

# Powder River Conservation District

**Annual Report**  
July 1, 2008-June 30 2009

## **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-four 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. Of the total area of the PRCD, approximately 910,510.20 acres are privately owned; approximately 312,422 acres are administered by the Bureau of Land Management; approximately 104,468.10 acres are owned by the State of Wyoming; approximately 3,454.80 are owned by the U.S. Forest Service and approximately 546.90 acres are owned by Johnson County.

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 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. This 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 Wednesday of each month at the PRCD office and are open to the public.

## **CHAIRMAN**

Jason Williams (at-large)

## **VICE-CHAIR**

Amy Icanberry (rural)

## **SECRETARY**

Judy Novakovich (urban)

## **TREASURER**

Greg Cunningham (rural)

## **SUPERVISOR**

George Renkert (rural)

## **DISTRICT PERSONEL**

Anita Bartlett-District Manager

## **NRCS STAFF**

Allison McKenzie-District Conservationist

## **HOW TO CONTACT PRCD**

### **Address:**

350 Nolan Avenue  
P.O. Box 48  
Kaycee, WY 82639

### **Phone:**

(307) 738-2321

### **Fax:**

(307) 738-2107

### **Email:**

Anita.Bartlett@wy.nacdnet.net

### **Website:**

[www.powderrivercd.org](http://www.powderrivercd.org)

# ADMINISTRATION & OPERATIONS

**ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATIONS GOAL:** To be accountable for all public funds and ensure all District programs are carried out in a responsible manner.

## ACCOUNTING

The District continues to maintain responsible financial procedures and records to be accountable of all funds that it receives. The 2008-2009 budget was prepared in accordance with all state statues and submitted to the Johnson County Commissioners, Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts, and the Wyoming Department of Agriculture. All monthly, quarterly, and yearly state and federal reports will be filed in a timely manner.

## TRAININGS

The District staff and/or Board Members attended the following trainings:

- Employee's Association Training
- Animal Grazing Behavior Workshop
- Recreational UAA Training
- Range 501 Workshop
- Roy Roath Grazing Workshop



## MEETINGS

The District Staff and/or Board Members attended the following meetings:

- Wyoming Conservation Districts Employee Association Meetings
- WACD Annual Convention in Gillette
  - Area I meeting in Buffalo
  - Powder River Watershed Steering Committee meetings
  - Buffalo BLM Field office RMP meetings
  - Johnson County Local Work Group meetings
  - Northeast RC&D meetings



## AWARDS

- Supervisor Pete Meike was awarded the WACD Presidential Award for outstanding service to the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts at the 63rd WACD State Convention held in Gillette
- Supervisor Pete Meike was awarded Distinguished Service Award from the PRCO for 42 years of service to the Powder River Conservation District.
- District Manager Anita Bartlett was named the 2008 Area I Employee of the Year at the Area meeting in Buffalo, WY.
- NRCS District Conservationist Allison McKenzie was named the 2008 WACD Outstanding Conservationist
- The PRCO also award the following awards to local members of the community:
  - ◇ Teacher of the Year-Kari Vore (KES 4th Grade Teacher)
  - ◇ Outstanding Cooperator-Willow Creek Ranch
  - ◇ Outstanding Supervisor-Ray Winsor

## PRCO FUNDING

- Johnson County Mill Levy
- Wyoming Department of Agriculture
- Anadarko Petroleum Corporation
- Wyoming Small Water Development Commission
- NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection Program
- Wyoming Community Foundation Grant

# INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

**INFORMATION DISSEMINATION GOAL:** To provide conservation information to the public through a comprehensive media plan.

## Newsletters

The District's Quarterly newsletter "Powder River News" was mailed to more than 300 Southern Johnson County households, four times last year. Included in these newsletters was information regarding District and NRCS activities, events, and educational articles on a variety of natural resource topics.

## Website

This past year the District revamped our website to make it more eye appealing and user friendly. The District continues to update the website monthly to keep the public updated on it's programs and activities.

## Media

Numerous news articles and advertisements were published in the Kaycee Community Voice, Buffalo Bulletin, and the Wyoming Livestock Roundup detailing the District's activities, projects, programs, and other information.

