

UINTA COUNTY *Conservation District*

Annual Report 2018-2019
Plan of Work 2019-2020



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, including the following:
 - DEIS High Uintas Wilderness Domestic Sheep Analysis
- 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
- 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 to through UCCDs Natural Resource Projects cost share program to partially fund and complete a headgate replacement as required by the State Engineers Office
- Complete the design of the Bridger Well 18 small water project and put it out to bid for construction in February of 2020
- Select contractor through a competitive bid process to construct 3 shovel ready small water projects that were approved for funding through the Wyoming Water Development Small Water Program
- Complete one reservoir rehabilitation project that was funded through 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
- Assist Eagle Scouts with future projects as needed
- 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.



Kelly Guild
Chairman (rural)



Dennis Cornelison
Vice Chairman (rural)



Spencer Eyre
Secretary/Treasurer (rural)



Kevin Condos
Member (at-large)



Carol Hamilton
Associate Board Member



Shaun Sims
Member (urban)

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.

Contact us...

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- 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
- Area V meeting
- Hosted the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts annual meeting in Evanston
- Completed Annual Report and Plan of Work
- Water Quality Training
- Blacks Fork/Smiths Fork TMDL Technical Advisory Committee and public meeting
- Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality Non Point Source Task Force meeting and project presentation
- Participated in health insurance webinars
- Participated in webinars related to grazing, sage grouse and soil health
- WLCI meetings
- Briar Harris was the Education Coordinator through July of 2019

WATER QUALITY CONTINUED

- Work with Partners for Fish & Wildlife, the Town of Bear River, and Forsgren Engineering to complete a design for a permanent diversion structure on the Morris Brothers Ditch Diversion and follow procurement procedures to construct the project
- Work with partners and landowners to complete an engineered design to replace another push up dam with a more permanent, fish passable structure on the Bear River
- Complete grant tracking, reporting and other administrative tasks for all sources of funding to complete stream restoration projects
- 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, Animal Feeding Operation programs, 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
- Participate in the Good Neighbor Authority webinar training and meeting to be held in Evanston to find ways to work with other agencies and landowners to complete projects on National Forest lands.
- Work with the USDA Forest Service and Wyoming State Forestry on projects that will improve forest health
- Host an Elected Officials 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, 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, and wildlife habitat.

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:

- Update the Sampling and Analysis Plans for the Blacks Fork/Smiths Fork and the Bear River
- Renew water quality monitoring agreements with landowners
- Organize water quality data that was collected in 2018-2019 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.

- ◇ \$1,671-Repair & Enhancement of Bear River Kiosk Area
- ◇ \$4,510-Irrigation of Grazing & Hay Ground Project, designed, built and installed by Evanston High School Ag Department
- ◇ \$5,000-Wyoming Stewardship Project to bring quality ag lessons into Wyoming Classrooms



4th Grade
Agriculture Unit

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.

The grant has been used for tree plantings, soil testing, Ride with a Ranger Program, scout camps, Camp Carpe Diem, Adopt a Trout program and a youth conservation camp.

Community Outreach

- Held first annual Uinta County Soil Health Day in Lonetree with 125 participants, logo designed by Grant Redden
- Held a Gardening Workshop with 25 participants
- Produced 4 newsletters which were distributed to over 600 households and placed at area businesses
- Maintained a current website
- Attended 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
- Held a two day Outdoor Forestry Workshop and offered PTBS and UW credits
- Member of Greater Bridger Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Member of Evanston Chamber of Commerce
- Held annual Elected Officials Dinner
- Partnered with Uinta County Weed & Pest to host Hay Growers workshop
- Attended a Farm Service Agency Crop Insurance meeting and handed out informational materials
- Held annual Well Water Testing Day with 13 participants
- Held public meeting with solicit comments on the Blacks Fork TMDL



Outdoor Forestry Workshop June 18 & 19, 2019

Mark your calendars!
Workshop Dates: June 18-19, 2019
Location: UCCD office, Uinta Mountains
Registration: by June 4, 2019
Cost: \$25.00 (includes lunch, snacks & materials) (link to sign up)
Call: 782-2672
or email: libby@uccd.net to register

