

SWAAN Conference Presenters 2023

July 11, 2023



Clint Evans is the State Conservationist for the NRCS in Colorado. He is headquartered in Denver and has served in his current position for 8 of 23 years he's worked with the Agency. As the State Conservationist, Evans has worked to expand and build new conservation partnerships across the state. He has also worked to increase conservation program funding levels to increase the number of program applicants who need financial assistance to address their resource needs.

Over the past 23 years, Evans has served in several permanent positions at all levels of the Agency, from the county field level to the National Office. He has also served in numerous temporary assignments in OH, WY, UT, TX, and the National Office including his most recent where he served as the acting Deputy Chief for Programs until May of 2022.

Evans earned a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture at Kansas State University where he studied animal science, agri-business, and agronomy and met his wife, Lynn. He started his NRCS career in 2000 as a soil conservation technician in Altamont, Kansas. He was introduced to the agency in the late 1990s while working on a ranch where his then employer enrolled in the EQIP program. Evans gained experience in conservation planning and practice implementation through financial assistance programs from the customer's perspective. He enjoyed working with the NRCS field staff and ultimately pursued a career with the agency. After his tenure as a technician, Evans served as a soil conservationist in two Kansas field offices and was promoted to district conservationist in Kingman, Kansas. He then moved to the Kansas State Office to serve as a resource conservationist on the programs staff and was soon selected as Idaho's assistant state conservationist for programs and then as Idaho's assistant state conservationist for operations, a position he helped until his selection in Colorado.



Matthew McCombs is the Colorado State Forester and Director of the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS). Prior to joining the CSFS in January of 2022, McCombs served as the U.S. Forest Service District Ranger for the 1.3-million-acre Gunnison Ranger District, part of the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests. McCombs' career has spanned natural resources and other government experience. He has worked as the U.S. Forest Service District Ranger for the Appalachian Ranger District and as an aide to Sens. Ken Salazar and Jon Tester. McCombs is also a veteran, having deployed to Iraq in 2003 as a combat medic with the Colorado Army National Guard and having served as a Medical Service Officer in the Montana Air National Guard, where he achieved the rank of captain before leaving the service in 2012.



Susan Stein provides agroforestry support to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service through the Agriculture Conservation Experienced Services program. Previous work, during her 32 years with the USDA Forest Service included leading the National Agroforestry Center, managing national programs to support the sustainable management of private forest lands, and advising tropical countries on agroforestry adoption. Throughout her career, Susan has worked with scientists and managers to provide science-based information to natural resource professionals, land owners, and policy-makers.



Susan Bennett is the Environmental Interpreter for the City of Wheat Ridge. She is an NAI Certified Interpretive Guide and a Leave No Trace Master Educator. She creates and implements numerous environmental education programs for the City on topics as diverse as Leave No Trace, embryology, Colorado pollinators, water chemistry, aquatic macroinvertebrates, tree biology, and many others. She has over 20 years of experience in environmental consulting, project management, and preschool-college education. Susan completed her M.S. in Mineral Resource Ecology at the Colorado School of Mines and is in the process of completing the journey-level beekeeping program through the Colorado Beekeepers Association.



Creighton Hofeditz grew up in Morrison, Colorado and started a career in theater before switching paths with a permaculture design course at the Central Rocky Mountain Permaculture Institute in 2011. He worked with Peter Bane during the editing process of *The Permaculture Handbook* and has since designed home landscapes, a highway exit, and a farm school curriculum. He was a contributing author on Jerome Osentowski's book *The Forest Garden Greenhouse* and served as the intern coordinator at Bullocks' Permaculture Homestead in Washington State. He is the Director of Permaculture and Perennials at Denver Urban Gardens, leading their new Food Forest Initiative, and has been the lead organizer of the Denver Permaculture Design Course since 2015



James Calabaza: Born and raised in New Mexico, James comes with direct experience working with Tribes and understanding the traditional knowledge as it pertains to their unique values. After working with the government sector, James realized his heart belongs to the nonprofit world. As TWP's Indigenous Lands Program Director, James provides much needed insight and experience on working with Tribal governments that uphold traditional ethics of governance and leadership. His deep rooted experiences and cultural values strengthens our program by building trust with Tribes, promoting traditional landscape conservation values and over-seeing the development of community-based projects.



Jake Takiff owns Cedar Springs Farm in Hotchkiss, CO where his family plants trees, milks cows and butchers pigs. The 120 acres of dryland has been converted to lush silvopasture utilizing scaled up permaculture techniques for harvesting water, combined with intensive rotational grazing. Off of the farm, Jake is a consultant, engineer and installation manager for RAD, a company that helps farms and ranches transition to regenerative farming methods that build soil, foster biodiversity and eliminate the need for inputs such as herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers.



Amy Scanes-Wolfe: Amy's interest in food systems was originally born out of a degree in cultural anthropology. After five years farming on the East Coast, Amy served on the board of a forming urban ecovillage, worked at Harlequin's Gardens Nursery, and founded an ecological landscaping business. Amy is also a teacher and facilitator for the Boulder Permaculture Design Course, which she graduated from in 2018. She is deeply passionate about local history and ecology and how dryland agriculture can regenerate the land and communities of the arid west. Amy is currently the Director of Research and Community Outreach for Drylands Agroecology Research, and lives and homesteads in Niwot.



My name is **Rutger Myers** and I am the Soil Health Technician at Chatfield Farms. I am focused on creating and displaying low-maintenance composting techniques for small-scale farmers on the Front Range. I teach farmers about the importance of preserving and maintaining healthy soil ecosystems with the purpose of improving production and nutrient density of vegetable crops.



