



### *A Note from the Director*

One of the things that makes working in our field enjoyable is the challenge of new opportunities. The conservation of natural resources is a constantly moving target. One example of this is the rise of organic agriculture. As more and more farmers and ranchers shift to organic production systems, we find ourselves scrambling to understand their conservation challenges and adapt our practices and programs to their needs.

We at the WNTSC have been gearing up to provide assistance in this area. Giulio Ferruzzi, conservation agronomist, has been working with State specialists to organize cross-training workshops with State and field staff, local organic certifiers, and organic producers. In addition, we received NHQ funding to pursue a contribution agreement with a national certifying organization to assist us in developing technical information, conducting training, and forging partnerships. I encourage you to contact Giulio about how we can help support organic farmers and ranchers in your State.

Three staffing changes have occurred since our last report. Steve Campbell, soil scientist, and Craig Ziegler, forester, have joined us and are profiled in this report. Roel Vining, air quality specialist, has taken a new position with the Information Technology Center in Fort Collins as a project manager. We wish Roel well in his new position. We will be advertising to fill his position shortly.

As always, please let us know how we can serve you.

*- Bruce Newton*

For contact information on WNTSC specialists, check our website at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/about/ntsc/west/contacts.html>.

### Core Team Highlights

#### Electronic Irrigation Toolbox Delivered to States

States should have recently received a digital “Irrigation ToolBox” specifically designed to assist them with irrigation planning. Coordinated by WNTSC water management engineer **Peter Robinson** with help from **Betty Shatto**, the ToolBox is a new and improved digital version of the original “Irrigation Training Toolbox” released over 10 years ago.

The new “Irrigation ToolBox” contains most of the content of the original toolbox, including books, brochures, and lesson plans which were digitally scanned. It also



*The Irrigation Toolbox contains a CD, thumb drive, and Xd disc each containing all of the reference materials.*

includes over 30 hours of flash video on irrigation subjects. Additionally, the new version of the ToolBox includes Extension documents from over 30 states, more than 50 PowerPoint presentations, and technical papers covering 6 years of technical writing from both the Irrigation Association and Central Plains Irrigation Association. There are also over 400 irrigation photographs available for use in developing PowerPoint presentations or other documents. Copyright issues were resolved to allow users to replicate materials by giving credit and following non-profit guidelines.

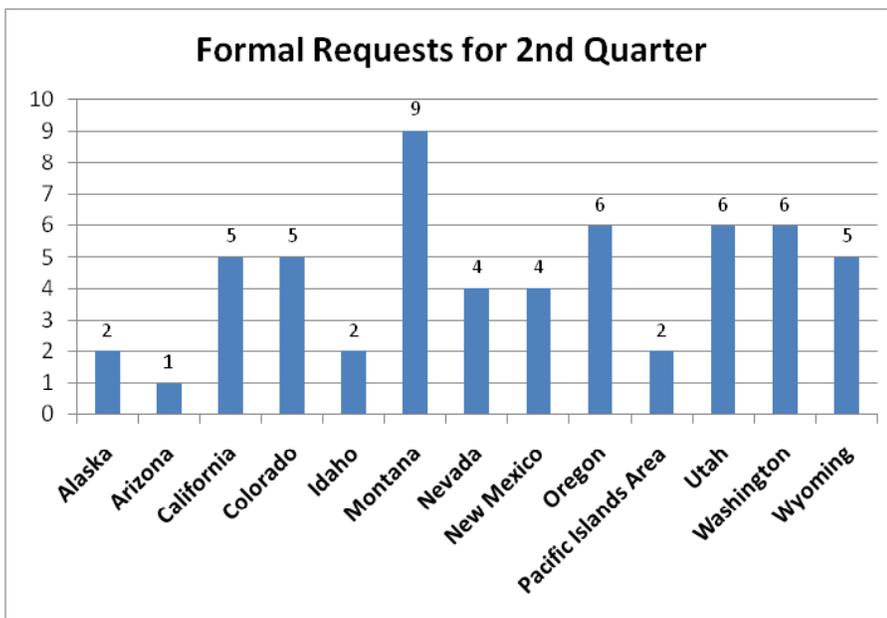
Robinson states that the ToolBox was designed to be especially easy-to-use as it includes a search engine that will seek out keywords in the main sections of the