UCCD OFFERS BASIC SOIL TESTING

The Uinta County Conservation District offers basic soil testing for smaller areas such as lawns and gardens. This provides information on soil pH, Phosphorus, Nitrogen and Potassium levels. The first sample is free and a complete set is \$5.00. This is a very basic soil test that gives a good indication of what is in your soil and what you can be lacking. Bring an about a cup of your soil sample in a zip lock bag, and we should have your results in about a week. For larger areas such as pastures and fields, we recommend sending your sample to a lab, which has a turn-around time of about 2-3 weeks. We will provide you with a detailed report from your soil test.

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
- Distribute Conservation District informational brochures to county governmental entities, to include: town halls, chamber of commerce offices, county planning and zoning, libraries and business entities that support conservation
- 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
- Pursue expanding the Adopt A Rancher program into Evanston Schools
- Host WyRED in June of 2020
- 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
- Continue the Adopt a Rancher Program in Bridger Valley
- Plan and organize Meet the Rancher Days for all classes participating in the program
- 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 2nd Annual Uinta County Soil Health Day
- Host an outdoor teacher workshop to provide local and statewide teachers with UW and PTBS 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 in Pinedale and WACD convention in Buffalo
- Continue participation as a Bear Board member
- Participate in cyber security for public entities webinar training

PUBLIC AWARENESS

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

OBJECTIVES:

- Participate in Fish Passage and Booth Ditch Diversion Tour of the Bear River to showcase projects that have been done to improve fish passage, water quality and streambank stabilization.
- Sponsor and attend the Annual Wyoming Weed and Pest Conference in Evanston and provide and informational booth at the event.
- 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

Projects & Partners

- Assisted with one septic rehabilitation project to improve water quality
- Awarded funding through the Wyoming Sage Grouse Conservation Project for wet meadow restoration II on Albert Creek
- Maintained cooperative agreement with Partners for Fish and Wildlife to complete projects that benefit habitat, stream restoration, fish passage and other important resources
- Completed and funded 6 projects through the Partners for Fish & Wildlife cooperative agreement
- Administered 2 Wyoming Wildlife & Natural Resource Trust grants
- Completed 4100 feet of stream restoration on the Bear River with the help of several project partners
- Completed two reservoir rehabilitation projects through the Small Water Program
- Awarded contracts for 4 water development projects through the Wyoming Water Development small water program
- Received 319 grant funding for Phase 2 of the Bear River Restoration Project
- Received grant funding through WG&F for the Bear River Restoration Project

Fiscal Year 2019 Project Funding

\$154,290 from Federal Grants
Partners for Fish and Wildlife

- Bear River Restoration
- Wetland Restoration
- Reservoir Rehabilitation

\$288,262 from State Grants
Wyoming Game & Fish

- Bear River Restoration
Wyoming Wildlife & Natural Resource Trust
- Bear River Restoration
- Reservoir Rehabilitation
Clean Water Act Section 319 Grant
- Bear River Restoration Phase 1
Wyoming Water Development
- Reservoir Rehabilitation

\$67,627 from private

- Bear River Restoration
- Reservoir Rehabilitation



Water Program

- Revised the Blacks Fork/Smiths Fork Sampling and Analysis Plan to more accurately reflect water monitoring objectives
- Added two sampling sites on the Blacks Fork to fill in data gaps identified by the TMDL
- Completed E.coli sampling on 8 Blacks Fork Sites, 5 Smiths Fork sites and 1 site on Threemile Creek; 14 total sites, 3 times from May-September
- Collected lab chemistry samples on all 14 sites once in May and once in September
- Completed chemistry sampling on 6 sites on the Bear River, one on Sulphur Creek and one on Yellow Creek in September 2018 and June 2019
- Presented a 319 proposal to the WDEQ Water Quality Task Force for Bear River Restoration Phase II, received funding to replace a push-up dam with a more permanent structure and to help fund engineering for another push up dam replacement
- Submitted an application to WWNRT for the Bear River Restoration project Phase II
- Worked with Town of Bear River and Forsgren Engineering to initiate the design of the Morris Ditch Diversion structure



