

UINTA COUNTY
Conservation District



**Uinta County
Conservation District**

**Annual Report 2019-2020
Plan of Work 2020-2021**

What is a Conservation District?

Conservation districts are local units of government established under state law to carry out natural resource management programs at the local level by providing technical assistance and tools to manage and protect land and water resources in U.S. states and insular areas. There are more than 3,000 conservation districts in the United States. In Wyoming, there are 34 conservation districts in 23 counties.

Conservation districts may go by different names such as Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Soil Conservation Districts, Resource Conservation Districts, or other similar names. However, they all share a single mission: to coordinate assistance from all available sources; public and private, local, state and federal, to develop locally-driven solutions to natural resource concerns.

History of Conservation Districts

During the Dust Bowl of the 1930's, it became clear that there was a need to conserve natural resources, specifically soil. Intensive efforts were made by state and local governments to develop adequate programs for soil conservation. However, those agencies often ended up competing with each other and local leadership was needed to coordinate their efforts as well as tie them into local conditions and priorities. In March of 1941, State Legislature passed an act to establish conservation districts in Wyoming. As subdivisions of the State of Wyoming, conservation districts were to direct programs that protected local, renewable natural resources.

Our Roots

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, several landowners petitioned and were included in the District. The District now includes and services all of Uinta County and the name of the District was changed to the Uinta County Conservation District in 1993.

The Uinta County Conservation District is responsible for directing conservation programs that aim to conserve the soil, water and vegetative resources within our county. This is accomplished through Conservation programs that promote sustainable use of our natural resources. Success and advances in conservation in Uinta County is due to the stewardship of the local landowners and concerned citizens of the county. Funding for programs is received through a mill levy that was passed during general election in 1988. UCCD also receives grant funding through other local, state and federal agencies to get projects on the ground.

LAND USE PLANNING CONTINUED

- Continue participation as a Cooperating Agency during federal land planning processes to represent the interests of the local landowners and land users,.
- Maintain a working relationship with Uinta County Weed and Pest to distribute information on noxious weeds in Uinta County and assist with weed management efforts
- Work with the County Commissioners and County Planner to review statutes for subdivision reviews and provide valuable information regarding the soil, water and other natural resource concerns for each proposed subdivision
- Offer basic soil testing and other soil information including maps and lab information
- Assist with organization of Uinta County Soil Health Day and present range monitoring values and concepts at the workshop
- Assist both large and small landowners with their resource questions and provide science based solutions for the sustainability of the natural resource
- Assist and educate large and small landowners in developing grazing plans and the benefits of proper grazing management
- Educate landowners on the cost share programs that the district offers as well as the many other programs and resources available through other agencies
- Maintain and develop working relationships with federal, state, and county government agencies responsible for natural resource management
- Keep landowners informed on natural resource developments that affect the producers of Uinta County
- Work with landowners to develop conservation plans that addresses their resource concerns and improvement opportunities
- Work with private landowners to complete range monitoring and conservation planning on private land
- Assist private landowners with resource concerns using data from trail cameras where appropriate
- Provide rubber tire water tanks to allow producers to provide water for livestock and wildlife in remote areas



SPECIAL PROGRAMS

GOAL: Provide information, technical and financial assistance for natural resource related projects that aim to improve natural resource stewardship in Uinta County.

OBJECTIVES:

- Work with landowners through UCCDs Natural Resource Projects cost share program to partially fund and complete projects that benefit our natural resources.
- Complete streambank stabilization project on the Smiths Fork that was approved for funding by UCCD board
- Complete the request to begin construction on 4 small water projects funded by the Wyoming Water Development Commissions small water program
- Assist landowners in applying for funding through the Wyoming Water Development Small Water Program
- Promote District cost share programs and encourage more participation
- Promote the Wyoming Water Development Commissions Small Water Program and assist landowners through the application and construction process
- Continue UCCDs Cooperative Agreement with Partners for Fish and Wildlife to provide landowners with technical and financial assistance for habitat and conservation projects.
- Provide assistance to local entities and organizations on community enhancement and urban conservation programs
- Promote and assist residents with future Community Enhancement Grants
- Continue to actively participate on the B.E.A.R. Project Board and support the activities and improvements of the Bear River Greenway
- Hold a well water Testing Day for Uinta County residents
- Develop disaster programs as needed to provide producers with technical and financial assistance in a timely manner.