Kelly Bull is a permaculture landscape designer and garden coach with an infectious love for plants and an endless fascination for soil. As owner of Kelly Bull Permaculture Design, she creates custom designs for backyard ecosystems that allow people to connect with nature through a thriving low-maintenance yet highly productive yard. She believes every yard should be producing food, shade, wildlife support, beauty and fun. Having been a teacher for almost a decade, she is passionate about education and enjoys helping other DIYers who love to learn and like to get their hands dirty.

July 12, 2023 Field Tour



Josie Hart, Associate Director of Farm Programs, has worked at Chatfield Farms for 12 years in a variety of roles as farmer, program manager, community impact coordinator, camp director and cut flower production. Coming from a background in education, Josie is passionate about how small-scale regenerative farming, holistic landscape management and healthy food systems seem to address many of the issues that threaten the health of the planet and our future. Josie has served on a variety of boards and speaking engagements to educate the public on this vital work.



Erik Geyer has been with The Denver Botanic Gardens for 8 years and leads the Natural Areas & Arboriculture department at Chatfield Farms. He holds a B.S. in Environmental Science from Eastern New Mexico University and has been an ISA-Certified Arborist since 2016. He manages Chatfield’s tree canopy and leads Prairie and Riparian restoration projects. His work focuses on restoring non-native areas into diverse native plant communities, and their impacts on soil development.



Nick DiDomenico: Hailing from the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, Nick is a regenerative designer, farmer, and builder. Inspired by indigenous culture and ancient farming practices, he works passionately to design the future of living systems. In 2015, Nick began farming on a barren and desertified 14 acre parcel of land in rural north Boulder County, now called Elk Run Farm, and the pilot research project for Drylands Agroecology Research (DAR). Today, Nick is working to develop climate change solutions through regenerative farming, working with private and public landowners across Boulder County.



Azuraye Wycoff grew up in Boulder, and has experience in entrepreneurship, cross-cultural communications, and nature-based people systems. She has returned to the land to help steward the test pilot for DAR’s “full stack” regenerative systems design & implementation at the Yellow Barn.



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SWAAN Conference Session Moderators, Special Guests, and Closing Thoughts 2023



Dana Coelho is a collaborative and innovative urban forestry and urban sustainability professional with 15+ years of experience working in academia, government, and non-profit settings. She is currently serving as [Urban & Community Forestry](#) Program Manager for the Colorado State Forest Service where she leads a six-person team delivering technical and financial assistance to communities across the state to support the planting and care of trees in cities and towns. Prior to this role she worked as Executive Director of the [Metro Denver Nature Alliance](#), a non-profit coalition of environmental organizations in Colorado committed to conserving and increasing equitable access to nature in and around the capital city of Denver. She began her career with the [United States Forest Service](#) and worked in [Urban & Community Forestry](#) and other programs in Washington, DC; Alaska; and Colorado. Dana received a Masters of Science in Sustainable Development & Conservation Biology and a Masters of Public Policy from the University of Maryland in 2007. She completed her Bachelors of Urban & Environmental Planning degree with minors in architecture and environmental science at the University of Virginia in 2003.



Dr. James Allen is a Professor with the School of Forestry at Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ. He served as its Executive Director from 2007 to 2021. He is a founding member and immediate past chair of the Southwest Agroforestry Action Network. Dr. Allen's interest in agroforestry and food forests dates to his work as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Swaziland. His involvement in agroforestry in the Southwest began in 2017, when he took a sabbatical and spent part of it investigating current practices in this region.



Anne S. Marsh, Director of the National Agroforestry Center, works to accelerate the adoption of agroforestry, the intentional integration of trees into crop or animal production systems for environmental, economic, or social benefits. As the Forest Service's lead for agroforestry and manager of NAC's personnel and resources, she is responsible for a team that leads, coordinates, catalyzes, and undertakes research and science-based outreach. The Center develops and delivers information to natural resource professionals working with farmers, ranchers, forest landowners, Tribes, and communities through publications, workshops, training, and demonstration sites. Anne works closely with Forest Service Research and Development and State and Private Forestry, and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NAC lead partners) as well as an extensive network of partners spanning universities, non-profit organizations, state and Federal agencies, Tribes, and conservation organizations to advance agroforestry.



Steve Price has worked for Utah State University Extension in Carbon County (eastern Utah) for 6 years with a role split between natural resources, agriculture, and 4-H. As a person of many hats, his professional expertise ranges from integrated pest management, forage production improvement, pasture optimization, and youth natural resources education.



Chris Jones is responsible for Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension programs in Gila County. His programs include forest health, watershed, and horticulture education. Chris' mission at the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension is to Improve lives, families, communities, the environment and economies through applied research and education in Arizona and beyond.



Diomides "Diomy" S. Zamora, PhD, serves as a National Program Leader with the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Institute of Bioenergy, Climate and Environment. In collaboration with Land Grant University Extension systems, Diomy provides national leadership of the Renewable Resources and Extension Act (RREA) to strengthen extension programming on forestry and rangeland ecosystem across the Land Grant Systems. Diomy also provides national leadership of the 8.1 Forest and related resources area of NIFA's Small Business Innovation Research Program (SBIR). He also supports conservation research-education-extension activities and administers special research and extension grants.

Prior to joining NIFA, Diomy worked as an Assistant Professor of Forestry with Kentucky State University, and as an Extension Professor of Forestry with the University of Minnesota Extension. Diomy received his PhD in Forest Resources and Conservation at the University of Florida in 2005. He holds a Master of Science in Forestry (1999) and a Bachelor of Science in Forestry (1994) degree both from the University of the Philippines Los Banos.

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