

Locals clean up 25 tons of trash

Posted: Friday, May 22nd, 2015

BY: Connie V. Scott, Herald Reporter

EVANSTON — A dump truck, frontend loader, and approximately 85 volunteers took part in a land cleanup that netted 25 tons of trash last Saturday.

Spearheading the cleanup was 307 Long Range, joined by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD) and Wyoming Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife (SFW). Pinedale's Game and Fish construction crew also lent a hand by bringing a frontend loader and dump truck.

"There were horse trailers and trucks full of trash," Roberts said. "I think it was a great success, and I'd like to thank everyone who volunteered and those who donated to the cause."

Roberts said landowners were very pleased with the cleanup. Throughout the day, volunteers picked up 24.78 tons of trash from both side of Woodruff Narrows Reservoir, the road to the landfill, Painter Road and land in the Sulphur Creek area.

"This is nearly 40 years of trash that was picked up," Nick Arnold of 307 Long Range said. "The land is clean for now."

He said the goal of 307 Long Range isn't to go out and pick up trash each week, and its members understand the challenges facing them.

"We can't change the minds of those who are dumping, but our goal is to change the culture of our community by teaching the youth the importance of land and wildlife management, which has been lost over the decades," Arnold said.

Volunteers came from far and wide to pitch in — there were some from Salt Lake City and Riverton, Utah; Rock Springs; Green River; Pinedale; and, of course, Evanston. Approximately 40 of the volunteers were youth.

To thank those involved in the event, a lunch and giveaway were held at The Gun Room in Evanston. Many of the raffle items went to the youth, Arnold said.

Nick and Jennifer Arnold said they wanted to thank everyone who volunteered and gave toward the event. Donating to the land cleanup event were The Gun Room, which donated a gun for the raffle;



Evanston residents Janel Campbell and Danny Blackmore pick up trash at Woodruff Narrows Reservoir on Saturday. The two were part of a cleanup effort organized by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Wyoming Sportsmen for Fish and Wildlife and 307 Long Range that netted 25 tons of litter. (COURTESY PHOTO/Lucy Diggins, WGFD)

Sportsworld, which also donated a gun; Walmart, which gave \$50 worth of food for the volunteers; and Uinta County, which provided trash bags and free dumping at the landfill.

"I want to especially thank Mark Anderson from The Gun Room, Mike and Michelle Meyers, and Ben and Desi Workman from the 307 Group," Arnold said. "They are shining stars, who always step up to the plate and support what we're doing. They are amazing."

Arnold said 307 Long Range simply started out with two guys getting together to go shooting. They started a Facebook page, hoping to get a handful of guys together to hang out and shoot. Now the Facebook page has over 1600 members.

"About 50 percent of the time we go out to shoot and hang out and the other 50 percent we're working hard out in our community," he said.

307 Long Range and Arnold are getting plenty of attention lately, too. Since their involvement in the recent vandalism cleanup, where they cleaned up anti-military graffiti from Evanston servicewoman Cassie McEuen's apartment, local, Utah and even national news have contacted them. Yesterday Arnold and McEuen appeared on the nationally-televised program "Fox and Friends" to talk about the incident and how the group promptly showed up to help.

Arnold, uncomfortable being in the spotlight, said they are used to being behind the scenes and working in the shadows.

"I'm not used to all this attention," he said. "It isn't about us getting noticed; we just want to do what is right. Plus, without the 307 group, none of this would happen."

Local groups and volunteers hope the attention will only increase participation in future cleanup events, which they plan to do each May. They want to reach more people, clean more land and teach more about the importance of good land management. As they do this, Arnold said, they are certain it will help bring more visitors and simply make Uinta County more beautiful.