



## ANNUAL REPORT July 2015—June 2016

### EDUCATION

Brochures about trees, Barnyards and Backyards magazines and landscape information were handed out to participants in the annual Farm and Ranch Days. The 2-day event was hosted by the University of Wyoming Cooperative Agricultural Extension Service. About 350 citizens participated.



The LWRCRD worked with the Riverton and Shoshoni Cow Belles to host the annual Ag Expo held at the Central Wyoming College Equine Center. The annual event is for third graders from Riverton, Shoshoni, Arapahoe, St. Stephens, St. Margaret's, Trinity Lutheran and Wind River Schools. Over 300 students and teachers participated in the event designed to teach students about the importance of agriculture.





LWRCD taught the students how to make ag (earth) bracelets with materials obtained from the Wyoming Chapter of the Society for Range Management.

### **DISTRICT OPERATIONS**

The Board requested and continued to receive funding from the Fremont County Commissioners. The District also received grants from the Wyoming Department of Agriculture. Since funding on the state and local levels is diminishing, the Board members of the LWRCD voted to educate the citizens about our projects and the fact that we are the local voice for conservation issues. At every monthly meeting the group has been working toward passing a mill levy in November of 2016. Members provided input on legislative issues to local legislators as well as to the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts. Information about current projects was provided through a Facebook page and a web site. Newsletters were mailed to about 750 citizens. A Political Action Committee was formed to advertise. The Board is planning to hold community meetings and to meet with civic groups to discuss our purpose and projects.

### **LAND USE PLANNING**

The District is revising its Land Use and Natural Resource Management Plan. Public input is being received in community meetings, board meetings, our Facebook page and our web site. Adoption of the plan will occur in December of 2016.

The District is a cooperating agency for implementation of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Lander Resource Area Resource Management Plan (RMP). We made comments on a Land Health Assessment for the Breeding Pasture.



Land Use and Natural Resource Management Plan 2016--2020

## **RANGELAND MONITORING**

The District worked with landowners, the BLM, the University of Wyoming Agricultural Extension and the Office of State Lands and Investments to obtain funding for six Rangeland Health Assessment Program monitoring projects. Four projects have been completed and the manager has worked with the landowners to continue monitoring every year. The fifth and sixth projects are in progress. Each project was funded through a grant awarded to LWRCD from the Wyoming Department of Agriculture. Over 200,000 acres of private, state and federal lands are included in the allotments that have been or are being monitored.



## **SOIL CONSERVATION**

The District completed soil reviews for four proposed subdivisions as required by the State of Wyoming. Recommendations were forwarded to the Fremont County Planning Commission as well as to the developer/landowners for each proposed subdivision. The District Manager worked extensively with the State Engineer's office personnel to clarify water right issues on one proposed subdivision. Even though water rights exist on a property, the right doesn't guarantee that water will be delivered by the irrigation district.

The District sold and distributed 2,961 seedling trees and shrubs and 10 rolls of weed barrier to 53 customers during our annual tree and shrub sale. The project is designed to



provide low cost seedling trees and shrubs for windbreaks to protect buildings and livestock as well as reduce energy costs.

## WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY

A grant from the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) was received and work completed to enhance bank stabilization and prevent soil erosion in the Ocean Lake Watershed.

The picture below is of Drain #4 to Ocean Lake which is located near Reece Road.



Above, vegetative plantings along the shoreline of Ocean Lake to prevent soil erosion.

Muddy Creek and Poison Creek are listed as impaired for *E.coli* by the WDEQ. The LWRCD has monitored both creeks to collect data to support delisting. Grants were received to continue water quality monitoring. Pictured below is water from the Wyoming Canal at Site #1 where the water merges with that from Muddy Creek.



Forty two samples were analyzed at a local lab for total coliform and *E.coli* during the Water Well Testing program held for four days in March and for four days in April. Six samples were positive for total coliform but none was positive for *E.coli*. This was the fifth year that the LWRCD offered free water well testing to citizens in the district.

A group of landowners in the Pavillion area concerned about the quality of their well water formed a corporation named the North Ocean Lake Water Association. After much deliberation, the company using hydraulic fracturing for drilling operations provided cisterns and money to haul water to citizens within a specified area. The LWRCD is working with the Association and provides book keeping services for the group.

The District sponsored a Level 1 Study through the Wyoming Water Development Commission of the Badwater and Poison Creek Watersheds. The study took two years for a Anderson Consulting Engineers to complete an inventory of the resources and potential water development in the area. The report is available for public viewing in the office. A copy of the report was provided to the Fremont County Commissioners. As a result of the study, eight small water development projects were approved for cost-share funding totaling \$175,000.00 from the Wyoming Water Development Commission. One spring development project has been completed. Below you will see the spring area (top photo) before the spring development was completed. The spring is now fenced to prevent trampling of the area. The bottom photo shows the tank which collects the water downstream from the spring. The water benefits livestock, wildlife and, once in a while, the landowners' dog.