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:

- Work with and assist BLM and USDA Forest Service with range assessments on grazing allotments
- Offer seeding alternatives that can be used in conjunction with range treatments for various soils and management objectives to increase vegetative cover
- Continue to review and provide recommendations on subdivision reviews as required by the state

Mission: To be a leader in natural resource conservation by providing resources, education, technical assistance and information for the development and improvement of our natural resources, to promote and protect agriculture, protect the tax base and promote the health, welfare and safety of Uinta County residents.

Get to know us

The Uinta County 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 Uinta County during the general election. Supervisors may come from many different occupations, but must reside within the boundaries of Uinta County and must be residents of Wyoming. 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 third Thursday of each month and are open to the public.

Associate Supervisors are also an important part of the District. They are citizens interested in the important role of conservation districts and volunteer their time to attend meetings and provide valuable input, however, they are non-voting members.



Kelly Guild
Chairman (rural)



Dennis Cornelison
Vice Chairman (rural)



Spencer Eyre
Secretary/Treasurer (rural)



Kevin Condos
Member (at-large)



Carol Hamilton
Associate Board Member



Ty Lester
Member (Urban)



Shaun Sims
Member (urban)
Through February 2021

Administration

The UCCD staff oversees the day-to-day operations of the conservation district. They administer conservation programs and provide technical assistance and other services as directed by the Board of Supervisors. Mill levy funding as well as funding from other local, state and federal agencies is administered through the UCCD office. Natural resource education is a key component of UCCDs mission. Through successful outreach efforts, the conservation district can work with land users to provide effective resource management.

- Monthly Board of Supervisors Meetings
- Annual Budget Hearing
- Completed compliance requirements for the Wyoming Department of Ag
- Local Work Group Meeting
- Coalition of Local Governments meetings
- Hosted Area V meeting
- Attended the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts annual meeting virtually
- Completed Annual Report and Plan of Work
- Water Quality Training
- Participated in Wyo Retirement and health insurance webinars
- IT training to understand correct use of office equipment
- Administration of 319, NACD Tech, WWNRT, WG&F, Small Water and other grants



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Katie Lott
Education Coordinator
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WATER QUALITY CONTINUED

- Work with Partners for Fish & Wildlife and other partners to continue Bear River restoration work to replace push up dams and provide streambank stabilization.
- Complete grant tracking, reporting and other administrative tasks for all sources of funding to complete stream restoration projects
- Search out and apply for additional grant monies to assist with stream work in Uinta County.
- Complete final reporting requirements for the NACD Technical grant
- Provide the public with educational materials, tours, workshops and activities to increase awareness of water quality
- Continue providing water quality improvement programs, such as Septic System Remediation, Livestock and other Pastured Animals program, Irrigation Water Management and others

PARTNERSHIPS

GOAL: Develop and maintain partnerships with local, state and federal agencies to encourage multiple-use of our natural resources.

OBJECTIVES:

- Build lasting relationships with local landowners and citizens of Uinta County to further education and conservation work that will benefit local resources
- Work with the USDA Forest Service and Wyoming State Forestry on projects that will improve forest health
- Host a Community Leader event to foster partnerships with our community leaders and keep them informed of current activities and resource concerns
- Stay abreast of federal land planning projects, rule changes and proposed decisions that affect our local constituents
- Coordinate with NRCS, BLM, Partners for Fish and Wildlife, Wyoming Department of Ag, Wyoming Landscape Conservation Initiative, Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust, and Wyoming Game and Fish to work with landowners and complete sound conservation practices and range monitoring
- Continue participation as cooperating agency in state and federal land planning processes and proposed decisions

TREE PROGRAM

GOAL: Offer low-cost seedling trees and shrubs, supplies and technical assistance and information to Uinta County Citizens to encourage the establishment of conservation tree plantings such as windbreaks, living snow fences, shelterbelts, erosion control, wildlife habitat, and more.

