



# **WASHAKIE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

### **JULY 1, 2008 - JUNE 30 2009**



**The Hefeneider Family  
Was Awarded For  
Washakie County  
Conservation District's  
2008 Outstanding  
Farmer Award**

**Washakie County  
Legislatures &  
Commissioners  
Discussing Legislative Issues  
with Conservation District  
Board of Supervisors and Staff**



# INTRODUCTION

Two of the oldest Conservation Districts in the State of Wyoming consolidated to form the Washakie County Conservation District in 1990. This combined the Nowood Conservation District, which was formed in 1941 in Ten Sleep, and the Washakie Conservation District, which was formed in 1943 in Worland.

The Washakie County Conservation District is a local government and a governmental subdivision of the state as defined and established by the Wyoming Statutes at Title 11, Chapter 16, et seq., entitled, "Wyoming Conservation District Law".

The Washakie County Conservation District's Board of Supervisors (5 members) are elected by the people of Washakie County at General Elections, by popular vote. The elected members represent both the rural and urban population within Washakie County.

Conservation District Board members are the only locally elected board charged specifically with the responsibility of representing local people on natural resource issues.

The Washakie County Conservation District's Board of Supervisors employ a Director and an Education Specialist to implement their projects and programs, which are supported by a mill levy, which is voter approved, and by grants.



## BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

|                     |               |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Chairman            | Rick Six      |
| Vice-Chairman       | Dan Rice      |
| Secretary/Treasurer | Kitsy Barnes  |
| Supervisor          | Reed Lyman    |
| Supervisor          | Vance Lungren |

# A SUMMARY OF THE WASHAKIE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT'S ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## EDUCATION



Grand Prize Poster Contest  
Winners for 2009 Soil and Water  
Stewardship Week for Washakie  
County. Shelby Eldridge; Second  
Grade (left) and Aften Peterson;  
Fifth Grade (right).



The Soil and Water Stewardship Week's theme in 2009 was "Dig It". Presentations were made to each 2nd and 5th grade class in Washakie County and the students participated in the annual poster contest. Presentations focused on the importance of soil resources. Over 170 posters were submitted and the winning posters were on display in downtown Worland during Stewardship Week.

Worland Middle School sixth graders celebrated the International Day of Monitoring with a trip to the WCCD's Outdoor Classroom to test pond water and collect insects. After the field trip, they continued their studies in the classroom by looking at the microscopic life of the pond water, as well as taking a close up look at the insects special adaptations.

Two classes of 4th graders, while on a field trip to the Ten Sleep Fish Hatchery, learned about the insect life that supplies natural fish food, and the importance of the riparian area to stream health, which was taught by the WCCD's Education Specialist and Wyoming G & F Habitat Extension Biologist.



Students Collecting and Identifying Insects from  
the WCCD's Outdoor Classroom Pond



All of Worland's 4th grade classes learned about recycling at the local landfill with a field trip and classroom activities. Each classroom sorted, weighed, and recorded recycled paper they had collected in their classroom. This was to determine what kind of volume the school was recycling and whether or not the bins were free from non-recyclables. The students were then able to teach other classrooms about what paper products are recycleable. In addition, the students made recycled paper.

4th Grade Classes Watch a Load of Paper Products  
Being Unloaded Onto Shop Floor For Sorting

The District continued the support of the Advanced Biology class in the Spring, helping with the Urban Bat Study. This year the class monitored three nights a week at the Worland Golf Course pond, which is a large pond where the irrigation water is stored. The students found high bat activity at the pond. In May, the Wyoming G & F personnel taught the students how to set up and tear down the mist nets and how to look for the identifying characteristics and use a key to determine the different bat species.

The Worland High School Advanced Biology class was assisted by WCCD as they spent the first nine weeks of the school year focusing on water quality. The students studied different streams, representing different stream channels and riparian zones. The students also learned about chemical, physical and biological components of stream health and used GPS and GIS technology as part of the curriculum. After the high school students finished their water quality studies, they used their newly found insect identifying skills to help a classroom of second graders learn about pond insects.



