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Nez Perce Soil & Water Conservation District
www.nezperceswcd.org

Forever Soil & Water

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Rainstorm Threatens Garden Gulch Road and Surrounding Land

By Whitney Garrison

LAPWAI—Heavy rain Saturday, June 6, caused severe cropland erosion as well as pavement damage along Garden Gulch Road just off of U.S. Highway 95.

The rain caused area crop soil on Tom Beall Road to become loose and erode during the afternoon storm that also flooded several stream channels, triggering about an inch of water to seep over and uproot parts of Garden Gulch Road.

Nez Perce County Commissioner Doug Zenner, and Doug Moore, road director, evaluated the area Tuesday

“Culverts being blocked with debris is a concern to me,” said Moore.

and said damage to portions of Garden Gulch Road is severe while there are also other major issues.

“Culverts being blocked with debris is a concern to me,” said Moore.

The culverts filled with rain and woody debris while water leaked to cropland and toward the road.

A portion of Garden Gulch Road closest to U.S. Highway 95 sustained the most water damage. The heavy rain deteriorated sides of the road, causing the asphalt to slide into the ditch. Mounds similar to ones that moles make by pushing up grass sprinkled the remainder of the road.



Road Director Doug Moore examines Garden Gulch Road after rainstorm



Cover photo by Whitney Garrison

continued on page 5

Steps to Protecting Drinking Water

Information by the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality and District

1. Form a planning team.

A community planning team is established to help develop the local drinking water protection program. The team is made of people who live and work in the community, make decisions that affect the community, are interested in the quality of their drinking water, and/or will be affected by drinking water protection activities. The Nez Perce Soil and Water Conservation District (District) works with landowners, agencies, and communities to enhance and protect several area watersheds. District Watershed Advisory Groups review and approve plans for projects and goals.

2. Delineate the land area to be protected.

The delineation process establishes the physical area around a well or surface water intake that becomes the focal point of the source water assessment. This step is completed during the source water assessment phase. The District implements projects for the restoration of several watersheds including Cow Creek and Tammany Creek.

3. Identify potential contaminant sources.

Once the drinking water protection area has been delineated, the next step is to identify the potential contaminant sources found within this delineated area. This step is also completed during the source water assessment phase. The District monitors TMDLs (Total Maximum Daily Load) in watersheds for such pollutants as E. coli bacteria, ammonia, and dissolved oxygen.

4. Develop and implement a drinking water protection plan.

A drinking water protection plan outlines the management tools the committee plans to use to protect drinking water sources. Management tools can apply to existing or future potential contaminant sources and can be either regulatory or non-regulatory. Regulatory tools include items such as zoning ordinances or site plan review requirements. Non-regulatory tools include items such as educational or pollution prevention activities. Every plan should include a public education and information component.

5. Plan for the future: develop a contingency plan and plan for future drinking water sources.

The planning team, local governments, and water systems should adopt a contingency plan to outline steps to be taken in the event that the system experiences a disruption and cannot provide service. The plan should list the resources that are available for emergency response. The planning team should also develop a plan for dealing with future drinking water sources that includes information on planning, siting, constructing, and protecting future sites and incorporating new sources into the existing drinking water protection plan.

For more information, visit www.deq.idaho.gov/water or contact the District at (208) 843-2931.

Forever Soil & Water

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Photo courtesy of
Nez Perce Soil and
Water Conservation
District

