

# THE LAND STEWARD

Teton Regional Land Trust's Stewardship Newsletter

Fall 2019

## What is the Dirt on Regenerative Agriculture?

Regenerative Agriculture has been a buzzword in farming, ranching and conservation communities alike for the past few years, but what exactly is it? We will be diving into the core principles of Regenerative Agriculture throughout the next few newsletters to learn what it is, how it can be used and how it links people through shared common values across our region.



Regenerative Agriculture is a system of farming principles and practices that results in healthier, more productive soils that aid in the retention of more organic matter. These practices can increase the soil's water storage potential and increase yields on farm ground over time. By incorporating Regenerative Agriculture's principles and practices, you are not only benefitting your ground, but your surrounding community as well as future generations by increasing biodiversity, encouraging pollinators, improving watersheds and enhancing ecosystem services.

### The Five Guiding Principles:

- **Protect the Soil** - When feasible, leave plant residue behind. Bare soil is prone to wind and water erosion, and will cause the soil temperature to rise and evaporation to increase. Leaving cover on the soil also suppresses weed growth and provides habitat for surface dwellers, an important part of the soil food web.
- **Minimize Soil Disturbance** - Minimize the amount of biological, chemical and mechanical soil disturbance by incorporating practices such as no till, reducing overgrazing and minimizing the use of fungicides, synthetic fertilizers and herbicides.
- **Promote Biodiversity** - Diversifying crops enables microbes to flourish in the soil food web, resulting in healthier soils more able to stave off pests and disease, while also enabling the soil to store more carbon and other nutrients by better managing water and sunlight.
- **Leave Living Roots** - No matter the crop, leaving a live root in the ground encourages the formation of soil aggregates, builds carbon while reducing nitrogen leaching, controls weeds, provides pollinator and wildlife habitat, discourages wind and water erosion, improves water storage potential and enhances the quality of the soil.
- **Livestock Integration** - Managing grazing practices by utilizing regenerative agricultural principles and practices will not only increase your forage yields by giving areas time to regenerate, but also increase the nutritional value of your livestock's diet by increasing the grass recovery period. When carried out properly, the grazing of livestock can be used to suppress weeds rather than encourage them.

"THE SOIL IS THE GREAT  
CONNECTOR TO OUR LIVES,  
THE SOURCE & DESTINATION  
OF US ALL" - WENDELL BERRY

### Teton Regional Land Trust Staff

**Joselin Matkins,**  
Executive Director

**Jeske Gräve,**  
Development Director

**Tamara Sperber,**  
Conservation  
Director

**Renee Hiebert,**  
Conservation  
Specialist

**Josh Holmes,**  
Land Protection  
Specialist

**Kimberly Holmes,**  
Stewardship  
Coordinator

**Nicole Cyr,**  
Stewardship Technician

**Kate Hopkins-  
Salomon,**  
Membership &  
Outreach Coordinator

**Hilary Ordonez,**  
Development Associate

**Christine Ford,**  
Operations Manager



inspiring you to protect great places





## Winter is on Our Heels

The show of fall leaves have come and gone across our region and the snowpack seems to increase each time the clouds lift from the mountaintops giving us a glimpse of what will soon be moving upon us, winter. The Land Trust staff have finished their field visits and are tucked cozily away at the office finishing up paperwork. Perhaps you are thinking of plans you may have for your property in 2020? If so, please remember that every conservation easement has a set timeframe for notifying the Land Trust so that we can appropriately evaluate the proposed activity and ensure that it is in line with your conservation easement.

## The Need for Prior Notification

Each conservation easement outlines Permitted Uses and Practices reserved by the landowner (Grantor) at the time the conservation easement was negotiated. When we look deeper at these terms, some require the need for prior written notification and/or approval before an activity can be carried out. If your activity requires notice and/or approval, please take note of the Notice and Approval clause in your conservation easement. This clause will explain what you need to do to notify the Land Trust, including the notification timeframe, specific details of

the proposed activity and the length of time the Land Trust has to respond to the request. These timeframes were designed so that the Land Trust has adequate time to evaluate each request and determine that we have all of the details on file before any changes happen on the land that might affect the conservation values of the conservation easement. If you have questions about the timeframe or need for approval for an activity on your property, please contact the Land Trust and we can help you find the information. Thank you for allowing the Land Trust adequate time to address your needs!

### CONTACT US

For questions, to schedule a meeting to review your conservation easement or to schedule a visit to walk your land, contact us today!

**Teton Regional Land Trust**

(208) 354-8939  
stewardship@

tetonlandtrust.org  
or

Visit us on the web at  
tetonlandtrust.org

## When to Give Notice

If you are unsure if an activity requires prior notification and/or approval from the Land Trust, or if you are unsure of the timeframe you need to give the Land Trust to grant approval of an activity,

### Give us a call!

We are always happy to answer questions regarding your conservation easement

Planning to build or add on to a structure?

Give Us a Call!

Planning to change your land management practices?

Give Us a Call!

Planning to build a fence or road?

Give Us a Call!

Planning to sell/gift your conservation easement property

Give Us a Call!

Need to update your contact information or preference?

Give Us a Call!