Wyoming G & F Employees Helping Students Set Up Mist Nets to Catch and Study Bats



Eleutian Students Looking At A Silver Haired Bat

Eleutian Technologies, based out of Ten Sleep, teaches English to Korean students through the internet. In the summer of 2008, 15 middle school aged students traveled to Wyoming for two weeks to learn about the people who were teaching them. WCCD teamed up with the G & F bat experts and gave them lessons in mist netting bats.

To enhance their study of sound, two groups of 4th graders learned about how bats use sound waves to echolocate their food and other objects. The WCCD's Education Specialist used the WCCD's echolocation equipment to introduce the students to bat calls.

Animal adaptations is included in the 2nd grade curriculum and WCCD, along with the teachers, used the Ag in the Classroom Discovery Toolchest in teaching about this topic. WCCD also assists with the annual winter field trip to teach students about humans adaptations to the winter environment.

The WCCD's Education Specialist gave presentations to all 3rd grade students in Worland using the Enviroscape and Grounwater models, to enhance their study of the water cycle. In addition, they took a water cycle journey through the eyes of a water drop.

Two classes of 3rd graders studied trees with the WCCD's Education Specialist, at the Ten Sleep Preserve.



2nd Grade Students Group Photo During Their Winter Field Trip Activities



3rd Grade Students Smelling A Ponerosa Pine To Use All Their Senses In Tree Identification

# WATER QUALITY

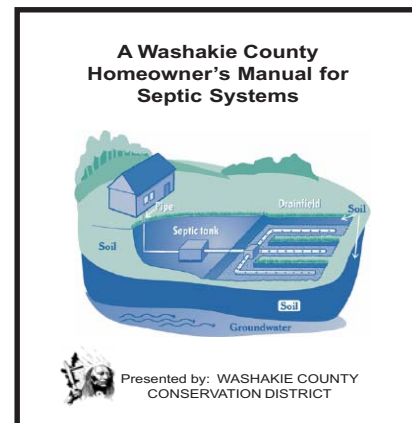
Water quality monitoring was completed on all listed segments (Nowood River, Big Horn River, Slick Creek, Nowater Creek, Sage Creek, and Fifteen Mile Creek) according to the current WCCD's Sampling and Analysis Plan. The water quality and land use information was compiled for interpretation and analysis by consultants.

The implementation activity's notebook, which documents the action items identified in the Big Horn River Watershed Management Plan, was maintained.

Over the course of three years, forty-nine homeowners were awarded cost share funds to upgrade their inadequate and/or failing systems, using \$161,124.00, and four landowners were awarded cost share funds to move their animal feeding operation, using \$25,580.00 of the WCCD's 319 program. In addition, three homeowners upgraded their inadequate and/or failing systems using \$7,500.00 of the WCCD's mill levy funds.

The WCCD employees attended a Use Attainability Analysis training this Spring, put on by the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts. Upon returning, the WCCD began gathering the data necessary to document the proposed change of classification from Primary to Secondary on Nowater Creek and Fifteenmile Creek. The WCCD has received assistance, with some of the field work, from Vance Lungren, WCCD board member, and Chet Wheelless, BLM employee.

A "Washakie County Homeowner's Manual for Septic Systems" booklet was developed and published using a grant from the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality 319 Grant. The booklet has been distributed to local contractors and county officials to provide to their customers to help educate homeowners on the proper installation and maintenance of their septic systems. Topics covered in the booklet include Homeowner Self-Assessment, Authorities and Regulations, Function of a Septic System, Basic Components, Design and Installation Considerations, Septic System Operation and Maintenance, and Homeowner Septic System Record Keeping. Also included in the booklet is a history of our local watershed.



The District hosted a workshop in April to gather landowners together to update them on activities that have been accomplished within the Big Horn River Watershed Plan. Doug Miyamoto, WACD Watershed Coordinator, presented the WCCD's past four years of water quality monitoring data and explained what it was showing. In addition, the attendees were asked to brainstorm ideas for improving the Sage Creek watershed. The ideas were listed and a questionnaire will be mailed out to Sage Creek watershed residents to begin working with the WCCD on Best Management Practices.