Steelhead Life Cycle

By Whitney Garrison

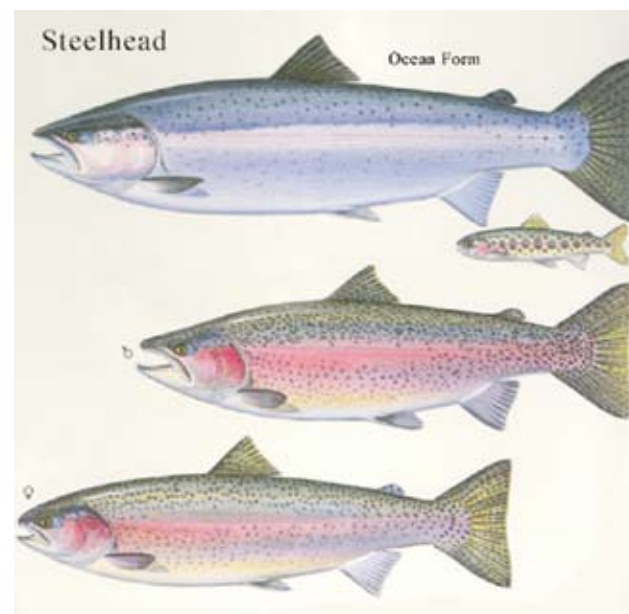
Life for a steelhead is anything but simple. Steelhead are part of the anadromous family. This means they are born in streams and migrate to the ocean for their adult phase. For the first one to three years of its life, the steelhead struggles to thrive in streams. Then, it's on to the ocean where their growth rate speeds up dramatically for approximately the next four years.

Steelhead are quite resilient. Unlike many fish species, the steelhead will return home to the very stream they started from, to spawn. Then, it will strive to do it all over again.

Steelhead eat an array of fascinating aquatic life. Young steelhead primarily eat crustaceans and insects. Mayflies, caddis flies, and black flies all make for excellent food. Salmon eggs, too, may become a meal for a growing steelhead.

The length of steelhead ranges between 51 and 76 cm. Its weight can reach nearly 45 pounds. Its massive size is a direct effect from its adult phase in the ocean. Once the steelhead is there, not only does its size change dramatically, but so does its appetite. In the ocean, a steelhead eats salt-water fish, various types of shrimp, even squid---sure beats the mayflies.

Source: Napa County Conservation District



Steelhead Growth- stream to ocean

Photo courtesy of: Nez Perce Soil and Water Conservation District

Bonneville Power and Avista Utilities Credit Eligible Customers

By Whitney Garrison

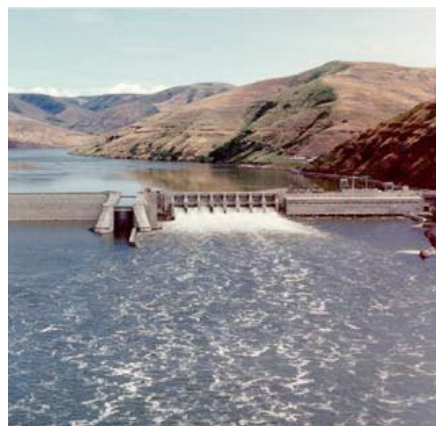
Avista Utilities and the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) teamed up in 2008 to resume a bill credit for residential and small-farm customers of Avista Utilities in order to help share benefits of the Federal Columbia Hydropower System.

The BPA provides Avista customers the credit under the Residential Exchange provision of the 1980 Northwest Power Act. Avista customers currently see about a 1 percent credit on their bills. The bill credit for Avista customers is expected to increase to approximately 3 percent in the fall of 2009.

The bill credit will remain at about 3 percent until October 2011.

Larry La Bolle, an Avista representative, said, “the intent of the Residual Exchange Program is to provide a share of the benefits of the Federal Columbia River Hydro-system to customers served by the region’s regulated utilities, like Avista.”

For more information, contact the Bonneville Power Administration at 1-800-282-3713 or online at <http://www.bpa.gov/corporate/>



Lower Granite Dam, www.nwncouncil.org

SPOTLIGHT: Board Member Lisa Swanson

By Whitney Garrison

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Resource Conservationist, banker, student, teacher—the list of diverse platforms that board member Lisa Swanson has served within goes on.

At 38, Lisa Swanson has found her niche teaching high school science, while also serving on the Nez Perce Soil and Water Conservation District (District) Board.

“I’ve always been into educating,” Swanson said, “At the Department of Agriculture I educated landowners about protecting their well water, working as a Resource Conservationist I educated the community about soil and water, and now teaching high school science...I’ve always liked sharing and understanding natural resources.”

