COMMUNITY

AGRICULTURE

Lynn Miner demonstrates his horse logging operation north of Chewelah.
Courtesy photo

Lynn and Becky Miner named Conservation Farmer of Year

MODEL FOREST: *Miners own 100-acre tree farm that is used as example of good stewardship*

PRESS RELEASE
Stevens Co. Cons. Dist.

Stevens County Conservation District will present Lynn and Becky Miner of Chewelah at the inaugural Voluntary Stewardship Program's (VSP) Conservation Farmer of the Year Award at the Stevens County Conservation District's annual meeting on February 23, 2023. The Miners own the 100-acre Casa Becca del Norté Tree Farm, established in 1995. They have worked diligently to create an exceptional model of forest practices. The Washington Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR) has used their site as "an example of how the [DNR Stewardship] program is supposed to work." Additionally, their endeavors in habitat enhancement have served as a field laboratory for multiple public seminars and Washington State University classes, including the 2022 Forest & Range Owners Field Day, where over 200 people joined from all over the region to learn about healthy forest and range practices.

The Miners purchased the land from Cliff and Fay Hartill in 1993. The property was originally homesteaded by the local Egger family in the late 1800s and sold to the Hartill family in the 1930s. Lynn and Becky purchased the tract and began restoring the land, planting, thinning, reducing ladder fuels and creating habitat. Over the years, the two have planted over 10,000 trees and installed more than 500 nesting boxes alongside many snags and roost poles. Becky utilizes this habitat to support the Cornell University Ornithology Laboratory by helping graduate students collect thesis data. Forest thinning and fuels reduction are implemented using horse logging to reduce the impact on the land.

The VSP developed

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the Conservation Farmer of the Year Award program to showcase the hard work of local landowners who voluntarily implement projects to protect critical areas on their working lands. The Voluntary Stewardship Program is non-regulatory, and landowners are free to choose and implement a variety of practices that best suits their property's needs. The support of landowners in these endeavors is critical to sustaining the resources of our region while reducing the potential impact of regulatory action. The award program aims to highlight the efforts of these landowners and recognize their contributions to sustaining Stevens County's natural resources.

If you are interested in the VSP program, the award or attending the District annual meeting, please contact Stevens County Conservation District at sccd@stevenscountywa.gov or by phone at 509-684 7579.

Congratulations, Lynn and Becky; we at the Conservation District and VSP look forward to many more years of stewardship in our great county.