

# Powder River Conservation District



Southern Johnson County (PRCD) 1895

## Annual Report July 1, 2006-June 30 2007

### Mission Statement

The Powder River Conservation District's mission is to provide conservation education and leadership for the betterment of our natural resources and improvement of our environment and to be a cooperating agency with other government entities administering our natural resources.

# Powder River Conservation District

The Powder River Conservation District was established in August of 1955. Petitions for the organization of a Soil Conservation District, were circulated at various organization meetings at Barnum, Kaycee, Sussex, and Mayoworth, and signed by ranchers located in the southern end of Johnson County.

Many changes have been made in the past fifty-two years and the district continues to grow and provide service to the citizens of Southern Johnson County. There are approximately 1,220,528 acres within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Powder River Conservation District. The district has one incorporated municipality, the Town of Kaycee, with a current population of 270. The main drainages in the District are the North Fork, Middle Fork, Red Fork, and South Fork of the Powder River. The majority of the district is composed of native rangeland, both private and government.

The agriculture of the Powder River Conservation District is centered around livestock operations. Irrigated areas are used primarily for the production of hay and small grain as supplemental food for livestock. The mineral industry includes oil and gas production, bentonite, uranium, and coal reserves. The scenic ranching community is rich in heritage and history.



# PRCD BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

The Powder River Conservation District is governed by a five member Board of Supervisors. Three supervisors are rural, one is urban, and one is designated as at-large. They are elected by the residents of Southern Johnson County during the general election. They serve staggered four year terms, with two positions available at a general election one year and three positions available at the next year. Supervisors are unpaid, elected volunteers who attend monthly board meetings and are actively involved in overseeing the activities of the conservation district. Board meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month at the PRCD office and are open to the public.

## **CHAIRMAN**

Jason Williams

## **VICE-CHAIR**

Greg Cunningham

## **SECRETARY**

Ray Winsor

## **TREASURER**

Amy Icanberry

## **SUPERVISOR**

Pete Meike

## **DISTRICT PERSONEL**

Anita Bartlett-District Manager

John Garrett-District Technician

## **NRCS STAFF**

Allison McKenzie-District Conservationist

## **HOW TO CONTACT PRCD**

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# ADMINISTRATION

## DISTRICT OPERATIONS

- Approved FY 2008 Budget
- CPA completed financial review
- Supervisors and District Manger attended Area I Meeting and the WACD State Convention
- Worked Cooperatively to promote those areas of common interest in the state, federal and local partnership in natural resources conservation.
- Participated in training seminars
  - Water Quality I & II Training
  - Completed Employee Certification Training
- Addressed local concerns and planned cooperative efforts with the Town of Kaycee
- Worked with Kaycee Schools to promote Ag-In-the Classroom
- Sponsored informational workshops for landowners
- PRCD Supervisor Pete Meike was Named Area I Supervisor of the Year at the Area I Meeting held at Devils Tower
- Kaycee Community Voice was named State Conservation Report at the WACD State Convention in Rock Spring



## NEW STAFF

In April 2007, John, Garrett a local of Kaycee, began his duties as the District Technician. John received his Associates Degree from Sheridan College in Computer Information Systems and his Bachelors of Science Degree from the University of Wyoming in Mathematics N.S. Emphasizing Computer Science.

## PRCD FUNDING

- Johnson County Mill Levy
- Wyoming Private Grazing Lands Team
- Department of Environmental Quality
- Wyoming Department of Agriculture
- Wyoming State Forestry
- Coordinated Resource Management

# DISTRICT PROGRAMS & SERVICES

**EDUCATION GOAL:** The Powder River Conservation District will work to educate the public and our youth on the importance of conserving our natural resources.

## YOUTH EDUCATION

### ❖ Ecology Camp

A three day Ecology Camp was held at HR Camp near Laramie Peak. Students from Kaycee Middle School studied forest and water ecology, where they learned how to determine the age of a tree, the damage that has been done, or tell when times of drought occur by looking at a tree cookie, as well as how to determine water quality based on different types of sampling and monitoring techniques. Also at HR Camp they participated in activities to help develop teamwork and leadership skills.