Swanson lives in Lewiston, Idaho, and teaches in Clarkston, Wash., where she just finished her third year.

“It’s been good,” she said, of her experience teaching, “no two days are ever the same.”

Swanson was born in Whittier, Calif., and her family moved to northern Arizona when she was 4. After high school, she moved from Arizona to Boise, Idaho, where she attended Boise State University. Swanson finished her schooling in Moscow, Idaho, at the University of Idaho (UI). She graduated from UI in 1995 and holds a bachelor’s degree in Wildlife Resources, with an emphasis in Biology.

After graduating in 1995, Swanson took a job with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. She worked with landowners to help them protect their wells from contamination sources. The job eventually led her to the District, where she worked as Resource Conservationist for three years, informing the public and landowners about soil and water.

After the District position, Swanson worked briefly as a banker. It was then that she decided to return to school to receive a teaching certificate.

“Before teaching in Clarkston, I taught in Lapwai. I taught part-time

and also worked in the special education program for three years,” she said.



- **Name:** Lisa Marie Swanson
- **Birth date:** May 13, 1971
- **Birthplace:** Whittier, Calif.
- **Hobbies:** horses, hunting, camping
- **Favorite Food:** anything Mexican
- **Pets:** one snake, two dogs, four cats, two horses
- **Vacation Spot:** anywhere in mountains or with friends, family, horses

Aside from teaching, Swanson also serves as a District board member.

About three years ago, a District board member approached Swanson and asked her to fill a board position. Swanson said that since she was already familiar with natural resources and conservation issues, she accepted the offer. She attributed her decision to her different slant on operations, and her location in the county (Lewiston Orchards) because it sets her apart from others in that she’s not in the center of the agriculture business. She began serving as a board member and served as vice-chair her second year. Swanson’s current role is as a board member.

There are key issues Swanson said the board is facing.

“The Lindsay Creek Septic System issues are important,” she said. “There

are Tammany Creek hobby farms, too, which are impacting that watershed. I would like to see those issues addressed.”

Swanson said fertilizer usage is another major concern.

“I would like to see more done about fertilizers and the amounts used, especially where I live [here] along the fringes of town. People don’t realize the impact from over-fertilizing their yards...it is not a good option.”

Swanson enjoys several things about serving as a District board member.

“I like that it’s a group of local farmers and ranchers who are trying to help others improve. Also, it’s easier for neighbors to communicate, rather than a government enforced agency telling you how things will be. Plus, I really like that it’s on a volunteer basis.”

Local homeowners, especially, can do their part in conserving resources on a daily basis.

“When it comes to fertilizing your yard, know how much is required. Be aware, and then you can conserve,” said Swanson.

This will be the first summer that Swanson won’t be working or attending school.

She said she decided to take on painting her home as a summer project.

“So far it’s going good.”

Any free time goes to riding horses Swanson said. She owned her first when she was 29, but has been riding for years. She also helps a friend within the Asotin County 4-H Program.

Swanson is married and will celebrate her 14th anniversary, with husband Kevin, this August.



One of Swanson’s nine pets, “Ace”

District Puts Stop to Knotweed Spread

By Whitney Garrison

Some say it looks like bamboo. Others say the leaves resemble elephant ears. Whichever way you see it, one thing remains the same: Knotweed spreads furiously through Nez Perce and surrounding counties.

“It’s definitely around,” said Wes Zenner, landowner, of the noxious weed that’s taking over parts of his land.

Hybrid Knotweed is an herbaceous perennial species that is known for its rapid spread.

The bulk of the weed is at its stems, which can reach between 6 and 8 feet tall. The stems are green and form cane-like clumps...hence its resemblance to bamboo. Heart-shaped green leaves and seasonal cream-colored flower buds grow from Knotweed’s stems. Stems extend up banks and over vegetation.

Knotweed’s foundation of deep roots is to blame for the spread of the branchy stems.

Roots can be found a whole 23 feet from the parent plant and can reach 10 feet underground. Knotweed commonly grows along streams this way; a definite concern to native trees, shrubs, fish habitat and vegetation.

