



# CONSERVATION CURRENTS

A newsletter by  
Teton Conservation District

Summer 2019

## Six Water Projects Funded

The Wyoming Water Development Commission and Teton Conservation District granted six local projects more than \$200,000 this spring through the Small Water Project Program. The grants improve watershed condition and function, and benefit wildlife, livestock, and the environment. Past projects have included the construction and rehabilitation of small reservoirs, wells, springs, wetlands, solar platforms, irrigation works, and other water related efforts. Projects funded this year include creek rehabilitation to improve fish and wildlife habitat, headgate reconstruction, and wildfire water supply reservoirs.



## Horses for Clean Water at Teton County Fair

Join us at the Teton County Fair for a series of workshops on basic horsekeeping, simple solutions for pest control, and mud and manure management. The workshops will be held from noon to 1pm and from 3 to 4pm on July 25th under the Big Top tent. The workshops will be led by Alayne Blicke, a life-long equestrian, educator, and director of Horses for Clean Water, an internationally acclaimed environmental education program that focuses on caring for horses and land.

If you own a corral, Alayne will be conducting individual site visits on July 24th. Funding is available for recommended corral improvements. To be considered for a site visit and funding, contact Teton Conservation District.

## 4th Graders Prevent Bird Window Strikes

In late May, Teton Conservation District staff led local 4th graders through a craft activity to prevent bird-window strikes. An estimated 365 to 988 million birds are killed by building collisions in the U.S. annually, which means each house kills between one and ten birds every year. Here are a few tips on how you can prevent bird strikes:

- Apply decals or artwork on the outside of windows. Birds will fly through spaces smaller than the average handprint. Therefore, decals and tape are most effective when placed within four inches of each other across the span of the window.
- Install textured glass, window film, string, netting, screen, grilles, shutters, or exterior shades on windows.
- Be aware that house plants may look like habitat to a bird from the outside.
- When planting and maintaining trees and bushes around your home, consider how they might create or block reflections in windows.



If you'd like to discuss solutions for your property, feel free to contact us.



**Teton  
Conservation  
District  
Est. 1946**

420 W. Pearl Ave.  
Jackson, WY 83001

(307) 733-2110

[info@tetonconservation.org](mailto:info@tetonconservation.org)

[www.tetonconservation.org](http://www.tetonconservation.org)



## Is Your Lawn Trout Friendly?

A recent U.S. Geological Survey study found that residential landscaping is one of the major sources of nutrient pollution in the Fish Creek watershed. To encourage water stewardship in landscaping practices, the Jackson Hole Clean Water Coalition launched the Trout Friendly Lawns program. The goal of the program is to make it easy for you to modify your landscaping practices to limit your impact on water quality in the valley, without sacrificing your lawn's aesthetic. By committing to Trout Friendly landscaping practices, we can collectively improve water quality for the health of all the plants, insects, fish, wildlife, and humans that rely on clean water.

To meet the Basic Level of the Trout Friendly Lawns program, commit to the following four landscaping practices. You can learn more about the Gold Level Certification and certify your lawn as either Basic or Gold at [www.jhcleanwater.org](http://www.jhcleanwater.org).



*Those who have committed to Trout Friendly practices have the option of placing one of these steel "certified trout friendly" signs on their lawn to show off their commitment to water quality stewardship in their landscaping practices.*

**1. Limit Fertilization.** Use slow release or organic fertilizer only if needed, not to exceed two pounds of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet of yard per year. Do not fertilize within 20 feet of water.

**2. Be Water Wise.** Do not overwater. Sprinkle at dawn and dusk every other day. Stop watering when it's raining. Raise the mower blade to a mow height of three to four inches so less water and fertilizer are needed.

**3. Use Herbicides and Pesticides Appropriately.** Only apply herbicide for state- and county-listed noxious weeds, using spot spraying or mechanical removal techniques where appropriate.

**4. Plant Natives & Maintain Streamside Buffers.** Maintain a 5-foot buffer of unmanicured landscaping around water.

Teton Conservation District is a founding member of the Jackson Hole Clean Water Coalition, a group of organizations working together to address water quality issues in Jackson Hole.



## Native Species Spotlight

Golden currants (*Ribes aureum*) are one of the earliest shrubs to flower in the valley. They provide important nectar for nesting hummingbirds and pollinators. Berries appear in July and can be eaten fresh or dried.

The US government outlawed cultivation of *Ribes* species between the early 1900s and 1966 in response to the plants harboring white pine blister rust fungus, a scourge to 5-needle pines. The timber industry appealed to the federal government to eradicate any currant in the vicinity of white bark pine plantations across the country. White pine blister rust is still a threat to 5-needle pines today, including high elevation species like whitebark. Indian paintbrush and snapdragon species have also been identified as intermediate hosts of the rust.

## Services for Residents

**Well Test Kits:** Pick up a well test kit for \$50 at our office. The kits test for chloride, fluoride, nitrate, nitrite, pH, sodium, sulfate, total coliforms (bacteria), total dissolved solids, and total hardness. Other parameters can be added for an additional cost.

**Wildfire Risk Overviews:** Sign up for a free Wildfire Risk Overview of your home at [www.tetonconservation.org](http://www.tetonconservation.org). We also offer a cost share grant for vegetation management on private property. Learn more on our website or call us for more information.



*Slash piles await removal after a landowner received a Wildfire Risk Overview and funding for their wildfire risk reduction project.*