

MD of Bighorn
Agriculture Services and Environmental Advisory Board
February 24, 2023 – 9:00 AM
Held at the MD Administration Building, 2 Heart Mtn. Drive, Exshaw

In Attendance	Jackie Phillips	Public Member & Chair
	Pat Bedry	Public Member
	Erik Butters	Public Member
	Patricia MacMillan	Public Member
	Rick Tuza	Deputy Reeve
	Alice James	Councillor
Staff	Kendra Tippe	Environmental Fieldman
	Carol Pegg	Executive Assistant/Recording Secretary
Regrets	Kellie Jackson	Alberta Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Economic Development Regional Liaison

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 9:03 AM.

A. Agenda

Add G.4 Weed Workshop

MOTION by P. MacMillan to approve the agenda as amended.

Carried

B. Adoption of Minutes

MOTION by E. Butters to approve the November 25, 2022 minutes, as amended.

Carried

C. Environmental Fieldman's Reports

K. Tippe presented an overview of the fieldman reports for December 2022 and January 2023.

D. Business Arising from the Minutes

- There were no items

E. Delegations

- There were no delegations.

F. General Business

1. Living in the Natural Environment

- K. Tippe gave a report (Schedule A) reviewing how the evening went, budget and summaries of comment sheets.

- P. MacMillan would like to add a question to the survey: How did you hear about the event?
- Discussion on various topics and/or speakers for the next event. It was discussed that the flow of the event worked well.

2. Jumpingpound Creek Watershed Partnership (JCWP)

- K. Tippe advised that the grant request with Alberta Eco-Trust was denied.
- K. Tippe advised that the Peridae Grant Application has been submitted
- K. Tippe advised that the Watershed Resilience and Restoration Program grant is still an outstanding item.

3. Municipal Update – Deputy Reeve Tuza

- Deputy Reeve Tuza said that the MD recently lost a planner.
- New CAO to be announced soon.
- MDP is ongoing, the work may slow down a bit because of the loss of a planner.
- HarGroup Recreation Update is coming.
- ASB Conference was very informative and shed light on the bigger picture.
- Request for Proposal for Climate Resilience Capacity Building Program deadline is March 10, 2023.

4. Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation Update

- Provincial webinar updates have started up for Agricultural Fieldman.

5. Ghost Watershed Alliance Society (GWAS) – MacMillan

- P. MacMillan advised that Spray Lakes Sawmill (SLS) is logging the Southeast corner of the GWAS. In the past SLS has responded to requests from GWAS.
- Concerns around Sandhills area regarding significant erosion if the present tree barriers are removed.
- Working on GWAS walks, should be on the website by the end of March
- GWAS made suggestions for signage and fencing on Richards Road to the MD related to the Western Toad breeding site on public land.

6. Public Member Reports

- P. MacMillan has noticed stream flows seem to be lower and water may be a problem.
- E. Butters advised some areas are quite dry and the rain in June will determine how the rest of the year goes with regards to moisture. The sandhills are becoming “Sand-valley” by offroad vehicles (dirt bikes).
- J. Phillips spoke to her positive experience at the ASB conference and the Living in the Nature environment.
- The new Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (SCAP) will replace the former Growing Forward program.

G. New Business

1. ASEAB 2022 Strategic Plan Review

- K. Tippe will be presenting to Governance and Priorities for comments and then to Council in March.

2. ASEAB 2022 Year End Report

- K. Tippe reviewed this report with the committee and advised it is used for grant reporting.

3. Provincial Field Visit

- Field visit from the province for the Agricultural Service Board Grant will take place for the MD of Bighorn this year (2023). This occurs every 5 years.
- K. Tippe anticipates there will be some administrative changes needed.
- Requested input for what places should we be showing when they are here (suggestions of gravel pit, the shop, range grazing site).

4. Weed Workshop

- K. Tippe asked for input as to time and preferred location.
- P. MacMillan thinks that workday evenings work the best (6PM).
- K. Tippe would do a PowerPoint presentation.
- Timeframe of June/July
- Alberta Invasive Species booth

I. Next Meeting Date

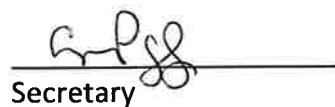
- April 21, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. to be held in-person at the MD Administration Building.

Adjournment

Moved by P. MacMillan that the meeting be adjourned at 11:42 p.m.

