



LAND USE AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

2016--2020



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RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION

Whereas, the Lower Wind River Conservation District is empowered by Wyoming State Statute §11-16-101—134 to adopt and implement soil and water conservation management policies; and

Whereas, the Lower Wind River Conservation District has sought out and received public involvement and input regarding the role of the Lower Wind River Conservation District in the conservation and management of the District's natural resources; and

Whereas, the plans and programs are carried out utilizing an open and collaborative planning process;

Therefore, be it hereby resolved by the Board of Supervisors of the Lower Wind River Conservation District this ____ of _____ that the Board of Supervisors adopts the Lower Wind River Conservation District's Land Use and Natural Resource Management Plan for 2016--2020.

Rod Rivers, Chairman

Gavin Woody, Vice-Chairman

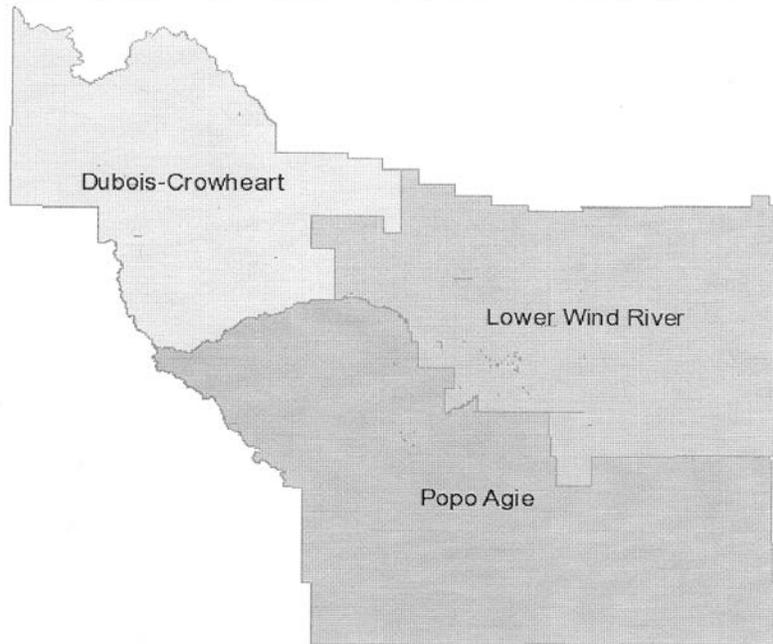
J. W. Hendry, Secretary/Treasurer

Ron Lucas, Supervisor

Terry Hayes, Supervisor

INTRODUCTION

The Lower Wind River Conservation District is one of 34 in Wyoming and three in Fremont County. The District was formed on June 16, 1969 when the Pavillion and Wind River Conservation Districts were merged. The district encompasses the northeast part of Fremont County including the towns and communities of Arapahoe, Morton, Kinnear, Pavillion, Shoshoni, Lysite, Lost Cabin, Riverton and Sand Draw.



The above map of Fremont County shows the three conservation districts. There are 1,999,015 acres in the Lower Wind River Conservation District.

Land Use:

Rangeland	1,609,651 acres
Irrigated Cropland	99,886 acres
Pasture	9,109 acres
Forest and Woodland	7,368 acres

Land Ownership:

Private	382,488 acres
State	216,414 acres
Bureau of Reclamation	226,823 acres
Bureau of Land Management	797,123 acres

ECONOMY

Agriculture has been the main industry driving the economy in the District. Riverton was founded in 1906 and the development of irrigation systems began in 1915. There are three main irrigation districts within the Lower Wind River Conservation District. The largest is the Midvale Irrigation District who manages the US Bureau of Reclamation project (approximately 96,000 acres). The other two irrigation districts are Riverton Valley (8,400 acres) and LeClair (11,450 acres). Crops produced include alfalfa hay, forage crops, beans, sugar beets, corn, oats and barley as well as specialty products such as raspberries, sunflowers and pumpkins. The area has traditionally been cattle and sheep country but the sheep numbers have been declining. Few dairy cattle and hogs are commercially raised in the area but goat numbers are increasing.

Energy development includes oil and gas development with some attempts to produce coal-bed methane. Activity in the Beaver Creek area south of Riverton, the Pavillion area and the Lysite area has gradually been increasing. Uranium mining may begin again in the Gas Hills area and there is some speculation of wind energy development.

Many tourists pass through this area on their way to the Tetons and Yellowstone National Park or to view cultural activities of the Shoshone and Arapaho Tribes on the neighboring Wind River Indian Reservation. The area is known for antelope, deer, elk and bird hunting. Pilot Butte Reservoir, Ocean Lake, Bass Lake and Boysen Lake are destinations for fishing, boating, skiing, swimming and camping. The Little Wind and Big Wind Rivers are primarily used for fishing. More recent recreational activities include ATV and motorcycle riding particularly on federal and state lands.

Urban areas are expanding as larger parcels of land are subdivided. Some cropland and rangeland has been subdivided into smaller parcels with a house on each. In other areas, new schools or industrial sites have been developed.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The soils in the District are immature and vary from blow sands, silts, loams and clays to rocky soils of the mountain areas. They are principally sedimentary in form and nature, contain little organic matter and are low in fertility. Some glacial deposits are found. Depth of soil ranges from shallow to 20 inches or more. The rangeland consists mainly of sandy, shallow soils. The topography includes relatively flat river bottomlands and terraces to rolling and broken rangelands. Elevations vary from 4,600—8,101 feet.

