

Winter 2020

# Powder River News

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### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Bill Jones-Chairman

George Renkert-Vice-Chair

Wade Curuchet-Secretary/Treasurer

Dan Mahoney-Supervisor

Kevin Lund-Supervisor

### DISTRICT STAFF

District Manager  
Anita Bartlett

### NRCS STAFF

District Conservationist  
Allison McKenzie

Rangeland Management Specialist  
Kassie Camino

Range Conservationist  
Caleb Gray

Soil Conservationist  
Joel Milos

## WACD 75th Convention

This year District Manager Anita Bartlett and District Supervisor Kevin Lund attended the 75th Wyoming Association of Conservation District (WACD) State Convention via a virtual meeting. District Supervisors and Staff, State and Federal Agencies, Agricultural Producers and other Natural Resource Professionals gathered from across Wyoming to take part in this event from the comfort of their home or office.

During the Convention we listened to speakers including: Governor Mark Gordon, Senator Enzi, Senator Barrasso and Representative Chaney

Anita & Kevin also attended committee meetings that discussed Conservation District Education and Wyoming's Public Lands, Wildlife, Forestry, and Water. and the Annual WACD Board Meeting.

The highlight of the Convention for the PRCD was when District Supervisor Kevin Lund was sworn in as a Area I Director.



## FY 19-20 Accomplishments

### Administration

- Attended Area I meeting, the WACD State Convention, and the WCDEA Winter Training/meeting
- Acted as a cooperating agent to Buffalo BLM Field Office Resource Management Plan revision meetings.
- Attended the EzGrant Webinar training, NRCS Range Training, Barnyards & Backyards Virtual Trainings and a public purchase training.
- Working to complete the Apprentice Conservation Planning Certification process
- Participated in the Local Working Group Meetings, Johnson County Commissioners meetings, Dull Knife Irrigation Meetings, Special District Task Force Meetings, State Technical Committee Meeting, Kaycee Flood Levy Meetings, NRCS Emergency Watershed Protection Program meetings, Johnson County Natural Resource Planning Committee Meetings, and the Johnson County Weed Bounty meetings.
- Public Outreach- Publish articles in local newspaper & published 4 district newsletters, continued to maintain & update the district website, and created a District Facebook page.

### Education

- Adult Education
  - City Council & County Commissioners Presentation
  - Legislative & Commissioner Tour of EWP Projects
  - Leadership Johnson County Presentation
  - District Facebook Educational Posts
- Youth Education
  - Rise & Shine Learning Center Educational Olympics
  - District Facebook Educational videos
  - Ag in the Classroom Activities
  - The Miraculous Seed and Transplanting
  - What Is a Mineral?
  - Microscopes



### Special Projects

- Worked with Town of Kaycee to host a Arbor Day Celebration at their Town Council meeting
- Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day w/ Clear Creek C.D.
- Tree Program



- Approved for funding for 5 Non-Exigency Emergency Watershed Protection Projects due to spring flooding in 2019
- Participated in the Johnson County Weed Bounty Program
- Applied for and received fund from the WY State Forstry Bark Beetle Grant program to thin Douglas Fir infested with Western Spruce Budworm
- Held the PRCD's 1<sup>st</sup> Bi-Annual Photo Contest

### Water Quality

- Offered a free private well water testing day to landowners for them to test their wells for bacteria and Domestic/Irrigation/Livestock use.