“The roots go down so far that you can’t just spray the surface with Round-up, you have to inject every stem.”

The roots allow for competition with all habitat and vegetation because it limits growth and leaves stream banks prone to erosion.

Chelsie Zenner, a project coordinator for the Nez Perce Soil and Water Conservation District (District), said Knotweed spreads so quickly that it’s hard to completely eradicate it from an area.

“The roots go down so far that you can’t just spray the surface with Round-up, you have to inject every stem.”

Zenner, and three other District field technicians— Nikki Lane, Kayla Dau, and Tony Kern— have visited county sites containing Knotweed for the past two weeks. Once at a site such as their



Knotweed leaf, close-up



Mission Creek, Knotweed in right-hand corner

most recent at Mission Creek, located outside of Lapwai, they begin to control the noxious weed.

Controlling Knotweed is no easy task, either.

Zenner demonstrated the procedure at Mission Creek on June 11. First, she took measurements of temperature and wind speed. She then evaluated the area containing the Knotweed, which equaled approximately 20 feet by 15 feet in area. Zenner recorded the information and included the average length of stems; 8 feet.

The last step is injection.

Zenner and field technicians use injectors (resembling paintball guns) to infuse the stems with a type of Round-up that kills the weed. However, the roots underground lay dormant and will

“Don’t try to eradicate it yourselves,...All it takes is just one leaf to cause more and even worse spread.”

spread and push up more Knotweed the following season.

Lane agreed Knotweed is an issue.

“It takes over stream vegetation,” she said.

Zenner urges landowners to be wary of how they handle Knotweed if found on their property.

“Don’t try to eradicate it yourselves, it creates a huge spread. Some might try to bull-doze through it or chop it down. All it takes is just one leaf to cause more and even worse spread.”

For more information about Knotweed, call the District at (208) 843-2931.



Kayla Dau, field technician, injects Knotweed stem



District field technician injects Knotweed stem



Landowner Wes Zenner pictured with niece, Chelsie Zenner, District project coordinator



Knotweed Crew Field Technicians
Left to right; Tony Kern, Nikki Lane, Kayla Dau, and Project Coordinator Chelsie Zenner

Rainstorm Threatens Garden Gulch, *continued from page 1*

A crew from the Nez Perce County Road and Bridge Department worked Tuesday, June 9, to gravel the road to prevent any more water seepage.

The heavy rain also damaged banks and flooded ditches.

Banks separating the crop fields from Tom Beall Road showed high erosion. In some areas, the entire height of banks eroded. Thick mud and leftover pools of water filled ditches. The rapid, heavy rainfall flattened vegetation along other parts of the channel.

When heavy rain occurs, land is affected depending on its type. Rough landscape describes land with steep variations, lots of hills, or brush. On the other hand, a smooth surface landscape is level.

“With a smooth surface, it’s like turning a hose directly onto asphalt. It’s the velocity, not volume, of water that is the big deal...it’s really how fast



Tom Beall Road

the water’s coming down,” said Lynn Rasmussen, District project manager.

The Garden Gulch and Tom Beall Roads’ soil erosion and watershed issues attributed with the June 6 storm will be implemented as a District project in 2010.



Crop erosion on top of Tom Beall-Garden Gulch Roads



Nez Perce Soil and Water Conservation District

District Board meetings held the third Thursday of each month

Tammany Creek Watershed

By John Cardwell, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

Brief Background:

The Federal Clean Water Act requires that states and tribes restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. States and tribes must adopt water quality standards necessary to protect fish, shellfish, and wildlife while providing for recreation in and on the waters whenever possible.