*Toolbox Continued on page 4*

# An Analysis of WNTSC Assistance First Quarter FY2010

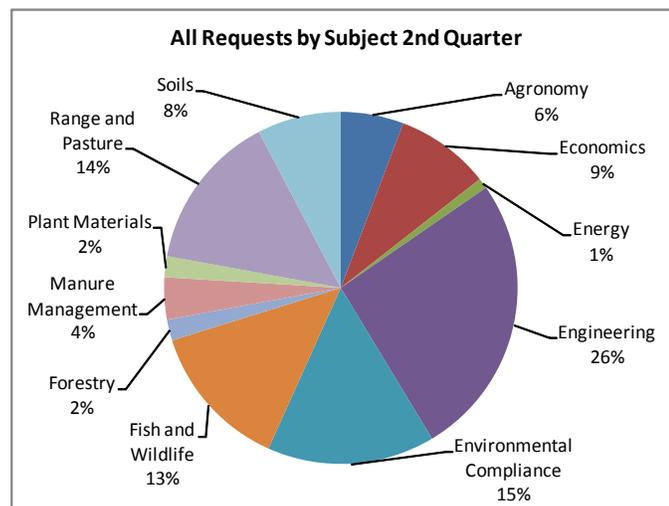
FY10 1st Qtr WNTSC Requests			
Requested	In Progress	Ongoing	Completed
104	71	4	30

*Includes requests to Core Team and National Technology Development Teams*

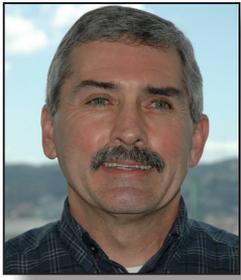


*Formal Requests are identified as requests that take more than 2 days to complete. They are often initiated by a letter sent from the State Conservationist of the State requesting assistance.*

For more information or to track a specific request, visit the Assistance Tracker web site at <http://ssiapps.sc.egov.usda.gov/RequestTracker/Default.aspx> or contact Russ Hatz, WNTSC national technology specialist, 503-273-2428 or [russ.hatz@por.usda.gov](mailto:russ.hatz@por.usda.gov).



## New Employees

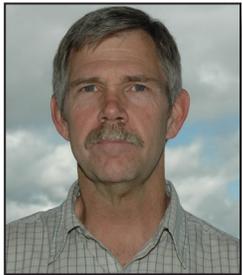


### Steve Campbell, Soil Scientist

**Steve Campbell** received his BS in Forest Management with a Soil Science option from Washington State University in 1976 and shortly thereafter began his career as a soil scientist with NRCS in Washington State. Steve was a project

member for numerous soil surveys, the Soil Survey Project Leader for the Colville Indian Reservation, and Resource Soil Scientist in the Spokane Washington Area Office.

Steve moved to Portland, Oregon in 1995 to serve as Soil Scientist in the NRCS State Office. Prior to becoming the WNTSC Soil Scientist, Steve served as the Soil Data Quality Specialist for the Pacific Northwest Soil Survey Regional Office where he provided quality assurance for project soil surveys in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, and served as the soil survey database manager for the Pacific Northwest. Steve is a Certified Professional Soil Scientist with the Soil Science Society of America. He lives in Portland with his wife Rhonda and daughter Shannon and enjoys many outdoor activities including canoeing, kayaking, skiing, and hiking.



### Craig Ziegler, Forester

A native of Tucson, Arizona, **Craig Ziegler** received his BS in Watershed Management with an emphasis in Forest Management from the University of Arizona in 1976 and began his federal service career with the USDA

Forest Service. Shortly thereafter, he moved to work for NRCS in Texas as a forester as well as a district conservationist in 3 field offices.

In January 1989, Ziegler accepted the position of area forester and headed north with his family to Bend, OR. In 1996, he accepted the position of OR state staff forester and held that position until March, 2010, when he accepted the position of forester on the WNTSC Core Team.

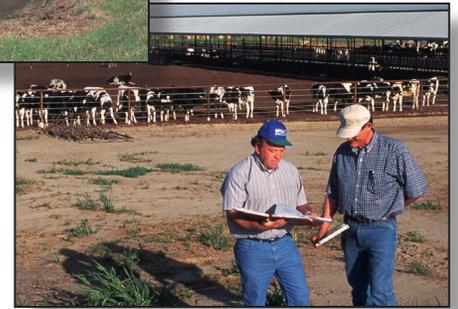


## MMP in New Mexico

Agronomist **Rick Fasching** provided a one-week training session for New Mexico demonstrating how the Manure Management Planner (MMP) works in animal feeding operations for planning manure management-scheduling manure and fertilizer application, and providing a “smart document” that is generated automatically during the planning process. Participants at the training session included NRCS State Office technology and engineering staff along with State regulatory, University, and Extension Service personnel.



