



# Outreach project exists to serve small-acreage landowners

Land use in Wyoming and the western United States has shifted rapidly. As changes occur in the demographics, small-acreage parcels have proliferated and the number of landowners is growing.

To meet the educational needs of these landowners and land managers in Wyoming, a cross-organizational issue team has developed a collaborative, multi-pronged approach to land management education – the Small Acreage Outreach Project.

The project is the work of the Small Acreage Issue Team, which consists of members from University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service, Wyoming natural resource and conservation districts, Resource Conservation and Development councils, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Wyoming State Forestry Division, Audubon Wyoming, weed and pest control districts, and others.

The purpose is to provide Wyoming landowners with information to sustain-

ably manage their land. We strive to help landowners maintain or improve the quality of life in Wyoming by raising healthier crops, landscapes, and animals, while protecting their natural resources, such as water, soil, and plants.

Working in cooperation with landowners, this project includes a series of activities: landowner outreach in pilot areas of the state, surveys of landowner needs, publication of the *Barnyards & Backyards* magazine, and informational workshops.

## Magazine

*Barnyards & Backyards* ([www.barnyardsandbackyards.com](http://www.barnyardsandbackyards.com)) is a quarterly, informational magazine containing articles by natural resource experts on topics such as feeding animals, grazing and maintaining pastures, landscaping, windbreaks, irrigation, maintaining quality drinking water, weed control, and septic system maintenance. Each issue also features landowners who practice good land management. The landowners



discuss the challenges they have faced in Wyoming and the strategies used to overcome them. The magazine is intended to be attractive, engaging, concise, practical, and informative.

## Landowner Visits

Landowner visits were conducted in the Casper, Wheatland/Cheyenne, and Gillette areas by project interns in summer 2006 and this year. These visits serve several purposes. One is to inform landowners of the many land management resources available to them and to discuss any particular needs they have. The second is to allow the project to better understand landowners' educational needs. The visits also provide interns the opportunity to learn more about Wyoming's natural

resources and to provide them with important work skills.

## Workshops

Another aspect of this project is informational workshops. These workshops are an opportunity for landowners to gather and talk about problems they have encountered and to attend expert-led sessions to learn about different land management topics. Feedback gained from these workshops helps the project team improve future programming. A list of past and future workshops can be found by visiting [www.barnyardsandbackyards.com](http://www.barnyardsandbackyards.com) and clicking on "Events".

## Surveys

To better understand landowners and serve their educational needs, a large mail survey effort of



Wyoming landowners has been conducted in collaboration with the Wyoming National Agricultural Statistics Service. This survey was sent to 4,800 landowners in six counties. With a high return rate, data from this survey will lead to a better understanding of small-acreage landowners and help us create targeted, informative, and effective outreach efforts.

## Support

Major support for the project is provided by a 319 Information and Education grant from the Nonpoint Source Task Force administered through the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality. The team has also received grants from the Wyoming Private Grazing Lands Team in addition to partner organization contributions.

For more information about the project, visit [www.barnyardsandbackyards.com](http://www.barnyardsandbackyards.com), or contact Jennifer Jones, small acreage coordinator, at [jsjones@uwyo.edu](mailto:jsjones@uwyo.edu).

Sponsors of the project include:

- UW Cooperative Extension Service
- Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts
- Historic Trails Resource Conservation and Development Council
- Wyoming State Forestry Division
- Wyoming Private Grazing Lands Team
- Audubon Wyoming
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Wyoming Weed and Pest Council
- Nonpoint Source Task Force, Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, (319 grant)
- Wyoming Business Council (survey support)
- Wyoming National Agricultural Statistics Service (survey support)
- Western Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (survey support)