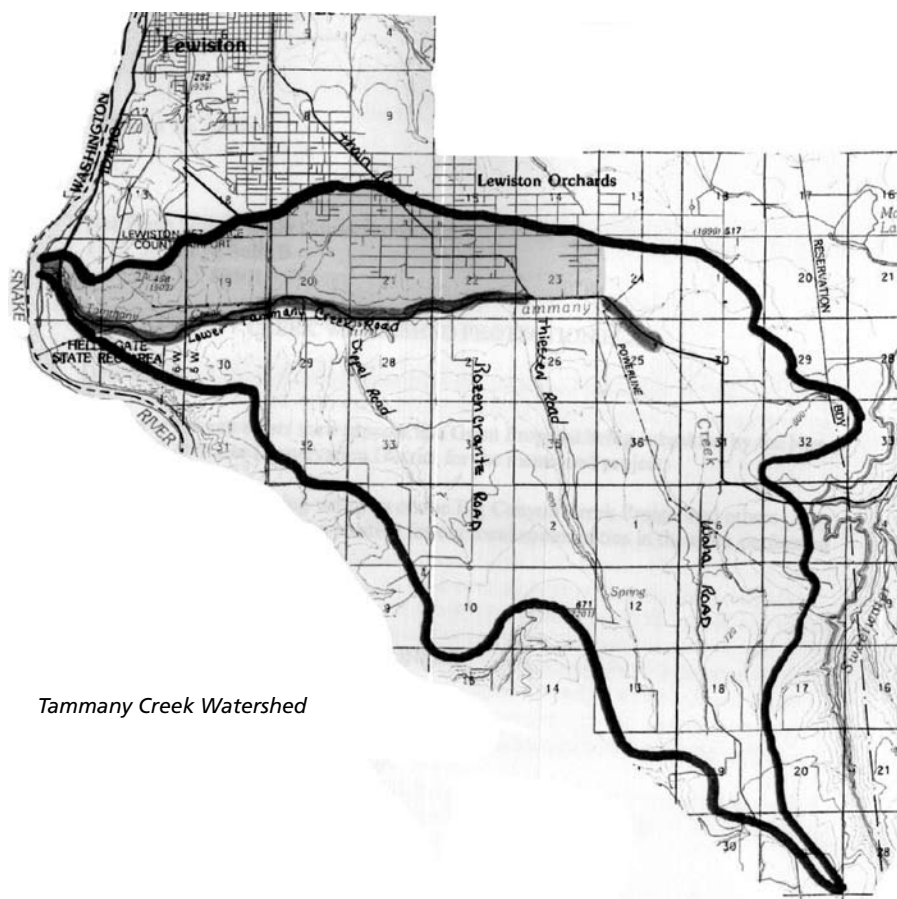
Tammany Creek is located in the Lower Snake-Asotin Subbasin. Due to the extensive rural and agricultural development within the Tammany Creek watershed, surface and stream bank erosion are the dominant sources of sediment loading to Tammany Creek.

During the TMDL investigation, nutrients and pathogens were also examined. Results for nutrient monitoring indicate that high nitrogen levels occur in Tammany Creek. High nitrogen levels were not correlated with changes in flow or seasonal variation, which indicates that nitrates are originating from a constant source, such as ground water recharge. Phosphorous levels remained relatively low for most of the year and were found to be the limit-

ing factor to nuisance aquatic growth. Phosphorus levels did increase during high flow events, indicating that phosphorous transport occurs in correlation with increased sediment transport in the watershed. Nutrient reductions for Tammany Creek will be addressed through this TMDL since phosphorus levels will decrease when sediment levels are reduced as part of TMDL implementation.

Initial pathogen monitoring results indicate that pathogen loading within Tammany Creek exceeds the Idaho water quality standards. Upon analysis, concentrations of pathogen loading appear to be somewhat random and unpredictable. Further monitoring will be conducted by DEQ to determine if a pathogen TMDL is warranted.

For more information regarding the Tammany Creek watershed and/or TMDL, contact the DEQ Lewiston Regional Office, 1118 F Street, Lewiston, ID 83501, (208) 799-4370.



Tammany Creek Watershed

Nez Perce County Waterways & Public Access Information

LANDS:

The information included is to assist the general public in the rules and regulations governing public waters and adjoining lands that NPC has jurisdiction to regulate. (NPC Ordinance #86) This ordinance was developed with the cooperative efforts of Nez Perce County, Nez Perce County Sheriff, Idaho Dept. of Lands, Idaho Fish & Game, US Bureau of Land Management, US Army Corps of Engineers, US Bureau of Reclamation, Lewiston Orchards Irrigation District, and the City of Lewiston.

