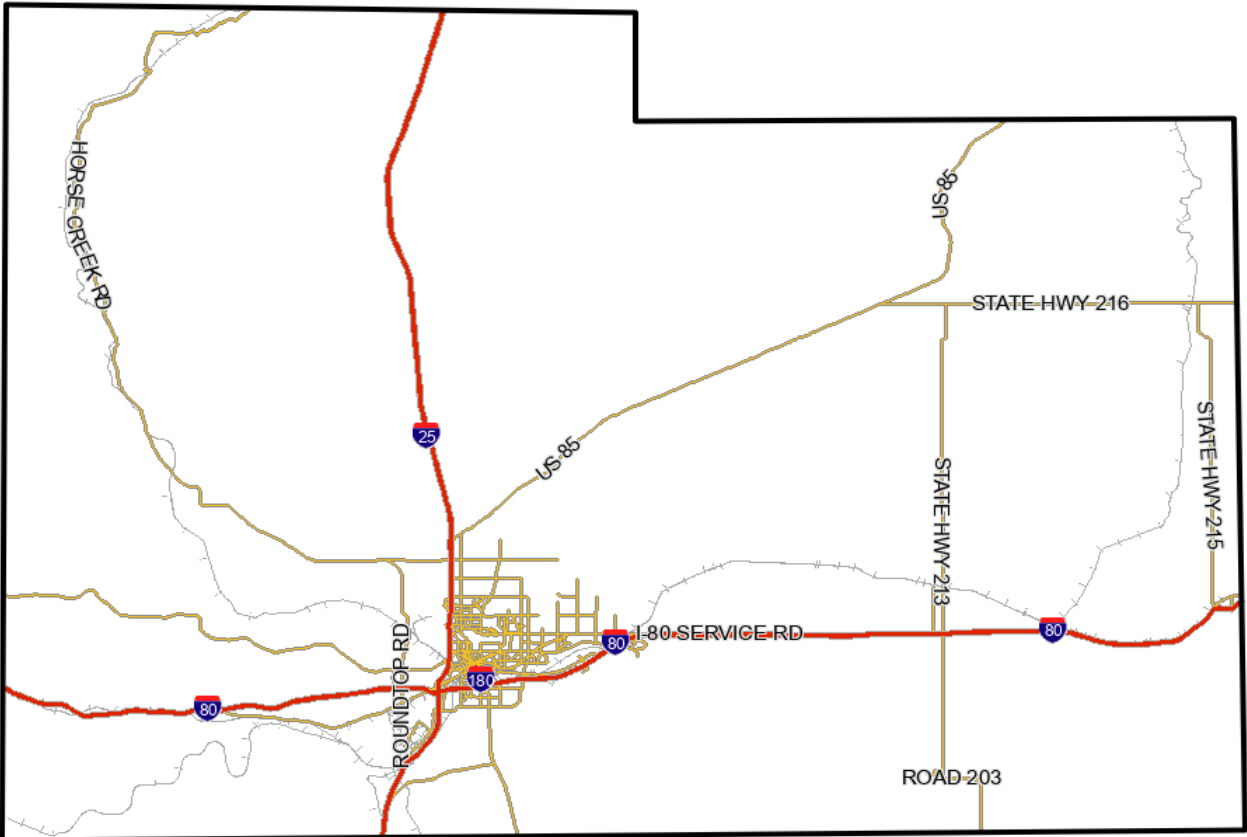


# LARAMIE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT



## ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020



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# Laramie County Conservation District

## Board of Supervisors and Staff

The Laramie County Conservation District has a five member Board of Supervisors. These board members serve four year terms and are comprised of three rural (living outside of a municipality), one urban (living inside of a municipality), and one at-large (either rural or urban).