January 2009

### Powder River News

INSIDE THIS ISSUE	
Remembering PRCD Board Members and Friend Ray Winsor	1
Member and Friend Ray Winsor	1
Four Mile Reservoir	2
Outfitting Conservation	2
District Plot	3
Tree Sales	4
Field Note	5
Wildlife Escape Program	5
NRCS Conservation	6
Conservation Summit	6
PRCD News at 5000 ft	6
Farm Call	7

**HAPPY NEW YEARS!**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Joan Wilshire  
Drg. Cunningham  
Amy Hankins  
Judy Knalson

**DISTRICT STAFF**

District Manager - Andy Buel

**NRCS STAFF**

District Conservationist - Alton Williams

**Remembering PRCD Board Members and Friend Ray Winsor**

On December 18, 2008 the PRCD Board mourned the untimely loss of our member and friend Ray Winsor. Ray was a dedicated local landowner, but a dedicated member of the "Conservation Team" and District conservation staff. He served on the Board of Directors for the Wyoming Association of Conservation Friends, the Wyoming State Land Use Board, and was a member of the United States Deer, Bojig, Cheesecake, and the Mountain Team Jockey Association.

Ray was not only a dedicated local landowner, but a dedicated member of the "Conservation Team" and District conservation staff. He served on the Board of Directors for the Wyoming Association of Conservation Friends, the Wyoming State Land Use Board, and was a member of the United States Deer, Bojig, Cheesecake, and the Mountain Team Jockey Association.

It will be remembered by everyone here at Powder River Conservation District. Please take a moment to express your condolences to the family and friends of Ray Winsor.



# TREE PROGRAM

**TREE PROGRAM GOAL:** To promote the planting of trees that will improve our watersheds, benefit the environment, our communities and aid in the conservation of our natural resources.

## Tree Program

- Provided informational handouts on planning, planting, and the maintenance or windbreaks and shelter belts.
- Made the tree planter available to landowners for the planting of seedling trees.
- Donated approximately 80 seedling Colorado Blue Spruce trees to the Kaycee Elementary School for the Adopt a Tree Program.
- Donated large stock Poplar & Spruce Trees to the Kaycee FFA to begin a shelter belt around their newly constructed FFA barn.



## Tree Sales

Provided a variety of large stock trees, shrubs and seedlings to the community. Approximately 660 seedling trees and 100 large stock trees and shrubs were ordered and planted for conservation purposes.

# EDUCATION/OUTREACH

**EDUCATION/OUTREACH GOAL:** To strengthen, expand, and build a strong public education and outreach program that will create an understanding of natural resource conservation through a variety of youth and adult education opportunities.

## YOUTH EDUCATION

### • Ag In The Classroom Activities

This past year the PRCD visited the Kaycee Elementary School classrooms to present a variety of Ag in the Classroom activities that included:

✧ *The Miraculous Seed*-students dissected monocot and dicot seeds to learn the differences in these types of seeds. They also germinated different types of seeds in order to see how different types of seeds grow.

✧ *Transplanting*-students transplanted seeds that they grew. Through this process they learned why plants need such things as soil, water, and sun for continual growth.

✧ *What is a Mineral?*-a series of six hands on experiments students learned to identify 20 different minerals based on the characteristics of luster, color, streak, hardness, cleavage, fracture, and other special characteristics.

✧ *Mapping Skills*-KES 3rd graders learned how to identify parts of a map, read different types of maps, and how government agencies use maps for agricultural purposes.

✧ *Simple Machines in Agriculture*-KES 3rd Graders that a variety of simple machines can be found in the world of agriculture. They can include such things as: shovels, wheel borrows, axes, windmills, and plows.

✧ *Ice Cream in a Bag*-4th graders learned how different types of plant and animal by-products combined to make an end-product such as ice cream.

### • World Water Monitoring Day

This year the PRCD and KES fifth grade students recognized World Water Monitoring Day through a water sampling/testing experiment.

