

# Powder River Conservation District



## Annual Report FY 2017-2018

### *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 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-three 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.

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 Tuesday 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) {Resigned December 2017}

Wade Curuchet (rural) {Appointed January 2018}

## **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 Camino-Rangeland Management Specialist

Charlie Bradshaw-Soil 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 accurate records. The 2018-2019 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
- ✧ Project Wet & Flying Wild Training
- ✧ Cowboy Ethics 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 Casper, WY
- ✧ Area I meeting hosted by the Weston County Natural Resource District
- ✧ 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

## Awards/Honors

- **District Manager Anita Bartlett:**
  - Served as the WCDEA President November 2013-November 2017
  - Currently serves as the Chair of the Johnson County Wyoming Public Lands Initiative Committee.
  - Was recognized by the Kaycee PTO for her time spent in the Kaycee Schools.



## 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 and 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 Red-oiser Dogwood shrubs to the Kaycee Elementary School for the Adopt a Tree Program.



- The District assisted with planting 26 trees at the Kaycee Cemetery in honor of Arbor Day.

## Tree Sales

- Provided a variety of large stock trees, shrubs and seedlings to the community. Approximately 550 seedling trees and 12 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 how habitats and adaptations 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 3-4<sup>th</sup> 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 Elementary Incentive Days**

Anita Bartlett participated in three Kaycee Elementary Incentive Days in which she taught youth about density, conductivity, and changes in states of matter through fun and interactive hands-on-activities. These activities included making a density rainbow in a jar, testing the electrical conductivity of fruit, and watching materials change states of matter through the process of making slime.



- **Black Hills Natural Resource Youth Camp**

District Manager Anita Bartlett helped to plan the Black Hills Natural Resources Youth Camp. This 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 PRCD also provided scholarships for eight Kaycee youth to attend this three day camp.

- **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 Red-osier Dogwood 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.



## ADULT EDUCATION

- **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.

- **State Forestry Field Day Presentation**

Anita Bartlett attended the Wyoming State Forestry Field Day to give a presentation on District Projects which landowners can participate in.

- **Emergency Watershed Protection Project Tours**

The PRCD Staff and Board Members hosted several tours of the four EWP Projects in Southern Johnson County. Tours participants included National, State, and County Elected Officials, National and State NRCS Leadership, the Johnson County Leadership class, and local landowners.



- **Soil Health Workshop**

The PRCD and NRCS hosted a Soil Health Workshop that featured Marlon Winger, NRCS Regional Soil Health Specialist for WY, ID, MT.

Participants learned the basics of soil health, the ecological principles and how they impact the soil ecosystem, the impact of soil health on the assessment of natural resource management, the soil disturbances that impact soil health, and the Soil Health Management Principles.



# 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 Clear Creek C. D.**

The PRCD worked with Clear Creek 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. The district has collected over three tons of e-waste to be recycled. Unfortunately we had to end this program in late 2017 due to no longer having a place to recycle e-waste.

- **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 one small cost share project. The District's portion of this project totaled \$1,384.



- **Arbor Day/Tree Plantings at Kaycee Cemetery**

This year, to celebrate Arbor Day, the Powder River Conservation District worked with the Johnson County Cemetery District, the Town of Kaycee, and Wyoming State Forestry to plant 26 large stock trees at the Kaycee Cemetery in celebration of Kaycee's twelve years as a Tree City USA town.

- **Emergency Watershed Protection Program**

The PRCD and the NRCS began working with local landowners, following the flood on 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 in FY 2017-2018 the PRCD completed its final EWP project . The Harold Jarrard Park project began in July of 2017 and was completed in June of 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. One Rural Cost Share project was completed this past year with the District's portion totaling \$17,813.48. The project included the installation of approximately 9,240 feet of stock water pipeline and two stock tanks.



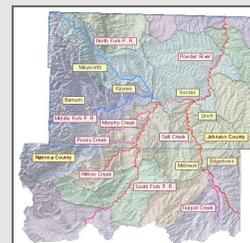
## WORK COOPERATIVELY WITH THE NRCS

- **Environmental Quality Incentives Program**
  - ✧ Stock Water Development—one active contract which focuses on stock water development.
  - ✧ Irrigation Development— one active contract which focuses on irrigation management
  - Sage Grouse Initiative— two active contracts that focus on the improvement of sage grouse habitat.
- **Conservation Plans**
  - ✧ Proper Grazing Management
  - ✧ Irrigation Water Management
- **Conservation Stewardship Program**
  - ✧ Two 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

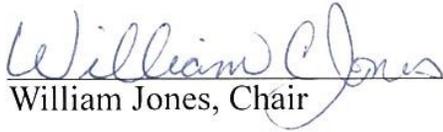
# WATERSHED PLANNING

**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 \$4,342.50 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 2017-2018 Annual Report as the culmination of the work completed within this Conservation District for the 2017-2018 fiscal year.*

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
William Jones, Chair

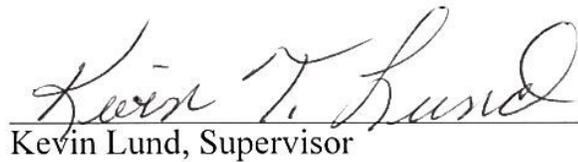
9-11-18  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
George Renkert, Vice-Chair

9-11-18  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Wade Curuchet, Secretary/Treasurer

9-11-18  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kevin Lund, Supervisor

9-11-18  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Daniel Mahoney, Supervisor

9-11-18  
Date