### **Board Members:**

- ② Tom Farrell, Chairman (Urban) Responsible for water quality and water quantity issues.  
Term of office - 2017-2020
- ② Kevin Wells, Vice Chairman/Treasurer (Rural) Responsible for wildlife and range issues.  
Term of office - 2017-2020
- ② Jeremy Manley, (At-large). Responsible for agricultural issues. Term of office - 2017-2020
- ② Ann Sanchez, Secretary (Rural) Responsible for education and public relations.  
Term of office - 2019-2022
- ② Jay Berry, Member (Rural) Responsible for tree issues. Term of office - 2019-2022

### **District Staff:**

- ② Shaun Kirkwood, District Manager - Responsible for the day-to-day management and functions of the Laramie County Conservation District and the coordination, organization and timelines of meeting all conservation goals and objectives within Laramie County.
- ② Rex Lockman, Wildlife and Range Specialist - Provides technical assistance to landowners on grazing management, grass seeding recommendations, weed issues, problem wildlife, and wildlife habitat improvement.
- ② Jeff Geyer, Water Specialist - Responsible for conserving, enhancing and sustaining Laramie County's surface and groundwater resources through the promotion of healthy watersheds and sustainable use of water supplies. Responsible for implementing water quality monitoring and BMPs, stream and riparian improvements, aquifer recharge opportunities, and water developments or rehabilitations using grant opportunities or other means.
- ② Clark Young, Tree Specialist - Responsible for community tree health, windbreak designs, acquiring Living Snow Fence funding and other program areas.
- ② Kathy Cooney, Financial Coordinator - Responsible for the Laramie County Conservation District's accounts payables/receivables, payroll, monthly budget reports, assists with annual audit, and annual budget.
- ② Paul Sandler, Education Specialist - Responsible for educating and informing Laramie County residents about the responsible use and care of their natural resources through classroom visits, field trips, community presentations, and public events. Also helps to promote public awareness of all Laramie County Conservation District programs and announcements through print, radio, television, and social media platforms.
- ② Dale Beranek, Tree Technician - Responsible for acquiring Living Snow Fence funding, implementation and maintenance. Responsible for designing windbreaks, drip irrigation, and other program areas.

# Financial Summary

The Laramie County Conservation District finances are overseen by the Board of Supervisors and District Manager. The Laramie County Conservation District has an annual CPA audit conducted and reports the audit results to the Wyoming Department of Audit.

The Laramie County Conservation District also reports its annual budget to the Laramie County Commissioners, the Laramie County Clerk and the Wyoming Department of Audit. The Laramie County Conservation District's annual budget is posted on its website for the general public. Following is a brief synopsis of last year's expenditures.

BEGINNING CASH ON HAND JULY 1, 2018-----\$1,103,640.00

## **INCOME**

Seedling Tree Program ----- \$ 144,582.00  
Living Snow Fence Program ----- \$ 7,790.00  
Water Program ----- \$ 45,654.00  
Wildlife & Range Program----- \$ 21,000.00  
Mill Levy ----- \$ 971,647.00  
Other ----- \$ 83,714.00

TOTAL INCOME ----- \$2,378,027.00

## **EXPENSES**

Administration ----- \$184,774.00  
Operations ----- \$516,220.00  
Indirect Cost ----- \$200,710.00  
Capital Outlay----- \$ 62,786.00  
Reserve Accounts ----- \$287,050.00

Total Income ----- \$2,378,027.00  
Total Expenses----- \$1,251,540.00  
Ending Balance----- \$1,126,487.00

# Administration

## Meetings

- ② WACD State Convention in Buffalo Wyoming
- ② Area II Meeting in Cheyenne
- ② Local Work Group Meeting in Cheyenne
- ② Laramie County Commissioner's Meetings
- ② State Engineers Board of Control
- ② LCCC Ag Advisory Committee
- ② Legislative Luncheon
- ② UW Water Research Committee
- ② NACD Convention in San Antonio Texas
- ② Forest Service Coordination Meeting
- ② Wyoming Small Acreage Issues Team
- ② Pheasants Forever Meetings
- ② State Technical Advisory Committee
- ② Wyoming Water Forum
- ② Pole Mountain Grazing Association Meeting
- ② Wyoming Water Development Committee
- ② Wyoming Board of Agriculture
- ② National Park Service Task Force Meeting
- ② CBP Natural Area Planning Meetings
- ② The Nature Conservancy Area Meeting
- ② Crow Creek Restoration Meetings
- ② WACD Board Meeting
- ② Cheyenne Greenway Committee meetings
- ② Living Snow Fence Committee
- ② South Platte Watershed Outreach meetings
- ② NRCS State Technical Committee Meetings
- ② Rooted in Cheyenne Committee meetings
- ② Rooted in Cheyenne Committee meetings

## Training

- ② Soil Health Tour
- ② Colorado Farm Show
- ② "811" Underground Locate Seminar
- ② Special District Training
- ② Managing Water in Drought
- ② Flow Training
- ② Western Governors Association
- ② Van Diest Chemical Applicator Training
- ② Green Industry Workshop

