



WINTER NEWSLETTER 2024

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From the Chairman



On the heels of a very dry 2023, I hope everyone got some rain and snow out of the last big storm that came through. It looks like we could have some spring feed after all.

Our workshop on conservation easements in which we partnered with Hereford NRCD generated a lot of interest and we've had several complements for initiating it. We are pleased to be able to provide land owners information to assist them in keeping their businesses in agriculture and setting up families to pass on farms and ranches to future generations. Contact information for speakers are found on Page 6.

With the nation's cowherds at its lowest point since 1962, here's hoping the good cattle prices we are experiencing will hang around for a few years.

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*Sincerely,
 Fred*

Meetings of the Board will be held quarterly, 3rd Wednesday of the month at 640 E. 10th St., Douglas, AZ at the NRCS Douglas Field Office. Meeting agendas are posted at the NRCS Douglas Field Office and at aacd1944.com. Minutes and newsletters will also be posted there under Whitewater Draw.

NRCS Douglas Field Office

FY 24 FARM BILL APPLICANTS

23 EQIP applications, which are within the Whitewater Draw NRCD, have been approved for funding and are currently being processed into eventual contracts once they are signed. 8 of these applications are for cropland and 15 are for rangeland. There are 16 applicants, that are within the District, which are signed up for the second round of applications.

STAFFING CHANGES

Jennifer Krentz has accepted a position with the State Office to be one of the two State Program Specialist. In her new role she will provide leadership for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). Jennifer will work directly with partners to develop and implement RCPP projects across the State. She will continue to be stationed in the Douglas Field Office. Her new position started on 1/15/2024.

U.S. DROUGHT MONITOR

The eastern half of the Whitewater Draw NRCD is in Extreme Drought while the western half is in Severe Drought (see attached map). The Douglas FO rain gauge has received 177% of its normal 5-year average precipitation for the calendar year so far. (Currently 1.33" with a 5-year calendar year average of .75" by this time). The US Drought Monitor data can be accessed online at <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/> . You can track the Douglas FO rain gauge (or others rain gauges), online at <https://rainlog.org> .

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL NRCS OFFICE:

The USDA-NRCS Douglas Field Office is; 640 East 10th Street Suite 2, Douglas Arizona 85607, phone number 520-368-3403.

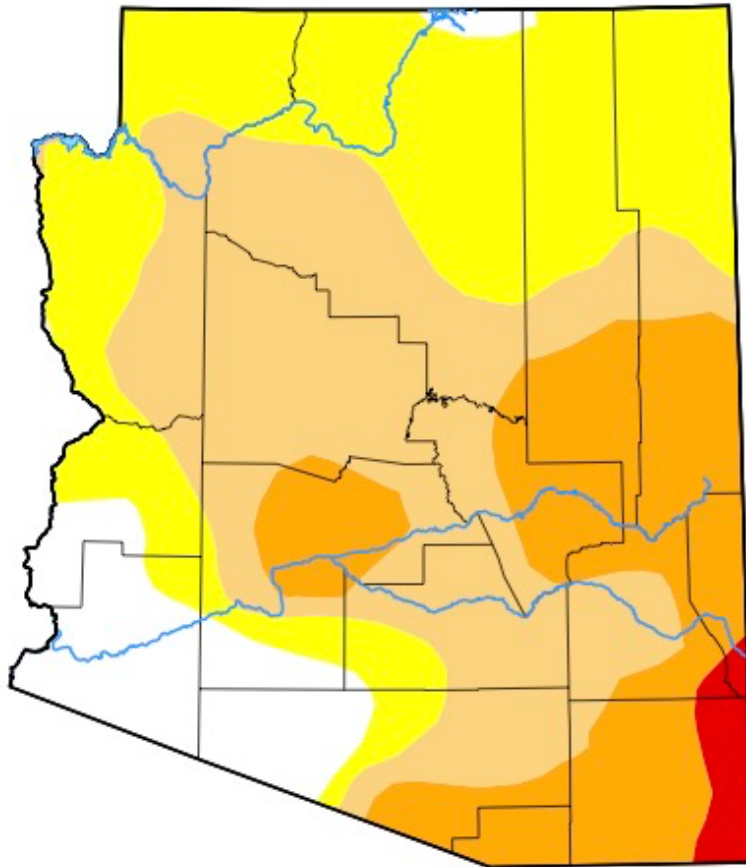
Don Decker-Range Management Specialist, phone number 520-471-0660.

Jennifer Krentz-State Program Specialist, phone number 520-508-1109.







Charles Thorpe-

U.S. Drought Monitor Arizona

February 6, 2024
(Released Thursday, Feb. 8, 2024)
Valid 7 a.m. EST



Intensity:

-  None
-  D0 Abnormally Dry
-  D1 Moderate Drought
-  D2 Severe Drought
-  D3 Extreme Drought
-  D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

Author:

Deborah Bathke
National Drought Mitigation Center



droughtmonitor.unl.edu



I Love the...



Conserving Your Legacy Workshop February 3, 2024

Whitewater Draw NRCDC and Hereford NRCDC cooperated together to sponsor Conserving Your Legacy Workshop. It was held on Saturday, February 3, 2024 at the Palominas Fire District Training Center.

