

## Food and Agriculture Development Centers: Ravalli County Beginner Landowner Course, “Living in Ravalli County”

The Project: Ravalli County has seen a large influx of new landowners in the past five years. Many of these landowners come from more urban areas or are not familiar with roles and responsibilities of living in an agricultural area. Newcomers to the Bitterroot often want to be respectful to their neighbors working in agriculture but may not have the knowledge on how to do so. After consulting with Ravalli County extension agents, county commissioners, the local weeds district, the local Right to Farm and Ranch Board, the Bitterroot Conservation District, and the county Natural Resource Conservation District, RCEDA's FADC determined that there should be a course that educates beginning landowners in the county.

Working with County Commissioner Dan Huls, the Bitterroot Conservation District, the Ravalli County Weeds District, and the NRCS, RCEDA hosted a course to educate these new property owners.

Twenty people learned about Bitterroot irrigation districts, water rights, 310 law, noxious weed identification and management, and resource conservation. Speakers highlighted the importance of knowing neighbors, working things out as two landowners before involving outside agencies. The class participants learned which resources were available in Ravalli County, where to find information on being a good landowner, and most importantly, how to be a good neighbor in the Bitterroot Valley.

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