- ② WCDEA Winter Training
- ② Wetland Delineation Training
- ② Dalmatian toadflax workshop
- ② Soil Health Workshop
- ② Project Learning Tree Workshop
- ② Proper Structure Pruning for Trees
- ② Wyoming Resource Education Days
- ② Irrigation Workshop

## Accounting

Preparation of the Laramie County Conservation District 2018/20019 budget was in accordance with state statutes and submitted to the Laramie County Commissioners, Wyoming Department of Audit, Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts, and Wyoming Department of Agriculture. All monthly, quarterly and federal government reports were filed in a timely manner.

## Funding

The Laramie County Conservation District relies on the ½ mill levy that is before the voters every four years. The Laramie County Conservation District also uses that base funding (\$971,646 last year) to apply for matching grants to increase natural resource conservation programs.

Grants received last fiscal year include:

- ② Laramie County Public Works:
  - Living Snow Fences - \$5,000.00
- ② Wyoming Department of Transportation:
  - Living Snow Fences - \$2,790.00
- ② WDA Water Quality - \$457.00
- ② DEQ 205j Grant - \$45,197.00
- ② NACD Technical Assistance - \$21,000.00

# **Education Program**

## **Classroom Instruction**

The Laramie County Conservation District, Education Specialist presented a variety of educational programs on natural resources, conservation, outdoor recreation and related topics. This year he presented 80 programs to 3,800 students. The Education Specialist also presented numerous workshops directed towards the voters of Laramie County, giving insight to where their conservation tax dollars are spent in Laramie County.

## **Information Program**

The Education Specialist maintains our website at [www.lccdnet.org](http://www.lccdnet.org), made multiple social media posts each month, published 3 newspaper inserts, one Report on Progress and numerous newspaper and radio notices.

## **Public Events**

The Laramie County Conservation District participated with a presentation or informational booth at the following events:

- ② Bee College/Bee University
- ② Dalmation toadflax workshop
- ② Holy Frontier Super Day
- ② Wyoming Outdoor Expo
- ② Proper Structure Pruning for Trees
- ② Cowbelles /LCCC Agriculture Exposition
- ② Cheyenne Frontier Days Western Experience
- ② Southeast Wyoming Project Learning Tree Training
- ② Wyoming Resource Education Days
- ② Soil Health and Cover Crop Farming/Grazing
- ② LCCC Wild West Garden Conference
- ② Wyoming State Parks Summer Outdoor Slam
- ② Green industry Workshop
- ② Wyoming State Fair
- ② Laramie County Fair
- ② Special District Training
- ② Master Gardeners Annual Plant Sale

## **Laramie County School District Science Fair**

Each year Laramie County Conservation District staff help judge local science fairs. Last year they judged at Pioneer Park, Gilchrist, Sunrise, St. Mary's, Hobbs, Saddle Ridge Elementary and All District Science Fair.

The Laramie County Conservation District also selected the best Natural Resource Project for each grade at the All District Science Fair. Last year's winners were; 4<sup>th</sup> Grade – Ashley Olsen, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade – Shelby Hoobler, and 6<sup>th</sup> Grade – Kaylee Lundberg.

# Water Program

The purpose of the Laramie County Conservation District Water Program is to conserve, enhance and sustain Laramie County's surface and groundwater resources through the promotion of healthy watersheds and sustainable use of water supplies.

📍 The Laramie County Conservation District has secured \$55,943 from WDEQ 205(J) funds, \$39,618 from City of Cheyenne, \$8000 from Laura Jane Mussner Grant, \$15,000 from Trout Unlimited-Curt Gowdy Chapter, \$10,000 from WY Game & Fish, and at least \$4,000 in private donations to initiate the design phase of the Crow Creek Revival restoration project within Cheyenne. The River Design group out of Whitefish, MT was contracted in November of 2018 to perform a 100% design for Crow Creek Revival-Phase I, which encompasses 0.6-mile of the creek starting at Happy Jack Road crossing down to Westland Road. By the end of the reporting year, CCR had secured a 60% draft Design and Design Report, Geomorphic Assessment, Wyoming Stream Quantification Analysis, and FEMA No-Rise Analysis. The CCR committee, comprised of over 13 different governmental agencies and NGOs, has also starting accruing implementation funding.