OBJECTIVES:

- Hold an annual seedling tree and shrub sale from October through April, providing seedling trees and shrubs and planting materials to Uinta County residents
- Work to provide an online tool for tree information specific to Uinta County that will help residents decide on what species to plant where and how to care for and maintain tree plantings
- Review and update the Windbreak Cost Share Program criteria to allow more opportunities for landowners to participate in the program
- Work with Evanston Parks and Rec to plan and coordinate Arbor Day
- Provide tree supplies such as tree protectors, weedbarrier and polymer to assist with tree plantings.
- Provide technical assistance for tree plantings that includes assistance with design, species selection, planting and maintenance
- Host a tree workshop to educate residents about hazardous tree removal, pruning, proper tree planting and maintenance
- Participate in Arbor Day and provide a seedling tree for participating students in Uinta County
- Provide outreach materials and offer hands-on assistance with local schools and youth organizations about the importance of trees
- Maintain a professional working relationship with Wyoming State Forestry Division and the U.S. Forest Service

WATER QUALITY

GOAL: Work to maintain and improve the quality of water in Uinta County through education, technical assistance and promotion of Best Management Practices.

OBJECTIVES:

- Review and follow the Sampling and Analysis Plans for the Blacks Fork/Smiths Fork and the Bear River
- Maintain working relationships with landowners who provide access for water quality monitoring
- Organize water quality data that was collected in 2021 into useable spreadsheets and charts
- Continue to collect water quality data on Uinta County rivers to measure water quality trends over time
- Work with landowners on future stream restoration projects and practices that improve water quality
- Work to secure funding that can be used to offset the costs of implementing Best Management Practices

Community Enhancement Grants

The purpose of the **Community Enhancement Grant Program** is to encourage natural resource projects that benefit the public. The program provides funding for smaller conservation projects that enhance the community. Grants are available to groups and other organizations for amounts up to \$5,000. This year UCCD awarded 3 grants for the following projects.

- ◇ \$5,000-Lyman Ag Barn Cattle Handling Project, students design and build functional cattle handling facility to benefit animal science students at Lyman High School
- ◇ \$2,500-Remove and Replace Russian Olive trees, Evanston Child Development Center, remove hazardous trees and replace with native trees that will be fenced to provide safety for children and prevent wildlife damage
- ◇ \$2,200-The Bee Project, purchase materials to establish bee hives that will be used to educate homeschoolers and offer classes for 4H
- ◇ \$2,500-Southwest Wyoming Off-Road Trails (SWOT), to sign/mark designated trails of the off-road trail system to protect private property rights
- ◇ \$2,500-Wyoming Stewardship Project to bring quality ag lessons into Wyoming Classrooms

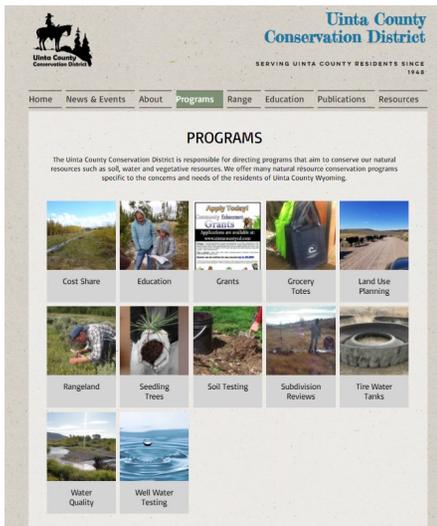


Outdoor Education Grants

The **Outdoor Education Grant Program** is designed to get kids outside where they can participate in hands-on learning that focuses on natural resources and agriculture. The grant can be applied for any time throughout the year for any amount up to \$1,000. Schools and youth organizations throughout Uinta County are eligible to apply. The grants can be used for things such as camp expenses or fees, lodging, meals, student transportation and educational materials.

