

Powder River Conservation District



Annual Report FY 2016-2017

Mission Statement

The Powder River Conservation District's mission is to provide education and leadership for the conservation of our natural resources, the wise use of Wyoming's waters, the improvement of our environment, and the preservation of our agricultural heritage through a responsible conservation ethic.

Powder River Conservation District

The Powder River Conservation District was established in November 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 sixty-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. Of the total area of the PRCO, 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 public.

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 election. 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

William Jones (urban)

VICE-CHAIR

George Renkert (rural)

SECRETARY/TREASURER

Amy Icanberry (rural)

SUPERVISOR

Dan Mahoney (rural)

SUPERVISOR

Kevin Lund (at-large)

DISTRICT PERSONEL

Anita Bartlett-District Manager

NRCS STAFF

Allison McKenzie-District Conservationist
Katie Vaporis-Rangeland Management Specialist
Kassie Bales-Rangeland Management Specialist

HOW TO CONTACT PRCD

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P.O. Box 48
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Email:

Anita.Bartlett@wy.nacdnet.net

Website:

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, account for all funds received. The 2017-2018 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 were filed in a timely manner.

TRAININGS

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

- ❖ Wyoming Conservation Employee's Association Winter Training
- ❖ WACD Water Quality Recertification Training
- ❖ Local Government Liability Pool-SDA Training
- ❖ Project Wet & Wild Training

MEETINGS

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

- ❖ Wyoming Conservation Districts Employee Association Meetings
- ❖ Wyoming Association of Conservation District's Annual Convention in Riverton, WY
- ❖ Area I meeting hosted by the Powder River CD
- ❖ Johnson County Local Work Group meeting
- ❖ Johnson County Commissioner meetings
- ❖ Wyoming State Forestry/Tree Board Meetings
- ❖ Town of Kaycee City Council Meetings
- ❖ Dull Knife Irrigation District Meetings
- ❖ Special District Task Force Meetings
- ❖ Wyoming Public Lands Initiative-Johnson County Meetings



District Manager Anita Bartlett was recognized as the Area I Employee of the Year and the WACD Employee of the Year.

- Anita Bartlett has served as the WCDEA President since November 2013.
- Anita Bartlett currently serves as the Chair of the Johnson County WPLI.

PRCD FUNDING



- Johnson County Mill Levy
- Wyoming Department of Agriculture
- Natural Resource Conservation Services

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

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

Newsletters

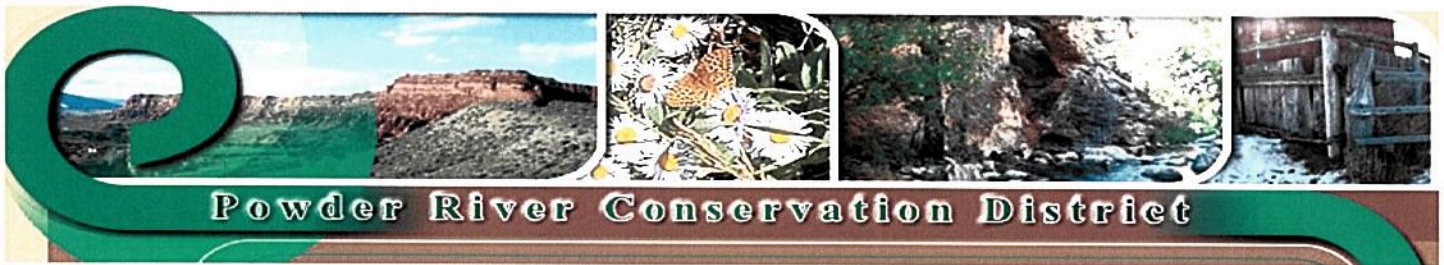
The District's Quarterly newsletter, "Powder River News" was mailed to more than 300 Southern Johnson County households. Included in these newsletters was information regarding District and NRCS activities, events, and educational articles on a variety of natural resource topics.

Website

The District continues to update the website monthly keeping the public updated on 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.



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 of windbreaks and shelter belts.
- Donated approximately 90 seedling Late Lilac shrubs to the Kaycee Elementary School for the Adopt a Tree Program.



- A Narrow Leaf Polar and a Green Ash were planted at the Town of Kaycee Entrance Sign in honor of Arbor Day.