### ❖ National Ag Day

National Ag Day was celebrated by Kaycee Elementary First Grade students when District Manager Anita Bartlett visited their classroom. First Graders learned about the different types of livestock commonly found in Wyoming, their uses and how they rank in numbers in the US and in Johnson County.

### ❖ Earth Day

Earth Day was celebrated when District Manager Anita Bartlett visited the KES Kindergarten class. These students learned the importance of keeping our Earth clean and constructed Earth Day bracelets that told them of the important elements of our world (water, soil, people, animals, etc.).

### ❖ World Water Monitoring Day

This year the PRC D and KHS & KMS science classes and KES elementary students recognized World Water Monitoring Day through a water sampling/testing experiment.

### ❖ Adopt a Tree Program

The PRC D started its Adopt a Tree Program this spring with the Kaycee Elementary 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders. District Manager Anita Bartlett taught the students how to plant a tree and about why trees are important.



### ❖ Rainfall Simulator

District Manager Anita Bartlett traveled to Lusk and Dubois this past Fiscal year to present the rainfall simulator. This simulator teaches the effect that erosion has on different soil types and why it is important to promote range management.

❖ The PRC D sponsored the FFA Champion Showmanship Steer Award at the 2006 Johnson County Fair

❖ District Manager Anita Bartlett attended the Black Hills Natural Resource Youth Camp, where she conducted a presentation on the Power of Water.

❖ The PRC D spent a good deal of time working with the Kaycee Schools. Other activities that the students participated in were plant id, planting flowers at the town hall, making “natural” bird feeders for the city park.

❖ The PRC D worked with Boys & Girls Club to promote agriculture. The activities that they participated in include types and habitats of animals, nature journaling, the power of the sun, and life in the rainforest.



# DISTRICT PROGRAMS & SERVICES

## ADULT EDUCATION

### ➤ **Cash Flow Management Class**

This class taught attendees about sales, accounts receivable, who to extend credit to, inventory and purchasing management, payroll periods, working capital, and business plans.

### ➤ **Ranching For Profit**

This workshop taught that there are three aspects to business: money, production, and land. The main focus of the class was money and economics.

### ➤ **Range Management 101 School**

Thirty-two people learned the basics of plant growth, how to decide when to graze and for how long (Time & Timing of Grazing), the basics of rangeland monitoring and how they can be utilized to improve their ranches. They also learned about animal nutrition and animal behavior, how to apply grazing management, and finally how to manage for drought.

### ➤ **Range Management 301 School**

Sixteen people learned about prescribed fire, why we should burn and the potential effects of burning, how to develop and implement a burn plan, managing for drought, identifying invasive species, tools to aid in monitoring and monitoring methods, low stress animal handling and matching your livestock to your resources. This three day class also included an entire day dedicated to rangeland monitoring in the field where participants spent the day learning about ecological sites, plant id, and experienced hands on activities.

### ➤ **Speaker Forum At the 7th Annual Trade Show**

#### ❖ *Watershed Planning*

Nephi Cole, NRCS/WACD Watershed Coordinator

-This lecture illustrated that Watershed Planning is an effective method of recognizing and creating a strategy where the community can deal with water quality problems.

#### ❖ *Weed Control and ID for Range & Pastures*

Stephen Enloe, University of WY Extension Service

-Through the use of an array of noxious weed samples this presentation demonstrated the negative effects that some weed species have had on the areas around us. These noxious weeds were also identified and there was discussion on how to control them.

#### ❖ *Sage Grouse 101*

Tom Maechtle, Chairman for the NE Local Working Group for Sage Grouse

-This presentation discussed why landowners should be more knowledgeable in regards to Sage Grouse. These reasons included the possible listing to the endangered species list, good grazing management can lead to good habitat, and the seasons that sage grouse use this habitat.