### Rangeland Management

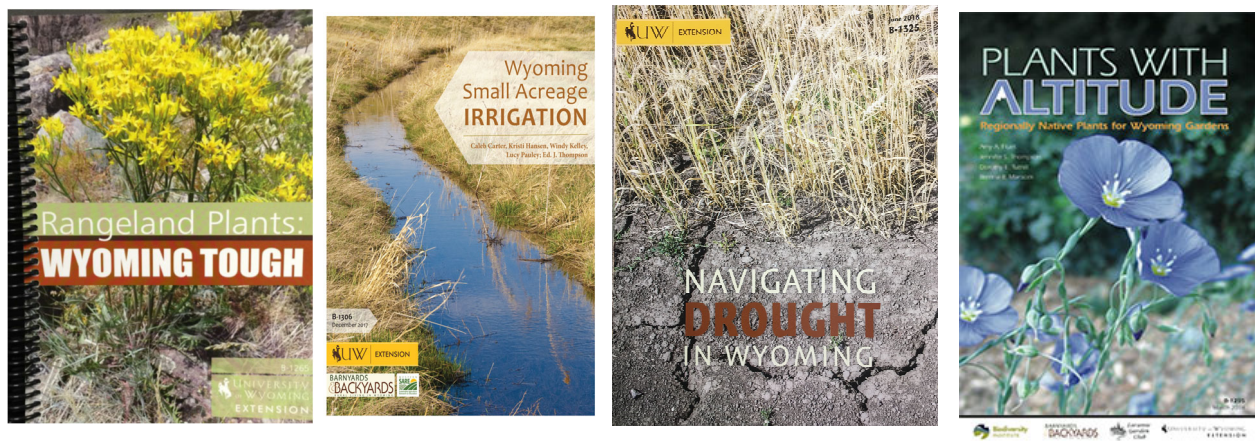
- 4 Rural Cost Share projects were completed this past year. They included the installation of a water pipeline, stock tanks, drilling of a new well, an irrigation pumping system, and an I rrigation conveyance pipeline.



# **FREE WILDLIFE ESCAPE RAMPS** **FOR STOCK WATER TANKS**

PLEASE CONTACT US AT 738-2321 IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN PLACING RAMPS IN YOUR STOCK TANKS.

Stop in and get your Free copy of these great books!!!



## **RECYCLING BINS**

Powder River Conservation District is offering stackable recycle bins to promote recycling efforts that will increase our landfill's life span.

**Recycling Bins** 18 gal./72 qt. stacking bin with an easy access front flap. Ideal for recycling or dry storage - indoor or outdoors. Stacks with or without the lid. Front lid stays open when desired.



Recycle bins are being offered for \$7.50 a 50% cost-share rate—original price \$15.00.

## **Emergency Watershed Protection Program Update Construction planned for 2021**

As many of you remember the spring of 2019 brought flood waters to the Middle Fork of Powder River. With the flood waters there was damage done to diversion structures and stream banks in the Middle Fork. The PRCD working with the NRCS applied for funding through the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program. Five projects were identified and the PRCD received funding to repair 3 diversions, 1 irrigation structure and complete some streambank stabilization on the Middle Fork of Powder River.

Along with the NRCS funding so far the PRCD has received grant funding from the Wyoming Natural Resource Foundation and the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust. Partners for these project include: NRCS, JC Commissioners, Town of Kaycee, Private Landowners, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Wyoming Department of Transportation, Wyoming Natural Resource Foundation, Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust, Trout Unlimited, and the Powder River Irrigation District.

The PRCD and the NRCS have spent the last year and a half working to get these projects designed and ready for construction. The challenges of COVID-19 has extended the construction of these project further out than the District would have liked, however, this upcoming spring-fall will see a considerable amount of projects constructed on the Middle Fork.



**15 Mile EWP Project**-This project will stabilize the 15 Mile irrigation overflow structure and the banks around the structure. This project will insure that the Sahara Ditch irrigators receive their irrigation water. Designs for this project should be finalized by the end of the year and the bid/contracting process will begin in January 2021.

**Town of Kaycee/HJP EWP Project**-This project will stabilizing the streambank from the Old HWY 87 Bridge on Nolan Avenue through the beginning the of the previous HJP EWP project. One cross vane will be installed and the 90 degree bend in the river will be widened to allow for improved water flow. Toe rock will be installed to stabilize the streambanks. This project is under contract and as soon as weather and stream conditions allow construction will begin.



**Gosney/Moffet/Harlan Diversion EWP Projects**- These three projects will replace the traditional push up diversion structures with a cross vane structure, as well streambank stabilization measures and cross vanes will be installed down stream. At this time 60% designs have been completed and the PRCD hopes to have final designs early next year and be under contract for construction by June of 2021. Permitting for

these projects has begun and the district continues to look for grant funding to help off set the cost of the projects not covered by the NRCS. We look forward to seeing these improvements installed in Southern Johnson County.

