



JULY 2026

UINTA COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Small Water Project Program: What You Need to Know

The purpose of the Wyoming Water Development Commission (WWDC) Small Water Project Program (SWPP) is to participate with land management agencies and sponsoring entities in providing incentives for improving watershed condition and function. Projects eligible for SWPP grant funding assistance include the construction or rehabilitation of the following:

- **Small Reservoirs**
- **Wells**
- **Solar Platforms**
- **Pipelines and Conveyance Facilities**
- **Springs**
- **Wetland Developments**
- **Environmental Projects**
- **Irrigation Works**
- **Windmills**
- **Rural Community Fire Suppression Systems**
- **Recreational Projects**

Activities should improve watershed condition and function and provide benefit for wildlife, livestock and the environment. Projects may provide improved water quality, riparian habitat, habitat for fish and wildlife and address environmental concerns by providing water supplies to support plant and animal species or serve to improve natural resource conditions.

Small Water Project applications are due by November 15th of each year and must be submitted by an eligible public entity. *Applications cannot be accepted from landowners.*

This is where the Conservation District comes in! We *are* an eligible public entity, and we would be happy to work with you to submit an application. We have worked with several landowners in the past to submit small water project applications and are willing to work with you on potential projects. With the application deadline being November 15th, we ask that you contact us by the first part of September so we can work through the application with you and gather all the information needed to submit the application.

Application Deadline:

November 15th
of each year

For more information and to familiarize yourself with the Small Water Projects Program, check out the Wyoming Water Development Office website at [Wyoming Water Development Commission](https://www.wyomingwaterdevelopment.com). You can also call or stop by the Conservation District Office and we can visit with you about your potential project.

Below are a few of the small water projects sponsored by UCCD:



Benefits of Wildlife Escape Ramps in Water Troughs

Wildlife escape ramps are designed to help animals—especially those that fall into or become trapped in livestock troughs, tanks, or other water structures—escape safely without drowning. They offer multiple benefits for both wildlife and human operations.

1. Reduce wildlife mortality

Many species, including small mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians, rely on livestock watering facilities during dry periods. Without escape ramps, these animals can drown when they fall in while drinking or bathing. Properly designed ramps significantly lower drowning rates and help conserve local wildlife populations.

2. Maintain water quality

Dead animals in troughs or tanks can contaminate the water, posing health risks to livestock. Escape ramps prevent fatalities, reducing the need for water treatment and keeping drinking water clean and safe for animals.

3. Support livestock health and productivity

Livestock with consistent access to clean water tend to be healthier, gain more weight, and perform better. By preventing wildlife deaths in water sources, escape ramps indirectly improve animal health and farm productivity.

4. Protect infrastructure

Animals trapped in tanks can damage float valves and other components. Escape ramps can also protect these parts by providing a safe exit point, reducing maintenance costs.

5. Improve wildlife access and safety

Ramps allow animals to use watering facilities without risk, supporting their natural behaviors and reducing stress. This is especially important for species that depend on these sites during seasonal water shortages.

6. Cost-effective and scalable

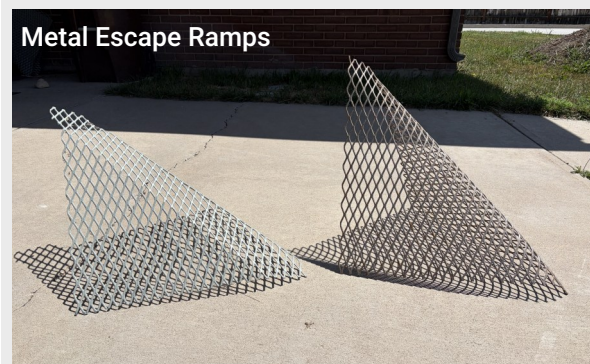
While installation costs vary, ramps are relatively inexpensive to fabricate and install, and can be retrofitted to existing troughs or tanks. They can be placed at regular intervals along tank edges to cover all potential access points.