CAMPING:

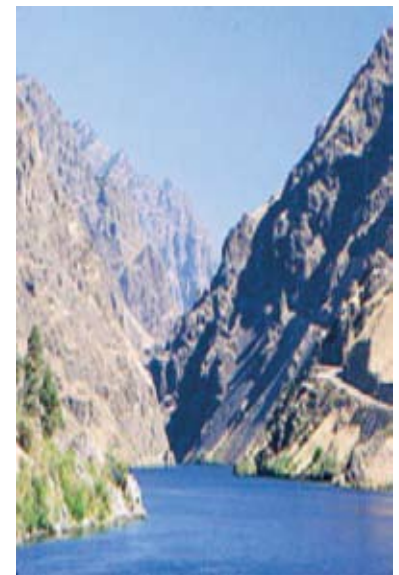
Unless posted otherwise, camping is prohibited on public lands within 100 yds of a public boat ramp, its parking area, and public docks. Any person camping within 100 yds of public waterways shall have a portable toilet unless the site provides a maintained toilet. No camping on public lands for more than 14 days in a 30 day period. (This does not supersede public use areas controlled by other government agencies.)

FIRES:

Fires within 100 yds of public waters must be in fire pans, barbecue grills, or established concrete or metal fire pits. Rock fire rings are prohibited. Disposal of fire residue or refuse in public waters is prohibited.

RV & BOAT SEWAGE:

Dumping of vehicle or boat sewage or wastewater is prohibited except in approved sanitary dump stations. No dumping in toilet facilities on public lands. Dumping more than 50 gallons of sewage/waste water at a County owned pump-out station is prohibited unless it is connected to a shore-based approved sanitary sewer system. Fees may be applicable at County pump-stations.



LITTERING / TRASH:

No littering or dumping of garbage allowed on County property. All refuse must be placed in designated containers. Otherwise pack it in, pack it out!

MOTOR VEHICLES / BICYCLES:

Motor vehicles, bicycles, skate boards, or roller blades are prohibited from operation on County beaches, dock areas, and boat ramps, when notice is prohibited by a posted sign.

PERSONAL & MOTOR DRIVEN WATERCRAFT

Soldiers Meadows Reservoir, Mann, and Waha Lakes are closed to personal watercraft; such as, jet skis, wave runners, or vessels powered by water jet pump and maximum passengers is 3 or less. These lakes are also declared "minimum wake areas." Watercraft must be operated to produce the least wake possible, and not in excess of trolling speed. Mann Lake only allows watercraft propelled by electric motors, oars, paddles, etc. Motor-driven watercraft is prohibited.

BOATER RIGHT OF WAY:

Persons using boat ramps and docks shall not interfere with boats approaching or departing dockage. Parking or blocking access to a boat ramp is prohibited except when loading or offloading a boat. Loading and unloading of persons, supplies, and equipment out of boats, rafts, and watercraft shall be conducted off the boat ramp and in a manner not interfering with the continued access to boat ramps for launching and retrieving of watercraft.

ISCC Grant Program Cut Due to Lack of Funding

By Whitney Garrison

The Idaho Soil Conservation Commission (ISCC) is cutting its Conservation Improvement Grant (CIG) program for the next fiscal year due to fund availability.

Biff Burleigh, ISCC program manager, said, “We have not been receiving, nor processing, grant applications for the past several months because of commitments to current grants and our Water Quality Program for Agriculture (WQPA) projects.”

There is reduced funding across all platforms within the ISCC; therefore, the commission decided to target the funds that are available and distribute them toward WQPA projects.

The CIG grant status is currently on hold, but program funding is anticipated to end in 2010.

