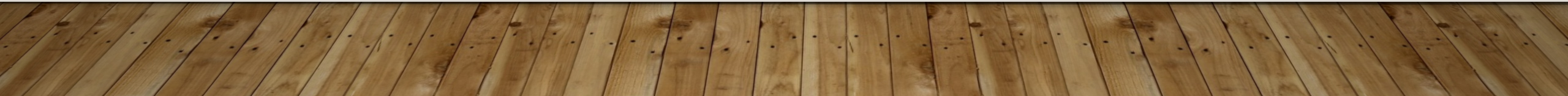


HOMESTEADERS CONFERENCE

JUNE 30-JULY 1st

KOOTENAI COUNTY

FAIRGROUNDS





SOIL HEALTH RAIN SIMULATOR DEMO

- NRCS allowed the Districts to utilize their Soils Health Rain Simulator trailer. John Mobbs & Wes Evans, Board members with KSSWCD took the lead as they are both passionate advocates of No-Till Ag practices and utilize them on their farmlands. These demonstrations were very popular each day. The experience and passion of both men shown through!





SOIL HEALTH CONVERSATIONS

• John Mobbs of Lazy JM Ranch speaks to those gathered about the soils he had collected from his pastures as well as that of a neighbor who utilizes traditional farming techniques. These soils included some that had been mob grazed approximately 12 days prior on the far left to bare plowed soil on the right. John explained how they utilize the 5 soil health principles:

- Keep the Soil Covered
- Minimize Soil Disturbance
- Maximize Biodiversity
- Living roots as often as possible
- Livestock integration



LET IT RAIN!

- After 2 inches of “rain” is applied equally to the soil samples the simulator is turned off and observations are made utilizing the jugs reflected at the base of the table. These jugs reflect run off. As you can see the far right jugs have a significant amount of water lost to water runoff and with the water is a heavy sediment load! There is almost zero run off as you move towards the left soil which is heavily vegetated.





WATER ABSORPTION

- The white board was removed and the jugs hanging show the water saturation that went down into these soil samples which would represent the moisture retention realized by utilizing these soil health principles. You will see that the far left not only has the most water retained but there is a significant difference in the filtration.
- You can see the jugs beneath which also reflects the difference of absorption vs. run off. On the right there was almost no measurable absorption as it had run off the soil before it could absorb.

OUTREACH

- During the two-day event, we spoke with over 500 people, many of whom stopped to have in-depth conversations about specific resource concerns or to ask questions and seek out resources to accomplish future goals for their land.
- We handed out hundreds of educational materials covering topics including soil health, noxious weed management, water protection, and forest management.
- Highlighting the Districts Tree sale program and benefits has already kicked off our sale for spring 2024!
- The predominate audience were new landowners who had relocated out of state and were unfamiliar with the unique and dynamic nature of our county.
- Was a great opportunity to network with both producers and industry that can have a symbiotic relationship.