### • Adopt a Tree Program

The PRCD continued its Adopt A Tree Program this spring with the Kaycee Elementary Students. Each KES student was able to take home a Colorado Blue Spruce seedling tree to plant. This year along with being able to take home a tree, students learned about the importance of Arbor Day and the role trees play in the world today.

### • 4th Grade Job Shadow

This year one 4th Grade Student was able to come to the PRCD office and Job Shadow the District Manager every Wednesday afternoon in April and May. This student learned about the various aspects of what a conservation district does, as well did several activities incorporating GIS, Soils and mapping as the student had a great interest in these topics.

### • The PRCD sponsored the Natural Resource 4-H Award at the 2008 Johnson County Fair

### • The PRCD worked with Boys & Girls Club to promote agriculture.



# EDUCATION/OUTREACH

## YOUTH EDUCATION CONTINUED...

- **Johnson County 4-H Natural Resource Skill-a-Thon**  
This past March District Manager Anita Bartlett participated in the Johnson County 4-H/YCMA Natural Resource Skill-a-Thon. This program is set up to teach the area youth about the natural resources around them, including, wildlife, forest, soil, and water. Anita taught the participants about the web of life and how all plants and animals rely on each other and the sun to survive.
- **Black Hills Natural Resource Youth Camp**  
This year District Manager Anita Bartlett and six youth from Kaycee attended the Black Hills Natural Resource Youth Camp, which is designed to give young people the opportunity to experience the natural world and its resources through hands-on-activities. Anita Bartlett also served as the director and was actively involved in the planning, organization, and running of this camp.
- **Kaycee Middle School Ecology Camp**  
A three day Ecology Camp was held at HR Camp near Laramie Peak. Students from Kaycee Middle School studied forest 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, they learned about watershed management and how the multiple uses of a watershed effect water quality .



## ADULT EDUCATION

- **Annual Virtual Tour**  
Held in conjunction with the Johnson County Weed and Pest and the Lake DeSmet Conservation District, this virtual tour highlighted the projects and efforts made by these conservation groups to improve the natural resources within Johnson County.
- **Range 501 Class**  
The PRCD worked with the WY section of the Society for Range Management to put on this class where the fourteen participants learned about prescribed fire, management of invasive weeds, methods of livestock distribution, riparian and watershed function, stream improvements through grazing, interactions among livestock and wildlife, sustainable ranching, balancing forage demand with supply, and grazing management planning.
- **Roy Roath Range Workshop**  
Partnering with the Campbell County CD, Weston County NRD, Wyoming Game and Fish, the NRCS and the Northeast Wyoming Sage Grouse Working Group the PRCD hosted one of three workshops where DR. Roy Roath gave individualized assistance to improve grazing and rangeland management to benefit livestock and sage grouse.
- **Rotary Club Presentation**  
District Manager Anita Bartlett gave a presentation on the District's programs and services to the Buffalo Rotary Club.
- **Conservation Update**  
The PRCD hosted its annual conservation update for local landowners, elected officials, and oil and gas companies. This past year the update featured updates by the Johnson County Weed & Pest, NRCS, and the Powder River CD. As well, presentations by Anadarko Petroleum on reclamation and WWC Engineering on the District's water quality,

# SPECIAL PROJECTS

**SPECIAL PROJECTS GOAL:** To provide technical assistance on projects to residents of Southern Johnson County that targeted in other project areas.