Community Outreach

- Produced 4 newsletters which were distributed to over 600 households and placed at area businesses
- Updated and improved existing website with more detailed information and interactive forms and videos
- Provided a educational booth at the Wyoming-Utah Ag Days held in Evanston
- Sponsor of Weekly Market Report, Centsible Nutrition and 4H radio program on KNYN 99.1 and KADQ 98.3
- Attended monthly B.E.A.R. Board meetings
- Offered Barnyards and Backyards, Plants with Altitude, Rangeland plants, Redbooks and other publications to the public
- Partnered with Benedicts, a local grocery store, to provide re-useable grocery totes at minimal cost to customers
- Member of Greater Bridger Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Member of Evanston Chamber of Commerce
- Held annual Community Leaders Dinner
- Partnered with Uinta County Weed & Pest to host an Alfalfa Weevils workshop
- Held annual Well Water Testing Day in June with 27 participants and 31 total tests completed on wells in Uinta County.



Contact us...

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Conservation District
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Find us on Facebook @[UintaCountyCD](https://www.facebook.com/UintaCountyCD)

PUBLIC AWARENESS CONTINUED

- Post flyers of events at local businesses and announce programs and events in local newspapers, Facebook, UCCDs website and through email blasts
- Promote the district website through radio advertising during local sports activities.
- Keep local educators up to date with activities and events via in-school flyers, emails, and mailings
- Work with local grocery stores to provide shoppers with low cost, reusable grocery totes that include UCCDs contact information and website printed on them
- Work with local radio stations to sponsor the Northern Ag Network by advertising UCCD programs and upcoming events

OUTREACH / ACTIVITIES

GOAL: To educate the public, of all ages, to create a strong knowledge and understanding of natural resource stewardship and the importance of agriculture.

OBJECTIVES:

- Work with LIS 5th Grade teachers to plan, organize and participate in an Outdoor Field Trip for students in early October at Bridger Lake
- Continue the Adopt A Rancher program in Bridger Valley and Evanston Schools
- Assist the adopted ranchers with planning and hosting a meet the rancher day with the schools
- Promote the Outdoor Education Grant to schools and other organizations in Uinta County
- Actively promote world, national and regional activities such as National Soil and Water Stewardship week, World Water Monitoring Day, Wyoming Agricultural in the Classroom, Earth Day, and Arbor Day
- Create outdoor activities for youth that relate to natural resources, agriculture and create an awareness of conservation.
- Plan informational tours, public workshops and display boards that address current resource concerns
- Continue to offer and promote the Community Enhancement Grant program
- Maintain an informational and interactive website specific to the District's goals, programs, workshops, and other activities
- Promote Wyoming Ag in the Classroom to area schools, home school students, and scout groups
- Work with Wyoming State Forestry to host tree care workshops throughout the year
- Partner with NRCS and landowners to hold Uinta County Soil Health Day
- Host an outdoor teacher workshop to provide local and statewide teachers with UW and PTSEB credits with courses geared toward Natural Resources and Agriculture

ADMINISTRATION

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

OBJECTIVES:

- Hold monthly Board of Supervisor meetings and encourage the public to attend
- Develop and maintain an accurate and legal District budget
- Provide the Board of Supervisors with accurate financial information so they can make appropriate decisions
- Follow Procurement Rule procedures, all public comment and adoption procedures
- Comply with Chapter 1, Wyoming Conservation Districts Financial Policies in order to receive state funding
- Complete all required state and federal reports in a timely manner
- Provide opportunities for professional development of staff and board members
- Attend meetings and trainings to increase knowledge of natural resources and to stay informed of local, state and national conservation issues
- Complete and distribute an Annual Report and Plan of Work
- Attend Area V meeting and WACD convention
- Continue participation as a Bear Board member
- Participate in cyber security for public entities and other IT trainings to make sure district information is safe and secure

PUBLIC AWARENESS

GOAL: To promote community awareness of conservation district activities and programs.