The Wyoming Game & Fish's Stream Trailer was utilized by WCCD's Education Specialist at the 1st annual Worland Outdoor Show. Students and adults were given the opportunity to learn about stream channel function at the event. The Stream Trailer was also used by seven classes of Earth Science students at the Worland High School.



Outdoor Show Attendees Learning About Watershed Function Using Stream Trailer

# WASTE MANAGEMENT

In the summer of 2008, the WCCD purchased a compartment-type recycling trailer for the community of Ten Sleep for their recycling program. This trailer has eliminated the need for 4-H members to empty the individual dumpsters and separately haul the recyclables to the Worland recycling facility. The members can simply hook on to the trailer to transport the recycled items without handling them. The WCCD continues to pay mileage to the Ten Sleep Sage Stompers 4-H Club to deliver the recyclables to the Worland Landfill for recycling.



The District continues to assist Washakie County schools in their efforts to recycle. In most of Washakie County's schools, there are classes or groups of students that are responsible for emptying the bins.

For the past fourteen years, the District has organized the collection and disposal of Christmas Trees in Worland and Ten Sleep. The trees have been chipped by Big Horn Rural Electric employees at no cost, and provided free to Washakie County residents for the past four years. The Ten Sleep Sage Stompers 4-H collected trees in Ten Sleep and the Worland Rotary Club plus fifteen individuals volunteered their time this year, which included picking up and stockpiling the trees, and feeding the trees through the chipper.



Volunteers Unloading Christmas Trees into Piles to be Chipped



Big Horn Rural Electric Employee Feeding Trees Into the Chipper

The WCCD has budgeted funds for the purchase of a compost turner and have begun visiting with local feedlot operators to gain support in using the turner to compost their manure. The WCCD held an informational workshop in March to teach attendees about the concepts of composting and to also show a video of the composter being used.

# TREE PROGRAM

The Washakie County Tree & Shrub guide was distributed to residents throughout the year, to provide general information on plant species, planting, watering, pruning and maintenance. This year, the WCCD sold 3660 trees and shrubs to residents.

The WCCD, along with landowners, Maurice and Kathy Bush continued to maintain the The Living Snow Fence at Orchard Ranch in Ten Sleep, which was installed in 2004.

150 trees were donated to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classes through the Worland Garden Club for the Arbor Day Celebration.

# GOVERNMENT AGENCY INTERACTION & COORDINATION

The WCCD Continues to provide a flow-through funding mechanism using Wyoming Wildlife Natural Resource Trust Fund grants for the eradication of Russian Olive and tamarisk along Gooseberry Creek, Cottonwood Creek and the Nowood River. This project is in cooperation with NRCS, Weed & Pest, and Wyoming Game & Fish.

The WCCD, in conjunction with the Hot Springs Weed & Pest District and the South Big Horn Conservation District, cost-shared with the National Wild Turkey Federation for the purchase of a Waterjet Stinger. The Waterjet Stinger is currently being used to plant cottonwood and willow pole plantings behind Russian olive and tamarisk removal on Cottonwood and Gooseberry Creek. This effort has been spearheaded by Amy Anderson, Wyoming Game and Fish Habitat Extension Biologist.



Amy Anderson, Wyo. G & F Habitat Extension Biologist, Using The Waterjet Stinger To Do Pole Plantings on Gooseberry Creek.

The WCCD Director and Dan Rice, WCCD Board member, have continued to participate in BLM's monthly, two and one-half day meetings, to help develop the BLM Resource Management Plan Revision for the Big Horn Basin.

# RANGE & IRRIGATED LAND MANAGEMENT

The WCCD hosted three different Range Schools; 101 School was held in December, 201 School was held in January, and 301 School was held in June. 101 Range School was an introduction to how plants grow, time and timing of grazing, animal nutrition and behavior, monitoring methodologies, and grazing management. 201 Range School was developing monitoring objectives, tools and methods to aid in monitoring, ecological site descriptions, applying monitoring data, and low-stress animal handling. 301 included plant identification, Cover by Life form monitoring, landscape appearance analysis, SamplePoint monitoring tool, and power fence construction.