**208-354-8939**



TETON REGIONAL LAND TRUST

## Regional County Weed Contacts

Don't forget to reach out to your local county weed representative to stay up to date regarding any cost-share weed control programs that might be available:

### **Bonneville County:**

Matt Stanger,  
Weed Superintendent  
208-589-9920

### **Clark County:**

Bo Billman,  
Weed Department  
208-709-6706

### **Fremont County:**

Bryce Fowler,  
Weed Supervisor  
208-624-7442

### **Jefferson County:**

Mitch Whitmill,  
Weed Superintendent  
208-745-9221

### **Madison County:**

Jeremy Johnson,  
Weed Supervisor  
208-356-3139

### **Teton County, ID:**

Amanda Williams,  
Weed Superintendent  
208-354-2593

### **Teton County, WY**

Teton County Weed & Pest  
District  
307-733-8419



## Rotational Grazing

At its core, rotational grazing means that only one section of a pasture is grazed at a time while the rest of the pasture is recovering. In order to implement rotational grazing, pastures must first be subdivided into smaller areas or paddocks. The number and size of the paddocks will be unique to each pasture and rancher.

There are numerous benefits to rotational grazing including higher forage yields, better quality forage, fewer noxious weeds and improved wildlife habitat. Forage yields can be increased up to 40% by switching from continuous to rotational grazing. In the spring, plants store carbohydrate energy for regrowth, and in the fall, plants store energy for the winter. Continuous grazing does not allow the root reserves to be replenished and can result in decreased yields.

Healthy plants will start growing earlier in the spring, produce higher summer yields and grow longer into the fall. Plus, increasing the health of native, or desired, vegetation is vital for competing with noxious weeds for space and resources. Maintaining vegetative cover benefits wildlife year-round. For example, in the spring, grassland birds rely on healthy vegetation for cover for their nests and young broods. Leaving specific pastures ungrazed from mid-May to July gives the hatchlings time to mature.

If you are thinking about switching to rotational grazing, please feel free to reach out to the Land Trust or your local Natural Resources Conservation Service Center for more information. To get started, consider writing down your goals and assess the resources available to you. Creating a grazing calendar can be a great way to get started! It is beneficial to track the resting and grazing periods, as well as observations, to maximize forage growth while also benefiting wildlife.

## Grazing Management Plans

Does your conservation easement require a grazing management plan to be on file with the Land Trust? If your easement allows grazing, chances are that it does. If you have a current grazing management plan or are planning on making changes to your grazing practices, now is a great time to get your plan on file at the Land Trust office! Please give a member of our Stewardship Staff a call to determine if you need to share a copy of or update your grazing management plan.

[stewardship@tetonlandtrust.org](mailto:stewardship@tetonlandtrust.org) . 208-354-8939

# The Plight of Flight

You may have heard about the recent study published in September 2019 in the journal of *Science* revealing that the North American bird population is down by 2.9 billion breeding adults. One of the most shocking findings in this study is that more than 90% of the birds on decline come from just 12 families of common birds that you see at your feeder, including sparrows, blackbirds, warblers and finches. While the effort to bring these species back to the numbers that we were seeing in the 1970's will be extensive, there are **7 Simple Actions** that you can personally do to help our bird populations:

- (1) **Make Windows Safer** - Install screens on the outside of windows or use film, paint or string to break up the reflections on windows
- (2) **Watch your Furry Felines** - Cats are responsible for killing approximately 2.6 billion birds annually. If your cat is a mouser, he is likely a bird hunter too. Keeping cats indoors is recommended, but if that is not possible, consider getting a bird-safe collar for your furry friend.
- (3) **Reduce your Lawn and Plant Natives** - Lawns do not offer quality habitat or food sources, while native plants provide shelter and nesting habitat for birds. The nectar, seeds, berries and insects encouraged by native plants help sustain birds and diverse wildlife.
- (4) **Avoid Pesticides** - Pesticides that are toxic to birds can harm them directly through contact or if they eat contaminated seeds or prey. Pesticides can also harm birds indirectly by reducing the number of available insects, which birds need to survive. You can help by reducing the use of pesticides around your home and gardens.
- (5) **Drink Coffee that is Good for Birds** - A lot of us do not think about our coffee habits affecting birds, however 3/4 of the world's coffee is "sun-grown", which means forests are removed to make way for large coffee operations. Buy shade grown coffee and support more than 42 species of North American migratory songbirds that winter in coffee plantations, including orioles, warblers and thrushes.
- (6) **Protect our Planet from Plastic** - Birds are ingesting plastics mistaken for foods at alarming rates. Avoid using single-use plastics and recycle the plastic you do use.
- (7) **Become a Birder** - Eastern Idaho is a wonderful place to become a birder! Bird watchers can help by recording the data that they are seeing and sharing this information online through eBird ([www.ebird.org](http://www.ebird.org)).



USDA /  
NRCS  
Service  
Centers

Idaho Falls  
Service  
Center:  
208-522-6250

Rigby Service  
Center:  
208-745-6664

Rexburg  
Service  
Center:  
208-356-5701

St. Anthony  
Service  
Center:  
208-624-7391

Driggs Service  
Center:  
208-354-2680

Source: Cornell Lab of Ornithology

PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

Teton Regional Land Trust  
P.O. Box 247  
Driggs, ID 83422