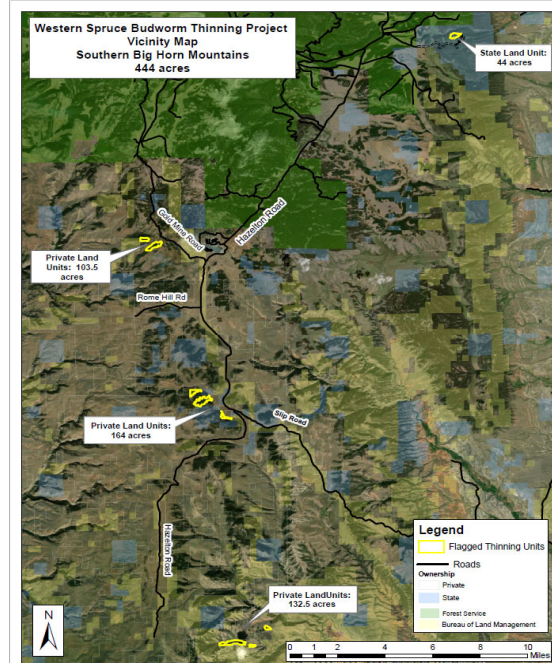
## Western Spruce Budworm Thinning Project Summer/Fall 2021

The southern end of the Big Horn Mountains Douglas Fir population is currently being devastated by a Western Spruce Budworm epidemic. The Western Spruce Budworm (WSBW), or *Choristoneura freeman* is a native species to the Big Horns, and as such, it is not the objective of the Powder River Conservation District's Forest Health Program to eliminate the species, but rather to decrease the population to levels that are less damaging. Currently 67,000 acres of Douglas Fir and mixed-conifer forest are infected by the WSBW and causing major defoliation damage in the southern Big Horn Mountains.

The Powder River Conservation District has begun to implement a program that:

1. Provides a proactive forest health thinning component for private and state lands
2. Viably treats WSB infected Douglas fir and mixed-conifer forested areas through mechanized thinning
3. Capitalizes on a large-scale, multi-landowner project.

Phase 1 of this landscape level active management will be to thin approximately 444 acres on state and private acres. The PRCD will work with the WSFD to thin thick stands of Douglas Fir and mixed-conifer stands of multiple age groups which will help decrease WSBW infestation rates. Technical assistance from WSFD will help determine which trees are suited for wood production, are important for wildlife habitat, and will facilitate successful regeneration. This project will benefit state and private lands and will build lasting relationships for the continuum of active forest management in this area of the Big Horn Mountains.



The PRCD has secured WSF grant funding to complete this project during the summer/fall of 2021. A contractor has been selected and as soon as weather and ground conditions allow they will begin the thinning projects. The PRCD is extremely excited to take on this new project and venture into improving a natural resource we had previously not worked on.

## The Year 2020

While this past year has been a new adventure and challenge for many of us, the PRCD and Johnson County NRCS staff would just like to thank each and everyone of you for your continued support of our programs and projects. We have had to adapt and change in some ways how we do business and you all have adapted right along with us.

It is our hope that while 2020 has been its own unique challenge that we were able to meet your needs and assist you to the best of our ability. We look forward to our continued partnerships and please feel free to contact us for any assistance we can offer.

The PRCD Crew  
Bill, George, Kevin, Wade, Dan & Anita

The NRCS Crew  
Allison, Kassie, Caleb & Joel

*Merry Christmas & Happy New Year*

*Powder River Conservation District  
P.O. Box 48  
Kaycee, WY 82639*

Non-Profit  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Kaycee, WY  
Permit #1



PRCD Board Meeting: Tuesday, January 12, 2021 at 6:30 pm in the District Office

PRCD Board Meeting: Tuesday, February 9, 2021 at 6:30 pm in the District Office

PRCD/NRCS Office Closed: January 18th for Equality Day



The PRCD is an equal opportunity employer.

Find us on the web: [www.powderrivercd.org](http://www.powderrivercd.org)