**Natural Resource Awareness Day held at Challis Elementary**

The Custer Soil and Water Conservation District hosted the Natural Resource Awareness Day on April 14 which included Challis, Stanley and Patterson Elementary schools and hosted at the Challis Elementary School. This is an annual event that the Custer SWCD hosts each year to education and encourage our youth about the importance and wise use of natural resources. Although we still cover a great deal about Agriculture (similar to Ag Week) we focus this day more on how important our natural resources are to the community and our economy.

We were fortunate to have a four new presenters this year including Garden Creek Farms; fish farming, Idaho Farm Bureau; the Big Book of Wheat, USFS Boat patrol for the Middle Fork Salmon River; Idaho Rangeland Resource Commission, range and rangeland fires.

Lyn Vanschoiack provided a very hands on presentation with live shrimp for the students as an employee of Garden Creek Farms. Zack Miller from the Idaho Farm Bureau brought the “Big Book of Wheat” giving the students an opportunity to grind their own wheat. Shauntee Rice and Shawna Johansen assisted with the boat patrol and gave the students an opportunity to “row the boat” and see all the implements that are needed for the boat patrol. Jackie Ingram, representing the Idaho Rangeland Resource Commission, provided some creative and hands-on demonstrations about rangeland and the behavior of rangeland fire.

Other presenters included Janette Bailey presenting bees; Sharron Arrizubieta, gardening; Salmon River Electric with an electrical display; Thompson Creek Mine, Dr. Jeff Bennetts, Veterinary Medicine; Sarah Baker, Custer County Extension, 4-H in our community. As always, we were fortunate to utilize the Challis Envirothon members, Challis FFA members and Challis High School Rodeo.

It was a fun filled and educational day and we appreciate all our speakers and the Challis Elementary School staff for allowing us to come into the school each year.