Tree Sales

- Provided a variety of large stock trees, shrubs and seedlings to the community. Approximately 125 seedling trees and 25 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 (KES) and Middle School (KMS) 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 germinated in the Miraculous Seed lesson. Through this extended activity, they learned why plants need such things as soil, water, and light for continual growth after germination.

✧ *What is a Mineral?*-through a series of six hands on experiments students learned to identify 18 different minerals based on the characteristics of luster, color, streak, hardness, cleavage, fracture, and other special characteristics.

✧ *Animal Adaptations & Habitats*-PRCD District Manager, Anita Bartlett taught a session on Animal Adaptations and their Habitats. The youth learned about habitats and adaptations of animals and how these two things are related. They then created their own animal and discussed the special adaptations it had in order to live in its environment.

✧ *Transpiration*-KMS 6th grade worked with District Manager Anita Bartlett to learn how transpiration occurs in plants and why this function is important to plants. They also conducted experiments to show transpiration in plants.

✧ *Flower Dissection*-District Manager Anita Bartlett visited the KMS 6th grade Science class where they dissected Tulips in order to learn the parts of flowers and what those parts are used for in the growth and reproduction of the plant.

✧ *Microscopes*-The PRCD went to the KMS 6th Grade Class to assist them with learning the basics of how to use microscopes.

✧ *Johnson County 3-4th Grade Rendezvous*- The 3-4th grade students in all elementary schools in Johnson County gathered to hold a Rendezvous to learn skills that early pioneers/mountain men would have known. This year Anita taught a lesson on identifying animal tracks.

✧ *Plant Kingdom*-Anita Bartlett taught the KMS 6th grade science class about the different classes of plants within the plant kingdom and how they function together within their ecosystems.



EDUCATION/OUTREACH

YOUTH EDUCATION CONTINUED...

- **Boys & Girls Club of Kaycee's Summer Science Week**

District Manager Anita Bartlett and NRCS Range Specialist Katie Vaporis visited the Boys and Girls Club during their summer program to give presentations on plant identification, water quality and macroinvertebrates.

- **Kaycee Middle School Outdoor Day**

To cap off the school year the Kaycee Middle School students participated in their first outdoor day. This program was designed to teach students about archery, fishing, geocaching, plant identification, and how to make fishing lures. Anita Bartlett, District Manager for the PRCO participated in the activity by teaching the geocaching session.



- **Black Hills Natural Resource Youth Camp**

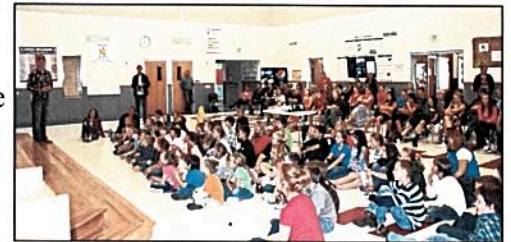
District Manager Anita Bartlett helped to plan the Black Hills Natural Resources Youth Camp. The camp is designed to give young people the opportunity to experience the natural world and its resources through hands-on-activities that taught about animal adaptations, the importance of forest health and fire, water quality, trees, fishing and archery. The PRCO also provided scholarships for 4 Kaycee youth to attend this three day camp.

- **Adopt a Tree Program**

The PRCO continued its Adopt A Tree Program this spring with the Kaycee Elementary Students. Each KES student was able to take home a Late Lilac seedling shrub 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 our environment.

- **Peterson Farm Brothers**

The Powder River CD and the Kaycee PTO worked together to bring Greg Peterson of the Peterson Farm Brothers to speak at the Kaycee School. He spoke to the youth about where our food comes from and why agriculture is so important.



ADULT EDUCATION

- **Wyoming Dam Owners Workshop**

Anita Bartlett, District Manager, spoke to the Wyoming Dam Owners Association on ways Conservation Districts can assist them with different programs and through technical assistance.

- **City Council & County Commissioner Presentation**

District Manager Anita Bartlett gave a presentation on the District's programs and services to the Kaycee City Council, the Johnson County Commissioners and attendees.



- **Emergency Watershed Protection Project Tour**

The PRCO Staff and Board Supervisors met with State Senators Dave Kinskey and Larry Hicks to look at the EWP Projects completed and under construction within the Districts. During the tour they discussed past, current, and upcoming projects for the District. The PRCO has also toured the projects with their County Commissioners on a separate visit.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

SPECIAL PROJECTS GOAL: To provide technical assistance on projects to residents of Southern Johnson County that are not specifically targeted in other project areas or come up unexpectedly.