📍 The Laramie County Conservation District secured an \$11,000 grant through the local Rotary Clubs in Cheyenne to install 12 Gutter Bins throughout the downtown Capitol Basin. The Gutter Bin is a catchment basin water filtration system that removes trash, sediment, and even hydrocarbons from storm-water runoff prior to entering Crow Creek. This is a simple BMP that accomplishes great treatment of storm-water. The Laramie County Conservation District is maintaining each Gutter Bin and weighing the captured inputs to gain an effectiveness of the pilot project.

📍 The Laramie County Conservation District has applied for and was approved for eleven (11) projects to be cost shared through Wyoming Water Development's Small Water account.

📍 The Laramie County Conservation District secured a Wyoming Department of Agriculture Water Quality Grant for \$19,800 and a Partners of USFWS Grant for \$17,500 to create an inset floodplain along Dry Creek, tributary Crow Creek within the Cheyenne Business Parkway Natural Area south of Campstool Road.

📍 In an attempt to integrate water-wise conversions within city limits, the Laramie County Conservation District is showing residents that water-wise vegetation and rain water harvesting techniques can be used to reduce water consumption while maintaining an attractive landscape. The Laramie County Library detention pond conversion project will transfer a Bluegrass turf lawn to a water-wise, pollinator planting mix. The design phase has been completed. Nursery plants have been contracted for a spring 2020 planting. This project was made possible through the Wyoming Department of Agriculture's Specialty Crop Block Grant. Two separate Bluegrass turf to Buffalograss turf conversions have been implemented. One occurred at the Board of Public Utilities and the other was a private landowner. Consumptive use of water will be tracked over the next couple of years to determine water and cost savings for both properties.

📍 The Horse Creek Watershed Level 1 Study was initiated during this last year. South Goshen and Laramie County Conservation Districts teamed up to get this study performed. Numerous small water projects were inventoried by both districts and the consultant. The final report should be completed by the end of 2019.

# Wildlife and Range Program

The Wildlife/ Range Specialist completes a variety of jobs on both small and large acreages. These practices include improving the habitat for wildlife, livestock, and people. Some of the accomplishments in this program include:

- ② Assistance to over 70 Small Acreage Landowners for a variety of reasons including, seeding, weed control, pest control, grazing management, etc.
- ② The District's no-till drill was rented out 23 times this past year to seed areas where the soil had been disturbed. By seeding disturbed areas right away it reduces weed infestations.
- ② The Laramie County Conservation District completed five livestock watering projects this past year with funding from the Wyoming Water Development "Small Water" development program.
- ② The Laramie County Conservation District, with help from the Forest Service refurbished four livestock watering systems on the Pole Mountain area of the Medicine Bow National Forest.
- ② The Laramie County Conservation District worked with Wyoming Conservation Corp and Nature Conservancy to replace about a 1/2 mile of fence with wildlife friendly fence in a migration corridor in western Laramie County. The Mule Deer Foundation supplied funding for the materials. The area sees heavy use by both elk and deer moving from summer to winter range and back again.
- ② The Laramie County Conservation District continues to assist permittees in monitoring vegetation production and utilization on the Pole Mountain unit of the Medicine Bow National Forest. Utilization is monitored on forest grazing allotments to insure less than 50% of the vegetation is used by livestock. The district assisted with 20 different sites on 5 allotments covering roughly 20,000 acres.
- ② The Laramie County Conservation District worked with local high school students and Wyo. Game and Fish on a Mule deer study. Two female deer were collared with GPS tracking devices to monitor their movements and habits for the students to study.
- ② The Laramie County Conservation District commented on the impacts and gave recommendations on how to reduce the environmental impacts of the "Roundhouse Wind Energy Project".
- ② The Laramie County Conservation District worked with local elementary students in hatching, raising, and releasing Quail chicks. This project helped students understand the life cycle of these birds and their habitat.
- ② The Laramie County Conservation District assisted the Wyoming Game and Fish with its annual Sharp tailed Grouse surveys. These surveys allow the department and district to monitor the populations of Grouse. It also provides information on where habitat projects can be implemented to benefit the Sharp-tailed grouse.