## SPECIAL PROJECTS

- **Hazardous/Household Waste Collection Day with Lake DeSmet C. D.**  
The PRCD work with Lake DeSmet Conservation District and other sponsors to hold a Hazardous Waste Collection Day in Buffalo for the people of Johnson County. There was a great turn out and a lot of waste was collected.
- **Arbor Day Celebration**  
During the 4th Annual Arbor Day Celebration Kaycee Mayor Allen Streeter read the Arbor Day proclamation and spoke about the importance of Arbor Day. This celebration was held in conjunction with the Kaycee Gardening Clubs annual gardening party.
- **2008 Governors Natural Resource Tour**  
Anita Bartlett, PRCD's District Manager served on the steering committee to plan and organize the 2008 Governors Natural Resource Tour which showcased Johnson and Sheridan Counties. The steering committee spent five months planning the tour. The Governor and invited guest visited a wide variety of conservation projects and historical sites such as the Powder River Salt Cedar removal project, the Tipperary Sage Grouse/Leafy Spurge project, Lake DeSmet, the Story Fish Hatchery, and the Occidental Hotel.
- **Free Well Water Testing Day**  
In September the District hosted its first Free Well Water Testing Day. Approximately 30 private wells were tested for nitrates, nitrites, hardness, pH, and bacteria. Seventeen of these wells tested positive for bacteria and the district worked with the landowners to treat and re-test the wells. All seventeen wells were successfully treated and tested negative for bacteria.
- **Middle Fork Gauging Station**  
The PRCD worked with the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration/National Weather Service (NOAA/NWS) out of Riverton to install a gauging station on the Middle Fork of Powder River to monitor the quantity of water flowing in the stream. This station was installed far enough up stream of Kaycee warn the town if flood waters are detected.
- **Russian Olive Removal Program**  
The PRCD partnered with local landowners, Johnson County Weed & Pest, and contractors to begin removing Russian Olive Trees from the stream banks of the Middle Fork of Powder River as it flows through Kaycee.
- **Emergency Watershed Protection Project**  
The District worked cooperatively with the NRCS, JC Commissioners, JC Road & Bridge, and the Harold Jarrard Park Board to remove the old flood protection berm to allow flood waters to flow quickly and easily out of Kaycee. Measures were also taken to protect the building and rodeo facilities at HJP.
- **WCDEA Mentoring Program & New Employee Packets**  
The PRCD District Manager worked with the District Managers from the Weston County NRD, Natrona County CD, and the Crowheart-Dubois CD to develop a Mentoring Program and Employee Packets for new district employees. These packets will be distributed out of the PRCD office in a hope to help new employees adjust to their new positions with greater ease.
- **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 Johnson County.



Before



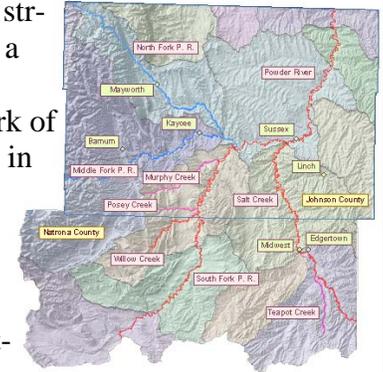
Getting Closer

# WATERSHED PLANNING

**WATERSHED PLANNING GOAL:** Promote and protect the quality of Wyoming's waters, reduce siltation of streams channels and reservoirs, promote wise use of Wyoming's water. Continue working towards removing impaired streams from the 303(d) list.

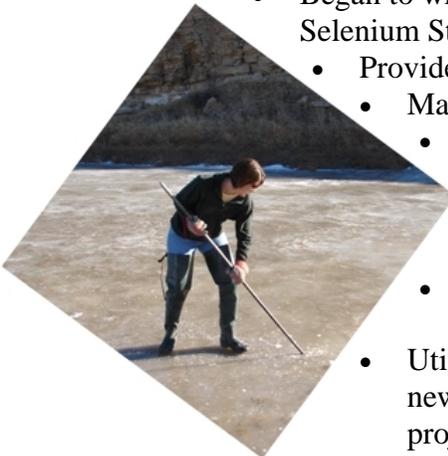
## WATER QUALITY

- The PRCD continued to monitor the three sites set up on the South Fork of Powder River, Willow Creek, and Murphy Creek to determine current water quality of these streams, and to see if implemented best management practices were making a difference in water quality.
- Began winter water quality monitoring on the three sites on the South Fork of Powder River, Willow Creek, and Murphy Creek to see if there is a trend in selenium concentrations during different seasons.
- Completed the Powder River Watersheds Water Quality Management Plan. This plan encompasses the Southern end of Johnson County and a portion of Northern Natrona County.
- Utilized the District's Watershed Inventory to prioritize watershed activities within the District.
- Provided activities to the local schools and youth organizations targeting the importance of water quality.
- Hosted a Free Well Water Testing Day to test for nitrates, nitrites, pH, and bacteria.
- Worked with cooperators to address water quality concerns through USDA programs.



## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POWDER RIVER WATERSHED WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

- Began to write a Use Attainability Analysis to address Site Specific Criteria for the Selenium Standard on Murphy Creek.
  - Provided DEQ an annual update on the progress of the watershed plan.
  - Maintained local partnerships to coordinate watershed planning efforts.
    - Secured the funding from the Wyoming Department of Agriculture, through the Water Quality Biennium Grant program, to successfully implement items outlined in the watershed plan to improve water quality.
    - Worked cooperatively with the NRCS to provide landowners with recommended BMP's to help reduce non-point source pollution
  - Utilized USDA incentive programs and alternative funding sources for new projects and continued water conservation projects
- Met with the Powder River Watersheds Steering Committee to update them on the progress of the watershed plan.
- Hosted a reclamation workshop to address soil disturbance near or around water sources.
- Attended water quality trainings offered by WACD.



# NATURAL RESOURCES

**NATURAL RESOURCES GOAL:** The Powder River Conservation District will promote programs available to assist landowners with decisions and options for proper management of range, pasture, and haylands. The district will work in cooperation with other county, state, and federal agencies.

## WORK COOPERATIVELY WITH THE NRCS

- **EQIP Contracts**
  - ✧ 5 new 2009 contracts have been awarded with the main focus on stockwater development
- **Conservation Plans**
  - ✧ Proper Grazing Management
  - ✧ Irrigation Water Management
- **Stockwater Pipeline Designs**
  - ✧ Over 13 miles of Stockwater Pipeline was been designed during the 2008-2009 Fiscal Year.
- **Irrigation**
  - ✧ TTT Irrigation Improvements within the South Fork Watershed
- **Dull Knife Dam**
  - ✧ Worked on the Emergency Action Plan and finding funding for the rehab of the dam.
- **Wetland Reserve Program**
  - ✧ One application was processed and work has begun on the project.
- **Farm Land Protection Program**
  - ✧ One application was approved and work has begun on the project.
- **Town of Kaycee Berm Design**
  - ✧ With the completion of the E.A. the NRCS has begun to design the berm for the flood protection project with the town of Kaycee.
- **Local Work Group**
  - ✧ Established local priorities and ranking criteria for local applications



## WORK COOPERATIVELY WITH THE BLM AND STOCK TRAIL USERS CRM TO IMPROVE THE STOCK TRAIL

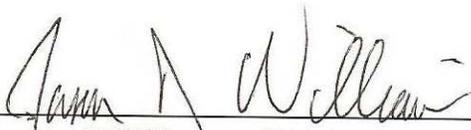
- **Develop Reliable Water Sources**

The PRCD and the Kaycee Stock Trail Users began working the three approved Stock Water Projects. Two of these projects have been completed and the third will be finished the summer of 2009. The two completed projects included restoring a spring and resealing a reservoir with Bentonite.
- **Maintain Fences**
- **Control Noxious Weeds**

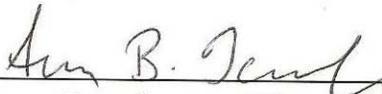
Worked towards developing a plan with the BLM and Johnson County Weed & Pest to control noxious weed along the stock trail.



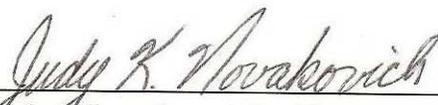
*We, the supervisors of the Powder River Conservation District, as duly authorized by the Wyoming Conservation District Law, hereby adopt this 2008-2009 Annual Report as the culmination of work completed within this conservation district for the 2008-2009 fiscal year.*

  
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Jason Williams, Chair

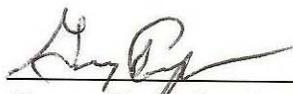
8/12/09  
Date

  
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Amy Icanberry, Vice-Chair

8.12.09  
Date

  
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Judy Novakovich, Secretary

8-12-09  
Date

  
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Greg Cunningham, Treasurer

8-14-09  
Date

  
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George Renkert, Supervisor

8-12-09  
Date