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

The PRCD worked 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 approximately 20 tons of waste was collected.



- **E-Waste Collection**

In November 2012 the PRCD began to collect e-waste within the community, since this time the district has collected over two tons of e-waste to be recycled. This Program has taken off in the community and keeps a considerable amount of electronic waste out of our landfill.

- **Well Water Testing Day**

In October the District hosted it's Annual Well Water Testing Day. Twenty-four private wells were tested for bacteria (Total Coliform/E. Coli Coliform) and fifteen were tested for Domestic/Livestock/Irrigation use. Three of these wells tested positive for bacteria (Total Coliform) and the district worked with the landowners to treat and re-test these wells.

- **Small Project Cost Share Programs**

The PRCD offers a Small Project Cost Share Program to residents and businesses for projects that conserve soil, water and energy. This past year the Powder River Conservation District funded two small projects one was a xeriscape project and the other was a wildlife habitat planting project. The District's portion of these projects totaled \$1,384.

- **Arbor Day/Tree Plantings at Town Park**

This year, to celebrate Arbor Day, the Powder River Conservation District worked with the Boys and Girls Club of the Big Horns-Kaycee, the Town of Kaycee, and Wyoming State Forestry to plant a Narrow Leaf Poplar and a Green Ash. These trees were planted next to the Welcome to Kaycee Sign in celebration of 11 years as a Tree City USA town.



- **Emergency Watershed Protection Program**



The PRCD and the NRCS began working with local landowners, following flood waters Memorial Weekend 2015, to obtain Emergency Watershed Funding to repair damage incurred on stream banks and structures on the Middle Fork of Powder River and Powder River. Funding was obtained and two additional Exigency EWP projects were completed in FY 16-17. They included Streambank Stabilization at the Sahara Diversion and the replacement of the Nolan Diversion. One final project still needs to be completed at the Harold Jarrard Park and construction of that project will begin in FY 2017-2018.

- **Irrigation and Landscaping Sales**

The PRCD sells drip irrigation hose and parts, weed barrier, rain barrels, composters, recycling bins and irrigation dam material as a service to Southern Johnson County.

NATURAL RESOURCES

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

RURAL COST SHARE PROGRAM

The PRCD offers a Rural Cost Share Program that is designed for large rural projects that make a positive difference on the land by conserving soil, water and energy. Six Rural Cost Share projects were completed this past year with the District's portion totaling 78,674. These projects included two solar pumps/panels, drilling a well, installing a new water storage tank, installing stock water pipelines & tanks, and repairing a reservoir.



WORK COOPERATIVELY WITH THE NRCS

- **Environmental Quality Incentives Program**
 - ✦ Stock Water Development-five active contracts which focus on stock water development.
 - ✦ Sage Grouse Initiative-4 active contracts that focus on the improvement of sage grouse habitat.
- **Conservation Plans**
 - ✦ Proper Grazing Management
 - ✦ Irrigation Water Management
- **Conservation Stewardship Program**
 - ✦ Four active contracts, which focus on rewarding current conservation practices and encourage new conservation efforts.
- **Local Work Group**
 - ✦ Established local priorities and ranking criteria for local NRCS applications

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 Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality 303(d) list.

- Provided activities to the local schools and youth organizations targeting the importance of water quality.
- Worked with EPA/WDEQ/WWC Engineering on the Murphy Creek UAA
- Hosted a Well Water Testing Day to test domestic/livestock/Irrigation use and bacteria.
- Worked with cooperators to address water quality concerns through USDA programs.
- Maintained local partnerships to coordinate watershed planning efforts.
- The PRCD spent \$3,716 towards water quality projects.



We, the Supervisors of the Powder River Conservation District, as duly authorized by the Wyoming Conservation District Law, hereby adopt this 2016-2017 Annual Report as the culmination of the work completed within this Conservation District for the 2016-2017 fiscal year.

William Jones
William Jones, Chair

12-18-17
Date

George Renkert
George Renkert, Vice-Chair

12/15/17
Date

Amy Icanberry
Amy Icanberry, Secretary/Treasurer

12.15.17
Date

Kevin T. Lund
Kevin Lund, Supervisor

12-15-17
Date

Daniel C. Mahoney
Daniel Mahoney, Supervisor

12-15-17
Date