

# HELPING PEOPLE HELP THE LAND

By Brenda Ling and Cheryl Grapes

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) works with residents to conserve natural resources on private lands.

We help land users approach conservation planning and implementation with an understanding of how natural resources relate to each other, to all of us, and how our activities affect those resources.

The NRCS, formerly the Soil Conservation Service, was created as a response to the Dust Bowl catastrophe of the 1930s. Hugh Hammond Bennett, the agency's first chief, convinced Congress soil erosion was a national menace; that a permanent agency was needed within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to call landowners' attention to their



land stewardship opportunities and responsibilities; and that a partnership of federal agencies with local communities was needed to help farmers and ranchers conserve their land.

Today, NRCS still speaks to the health and well-being of soil, water, air, plants, and animals on America's private lands. NRCS works closely with conservation partners such as the local conservation districts, land trusts, and wildlife and nature protection groups.

NRCS provides services and products to managers and owners of private lands that assist in making land-use decisions. These include technical assistance to help customers decide what conservation practices and systems will best sustain natural resources while meeting economic goals. This planning assistance ranges from a site specific plan to one that covers a larger geographic area.

Technical and cost-share assistance is available to help customers apply planned conservation practices and systems. This assistance includes designs, specifications, construction and management assistance, and financial assistance for practice and system installation.

Financial assistance is available to agricultural producers who meet the following criteria:

- Be an agricultural producer (generally, must produce at least \$1,000 worth of agricultural products)
- Be in compliance with the highly erodible land and wetland compliance provisions of the 1985 farm bill (Food Security Act of 1985)
- Meet adjusted gross income limits
- Have farm records established with a local USDA Farm Services Agency

For more information, contact a local NRCS office or go online to [www.wy.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.wy.nrcs.usda.gov).

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An advertisement for Wyoming Livestock Roundup. It features a silhouette of a cowboy on a horse in the foreground. The text reads: "WYOMING LIVESTOCK ROUNDUP The Weekly News Source for Wyoming's Ranchers, Farmers and AgriBusiness Community. www.wylr.net". There is a small image of the Roundup publication and a Facebook logo at the bottom. Contact information is provided at the bottom: "P.O. Box 850 Casper, WY 82602 (800) 967-1647 • (307) 234-2700".

**WYOMING LIVESTOCK ROUNDUP**  
The Weekly News Source for Wyoming's Ranchers,  
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