# **Tree Program**

## **Seedling Tree Program**

The Laramie County Conservation District continues to offer low cost seedling trees to the residents of Laramie County for conservation plantings. This past year the program the Tree Program assisted Laramie County residents with the following tree practices:

- ② Sold 33,054 trees for a total of 1,435,881 sold since 1988 when the program began.
- ② Sold 601 rolls of 6 x 300 foot and 35 rolls of 4 x 300 feet fabric mulch.
- ② Completed 136 windbreak/living snow fences tree planting designs.
- ② Completed 9 drip irrigation designs.
- ② In the spring of 2019, 82 private windbreak/living snow fence tree plantings were established, totaling 11,544 trees planted. 90,366 linear feet, or 17.1 miles, of fabric mulch was installed.
- ② Sold 4,916 tree protectors.
- ② Assisted 226 residents with tree related issues including insect, disease, wildlife, watering, and tree health concerns.

## **Living Snow Fence Program**

The Laramie County Conservation District contracts with both Laramie County Public Works and the Wyoming Department of Transportation to install living snow fences along Laramie County's roads, highways, and interstates. This past year, 2 new Living Snow Fence sites were established, bringing the total to 276 sites throughout Laramie County. At these sites, 726 total trees were planted totaling 4,973 feet of tree row installed. This adds 0.28 miles or 1,510 feet of road protection, bringing the total road protection up to 32.61 miles in Laramie County.

The Laramie County Conservation District continued rehabilitation of established sites consisting of replacing dead trees, cutting out and removing old fabric mulch, and repairing or replacing older exclusion fences. The Laramie County Conservation District gave this project a trial run last year and felt it was a huge benefit to the snow control on roads in Laramie County plus continued work at protecting conservation tax based investments in Laramie County. This year the Laramie County Conservation District rebuilt 2 sites for Laramie County Public Works. This task involved removing 2,222 feet of livestock exclusion fence and installing 2,322 feet of new livestock exclusion fence.

# **Special Projects**

## **Community Enhancement**

The LCCD provided technical assistance and funding up to \$1000 for following projects:

- 🕒 Laramie County Fire District #2: Fire District #2 received funding to plant a Living Snow Fence for wind and snow control at the new facility on Horse Creek Road.
- 🕒 Rotary Club of Cheyenne: LCCD provided funds to Rotary Club of Cheyenne for assistance in purchasing and installing Gutter Bins in downtown Cheyenne.
- 🕒 Laramie County Library: LCCD provided the Laramie County library with an Agri-drain system for the upgrade of their retention pond.
- 🕒 Cheyenne Rifle and Pistol Club: The LCCD planted trees and installed fabric mulch on site to control wind, snow and reduce noise from the firing ranges.
- 🕒 Laramie County School District: The LCCD provided 1,350 seedling trees, one to every second grader, in Laramie County. This is funded through the LCCD, Community Enhancement Program.
- 🕒 Rooted in Cheyenne: Through the Community Enhancement Program the LCCD donated \$1000.00 to Rooted in Cheyenne to continue street tree re-establishment in Cheyenne.

## **Cheyenne Business Parkway Natural Area**

The LCCD has assumed management of the Cheyenne Business Parkway Natural Area. This is roughly a 135 acre parcel along Dry Creek in the LEADS property east of Cheyenne. Plans for the park include natural resource education and demonstration areas.

Projects completed in the Natural Area in the past year include:

- 🕒 Herbicide application for control of Dalmatian Toad Flax, Canada Thistle, Leafy spurge, Cheat grass and Common Mullein.
- 🕒 Monitored flow and water quality of Dry Creek.
- 🕒 Built new post and cable fence along east access to area.
- 🕒 Worked with committee and consultant to plan and design BMPs for the area.
- 🕒 Mowed walking trails in the Cheyenne Business Parkway Natural Area.

## **Partner in Conservation Awards**

These awards are presented annually to businesses and individuals who assist in helping the Laramie County Conservation District fulfill its mission. This year the Laramie County Conservation District recognized:

- 🕒 Jim Pike - NRCS/DC, recognition of service to Laramie County, through NRCS
- 🕒 Kerry Peterson - Outstanding Educator
- 🕒 Lindi Kirkbride - recognition of service through the Laramie County Conservation District
- 🕒 Mark Ellison - outstanding service to Laramie County through City Urban Forestry.
- 🕒 Russ Dahlgren - partner in conservation through the Laramie County Conservation District.
- 🕒 Norman and Leah Bratton - small acreage conservationist.

Laramie County Conservation District  
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