The WCCD's Surge Valve was utilized on an alfalfa field again this year.



301 Range School Participants During  
Plant Identification Exercise



Washakie County WyRED Team, with  
Charlie Fifield, Wyo. SRM President

NRCS personnel and the WCCD's Specialist assisted Worland High School students in preparing for the WyRED competition in Basin. The Washakie County WyRED Team placed first! In addition, one student got Top Camper honors and the advisor took first place in the Open Adult division. The Wyoming team went on to compete in the Montana Range Days where they received first place and one of the students took top individual honors as well. The WCCD funded the students registration fee for the Wyoming competition.

In the winter months, the WCCD continues to publish and mail the Big Horn Basin Snow Pack information brochure to local producers.

In early 2007 WCCD teamed up with the Wyoming Sugar Company, Beet Research Committee and local producers to purchase and install three environmental monitoring stations as a pilot project. Now in the second year, the WCCD continues to assist producers with the use of this technology in sugar beet fields that are irrigated by center pivots. Fifteen sets of sensors were installed in the Spring of 2009 and the producers involved in the project are feeling more comfortable with both the equipment, and the data being collected. Results of the first year's data were presented by the WCCD's Education Specialist at WESTI Ag Days and the Regional Wyoming-Montana Sugar Beet Symposium in Billings, Montana.

# INTERNAL DISTRICT OPERATIONS

The WCCD Board of Supervisors and staff reviewed three subdivision plans and provided information, including soils maps, on soil suitability for buildings, sewage disposal, road and streets, shallow excavations, lawns and landscaping and unpaved road construction, as per state statute.

Every year the WCCD facilitates a Conservation Poster Contest in conjunction with Soil & Water Stewardship Week. Last Spring, Kylah Mills, second grader, won grand prize for Washakie County and it was reported in the Annual Report. However, Kylah also went on to win the 2nd grade poster contest, presented by the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts during the WACD Convention in November, 2008.

District minutes were sent to the Natural Resource Conservation Service, Wyoming Department Agriculture, Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts, Wyoming Board of Agriculture, Washakie County Planning Commission, Washakie County Commissioners, Washakie County Legislator, Gerald Geis, and Worland & Ten Sleep's Mayors.

In January, the powers and duties of the WCCD employees and supervisors, as clarified in 11-16-122 of the Conservation District Law, were reviewed.

The Director continues to maintain WCCD web site.

The District continues to budget for dues to the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts, Wyoming Conservation District Employees Association, USDA Bridger Plant Materials Center, and the National Association of Conservation Districts.

The District continues to assist local residents with maps for projects and special interest areas, generated using Arc GIS. GIS technology was also utilized for windbreak planning in support of the districts tree program and for the Use Attainability Analysis work being done by the district.

Yearly, a budget request to carry out the WCCD's goals is submitted to the Wyoming Department of Agriculture and Wyoming Department of Audit. A special budget hearing was held on July 23, 2009.

The WCCD utilizes a one-mill levy, which was passed as a petition recall during the 2002 General Election.

The District Director attended the National Association of Conservation Districts annual convention, which was held in New Orleans in February, 2009 and also attended Quickbooks Training in Casper in April. In addition, the District Director and Specialist attended UAA Training, which was held in Lander in May, 2009.

# PUBLIC INFORMATION

The WCCD set up their program display during the Washakie County Fair, with 1430 residents in attendance, the Worland Trade Show, with 560 in attendance, and WESTI Ag Days, with 760 in attendance.

Barnyards and Backyards conservation magazines were disseminated quarterly, which highlight conservation practices for urban and rural homeowners.

The WCCD continues to advertise the availability of natural resource conservation cost share programs in the District's newsletter, the Farm Service Agency's newsletters, and in our local newspaper.