OBJECTIVES:

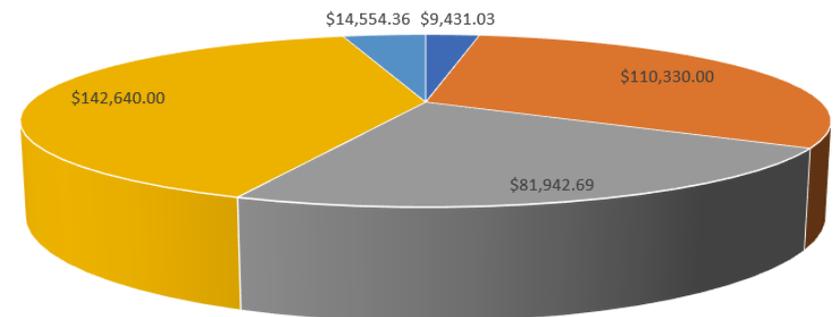
- Participate in tours of the Bear River to showcase projects that have been done to improve fish passage, water quality and streambank stabilization.
- Participate in the Annual Wyoming Weed and Pest Conference
- Organize annual dinner for elected officials and community leaders to educate them about UCCD programs and opportunities.
- Produce a quality newsletter to be distributed quarterly to Uinta County residents
- Distribute newsletter to local dentist offices, health care offices, banks and other businesses to be available for viewing in waiting rooms.
- Maintain participation at community events and public functions
- Find new ways to promote the district website via advertising, Instagram and Facebook

Projects & Partners

- Assisted with an irrigation improvement project, an alternative water source for rotational grazing project and a streambank stabilization project on the Bear River through UCCD's cost share programs - \$9431.03 UCCD, \$6738.20 landowners
- Maintained cooperative agreement with Partners for Fish and Wildlife and completed 3 projects that benefit habitat, stream restoration, fish passage and other important resources -\$9708.19
- Provided funding for 2 large stream projects on the Bear River through the Partners for Fish & Wildlife cooperative agreement -\$72,234.50
- Continue work on three, Bear River restoration projects with grant funding through WDEQ 319 program-used \$43,410
- Closed out one grant from the Wyoming Wildlife & Natural Resource Trust after completing the construction of the Coy Reservoir Enlargement project-\$7462.81
- Completed four small water projects funded through the Wyoming Water Development Commission - \$91,767.63 WWDC, \$103,591.69 landowners
- Received an NACD Technical Assistance Grant in the amount of \$80,000 to help with the cost of engineering for the Bear River Restoration Projects, small water projects and the Henry's Fork Fish Passage projects-used \$14554.36
- Currently administering three grants from the Wyoming Wildlife & Natural Resource Trust to help with the cost to complete stream restoration on the Bear River on the Almy Ditch Project, John Sims and the John Sims Ditch 2 projects-\$285,000
- Currently administering three, 319 grants from the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality for Bear River Restoration -amount remaining \$210,495
- Received funding from WG&F for the Bear River Restoration Projects-\$80,000
- Applied for and received funding for, 4 water development projects through the Wyoming Water Development small water program -\$73,275 WWDC, \$73,275 landowners
- Currently administering an NACD Technical Assistance Grant to help with the cost of engineering for projects on the Bear River, Henry's Fork and small water projects-amount remaining \$65445.64

Project Funding used July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021

■ Uinta County Conservation District ■ Landowners ■ Federal Grant Funding ■ State Grant Funding ■ National Grant



Water Program

- All staff members participated in an audit performed by WDEQ to ensure UCCD is following correct sampling procedures.
- Katie successfully completed water quality re-certification training online and in-person
- Completed E.coli sampling on 7 Blacks Fork Sites, 5 Smiths Fork sites and 1 site on Threemile Creek; 13 total sites, 3 times from May-September
- Collected e.coli, field parameters and discharge at the lowest site on the Blacks Fork every other week from May-September
- Collected lab chemistry samples on all 13 sites once in September 2020 and May 2021
- Completed chemistry sampling on 6 sites on the Bear River, one on Sulphur Creek and one on Yellow Creek in September 2020 and June 2021
- Attended bid-walks, tours and construction meetings on the Bear River Restoration projects
- Worked with Town of Bear River, Forsgren Engineering and contractor to begin work on the Morris Ditch Diversion structure
- Assisted with survey work on future Bear River Restoration Projects