CARRIED


Chair


Secretary

Schedule	Item
A	Living in the Natural Environment Final report



LIVING IN THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
February 3, 2023

Final Report 2023

Event Summary

The 2023 event had lower attendance to the previous years. There were 109 attendees of the 112 that were registered, with 3 no-shows.

For 2023, the Living in the Natural Environment was scheduled on February 3rd. The Cochrane RancheHouse provided the facility with Gourmet to Go (GTG) providing the catering and bartending services for this event. The Environmental Fieldman took the lead on planning this event. Ideas for potential speakers are discussed at the ASEAB meetings. The topics selected for this year focused on wildfire research and risk reduction. Uldis Silins presented on wildfire impacts to source water protection and Amanda Miller presented on wildfire risk reduction strategies. Staff members from the MD office were again recruited to assist with checking in participants at the door as well as finalizing any last-minute ticket payments that needed to be collected. Just under 40% of the evaluations were handed in which is consistent in years past. A summary of the evaluation comments is included at the end of this report.

Organization and Planning of Event

The ASEAB acts as the planning committee presenting ideas for speakers, location, timing, sponsorship etc.. The MD staff are responsible for event management and organization including speaker confirmation, sponsorships, advertising/promotions, tradeshow displays, facility and caterer bookings and ticket sales.

The organization of the Living in the Natural Environment typically begins at the spring ASEAB meeting, with potential speakers and dates identified. It is important to have speakers decided early so that sponsorship requests can get sent out. The dates and details with the venue and caterer are also confirmed at this time.

August and September are when sponsorship support gets ramped up and many potential organizations and opportunities are explored. The budget is also prepared at this time. In November promotional material such as posters and tickets are prepared and printed. Tickets were sold online using Eventbrite as well as in person at the MD office. A deadline of January 25th was set for purchasing tickets. There were a few last-minute transactions which can be tricky for catering numbers, but the RancheHouse and caterer were very accommodating.

During December all the newspaper advertising is arranged with the Cochrane Eagle, Rocky View Weekly and Rocky Mountain Outlook. A list of potential tradeshow displays is compiled and email requests are sent out with confirmation deadlines.

By the end of January all the last-minute items and details are completed. MC notes, evaluations updated and printed, table tent cards, and compiling the attendee list. A week before the event attendee list is finalized, numbers for the caterer and dinner set up are confirmed. Any special dietary requirements are communicated at this time.

Speakers

2023 presenters were Uldis Silins and Amanda Miller.

Uldis Silins is a professor of forest hydrology and Associate Chair - Graduate Programs in the Department of Renewable Resources at the University of Alberta. His teaching and research focus on the role of forests as a key landscape feature that regulate sustainability water resources. His research over the past 20 years or so has largely focused on impacts of climate change and natural disturbances such as wildfire, and Mountain Pine beetle, and how these, along with forest management affect snowpacks, flow dynamics, water quality, and aquatic health of headwater streams and rivers in Alberta's eastern slopes regions.

Amanda is passionate about rangeland stewardship and conservation, with a keen interest in providing ecological tools and strategies for long term sustainable land management. Applied science, extension, and effective communication with stakeholders and land managers are key areas of interest. Amanda has a master's degree in Rangeland and Wildlife Resources from the University of Alberta and has been a professional agrologist since 2016. The owner and founder of Palouse Rangeland Consulting, Amanda works largely with the BC Cattlemen's Association, and is a supporter of sustainable beef and cattle as a conservation tool. In her free time, you can find her exploring the mountains by foot, on skis, or horseback.

Venue & Catering

The Cochrane RancheHouse continues to be the best (and really the only) venue option in the area that can accommodate this type of event. There is room to grow to just under 200 attendees. In 2011, the presentations were moved from the theatre to the Aspen, Birch, Cedar (ABC) rooms as the sound and AV equipment in the theatre was not functioning properly. For 2014 the presentations were moved back to the theatre as the sound system underwent repairs and the quality had improved. The theatre was used again for this year and it worked very well.

The RancheHouse provided the in-house catering and bartending service. The evaluations reveal that the RancheHouse caterer performs a more than adequate job.

This year, the catering costs were around \$8200 (including 18 % gratuity and bartending service) and 109 people attended. This put the dinner cost at approximately \$75/ person for 2023.

