

Landi Krumpus

Colome High School

Conservation Speech 2021

“What have you done for conservation lately?”

For as long as I have been alive, I have lived on a farm/ranch. Growing up I was an outdoor kid who loved to play in the mud, ride with my dad in the tractor, and help work cows. Many of the activities we do on the ranch help with conservation. We rotate cattle and pasture, rotate crops, use no-till crops, plant trees, and much more. I have done more for conservation than just farming as well. I have picked up trash in both Colome and at my house, and plan to hunt. These are all examples of what I have done for conservation lately.

One way I help with conservation is rotating cattle and pastures. After the cows have been in a certain pasture for so long, we move them to a different one. This helps give the grass time to grow back and so the cows don't graze the grass down too far. It also helps conserve resources and prevents selective grazing. By changing pastures, cows are getting a variety of different grasses to eat. Some ranchers are on a ten-day rotation while others are on a two week or monthly rotation. It all depends on how big the pasture is and how many cows are in a pasture. Rotating cattle and pastures is one example of what I have done for conservation.

Rotating crops helps with conservation. Every year or every other year, we plant a different crop in a different field. This helps with the soil moisture. Different crops bring in different amounts of moisture to the soil. Rotating crops also helps control the weeds or amount of weeds in the fields. “Crop diversity through rotations, such as alfalfa, pasture or small grains is the first foundational step to better soil structure,” said Dr. Sieglinde Snap, a professor and soil

and cropping systems ecologist at MSU. As well as rotating crops, my family plants cover crops in our fields. Cover crops bring in nutrients to the soil. That is how rotating crops and cover crops help with conservation, and how I have contributed to that.

As well as rotating crops, we also use no-tilling crops. This means that we do not till or disk the ground that we use for planting. By doing this, it conserves the moisture in the ground. It also keeps the ground covered to prevent erosion of the top soil. According to regenerationinternational.org, "The Earth loses roughly 23 billion tons of fertile soil every year..." "One of the biggest contributors to soil degradation is the common practice of soil tilling." No-till crops also helps with fertilizer costs because you don't have to use as much fertilizer. In addition, the Nitrate doesn't run off the crops and into nearby water systems as much with less fertilizer. This is how no-till crops help with conservation.

Planting trees is another great example of what I have done for conservation lately. Planting trees is great for the environment. It helps clear out the carbon dioxide, and provides us with oxygen. With the amount of pollution problems from carbon dioxide, the Earth could use more trees. The roots from the trees help prevent erosion by holding the ground together as well. Planting trees also helps with the wildlife side of conservation as well. It provides shelter for animals and can be used for protection against the wind. Animals use trees often, and by providing them with more trees, we are helping them. Planting trees helps with conservation.

Along with all those that I have listed off, I have done more for conservation as well. I have been involved in many trash cleanups in town. Just recently, the FFA members and I picked up trash around the town of Colome. This helps the environment in many ways. According to communityactionworks.org "Americans generate over 250 million tons of trash each year." By

keeping the town and road ditches clean, less trash is being blown into fields and pastures. This causes less animals to eat trash and less waste sitting in fields and pastures.

Hunting is another great example of conservation. My dad, brother, and sister all hunt deer. I have never really gotten into it myself, but I plan to take hunter's safety course to get my license for the future. Hunting helps to control the population of animals so certain species don't overpopulate and cause other species to go extinct. Those are the other ways that I help conservation.

There are many ways that I have helped the conservation lately. As a farmer/rancher, I am always doing tasks for conservation. Rotating cattle and pastures, rotating crops, no-till crops, planting trees, picking-up trash, and hunting are all great examples of what I have done for conservation lately. I will continue to work for conservation because it is embedded in my way of life.