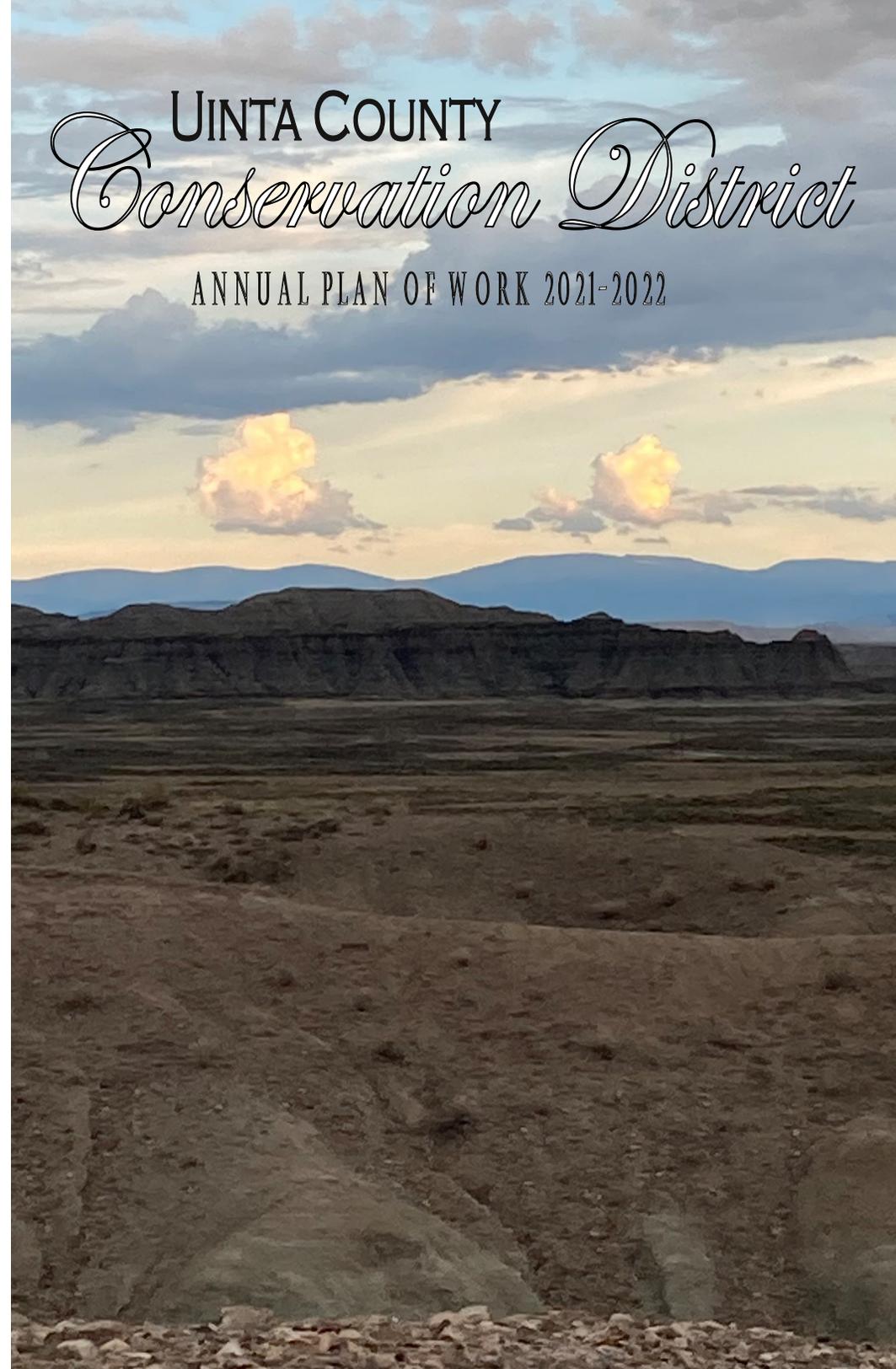


Provided the following cost share programs to address water quality:

- Septic System Remediation Program
- Livestock & Other Pastured Animals Program
- Irrigation Management
- Water Development