7. Environmental and conservation value

By reducing wildlife deaths, escape ramps contribute to biodiversity conservation and help maintain ecological balance in grazing and working landscapes.



Fiberglass
Escape Ramps



Metal Escape Ramps

In summary, wildlife escape ramps are a low-cost, high-impact measure that benefits both wildlife and livestock operations by reducing drowning risks, keeping water clean, and supporting healthy ecosystems.

If you use watering sources like tanks or troughs, consider installing a wildlife escape ramp. The Uinta County Conservation District recently discovered several of the fiberglass type ramps that have been stored in a shed for several years. If you are interested in installing these in your troughs, please let us know. They are free on a first come first serve basis. Please let us know as soon as possible if you are interested, otherwise we will give them to other conservation districts around the state that have a use for them.

UCCD also has a few of the metal escape ramps if those work better for you. Give us a call at the Uinta County Conservation District if you would like to install wildlife escape ramps in your water troughs!

Uinta County Conservation District Board of Supervisors

Kelly Guild (Chairman), Spencer Eyre (Vice Chairman), Ty Lester (Secretary/Treasurer), Kevin Condos, Wade Stoddard, Carol Hamilton (Associate Supervisor)

Kerri Sabey

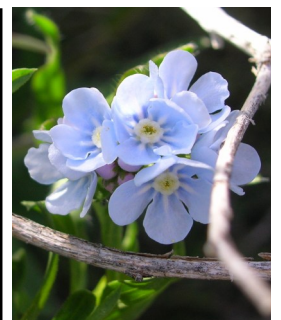
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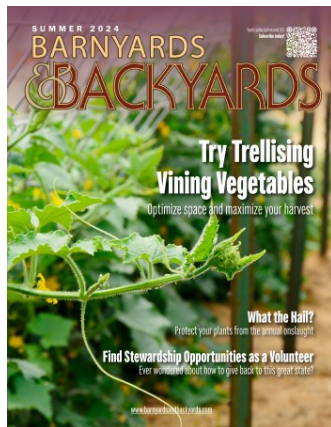
Barnyards & Backyards Magazine

Are you curious about how to live better on your acreage?

Barnyards & Backyards: Rural Living in Wyoming features articles written by natural resource experts.

This informative, concise, and timely quarterly magazine is made for YOU the rural landowner, or backyard enthusiast.

Copies available for FREE at our office!



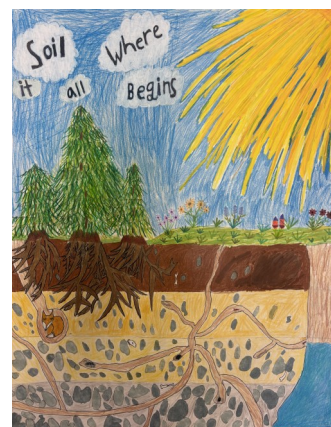
Congratulations to our poster contest participants!!

We truly value the talent of every student and the artistic quality of every poster entered into the contest. We will host the local poster contest again next spring and encourage all students to participate.

Four first place posters will advance to the state contest in October.

To view all winning posters, please visit our website:

www.uintacountycd.com/poster-contest



Local Students Experience WyRED -Wyoming Resource Education Days

Wyoming Resource Education Days is an annual week-long camp for youth and adults featuring hands-on learning, expert instruction, and a state judging contest. Held in a different part of Wyoming each year, WyRED offers a unique opportunity to explore the people, industries, and natural resources that shape our state.

For students, WyRED is a chance to connect classroom learning with real-world careers, ask questions and discover educational pathways that can lead to rewarding professions. For adults, it's an opportunity to deepen their understanding of the challenges and innovations involved in managing Wyoming's natural resources while engaging with organizations and professionals dedicated to the state's future.

Participants interact with industry professionals from agriculture, energy, forestry, wildlife management, conservation, water resources, and environmental science through demonstrations, field activities, and interactive exhibits. They gain insight into how these fields work together to balance economic opportunity with responsible stewardship of Wyoming's land, water, and wildlife.

