outreach. She enjoys working with people to conserve natural resources.

Naomi will be assisting with all aspects of the Invasive Species Program, in particular the Elodea eradication efforts.

Amber Masters-
Seasonal Youth Coordinator

Amber has a degree in Environmental Science and many years of experience working for the US Fish & Wildlife Service and other agencies. Her recent experience as coordinator for an at-risk youth internship program has inspired her to advance her career in environmental education. Amber will provide daily supervision and guidance to our Youth for Habitat program participants.

Apply Now for a Home & Business Green Infrastructure Cost-Share

Green Infrastructure is a way of building or landscaping that provides the ‘ingredients’ for solving challenges of dealing with stormwater, water pollution, and water management. We are anticipating being able to offer a cost-share program for Fairbanks area landowners. Home and business owners can submit an application with a description of the project and estimated costs. Applications will be available soon on our website. Green Infrastructure applications can be used to manage wet weather through infiltration, capture, and reuse of water from rain and melting snow that is cost-effective, sustainable, and environmentally

friendly. On a residential scale, examples of green infrastructure include permeable pavers, rain barrels, rain gardens, green roofs, and an array of rain-water harvesting systems for non-potable uses such as gardening, lawn irrigation, and even toilet flushing. FSWCD can provide you with assistance for evaluating your property for the best Green Infrastructure project to help manage your rainwater, runoff issues, and water needs. FSWCD and other agencies involved in the local Green Infrastructure Group have collaborated to produce a Green Infrastructure Project Guide including many tested projects that you can install on your property. The

guide and more information about Green Infrastructure are located on our website: www.fairbankssoilwater.org/resources-green-infrastructure.htm



This flow-through planter is a beautiful example of a Green Infrastructure practice

Youth for Habitat Program Openings for Kids Ages 13-14

The Youth for Habitat program is a summer job opportunity for kids ages 13-14 intended to introduce youth to natural resource related concepts and projects. The program runs from the third week of May through the first week of August. There are 3 two-week sessions for beginning participants and 2 two-week sessions for returning advanced corps participants. Projects will include streambank restoration, storm water

catchment, invasive species mapping and removal, and monitoring. Each group will meet and learn from specialists within the field of natural resource conservation and will be introduced to concepts that support healthy habitats. The Fairbanks Youth for Habitat program is intended to impart knowledge and skills that promote land stewardship. Each participant will receive a stipend for completing the program. For more information, call 479-1213 x107.

Does your child enjoy being outdoors and learning about science?

Help them apply for the Youth for Habitat program!

Program funded by:



Elodea Eradication Efforts Continue

Since the unfortunate but timely discovery of a new *Elodea* infestation in Totchaket Slough (a remote slough along the Tanana River located downriver of Nenana), achieving the goal of herbicide treatment of the existing infestations in interior AK has become ever more urgent. DNR and FSWCD have been working on the permitting process with DEC, ADFG, and DNR for herbicide treatments in Chena Slough, Totchaket Slough, and Chena Lake, as well as on the Environmental Assessment for

these three treatment areas. In the meantime, Test the Waters conducted diver-assisted suction dredging of the small *Elodea* patches in the Chena River in Fairbanks. NPS, FWS, and FSWCD conducted a rapid and extensive survey of sloughs and wetlands along the Tanana and Tolovana Rivers, downstream of Fairbanks (between Fairbanks and Minto), and high-risk lakes and rivers in the Fairbanks, North Pole, and Salcha-Delta areas, and found no *Elodea*. FSWCD hosted public scoping

meetings on March 7th and 8th, 2016 in Fairbanks, North Pole, and Nenana.

FSWCD and the Fairbanks *Elodea* Steering Committee will continue to communicate with landowners along Chena Slough as on-the-ground treatment plans unfold this summer.



FSWCD staff survey the Fairbanks Airport float pond for *Elodea*

Conservation Priorities & FSWCD Strategic Plan Survey

Please complete this survey to help determine FSWCD's program direction and enter to win great prizes!

1. What FSWCD programs or services have you participated in?

Examples: tree sale, soil testing, Weed Smackdown, green infrastructure cost-share, land use planning, etc.

2. Please rank FSWCD's conservation priorities in order of importance to you from 1 (most important) to 7 (least important):

Prevention and eradication of invasive species

Conservation of plant and soil resources

Sustainable agricultural resources and economy

Conservation/maintenance of water resources

Conservation of forest resources

Education for cooperators, staff, partners, and public (including children's programs)

Promotion of affordable energy

3. How can FSWCD be more effective in meeting its mission (to serve its cooperators, private landowners, and all citizens of the district by promoting wise development and use of natural resources)?

Cut Here

4. Name one thing, good or bad, that you would like the board and leadership of FSWCD to know as they develop their next strategic plan.

If you would like to be entered in a drawing to win **prizes including a tree sale gift certificate, a gift certificate for a local business, and more**— please enter your info below:

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Surveys can be mailed back to FSWCD (590 University Avenue Suite 2, Fairbanks Alaska 99709), dropped off at our office, or turned in at any of our upcoming events. Thank you for your participation!!!

590 University Avenue, Suite 2
Fairbanks, AK 99709

Phone: 907-479-1213

Fax: 907-374-4922

Website: fairbankssoilwater.org

Email: fairbanksswcd@gmail.com

Find us on Facebook!

The mission of the FSWCD is to serve its cooperators, private landowners and all citizens of the district by promoting wise development and use of natural resources.

Upcoming Events

- April 1-3 IABA Homeshow
- April 3-9 Alaska Miners Conference
- April 22 Earth Day
- April 26 Earth Day Celebration at Fort Wainwright
- May 13 Visitor Industry Walk for Charity
- May 16 Alaska's 50th Arbor Day Celebration
- May 21 Tree & Shrub Sale
- June 11 Riverwalk (sponsored by TVWA)



Visit our IABA Homeshow Booth!

The 2016 Homeshow is April 1-3 at the Carlson Center

This year's Homeshow theme is "Alaska Built Whoville". We will have Dr. Seuss themed displays and a trivia wheel for the kids!



Fill out a survey and enter your ticket in the drawing anytime before closing on Sunday April 3rd to win a great prize!

The Natural Resources Conservation Service and Tanana Valley Watershed Association (TVWA) will be sharing the booth.

Two workshops will be taught on Sunday April 3rd by FSWCD and TVWA:

2pm- Alaska Soils Can Hurt You: Permafrost & Other Soil Concerns for Realty
Soils are the most critical and often overlooked element in a home purchase. Permafrost or other unstable soil conditions can lead to foundation failure and damage to your home. Learn how to avoid these issues!
Presenter: Jessica Guritz (FSWCD)

3pm - DIY Rainwater Projects for the Home: Creating Habitat and Managing Runoff
Love landscaping? Learn what projects you can do in your yard to improve habitat, manage rainwater runoff, and increase the value of your home.
Presenters: Melissa Sikes (FSWCD) and Laura Minski (TVWA)

