2021 Impact

The Master Food Safety Advisor program completed its third year with six people completing the program and fulfilling volunteer obligations. They joined the current group of 15 Advanced Master Food Safety volunteers across five counties in North Idaho. This program educates participants with in-depth information regarding handling food safely during harvest, storage, preparation and consumption.

Boundary County participated in the Idaho FORM Project, funded by the Idaho Community Foundation. The University of Idaho-based project focuses on building partnerships in rural Idaho communities with a goal of creating sustainable and evidence-based mental health programs. The program strives to reduce the stigma towards mental health, increase mental health knowledge and access, and decrease the number of suicides in rural Idaho. Three QPR: Suicide Prevention classes and two Mental Health First Aid classes were offered. As a result, 45 community members increased their knowledge on mental health and how to help others experiencing mental health issues. Two community conversations on mental health were also held.

Forty-eight forest owners, loggers and professional foresters attended the Forest Insect and Disease Field Day in Bonners Ferry and many Boundary County residents attended forestry programs held in adjacent counties. Forestry programs on forest health, fire risk reduction for homes in the wildland urban interface, forestry cost sharing and backyard forests reached over 631 participants. Six Boundary County residents served as Idaho Master Forest Stewards volunteers, helping provide over 530 hours of volunteer service to over 1,000 contacts in 2021.

4-H in Boundary County

There were 234 youth participants in traditional 4-H programs in Boundary County who exhibited projects at the 2021 county fair. There were increases in the number of youths participating in many projects including drawing/art, sheep, beef and ATV. During the 2020-21 school year, a partnership with BCSD 101 resulted in the hiring of a half-time AmeriCorps member, who provided STEAM education at Naples Elementary and 4-H Friday Friends. During the summer, they helped with 4-H day camps, including cooking camp, summer scientist camp, Camp Clover, nature camp, Babysitting 101, a youth farm tour and others.

4-H Friday Friends celebrated its’ 14th year of all-day programs offered to elementary children on Fridays during the school year. Community partners participating included the Boundary Volunteer Ambulance, Boundary County Library, Bonners Ferry Fire Station, Idaho Master Gardeners, Boundary County Sheriff, Bonners Ferry Vet, and many others. The program received almost $19,000 in grants which allowed rates to stay affordable for families as well as the opportunity to increase staff pay.

On the Horizon

Idaho Department of Health and Welfare funding allows for the implementation of programming to help fill gaps with learning loss due to COVID-19. Robotics programming will be offered to youth ages 5-13 across the county and funds will be used to purchase robotics curriculum and materials and pay for two part-time robotics instructors.

The Advanced Idaho Master Gardener program will be offered to retain certified volunteers and increase volunteer hours provided to the community.