Registration and donuts and coffee were supplied by Central AZ Land Trust at 8:00 am with the welcome by WWD Chairman, Fred Davis making opening remarks about the importance of making a plan to pass on farming and ranching legacies. Pat Call, Vice-Chair of Hereford NRCDC welcomed the group following Fred.

The workshop began with Sharma Torrens from the Central AZ Land and Trust explaining what conservation easements are and how they can be beneficial to many farmers and ranchers. Sharma was followed by Cameron Becker from Arizona Land and Water Trust.

The next portion of the workshop included those who have already put their businesses into some kind of conservation easement. Nathan and Jackie Watkins from San Ysideo Farms offered their experiences and explained that various options are available for negotiation.

Amber Morin from Sentinel Landscape Partnership also talked about money available from the Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security and other agencies.

Summing up the workshop was Scott Pilchard from Western Skies Advisory. He stated that 1.5 million acres are lost from agriculture each year. His talk focused on providing landowners with information on how to implement 1031 exchanges and if this would be a viable option for your farm or ranch.

A taco lunch was provided by Arizona Land and Water Trust.

For more information:

Sharma Torrens, Central AZ Land Trust: (c) 602-540-5331

agconserveconsulting@gmail.com OR sharmahtorrens@gmail.com

Cameron Becker, AZ Land and Water Trust: 520-577-8564

cbecker@alwt.org

Amber Morin, Sentinel Landscape Partnership: 480-323-6832

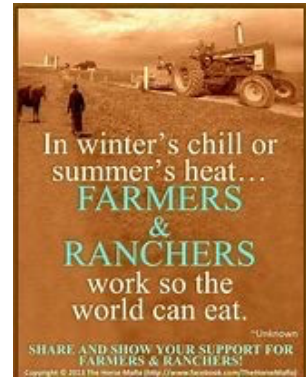
amberdawnmorin@gmail.com OR forthuachuca@sentinellandscapes.org

Malpai Borderlands Group: Frank Krentz, 575-640-7160

frankrk66@gmail.com

Scott Pilchard: (480) 847-2360 office (Cell) 480-652-9422

westernskiesadv.com, scott@westernskiesadv.com



Sharma Torrens introduces WWD Chairman, Fred Davis.



Cameron Becker talks to the group regarding pros and cons of easements.

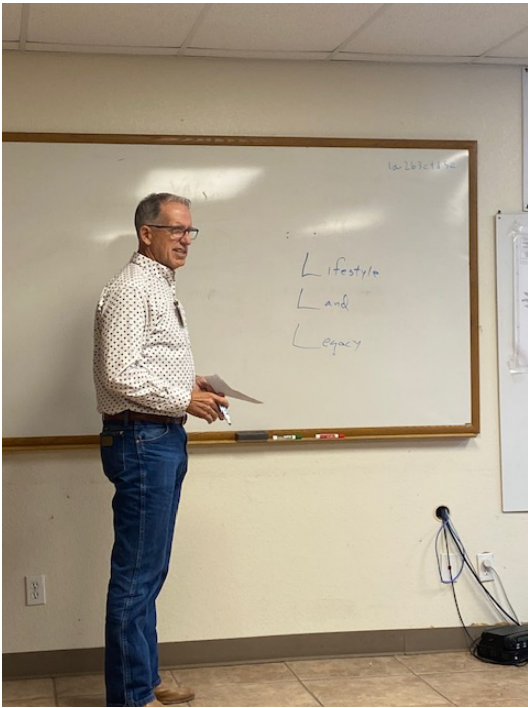
Nathan and Jackie Watkins from San Ysidro Farms talk about their conservation easement and things to consider before moving forward with one.



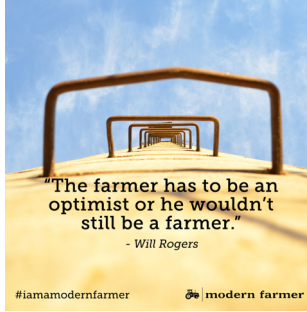
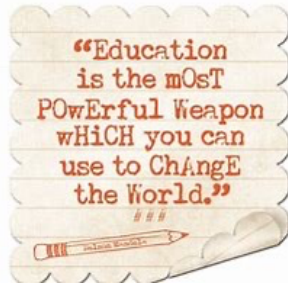
Amber Morin shows the Rhino Map of the Sentinel Landscape Partnership.



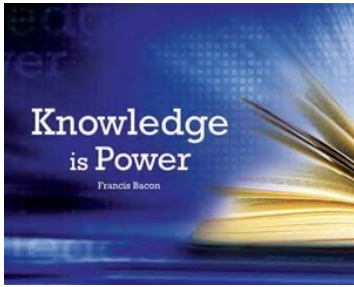
Frank Krentz representing the Malpai Borderlands Group talks about the easements available through them.



Scott Pilchard: Western Skies Advisory talking about the three L's in agriculture:
Lifestyle
Land
Legacy



Workshop attended by 50 individuals



L-R: Amber Morin, Fred Davis, Peggy Davis, Ron Bemis, Nathan Watkins, Frank Krentz representing the Whitewater Draw NRCD Board of Supervisors.



Steve Boice, Hereford NRCD Supervisor handled the food for lunch.