UINTA COUNTY *Conservation District*

ANNUAL PLAN OF WORK 2019-2020



Provided the following cost share programs to address water quality:

- Septic System Remediation Program
- Animal Feeding Operation Program
- Irrigation Management
- Water Development



FISCAL YEAR 2018–2019

Beginning Balance (cash on hand July 1, 2018)	\$	52,259
Savings and Investments Account	\$	167,161
General Fund CD Balance	\$	464,808
Income		
Mill Levy	\$	150,000
State & Federal Grants	\$	540,500
Operating Revenue / Interest	\$	30,833
Total Income	\$	721,333
Expenses		
Administration	\$	114,931
Operations	\$	676,150
Indirect Costs	\$	66,324
Capital Outlay	\$	3,500
Total Expenses	\$	860,905

FISCAL YEAR 2019–2020

Beginning Balance (cash on hand July 1, 2019)	\$	25,770
Savings and Investments Account	\$	73,335
General Fund CD Balance	\$	470,095
Total Anticipated Income		
Mill Levy	\$	150,000
State & Federal Grants	\$	701,670
Operating Revenue / Interest	\$	28,983
Total Anticipated Income	\$	880,653
Anticipated Expenses		
Administration	\$	135,790
Operations	\$	892,510
Indirect Costs	\$	65,374
Capital Outlay	\$	3,500
Total Anticipated Expenses	\$	1,097,174

Range Program

- Provided garden and lawn soil testing
- Provided 1 subdivision review
- 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
- Assisted private landowners with assessing fire damage on rangeland, providing estimates on seeding and reclamation costs.
- 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 and tree identification, grazing management, and range monitoring
- Monitored wildlife and livestock impact on water quality through use of a trail camera survey
- Participated as a Cooperating Agency in the following Federal Land Planning Processes:
 - DEIS High Uintas Wilderness Domestic Sheep Analysis



Education Program

- Continued Adopt-A-Rancher program for 3rd grade at Urie Elementary
- Active member of WyRED board
- Helped plan and participated in WyRED-a week long camp held in Wheatland where participants learn about range, water, plant id, stocking rates and other important resources
- Held an Outdoor Forestry Workshop with continuing education credits
- Taught Scientific Method to Urie 1st graders
- Taught Rocks & Minerals lesson to Urie 4th graders
- Participated in field trip to American Fossil with 4th graders
- Presented the Spooky Spiders & Wacky Webs lesson to Urie 1st grade
- Held poster contest for Soil & Water Stewardship Week
- Presented a lesson with Kendra Safford, Natural Resource Specialist with Wyoming State Parks on predators and prey
- Taught lessons on weather, Soil to Salad and Plant to Product to Urie 1st graders
- Held 5th grade Outdoor Field Day partnering with US Forest Service, BLM and LIS teachers
- Prepared and compiled lesson plans for K-12 grades that help to prepare and teach students about range management and our natural resources
- Modified and revised UCCD lesson plans to meet the new Wyoming State Standards
- Organized and held the bi-annual Ag Expo for all 3rd and 4th graders in Uinta County with over 800 participants and volunteers
- Gave water quality presentation to Mt. View high school science classes
- Hosted a student for Mentorability Day and helped her learn about water and soil testing and why it is important



Seedling Tree Program

- Took 20 seedling tree orders from October through May
- Sold over 1,000 seedling trees and shrubs
- Provided design and other technical assistance for 3 windbreaks
- Provided weed barrier and polymer to aid in plantings
- Provided diatomaceous earth as a natural bug repellent
- Worked with local residents to address tree concerns including scale, aphids, oyster shell scale and identifying and treating other tree diseases
- Donated 150 seedlings for Arbor Day and participated in celebrations in Evanston and Lyman
- Provided information on how to plant and care for seedling trees