#### ❖ *Wyoming Legislative Update*

Wyoming Senate President John Schiffer

-Senator Schiffer gave an update on the legislative issues that came through the senate during the last legislative session. He also opened the floor to questions and address issues brought forth by the audience



# DISTRICT PROGRAMS & SERVICES

## SPECIAL PROJECTS

### ❖ **PRCD Annual Trade Show**

The Powder River Conservation District's 7th Annual Ag Trade Show was well attended by both vendors and members of the community. Vendors ranged from farming equipment to art work to informational booths for government and county agencies. These vendors included Johnson County Weed & Pest, Johnson County 4-H, NRCS, Will Berg-Cowboy Artist, Heartland Kubota, and Morton Buildings. During the trade show there were 4 informational speakers. To round out our trade show we had a complimentary dinner and awards program.



### ❖ **Hazardous/Household Waste Collection Day with Lake DeSmet C. D.**

The PRCD works with LDCD and other sponsors to hold a Hazardous Waste Collection Day in Buffalo for the people of Johnson County. There was a great turnout and a lot of waste was collected.

### ❖ **Deke Latham Parade**

The Powder River CD with the assistance of the Kaycee Youth Day Camp carried the banners for the PRCD and the K.Y.D.C.

### ❖ **Arbor Day Celebration**

During the 2nd Annual Arbor Day Celebration Paul Wright with the State Forestry presented Kaycee Mayor Allen Streeter with the First-Year Tree City USA designation for the Town of Kaycee.

## SALES

### ❖ **Tree Sales**

Approximately 1000 large trees/seedlings were sold to local community members and ranchers.

### ❖ **Drip Irrigation/Weed Barrier/Irrigation Dam Sales**

The PRCD sells drip irrigation hose, parts, weed barrier and irrigation dam material as a service to Southern

# WATER QUALITY

**Water Quality Goal:** Promote and protect the quality of Wyoming's waters, reduce siltation of stream channels and reservoirs, promote wise use of Wyoming's water.

- ❖ Completed Phase III of Watershed Assessment
- ❖ Filed Final Report with WY DEQ
- ❖ Continued to monitor Salt Creek and South Fork of the Powder River
- ❖ New monitoring sites were developed along Willow Creek, Posey Creek, Teapot Creek, and Murphy Creek in an attempt to identify the source of selenium that causes the impairment on the South Fork of the Powder River.
- ❖ Watershed Planning was started in an attempt to improve the quality of water within the PRCD.



# RANGELAND MANAGEMENT

**Rangeland Management Goal:** The Powder River Conservation District will promote programs to assist landowners with decisions and options for proper management of rangelands. The district will work in cooperation with other county, state, and federal agencies.

## Work Cooperatively with the NRCS

- ◇ **EQIP Contracts**
  - ◇ 9 new 2007 contracts have been awarded with the main focus on stockwater development
- ◇ **Conservation Plans**
  - ◇ Proper Grazing
  - ◇ Irrigation Water Management
- ◇ **Stockwater Pipeline Designs**
  - ◇ Over 20 miles of Stockwater Pipeline has been designed during the 2006 Fiscal Year.
- ◇ **Local Work Group**
  - ◇ Established local priorities and ranking criteria for local applications
- ◇ **Town of Kaycee Watershed**
  - ◇ Sponsors: Town of Kaycee, PRCD, NRCS
  - ◇ NRCS has completed the Kaycee Flood Protection Design for the town, and will have the Draft Environmental Assessment completed by the first of September.



Design Engineer, Rex Stambaugh and State Engineering Geologist, Stan Mitchen drilled soils samples along the proposed flood wall to determine the water table and soil structure.

## Work Cooperatively with the BLM and Stock Trail Users CRM To Improve Stock Trail

- ◆ **Develop Reliable Water Sources**
  - ◆ The PRCD and the Kaycee Stock Trail Users began working on gaining approval to start water development projects on the Stock Drive. Construction of projects should begin in late summer of 2007.
- ◆ **Maintain Fences**
- ◆ **Control Noxious Weeds**
  - ◆ Worked towards developing a plan with the BLM and Johnson County Weed & Pest to control noxious weed along the stock trail.