For more information, you may contact Biff Burleigh, program manager for the ISCC at (208) 332-8652 or bburleigh@agri.idaho.gov

Water Quality and Pollutant Bacteria Fact Sheet

Groundwater supplies about 95 percent of Idaho’s drinking water. It is important to know that there are various ways water can be contaminated. The following is a list of facts concerning water quality and the different types of bacteria that pollute our water.

- Under flood conditions, contaminated surface water may enter directly into your underground source of water (well), polluting your source
- Biological organisms are responsible for most waterborne diseases
- Bacteria, protozoa, viruses, some algae and helminths (worms), all produce diseases
- It is common for bacteria to be transmitted through animal feces
- Total coliform (TC) bacteria is generally not harmful
- Fecal coliform (FC) and Escherichia (E. coli) bacteria pose greater danger; their presence suggests drinking water is contaminated by sewage
- Giardia and Cryptosporidium are two types of protozoa that are able to withstand water quality treatment implementations
- Symptoms of waterborne diseases may include gastrointestinal illnesses such as severe diarrhea, nausea, and possibly jaundice as well as associated headaches and fatigue
- Young children and the elderly are usually more susceptible to pollutants
- Groundwater pump seals are often made of Mercury, which is a strong pollutant if leaked into the water
- Mercury exposure can permanently damage the brain, kidneys, and developing fetuses

Help Reduce Mercury Contamination!

You can help reduce mercury incidents by purchasing mercury-free products and correctly disposing of products that contain mercury.

Contact your local landfill or DEQ regional office for proper disposal in accordance with local, state, and federal law.

For additional information, contact staff at your local regional DEQ office or local district health department.

For additional information on water quality and/or pollutants, contact the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, (208) 373-0502 or log in to view additional water quality sources: www.deq.idaho.gov

--Information provided by the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

Crop Burning Guidelines, *continued from page 8*

quire a permit and approval from those specific tribes. Field burns located outside these two reservations require an air quality permit from the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

How is field burning managed?

Members from various organizations including the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Environmental Quality and the Nez Perce, Coeur d’Alene, and Kootenai Tribes work together to ensure weather conditions, current air quality, and the location of possible field burns to determine whether or not burning will occur.

Daily Crop Residue Burn Decision Report

During the burn season, approved air quality burn permit information is available daily. For DEQ-approved burns visit : www.deq.idaho.gov and click on [Daily Crop Residue Burn Decision Report](#) found under *Rules and Regulations*.

If you live on the Nez Perce Reservation, burns approved by the Nez Perce Tribe can be found at: www.wrapfets.org/map.cfm?NezPerce=True

For information on agricultural burning in the area, or to submit a smoke-related comment or complaint, call 1-800-345-1007.



Photo courtesy of Nez Perce Tribe



**Nez Perce Soil and Water
Conservation District**
PO Box 131
Culdesac ID 83524

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Permit #3



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Crop Burning Guidelines and Notices

Information from the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, State Department of Agriculture, Nez Perce Tribe, and Coeur d' Alene Tribe

Compiled by Whitney Garrison

It's once again summertime. Many farmers, far and wide, will soon be burning fields.

According to the Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA), fire is a tool for the production and cultivation of certain crops. It is used to minimize pests and weeds, to remove residue after harvest, and to prepare the field for the next growing season. When used as a management tool for growing certain crops, such as bluegrass seed, it rejuvenates the plant and helps it grow healthy and strong.

In order to burn their fields from May 10 to Oct. 20, farmers must obtain a fire safety permit from the Idaho Department of Lands and/or their local fire department. These agencies



Photo courtesy of Nez Perce Tribe

are made aware of any burn activity in their area. Precautions associated with burning are required, such as: an ample supply of water and/or other fire suppression equipment must be present (generally a 1000+ gallon water truck is present, depending on the size of the field being burned), an adequate number of trained crew members on site to supervise the burn and in the case of fields near roadways, growers are required by law to provide flaggers to insure the safety of those traveling through the area.

Air quality burn permits are required year-round to burn fields in Idaho. Field burns located on the Nez Perce and Coeur d' Alene Reservations re-

continued on page 7