



*“Serving Uinta County since 1948”*

***Long Range Plan***

***2010-2015***

# Uinta County Conservation District

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***Mission:*** *To promote and protect agriculture, to provide leadership, information, education and technical assistance for the development and improvement of our natural resources, to protect the tax base and promote the health, safety and well being of Uinta County residents.*



# **Introduction**

The Uinta County Conservation District has developed a Long Range Plan to identify and prioritize natural resource concerns within Uinta County. The plan identifies the objectives of the Conservation District and serves as a guide for future conservation work. The Long Range Plan will encompass a period of five (5) years.

The Uinta County Conservation District was organized on June 4, 1948, as the Bridger Valley Soil and Water Conservation District, in accordance with Wyoming State Law. The original District included only the eastern portion of Uinta County, however, landowners on various occasions petitioned and were included in the District. The District now includes and services all of Uinta County and the name of the District has been changed to the Uinta County Conservation District (UCCD). UCCD covers approximately 1,331,200 acres of federal, state and private land.

UCCD is one of 34 Conservation Districts across the State of Wyoming. Conservation Districts are situated under the umbrella of the Wyoming Department of Agriculture that oversees conservation budgets, rules, regulation, programs and activities. Each District is then responsible for the conservation of natural resources in their local area.

The Uinta County Conservation District receives a majority of its funding through a mill levy which was passed at the general election in 1988. In addition, the District receives a state appropriation and generates a minimal profit through its seedling tree program and equipment rental program. This funding is used to support the programs administered by UCCD.

UCCD is administered by a board of five locally elected supervisors who each serve a four year staggered term. The elected supervisors serve voluntarily, without compensation. The Districts current Board of Supervisors are:

- Shaun Sims, Chairman
- Kelly Guild, Vice Chairman
- Spencer Eyre, Secretary/Treasurer
- Kevin Condos
- Dennis Cornelison
- Carol Hamilton, Associate Supervisor

The purpose of this Long Range Plan is to provide Uinta County residents with important guidelines for future conservation work. In the process, the District is charged with the responsibility to implement progressive practices and programs to maintain the natural resources of the county at the level of quality and abundance that meets the needs of the people of Uinta County. The District will work to maintain clean air and water and stable watersheds with a high level of diversity to allow our citizens to continue to enjoy their current lifestyle. Open, honest communication at the local level will help to build a stable program that will guarantee a healthier natural resource environment for all of us to reside in.

## **Water Quality**

**Goal:** To preserve and protect the quality and quantity of water in Uinta County.

**Objectives:**

- Continue to address the streams in Uinta County that have been placed on the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality's 303(d) list of impaired waterbodies.
- Continue to implement the Blacks Fork/Smiths Fork and Upper Bear River watershed management plans in an effort to improve these watersheds in Uinta County using a cooperative, community-wide approach.
- Continue the Districts role in monitoring streams in Uinta County to gather baseline, credible data that can be used in future watershed planning and project implementation.
- Provide technical assistance to landowners about Best Management Practices that will help reduce non-point source pollution and improve water quality.
- Take a local leadership role to address Animal Feeding Operation and Septic System issues that have the potential to contaminate live water and inform landowners of new regulations.



## **Education and Public Information**

**Goal:** To increase public awareness of the importance of preserving our natural resources.

**Objectives:**

- Provide conservation information to the public through quarterly newsletters, newspaper articles, and brochures.
- Provide and promote educational opportunities through tours, seminars, workshops and displays at local events.
- Visit local schools and organizations to promote the Districts natural resource conservation education programs.
- Continue to promote Wyoming Agriculture in the classroom.
- Sponsor students interested in attending WyRED.
- Continue to participate in Soil and Water Stewardship week.
- Aggressively seek out opportunities to educate Educators about our natural resources by offering more teacher sponsorships.
- Educate youth, adults and the public about District programs through “hands-on” participation with District projects such as water quality testing, tree plantings, etc.
- Participate in World Water Monitoring Day to increase awareness of the importance of water quality.
- Work to become actively involved in the community and promote the Conservation District.
- Work cooperatively with other agencies and organizations to promote programs and natural resource education.



## **Tree Program**

**Goal:** To encourage tree plantings that will reduce soil erosion, provide wildlife habitat and benefit the environment and the community.

**Objectives:**

- Continue to provide low-cost, high quality seedlings for the residents of Uinta County.
- Provide technical assistance for the design and planting of windbreaks, shelterbelts and other conservation plantings.
- Educate the public on proper tree planting and care through seminars, workshops, newsletters and brochures.
- Solicit participation in the Districts windbreak cost share program that will encourage tree plantings.
- Work with WYDOT and private landowners to identify possible sites in Uinta County for living snow fence plantings.

## **Wildlife and Range Management**

**Goal:** To promote and protect wildlife while encouraging proper range management techniques.

**Objectives:**

- Provide technical assistance and information to landowners on proper small acreage management, rangeland use and help to create and enhance wildlife habitat.
- Offer rental equipment to Uinta County landowners for rangeland and pasture improvements.
- Explore the opportunity for hiring a Range Management Specialist that will assist producers with range monitoring and grazing management on private and public lands to create a successful, cooperative range monitoring program.

## **Land Use Planning**

**Goal:** Improve livestock production, wildlife habitat, recreation and watershed protection while improving and maintaining productivity on rangelands and pasturelands in Uinta County.

**Objectives:**

- Maintain agriculture and open space as a vital land use that is important to the county economy.
- Continue to coordinate with government agencies to complete a comprehensive soil survey for Uinta County.
- Involve the public in the land use planning process through public meetings.
- Provide technical information and recommendations on all subdivision reviews.
- Provide assistance for conservation planning.
- Actively participate in County planning and zoning.
- Continue to seek Cooperating Agency Status with Federal Agencies on resource plans and decisions that will directly influence the residents of Uinta County.
- Provide the Lawson Aerator for rent to Uinta County landowners to aid in range and pasture improvements and in enhancing wildlife habitat.



## **Other District Programs**

**Goal:** Provide information and technical assistance for natural resource related projects that are not addressed through other District programs.

**Objectives:**

- Work cooperatively with Uinta County Weed and Pest District to eradicate noxious weeds in Uinta County through education about identification and proper removal.
- Encourage recycling by providing re-useable grocery totes to residents, participating in America Recycles Day events and offering educational activities for youth and adults.
- Provide information about proper management of small acreages by developing a small acreage management program.
- Provide assistance to local entities and organizations on community enhancement and urban conservation programs.

## **District Operations**

**Goal:** To be accountable with all public funds and ensure all District programs are carried out in a responsible manner.

**Objectives:**

- To provide proper training and education to all board members about Conservation Districts and their role as elected supervisors.
- Continue to recruit Associate Board members that demonstrate a commitment to providing local conservation guidance to the citizens of Uinta County.
- Continue to build working relationships with other local, state and federal agencies.
- Provide opportunities for staff training.