Four WCCD newsletters were developed and mailed out to residents during the 2009 fiscal year.

# SPECIAL PROJECTS

The WCCD continues to offer cost share to Washakie County Residents for “on-the-ground” projects. Acceptable proposals can include any projects for the implementation of natural resource improvement. Successful applicants can receive 50% cost share, with a maximum of \$10,000.00. This year the WCCD provided cost-share to residents totalling \$3,500.00, which included two septic system upgrades. Other items funded out of the “on-the-ground” projects budget included; GIS work done to map Russian olive on the Nowood River for \$1,661.13, Washakie County Fairgrounds windbreak drip system supplies, fencing, sign relocation, and stain for \$1,472.47, cost share on a Waterjet Stinger for \$400.00, purchase of a recycling trailer for \$11,227.66, and for data analysis work on the 319 final report for \$1,275.00.

The WCCD coordinated with the Hot Springs Conservation District to conduct the election for the formation of Cottonwood/Grass Creek Watershed Improvement District, which passed in 2007. The two Districts are currently working on the second Board of Director election, which will be held on November 3, 2009.

The WCCD continues to monitor and maintain the windbreak that was installed in 2004 at the Washakie County Fairgrounds. This year, the wildlife pole fence was stained for the second time since its installation in 2008.

The WCCD hosted their 9th awards banquet to recognize those who have contributed towards natural resource conservation. Awards were publically presented for Outstanding Farmer, Outstanding Rancher, Outstanding Teacher, and Outstanding Volunteer. Also honored were other individuals and groups who received their award certificate and free banquet ticket beforehand.



Tom Harrington, WCCD Chairman, presenting Dave Slover with Outstanding Rancher Award



Tom Harrington, WCCD Chairman, presenting Dave Egger with Outstanding Teacher Award



Tom Harrington, WCCD Chairman, presenting Renegades 4-H Club with Outstanding Volunteer Award

**WASHAKIE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
FINANCIAL STATEMENT  
FISCAL YEAR 2009**

**INCOME – \$445,660.00**

|                       |            |                                |            |
|-----------------------|------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| Mill Levy             | 157,723.00 | G & F Wildlife Grants          | 497.00     |
| Tree Program          | 781.00     | Special Projects               | 275.00     |
| Appropriations        | 8,824.00   | WWNRTF                         | 103,447.00 |
| WQ Lab Analysis Grant | 784.00     | Interest Income                | 2,320.00   |
| AFO/Septic Grant      | 92,471.00  | Watershed Implementation Grant | 30,000.00  |
| SARE Grant            | 24,715.00  |                                |            |

**EXPENSE - \$405,272.00**

**ADMINISTRATION**

|                                |           |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| Personnel                      | 72,420.00 |
| Mileage/Meals/Lodging          | 4,272.00  |
| Accounting                     | 3,500.00  |
| Office Supplies                | 2,512.00  |
| Training                       | 1,750.00  |
| Resource Library               | 400.00    |
| Dues                           | 10,316.00 |
| Postage/Advertising/Newsletter | 3,202.00  |
| Tree Equipment Maintenance     | 14.00     |
| Phone/Internet                 | 1,036.00  |
| Living Snow Fence Maintenance  | 300.00    |
| Meeting Expense/Workshops      | 1,337.00  |

**OPERATIONS**

|                                |            |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Recycling Program              | 1,035.00   |
| WQ Consultant                  | 12,332.00  |
| Russian Olive/Tamarisk Program | 121,321.00 |
| Education Program              | 5,739.00   |
| Program Services               | 8,796.00   |
| SARE Grant                     | 881.00     |
| Water Quality Programs         | 83,295.00  |
| On-The-Ground Projects         | 20,375.00  |
| Vehicle Fuel & Maint. Expense  | 1,481.00   |

**INDIRECT COSTS**

|               |           |
|---------------|-----------|
| Insurance     | 1,418.00  |
| Bonds         | 430.00    |
| Payroll Costs | 23,006.00 |