Uinta County was well represented at this year's camp hosted at Loomis Park Ranch in Daniel, Wyoming. Jim Bridger FFA Advisor, Cari Sue Covolo, took four students from her chapter as well as two students from the Lyman FFA chapter.

Cari had this to say about the camp, "WyRED is an excellent opportunity for the kids to learn about range management, plant science and careers in natural resources. It is one of the best places I can take kids to experience opportunities and see places they might not ever get to otherwise. I appreciate those who work so hard to put on the camp and the industry and individuals that allow us to come tour their places and learn. Thanks to the Conservation District for sponsoring the kids, we really appreciate all you do to support the FFA and our community."

The Uinta County Conservation District is a proud supporter of WyRED and recognizes the important role it plays in preparing youth for future careers in natural resources, agriculture, and environmental stewardship. To help make this opportunity accessible, the UCCD Board of Supervisors has long covered the registration fee for any Uinta County student or adult who attends and successfully completes the camp.

The District also understands the tremendous amount of planning and dedication required to make WyRED a success each year and sincerely appreciates the volunteers, educators, and organizers who invest their time and expertise in inspiring the next generation of land stewards.

A special thank you goes to Cari Sue Covolo for taking time out of her busy summer to help make this incredible experience possible for our Uinta County participants. Your dedication and support are truly appreciated!



UINTA COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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TURFGRASS DORMANCY

Did You Know? Cool season grasses enter dormancy during the heat of the summer. Kentucky bluegrass, Tall fescue, and most other SW Wyoming lawn species are cool season grasses. Even though your lawn may look dead during the summer, especially when water restrictions are in place, as little as 1/4" water once per month (rain or irrigation) can keep the crowns alive. Turfgrass can completely recover from summer/drought dormancy during the cooler days of the fall or the next spring.

Managing Turf Through Drought

UWyo Extension recently held a free webinar series about Managing Your Landscape in Drought. The following information is from the **Managing Turf Through Drought** webinar presented by Dr. Kelly Kopp of Utah State University. The following are some of the practices discussed for optimizing water use efficiency.

MOWING

Mow Higher: Mowing height greatly affects how much water your grass requires. The shorter you mow, the shallower the roots grow. If you mow as high as you can during a drought, you encourage deeper rooting. A height of 3 inches is recommended. Although taller grass does have more surface area which may cause a slight increase in water use and transpiration, taller grass causes better rooting mass and depth which increases overall water use efficiency.

Mow More Frequently: To go along with mowing your lawn higher, you will want to mow more often to keep your grass at the optimal height: tall enough to enhance the depth and extent of rooting but short enough to minimize leaf surface area.

Leave Grass Clippings: Clippings provide Nitrogen and help conserve soil moisture by preventing some evaporation from happening at soil surface.

IRRIGATION

Water Less Frequently: Watering less frequently and more deeply is the key to helping the moisture move down through the soil provide and be available to the roots longer.

Cycle Irrigation: This keeps water from ponding or running off high clay soils and keeps water from moving too quickly through sandy soils. Use water cycling in this manner – water for 5 min, wait 1 hour, water 5 min, wait 1 hour, water 5 min. For a total of 15 minutes of irrigation (easiest with a system).

Apply 1/2" Water: Each day you irrigate, it is recommended that you apply 1/2" water. In most soils this is sufficient for the moisture to move deep enough for the grass roots. Use a cup or empty soup can as a catch up to determine how long you have to run your sprinklers to get 1/2" water on an area.

Observe Your Lawn: Depending on the type of grass and the rate of evapotranspiration in your area, you should only need to water two or three times per week.

Other management practices discussed in this great webinar are fertilizing, thatching, aerating, irrigation audits, and overseeding.

The three recordings from this webinar series can be found on YouTube @UWyoExtension

UWyo Extension is planning a follow-up webinar series! Look for their Water-Wise Landscape Planning Series coming this fall.