Annual precipitation in the area varies from 5-9 inches to 10-15 inches in a small area in the northeast corner of the District. Dry periods are frequent while heavy downpours or cloudbursts of various intensities are not uncommon. Rapid, heavy rainfall can lead to severe soil erosion due to the soil types. Moisture from snowfall constitutes 50-60% of the total precipitation. The growing season averages 90-120 days. The average last

killing frost is May 5th and the average first killing frost is September 10. Temperatures range from -45° F to 102° F.

All the water resources within the District flow to Boysen Reservoir. The primary perennial streams are the Big and Little Wind River. Many intermittent streams flow in the spring during snow melt. Other tributaries only flow during heavy rainfall. Springs and wells (of various depths) furnish a supply of water for domestic use although the quality is variable. Concentration of wells and septic systems in subdivided areas is increasing the concern for water quality.

ORGANIZATION

The Lower Wind River Conservation District is operated by a five-member Board of Supervisors whose members are elected by the citizens living within the boundaries of the District. Members serve four-year, staggered terms without pay. Three of the five supervisors represent the rural areas of our district while one represents the urban areas and one serves as an at-large representative. There is one employee of the District who manages the books, applies for grants and plans and carries out projects authorized by the Board of Supervisors. The District offers all programs and services on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs or marital and familial status.

The District is financed by the Fremont County Commissioners, sales of seedling trees and shrubs, subdivision soil reviews and grants. A budget is proposed in the spring of the year and is presented to the public for comment. The financial records of the District are annually reviewed by a certified public accountant.

DISTRICT LAW—In 1941 the Wyoming State Legislature recognized the need for a local governmental entity which would assist landowners and resource users with conservation practices and provide leadership in natural resource management issues and efforts. As a result, legislation was enacted which enabled the formation of local Conservation Districts and the election of Conservation District Supervisors. The Wyoming legislation authorizing the establishment of Conservation Districts was signed by Governor Smith on March 5, 1941. The Conservation District Law can be found in the Wyoming Statutes (§11-16-101—134).

MISSION STATEMENT

The Lower Wind River Conservation District is dedicated to local development and implementation of programs to provide leadership and technical assistance for the conservation of the District's natural resources, agricultural heritage and resource base through preventing soil erosion, protecting water quality and quantity, conserving and enhancing wildlife habitat, protecting the district tax base and promoting the health, safety and general welfare of the residents of the District.

NATURAL RESOURCES

GOAL: Conserve and enhance the natural resources within the Lower Wind River Conservation District.

OBJECTIVES:

Coordinate with landowners, local, state and federal agencies in land use planning.

Communicate with landowners, local, state and federal agencies about legislation and policies that affect the natural resource base and agricultural heritage in our district.

Complete proposed subdivision soil reviews and make recommendations to the Fremont County Planning Commission.

Provide technical assistance and program information about soil health and best management practices to prevent soil erosion.

Continue the annual tree and shrub sale program to aid in preventing soil and wind erosion and to promote soil conservation.

Work with landowners, local, state and federal agencies to maintain and enhance vegetative resources and reduce invasive species.

Continue to monitor stream and lake water quality within the district and work with citizens to maintain and improve water quality.

Continue implementation of the Muddy Creek, Poison Creek and Ocean Lake watershed water quality management plans.

Continue and expand the water well testing program.

Coordinate with landowners, local, state and federal agencies to develop upstream water storage and to improve irrigation delivery systems.

Work with landowners to develop grazing management and monitoring programs.

Coordinate with landowners, local, state and federal agencies on projects to maintain and enhance wildlife habitat.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

GOAL: Expand and strengthen the information and education programs to enhance natural resource conservation.

OBJECTIVES:

Maintain an outreach program to educate the public on District programs.

Coordinate with local schools to provide youth conservation programs.

Coordinate with local, state and federal agencies to provide adult conservation programs.

Utilize local newspapers, radio, newsletters and social media to provide information to the community on conservation programs and activities.

Maintain and regularly update the web site.

Make available educational brochures about conservation programs.

DISTRICT OPERATIONS

GOAL: Ensure that all District programs are carried out in a responsible, accountable manner.

OBJECTIVES:

Develop and maintain an annual budget.

Complete financial reviews and audits as required by law.

Conduct and publicize regular meetings.

Participate in all meetings required of the District and pertinent to District operations.

Continue to seek funding for District programs.

Sponsor meetings with landowners, resource agencies, groups and other organizations to identify opportunities for implementation of conservation efforts.

Maintain and develop partnerships between the District and local, state and federal agencies and groups such as the Natural Resources Conservation Service, UW Cooperative Extension Service, local Chambers of Commerce, local civic groups, local

legislative representatives, recreation groups, Fremont County Commissioners and County Officials, Fremont County Planning Commission, Recreation Districts, Fremont County Weed and Pest, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, Wyoming Department of Agriculture, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts and other entities that provide technical and financial assistance necessary to the operation of the District.

Lower Wind River Conservation District Operating Policy

The Board of Supervisors has adopted the following policies to assist in the implementation of goals and objectives.

The Lower Wind River Conservation District will

- 1) Review, study and comment when possible on all local, state and federal legislation, rules and regulations that may have an effect on the Conservation District, its cooperators and its citizens.
- 2) Coordinate with cooperators, citizens of the District, public institutions and government agencies in the conservation (wise use) of the water, soil, vegetative and wildlife resources in the District.
- 3) Cooperate and coordinate with the private individuals and groups along with local, state and federal governmental agencies to pursue continued resource management and enhancement in the district.
- 4) Provide planning, technical and material assistance to citizens and partners of the District for natural resource conservation projects.
- 5) Protect the land within the District against soil deterioration.
- 6) Help maintain and improve cropland, grassland, recreation areas and wildlife habitat.
- 7) Help maintain and improve water management, distribution, conservation and quality.

PUBLIC INPUT