



FBKS Soil and Water

Chena Slough Neighborhood Committee Meeting

Over forty concerned citizens attended a Chena Slough restoration public meeting December 1 at North Pole City Hall. Presentations included the hydrologic history of the slough, background of slough restoration work from 2000-2003, an update of progress through 2005, and proposed future plans and studies.

Since FSWCD helped form the Chena Slough Committee in 2000, a cooperative effort of private, local, state and federal agencies has resulted in culvert removal and bridge building at several crossings, water quality studies and education and outreach efforts. Past efforts included Outside Hurst and Spruce Branch road bridge installations, Airway Bridge upgrade, Mission Road culvert modification, and a Beaver Springs culvert upgrade. Future proposals include beaver management, channel redesign, stream augmentation, fish habitat studies and replacement of all perched culvert road cross-

ings to improve fish passage and decrease impoundment of water and sediment.

A cost share between NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service) and DOT (department of transportation) has been proposed for culvert replacement at Nordale and Plack. However, DOT funding is not available at this time. Please contact your legislators and DOT to encourage this funding.

Anyone interested in volunteer water quality monitoring of the slough or assisting the slough committee in other ways should contact FSWCD at 479-1213 or fswcd@gci.net.



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Congratulations to Tim Hammond and Tony Gasbarro on being elected to the Board of Supervisors, seats B and C.

Both terms will expire Dec. 31, 2008.

A big thank you to all who ran and participated in election.

UPCOMING MEETINGS, CWMA & FSWCD



The Fairbanks SWCD has partnered with federal, state and private land owners in the formation of the Fairbanks Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA). The purpose of the Fairbanks CWMA is to facilitate collaboration and cooperation among all land managers and land owners so that invasive plant problems across the Tanana Valley are handled in a consistent manner that addresses the seriousness of the threat, the life cycle of the specific plant (s) and the appropriate manners of prevention, control and eradication. By effectively eliminating political and geographic management and ownership boundaries in addressing the problem of invasive plants, we can successfully combat the spread of the plants that invade regardless of those boundaries.

The overall goal of the cooperative weed management area is to prevent the introduction, reproduction and

spread of invasive plants into and within the CWMA. If this issue is of concern to you, join us at the next CWMA meeting to be held January 26 at 10 a.m. at the U-Park Building, room 108. If you cannot attend but would still like to participate, please call into our bridge at (907)271-1405. For additional information please call 479-1213 or email at fswcd@gci.net.



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The Fairbanks Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors meets on the third Thursday of every month at 5:30 pm.

All meetings are open to the public. Agendas and previous meeting minutes are available for public viewing at the FSWCD office. If you would like any information please stop by or call FSWCD at 479-1213.

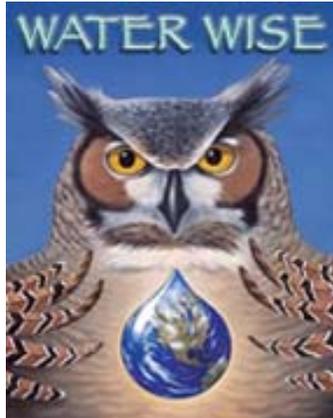
SPEECH AND POSTER CONTEST

A nation that destroys its soils destroys itself. Forests are the lungs of our land, purifying the air and giving fresh strength to our people. ~Franklin D. Roosevelt

The 2006 Speech and Poster Contest is set to kick off the first of February. Alaska's Soil and Water Conservation Districts have been sponsoring the speech contest for more than 30 years and the poster contest for 17 years.

The theme for this year's contest is "Water Wise" and encourages students to focus on the value and importance of a clean, healthy water supply in Alaska.

The poster competition is open to Alaska students in grades K-6, judged in 3 age categories, and the speech contest is open to Alaska students in grades 7-12, also divided into age categories. Public, private and home schooled kids are all encouraged to participate.



Contest details are available by calling the FSWCD at 479-1213, or emailing questions to fswcd@gci.net.

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Application are accepted year round, however, the cut-off date for receipt of completed applications for FY06 financial assistance for both WHIP and EQIP is January 31. For more info, call the Fairbanks NRCS office at 479-2657



The deadline for the posters and speech entries is March 13 and will be judged on March 16 at the monthly board meeting.

Cash prizes are up for grabs in all categories, with the winners advancing to the state competition.

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Don't forget to check FSWCD out on the web! Download Cooperator Agreements, Weed Cost Share applications, get updated on Chena Slough information and much, much more!
<http://home.gci.net/~fswcd/>

Schedule of Events

- **January 26– CWMA meeting**, 10 am, Old U-Park Building, Rm 108 or bridge (907) 271-1405, Open to the public
- **Feb. 13– UAF Workshop**, Growing Christmas Trees, 9-4 Aljeska Prince Hotel, Girdwood
- **Feb. 16– FSWCD Board of Supervisors Monthly Meeting**, 590 University Ave. Ste. B 5:30 pm Open to the public
- **Feb. 26-March 3– 7th Annual National Invasive Weeds Awareness Week**
- **March 9th thru 11th– ANROE Statewide Conference**
- **March 13th– FSWCD Speech/Poster Contest deadline**
- **March 16th– FSWCD Poster/Speech Contest Finals.**
- **March 16th– FSWCD Board of Supervisors Monthly Meeting**, 590 University Ave. Ste. B 5:30 pm Open to the public
- **March 20th– National Ag Day**
- **March 19th thru 25th– Ag Week**
- **March 31st thru April 2nd– Home Show**, Carlson Center.