UINTA COUNTY *Conservation District*

ANNUAL PLAN OF WORK 2021-2022



FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021

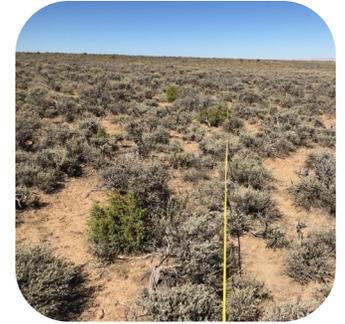
Beginning Balance (cash on hand July 1, 2020)	\$	8,576
Savings and Investments Account	\$	129,843
General Fund CD Balance	\$	333,373
Total Income		
Mill Levy	\$	160,247
State & Federal Grants	\$	375,383
Operating Revenue / Interest	\$	20,662
Total Income	\$	556,292
Expenses		
Administration	\$	90,736
Operations	\$	489,170
Indirect Costs	\$	47,797
Capital Outlay	\$	9,593
Total Expenses	\$	637,296

FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022

Beginning Balance (cash on hand July 1, 2021)	\$	76,354
Savings and Investments Account	\$	365,968
General Fund CD Balance	\$	0
Total Anticipated Income		
Mill Levy	\$	150,000
State & Federal Grants	\$	1,110,002
Operating Revenue / Interest	\$	21,790
Total Anticipated Income	\$	1,281,792
Anticipated Expenses		
Administration	\$	131,297
Operations	\$	1,354,646
Indirect Costs	\$	62,296
Capital Outlay	\$	11,000
Total Anticipated Expenses	\$	1,559,239

Range Program

- Provided garden and lawn soil testing
- Provided 12 subdivision reviews
- Sampled and obtained test results on pasture soils for producers as well as fertilizer recommendations
- Sampled moisture, salinity, and pH to assess lawn conditions.
- Worked with BLM, Forest Service and permittees on federal land range monitoring
- Produced GIS monitoring maps for field work
- Provided rubber tire tanks for producers to aid in grazing distribution of both livestock and wildlife
- Provided technical assistance with soil information and maps, soil testing, plant identification, grazing management, and range monitoring
- Monitored wildlife and livestock impact on upland vegetation and water quality through use of a trail camera survey
- After training, completed an erosion control structure to preserve a wet meadow.



Education Program

- Continued Adopt-A-Rancher program for 3rd grade at Urie Elementary, Mt. View Elementary, Clark Elementary and North Evanston Elementary
- Taught *Enviroscape Model of Pollution* lessons to 16 Children's Learning Foundation Pre-school students
- Taught *Trees/Birds* and *Hairy Caterpillar* lessons to 30 Pre-school students and their parents at Lyman Library Story time
- Taught *Hibernation*, *Hairy Caterpillars*, *Outdoor Fire Safety*, *Enviroscape Model of Pollution*, and *Bees* lessons to 45 Urie Elementary 1st grade students
- Taught *Water Quality/Conservation* lesson to 30 Mt. View High School Students
- Created/Provided GIS topo maps for Mt. View High School Earth Science class *Design a Hiking Trail* project
- Provided water quality monitoring site locations, video footage, and information for Mt. View High School Biology classes; 45 students
- Held poster contest for Soil & Water Stewardship Week for all Uinta County students
- Held annual Bridger Lake Field Trip for 50 LIS 5th grade students, partnering with WY Game and Fish, US Forest Service, and LIS teachers
- Organized and hosted biannual Ag Expo for 500 Uinta County 3rd and 4th graders
- Hosted WyRED at the Uinta County Youth Camp for 15 students and offered UW and PTSB credits for 5 teachers who participated
- Education Coordinator successfully completed University of Wyoming Extension Master Gardener Training



Seedling Tree Program

- Took orders for seedling trees from October through May
- Sold over 2700 seedling trees and shrubs
- Provided design and other technical assistance for 5 windbreaks and other conservation plantings
- Provided weed barrier, polymer and tree protectors to aid in plantings
- Provided diatomaceous earth as a natural bug repellent
- Worked with local residents to address tree concerns including wind and snow damage, aphids, wet wood and identifying and treating other tree diseases
- Put articles in local newspapers to encourage participation in seedling tree program
- Provided information on how to plant and care for seedling trees
- Participated in Evanston's Arbor Day Celebration with 84 5th graders at Uinta Meadows Elementary and provided a free seedling to each participant