Tradeshow Displays

We had 11 organizations participate in the tradeshow booths this year. There is no charge for the booths, participants only need to pay for a ticket if they want to join for dinner. There is room for 12 booths in the Hall of Vision. Not for profit event sponsors have first say on whether they'd like to participate in the tradeshow. This year 3 of our not for profit sponsors requested to have a booth, the rest were sourced from previous years' participants. The Alberta FireSmart booth confirmed attendance but did not show up. All the displayers brought something as a door prize to be given away between presentations which is always appreciated by attendees.

Ticket Sales

In 2023 the price for tickets remained unchanged at \$40 + GST. This doesn't cover catering costs but with adequate sponsorship support and commitment by the MD this is still an excellent price point and provides great value to participants. Of the 112 tickets that were spoken for, money was made on 94 tickets (82 sold online, 12 sold at MD office or door) totaling \$3495.26. There is a more detailed attendance and sales summary included at the end of this report.

As of 2021 the MD does not take credit card payment over the phone so the online platform Eventbrite was chosen for ticket sales. Approximately 87% of the ticket sales were done through Eventbrite while 13% were sold at the MD office or at the door. The MD covered the Eventbrite fees for participants which worked out to be approximately \$3.39 per ticket.

Budget & Sponsorship

The budget outlines expenses at \$11,000 and revenues of \$9,500 resulting in a \$1500 loss or annual expense to the MD. For 2023, there was a loss of about \$3900 which is the greatest deficit since 2014. A more detailed revenue and expense explanation is at the end of this report. Budgeting for this event is challenging as it is difficult to determine how successful ticket sales or sponsorship will be. For this reason, a deficit is always projected, and a profit is never expected.

Options to address this could include charging Eventbrite fees to the participants, reducing the amount of complimentary tickets or increasing ticket prices.

Expenses

Item	Cost
Facility Rental (theatre, hall of vision, reception, chinook dinning room, AV equipment)	\$1476.00
Catering – provided by the RancheHouse (includes bartending service)	\$8238.17 (\$6241.50 catering cost + \$740 bartending + \$1256.67 gratuity)
Printing	\$100
Advertising	\$2469
Speaker Honorarium	\$400
Mileage / travel (speaker)	\$362.27 (Amanda has not submitted expenses yet)
Misc Supplies	\$38.00
Total	\$13,083.44

Revenue

Item	Cost
Ticket Sales	\$3,495.26
Sponsorship	\$5,650.00
Total	\$9,145.26

Net

Revenue	\$9,145.26
Expenses	- \$13,083.44
	\$3,938.18 loss

The 2023 sponsorship was down from previous years but many of the same organizations still contributed.

SPONSORSHIP	2023	2020	2019
Shell Canada			1000
Carriag Ridge		1000	1000
Graymont			1000
Lafarge Canada		500	
CEAC	2000	2000	2000
TC Energy		1000	
Baymag		500	500
Fortis Alberta	1000	1000	1000
Mountain View County	150	150	150
Rocky View County	1000	1000	1000
Spray Lake Sawmills	500	250	250
CCI Solutions	1000		
TOTAL	\$5650	\$7400	\$7900

2023 Attendance

112 people registered

- 18 Comp Tickets (staff, ASEAB members, speakers and sponsors)
- 82 Paid for online (Eventbrite)
- 6 Sold at the MD Office
- 6 paid for at the door

3 No Show (paid tickets)

109 people attended

Money made off ticket sales:

- 18 were comp tickets
- 94 were paid for tickets

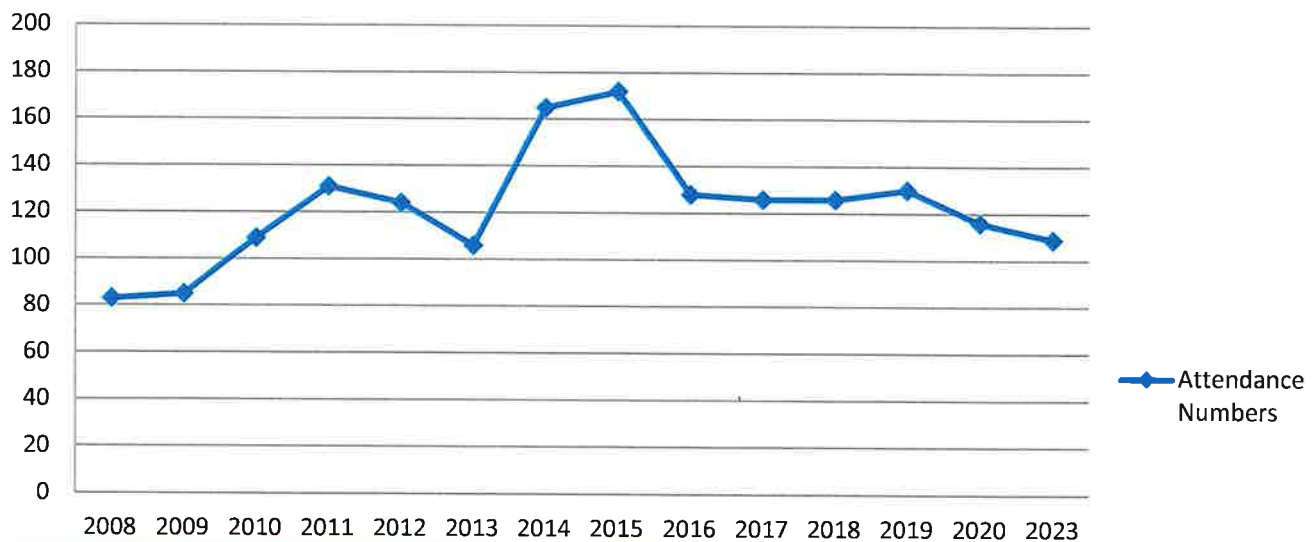
Ticket Sales Breakdown of 112 tickets:

Comp Tickets	18 @ \$0 = \$0
Paid for on Eventbrite	82 @ \$42 = \$3444 - \$277.98 Eventbrite fees - \$150.76 GST = \$3015.26
At the MD Office	6 @ \$40 = \$240
Paid for at the Door	6 @ \$40 = \$240
	<hr/>
	= \$3495.26 Total ticket revenue

Historical Event Attendance

Year	Attendance	Presentations
2008	83	Fossil Fuels / Bio Fuels
2009	85	Conservation Easements / Wildlife Conflicts
2010	109	Climate Change / Grizzly Bears
2011	131	Urbanization, Loss of Ag Land / Owls
2012	124	Bringing back the Bison / Mushrooms
2013	106	Food Security / Native Fish
2014	165	Feral Horses / Golden Eagle
2015	172	Upper Bow Basin Study and the 2013 Flood / Bats
2016	128	Connectivity on the Landscape / Wolverines of the Eastern Slopes
2017	126	Climate Change & Forest Change / Beavers on Our Landscape
2018	126	Wild Bee Diversity / Sharing the Range: Carnivores and Communities
2019	130	Wild Foods of the Forest Floor / Bison Reintroduction Panel
2020	116	Fire, Ecosystem Health & You / Tree Swallows Case Study
2023	109	Wildfire Effects: Source Water Protection / Wildfire Risk Reduction

Living in the Natural Environment Attendance



Promotion & Publicity

Advertising began running in the Cochrane Eagle on the week of December 29. Ads ran weekly in the Eagle for 4 weeks, the Rocky View Weekly for 3 weeks and the Rocky Mountain Outlook for 2 weeks. Posting in newspapers this year cost just over \$2400. Additional advertising was done on the MD's social media sites, website, municipal newsletters, posters and word of mouth. Newspaper ads are costly, but they do a good job at getting the word out to the different areas outside the municipality about the event. The ASEAB members play a big role in promoting this event in their areas.

Evaluation Summary

Total Submitted = 42 (38%)

Effects of Wildfire on Alberta's Water Supplies: Implications for Source Water Protection in a Warmer World

Uldis Silins, University of Alberta

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Topic	21	15	5	1	0
Speaker	17	16	6	1	0

Comments:

- I wasn't sure of the focus of this presentation.
- I had trouble discovering conclusions from his speech. He didn't seem to come to a point.
- Well presented.
- I had many take aways on the science behind the health of watersheds. I didn't know about the impact of nitrogen and phosphorous.
- Very good.
- Decent topic, consider having some ways we can mitigate wildfires.
- Very informative, feel like I have a lot more to learn now.
- Very dry and long, needed to be broken up.
- Very interesting.
- Such an interesting topic given recent events. The Waterton input was interesting as we've had the opportunity to compare before/after and good to learn the hydrology is doing quite well. It would have been helpful to address the local Devil's Head fire and it's effects for local water recreation and residents.
- Very good presentation, good overview of the subject. Some of the slides were difficult to read.
- Balanced scientific approach, lots of interesting information about the effects of wildfire on hydrology and water quality.
- A bit dry.
- Speaker was excellent.
- Good information, neutral presentation – inconclusive, could have used a laymans summation.
- Well presented, concise.
- Enjoyed this speaker.
- Really enjoyed the session. I felt like he had lots to cover so it maybe wasn't as in depth but overall I enjoyed it.
- Could have used the microphone more effectively. May be difficult for people to understand all the graphs. Some confusion as to whether fires are good for fish.
- Too technical. Couldn't make out the many, many graphs. Very knowledgeable though, enjoyed it.
- Good messages.
- Presentation was very interesting and I learned a lot.
- Thank you for your excellent talk, it was clear and understandable with excellent visuals.

- Looking around the room, I think it is fair to say that the way the material was delivered was somewhat over-technical for the audience, and delivery was somewhat monotonous, when the topic needed a really active delivery.
- The slides were on such a big screen (Good) that unfortunately, they were a bit fuzzy and some of the smaller print was difficult to read.

Wildfire Risk Reduction Strategies

Amanda Miller, Palouse Rangeland Consulting

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Topic	29	11	1	0	0
Speaker	24	15	0	0	0

Comments:

- Most Enjoyable; enough data to digest. She added humour and was engaging.
- I found Amanda's presentation quite good and it gave me some good ideas for the acreage.
- Very good presentation.
- The starter video was very informative, loved the explanation of forest mosaics.
- Very good.
- Maybe go into the long-term effects of the grassland.
- Video was incredible, learned lots and gave some action items, I liked that.
- Very well presented, easy to understand and follow.
- Thought provoking. Good applicable topic that can be implemented.
- Good slides, some "fuzzy" wording on maps. Bullet points easily understood. Questions well answered, clarified.
- Very relevant topic. Very good presentation. Documentary was a good intro.
- Good study and information.
- Excellent presentation.
- Very informative, less technical, easier to understand. Questions revealed depth of knowledge.
- Well presented, useful information.
- Interesting topic.
- Amanda was a very good speaker. I enjoyed her talk.
- Would have like to ask the question: Why do we reforest all areas and not leave the prime grazing areas on the south and west slopes not reforested?
- Clear and concise.
- Exceptional speaker.
- Well presented and interesting.
- Thank you for sharing your documentary and your excellent pilot project. Great work.
- Practically speaking, this was a very captivating topic for all those in the audience who are somewhat or greatly at risk of wildfire. In that sense, it was also more practically important for the MD in that any measure to reduce the risk in any area basically reduces the risk for many residents, if not all. It would have been informative had the presentation (probably with another speaker) addressed how individual residents can take emergency measures should a wildfire put them at risk, despite their fire smarting. Obviously, strategic use of water would be the main focus.

General Event Comments

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Location	38	3	0	0	0
Time	30	8	2	1	0
Length of Sessions	27	11	3	0	0
Format	26	10	4	0	0
Meal	37	3	0	1	0
Price	31	7	3	0	0

Suggestions for next year (Topic, Speakers, Venue etc.)

- It was so great to be back. The speakers and dinner was excellent.
- Venue is fine.
- Wildlife related topics.
- Indigenous speakers about wildlife, wildfire, and sustainability.
- I really enjoyed the topics this year, I felt like I learned lots and it was very environmentally focused while also showing the importance of cattle.
- Toxic weed management, information on black bears and living with them, predatory birds, management of pests, gardening with natural vegetation.
- This is my third year attending and it's always a very well organized and relevant event. Thank you for hosting.
- Effects of fire on animal species and fish.
- Maybe more wildlife talks – bees, bats, birds. Not both talks on the same/similar topics.
- Venue is good, meal too. Benefits and issues of grazing allotments in the Forest Reserve.
- Best prime rib anywhere, venue is great.
- Forget the draws at the end.
- Environmental forestry related issues.
- Exact same food, always love seeing case studies, Pecha Kucha (20 slides for 20 seconds each) would be a neat format to try.
- Pasture management, bear, cougar, bees.
- Well organized, great speakers, very informative, thank you.
- Rangeland importance, grassland topics, start earlier so it doesn't go so late.
- Too long of breaks between the first presentation and dinner.
- Effects of road salt and chemical on the environment and watershed.
- Venue is excellent as is format. Excellent value for the price.
- The pace of the evening was exceptional. Brilliant combo of seated and networking.
- Definitely keep the same venue, format and meal. Wildlife health in the MD and status of invasive plant species in the area.
- Native plant identification, benefits etc. Animal tracks and signs. Effects of increased usage of the forest reserve.
- This is an excellent event on all categories listed – as well as for the display tables and contents. In addition, it is a super way to bring MD members together. A presentation on the approach to reducing flood damage risk and describing what has been done since 2013 and who designed and paid for it. This could be combined with an assessment of how prevention structures are working, as well as an assessment of future excessive rain and most likely weather causes.