PARTNERS IN NEED

The Tanana Valley State Fair is celebrating their 75th fair from August 4 to August 12, 2006. The fair is a non-profit organization that relies heavily upon dedicated, motivated volunteers. This year, Competitive Exhibits has an opening in livestock for a Cavy Superintendent. This position is responsible for managing and coordinating the Cavy Division in the barns. Training is provided for all superintendents prior to the fair. Livestock superintendents are rewarded with season passes for them and their families and complimentary livestock parking. If you're interested in becoming a member of the dynamic and dedicated volunteer livestock team, please contact Vanessa Spencer, Competitive Exhibits Manager, at 451-5553 or e-mail vanessa@tananavalleyfair.org for more information and to see if this position would be a good match for you!



Cooperator Spotlight "Noel Napolilli"



USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announced that Alaska's first perpetual easement on private land to benefit wetland wildlife and waterfowl has been signed into contract. Noel Napolilli, a Fairbanks farmer, has enrolled 15.668 acres of ecologically unique wetland pasture in NRCS's Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP).

WRP is a voluntary program that provides an opportunity for landowners to receive financial incentives to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands they own while retiring wet, unproductive land from agricultural uses.

Napolilli's land will be permanently retired from grazing and mowing and

dedicated to providing resident and migratory waterfowl an important area for feeding, loafing and rearing. Species that utilize the area include geese, sand hill cranes, shorebirds, gulls and several duck species. Moose and fox also use the area.

Mr. Napolilli and NRCS will continue to work together to enhance the site's wetland values include improving at least two shallow-water areas, selective brush and timber control, and erecting a fence to protect the habitat.

While 1.5 million acres are protected by WRP nationally, today's contract may be the first to include a pingo—a landscape feature formed when un-

derground permafrost ice lenses push up to the surface, melts and then settles to form a lake. The Napolilli WRP project area contains a two-acre pingo.

Landowners interested in learning more about WRP or NRCS's other conservation programs can call the Fairbanks field office at 479-3159 or log on to www.ak.nrcs.usda.gov

**If a cow laughed really hard....
would milk come out of her nose?**

**Filthy water cannot be washed.
~African Proverb**

Farming looks mighty easy when your plow is a pencil and you're a thousand miles from the corn field. ~**Dwight D. Eisenhower**

SOIL TESTING PROGRAM



With snow on the ground and the subzero temperatures, soil testing season might seem far away, yet, it is not too early to begin preparing for the upcoming spring season. Appointments for having your soils tested can be made now at the Fairbanks Soil & Water Conservation District for this spring, summer and fall. If you had your soils tested last year, it is recommended that they be tested around the same time as before.

If you are unfamiliar with the Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District's soil testing program, let me enlighten you on this service provided to our

cooperators. Summer of 2005 was our first season and there were a record number of nine cooperators who participated in the program. Soil samples are taken by a District employee, and then sent to Brookside Laboratories in New Knoxville, OH. Once the soil sample analyses are received, the UAF Cooperative Extension Service provides recommendations to increase productivity and the health of your crop.

The cost of this service to FSWCD cooperators is \$22.00 per sample. For any additional questions or information, contact us at (907)479-1213 or at fswcd@gci.net.



DID YOU KNOW?

- **IT TAKES 2 GALLONS TO BRUSH YOUR TEETH, 2 TO 7 GALLONS TO FLUSH A TOILET, AND 25 TO 50 GALLONS TO TAKE A SHOWER.**
- **ONE CUBIC FOOT OF WATER**

DISTRICT FACTS:
We sell books & conservation tools.

1. Backyard Composting, Your Complete Guide, \$6.95
2. Weeds of the West, \$25
3. Weeds of the N. US & Canada, \$20
4. Weeds of the Prairie, \$25
5. Conservation Trees & Shrubs, Pocket ID Guide, \$4
6. Compost Thermometers, \$15



**FAIRBANKS SOIL AND WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

590 University Ave, Suite B
Fairbanks, AK 99709

Main Phone: 479-1213 or 374-6966
Fax: 479-6998
Email: fswcd@gci.net

<http://www.alaskaswcds.org/Fairbanks/index.html>

Staff:

Education & Outreach Coordinator: Joni Scharfenberg
District Assistant: Jennifer Miller
Natural Resources Technician: Cassidee Hall
Office Assistant: Angela Murphy

The Back 40



Farm Service Agency

ELECTION RESULTS

We thank everyone who took time to vote and to those willing to have their name on the ballot. The election results are as follows:

Todd Elsberry, member
Mike Martin, alternate

OFFICE UPDATES

The Fairbanks FSA Office is currently experiencing some major changes in operation. If you are not aware Pat Freeman, Program Technician, retired in November. Pat returned to South Dakota to be closer to her family.

Currently Alaska is going through a office reorganization and consolidation statewide. All offices are being reviewed and changes being proposed. Current

operations in the Fairbanks Office are being analyzed. The proposal on the table is to combine the Delta and Fairbanks Offices with Delta Office serving the Fairbanks area. The Fairbanks Office would be closed and employees from Delta would travel to Fairbanks to conduct business.

All concerns or comments to this change in operation should be directed to the Alaska FSA State Committee by January 27, 2006 at (907) 761-7738.

FARM LOAN PROGRAM

It is not too early to think about Spring and planting. If you plan to apply for an operating loan with FSA – don't delay. Contact the office for information and loan application packet.

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP)

USDA will offer certain CRP participants the opportunity to re-enroll or extend their current contract. FSA will determine whether a contract may be re-enrolled or extended based on Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) at the time of the original CRP offer. In the coming months, FSA will send letters to current CRP participants with contracts expiring September 30, 2007.

CRP statute limits CRP enrollment to 25 percent of a county's cropland. Recently Delta County's cropland has been reduced due to re-growth of previously cleared cropland.

Why do cows wear bells?



Because their horns don't work!