*Manure management from dairies may include removing animal waste from the barns and pumping it to lagoons.*



After observing the potential benefits of MMP in helping conservationists with the planning, application, and documentation

efforts associated with AFO/CAFO's, the State's technical group recommended that the State implement the software to directly benefit conservation in terms of effective planning and consistency. That recommendation commits all planners to use the Tool which is customized with detailed, state-specific data such as crop/forage fertility guidelines, mineralization rates, volatilization rates, storage facility details, animal species and their expected manure quality and quantity numbers, set-back requirements, application equipment details, etc. and ultimately provides consistent planning results for managing nutrients.

New Mexico made plans to fully implement MMP by March 31, 2010, including the training of all field office personnel. The State also plans to take the MMP planning one step further and include it in their Sustainable Ag Systems Training that includes organic production and soil health issues.

For questions on MMP training, contact Rich Fasching at [richard.fasching@por.usda.gov](mailto:richard.fasching@por.usda.gov) or 503-273-2425.



*Toolbox continued from page 1*

ToolBox as well as through selected subsets, such as a search looking only through the technical papers. Also for ease of use, the Irrigation ToolBox has been released on three types of digital media: DVD, flash drive, and SD card. Each one contains the entire ToolBox and can be easily carried or, in the case of the DVD or SD card, simply left inside the appropriate computer drive.

Most of the ToolBox materials were originally intended for use by trainers in preparing irrigation training sessions. However, with this new edition, the ToolBox has become a complete set of reference documents for all things irrigation.

For more information, contact Peter Robinson, 503-273-2417 or [peter.robinson@por.usda.gov](mailto:peter.robinson@por.usda.gov). 

## More Tools

In addition to the Irrigation Toolbox highlighted in this publication, the West NTSC has produced several other tools to help NRCS conservation professionals in their efforts to provide accurate, efficient, and effective conservation planning for landowners, particularly in the Western States that we serve.



Several descriptions of stream bed progression channels, valley types, and other stream criteria are needed to properly plan for streambank plantings and good

streambank health. Heavily laminated cards providing that information as well as the Rosgen Natural Rivers Classification Key have been provided to attendees of the Streambank and River Assessment courses as well as others who are using them for developing Ecological Site Descriptions (ESD's).

A CD containing reference materials for SPAW, the Soil-Plant-Air-Water Field and Pond Hydrology model, has also been developed and distributed to every State in the country. Additionally, training materials from two Net Meeting courses on Renewable Energy through Wind or Solar are also available on DVD.

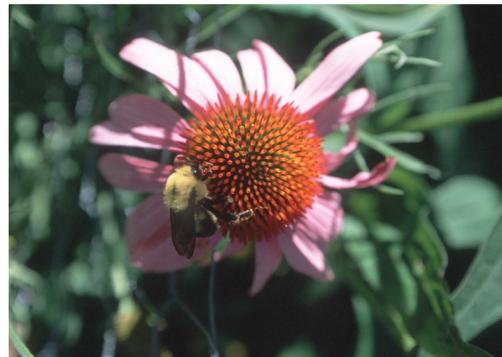
Many other tools and training materials are available. Contact the appropriate WNTSC specialist to discuss your needs. 

# National Technology Development Team Highlights



## Water Quality and Quantity Team Bees Love the Water Team?

The Water Quality and Quantity Team is developing an enhancement to the environmental risk analysis tool, WIN-PST. The current tool uses pesticide physical properties, toxicity data, and field-specific soils information to develop risk ratings for both human and aquatic ecosystem health. With the enhancement, producers can use the application to implement appropriate Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques



to reduce the environmental risks to bees and other insects that are a critical part of the plant lifecycle. NRCS has partnered with the Xerces Society to improve Win-PST with the addition of this new risk assessment for pollinators.

Pollinators play a critical role in agriculture around the world and have been facing stress on a number of fronts. WIN-PST is a proven conservation planning tool that is used nationwide. Through the Win-PST enhancement, NRCS provides conservation planners with access to pollinator risk information and appropriate mitigation techniques, including IPM and other conservation practices, in a familiar and easy-to-use tool.

NRCS has updated its Pest Management Policy and released a new national conservation practice standard for Integrated Pest Management (Code 595). The WIN-PST enhancement for pollinator risk analysis will compliment this new policy and standard. As pollinator and other factors interact with water quality, tools such as Win-PST need to be improved or developed to stay abreast of emerging science. The Water Quality and Quantity Team is proud to provide conservation planners with this new tool to help implement pest management, insure clean water, and conserve natural resources. 

*Helping People Help the Land*

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