Levels of Sponsorship

Co-Sponsoring Partners

Your company or organization will be featured as partnering with the MD of Bighorn on this event. This includes name and logo recognition on all promotional material including newspaper advertising, posters, tickets, table cards, through master of ceremonies introductions, two (2) tickets for the Forum, and an invite to introduce and promote your organization at the start of the event.

Cost \$2,000.00

Signature Partners

This includes name and logo recognition on promotional material for the forum including newspaper advertising, posters, tickets, table cards, through master of ceremonies introductions, and two (2) tickets for the Forum.

Cost \$1,000.00

Speaker Partners

This includes name and logo recognition on promotional material for the forum including posters, table cards, recognition through master of ceremonies introductions and one (1) ticket to the Forum.

Cost \$500.00

Table Partners

This includes name and logo recognition on table cards, through master of ceremonies introductions.

Cost \$250.00

Corporate Partners

This includes name and logo recognition on table cards

Cost \$150.00

Living in the Natural Environment 2024 is currently booked at the Cochrane RancheHouse
for February 2nd.

Supplemental Information

Historical Information

The MD of Bighorn has been hosting the Living in the Natural Environment event (originally called 'Living with Wildlife') annually since 2000. There was only one year of recollection (2004) where the event was cancelled due to many issues including venue issues, poor tickets sales etc.. This has always been viewed as a successful event with good attendance and generally positive feedback from those in attendance.

In 2010, a new format was introduced which included a later start time, but an earlier door opening with tradeshow displays and refreshments available for attendees to enjoy. Based on 2011 feedback, the start time was pushed back to 5pm, and while a few evaluations noted a preference for an even later start, observations were that the majority of the attendees were able to get to the event by this modified start. The two speaker format, with the first being more technical and the latter being more educational, seems to be working.

Traditionally the timing of the event has been early February with the exception of the 2012 and 2014 events occurring in late February. This later date did not seem to affect attendance levels so future events could certainly be anytime within the month keeping in mind other functions that may also be occurring around the same time. Prior to February is still considered a challenge because of the short time after Christmas for advertising and later in March would start to conflict with calving in the agricultural areas and school breaks.

Sponsorship for this event is sought out every year. This is one of the most important and time consuming tasks for this event. It has always been outlined in the budget that this event takes a loss and ends up costing the MD to run. It is for this reason that obtaining sponsorship from outside organizations is a critical component to making this event a success. A Co-Sponsor category of \$2000 was added in 2013 which would prove to be very valuable if chosen by an organization.

In previous years tickets have been made available at the MD main office, Rocky View County and Mountain View County offices as well as other local businesses in the surrounding area. Selling tickets through the local businesses was not continued for 2013. In 2018 the price of tickets increased to \$40, in 2010 the price of tickets was \$35, prior to that they were sold for \$30 each.

The Living in the Natural Environment is an Agricultural and Environmental services department event and has always been a part of their budget. The bulk of the organizing duties have been administered by the Community Services department along with the ASEAB and Ag Services staff. The Community Services staff would keep track of their time put into this event and charge it to the LNE expense account. Deb Grady took a lead in planning for the 2012, 2013 & 2014 events. As Deb's role in Community Services grew she was no longer available to assist so in 2015, Kendra Tippe (Assistant Environmental Fieldman) transitioned into this role. While it's easier and more organized to have one person manage the planning of the event, it is necessary to have helpers assist with the many last minute tasks at the night of the event to ensure everything is running smoothly. Members of the ASEAB and volunteers from the MD office do a great job at filling this role.