LOWER WIND RIVER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

LONG-RANGE AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2026-2030

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Forward

The purpose of this Long Range and Natural Resource Management Plan is to define the long-term goals and objectives of the Lower Wind River Conservation District (LWRCD).

As per requirements set forth by the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA) and the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts (WACD), the LWRCD develops a Long-Range plan every 5 years to assess changes within our District's landscape. This plan evaluates our natural resource goals and priorities, as well as serves as a framework for future planning and program implementation.

In 2024, the LWRCD surveyed constituents to gather feedback regarding their awareness of the LWRCD, natural resource priorities, demographics, and program participation. In the spring of 2025, staff revised the survey to gather additional insights from those we serve, aiming to assist in shaping the future of our programs. The District received 53 responses and the results are detailed on pages 9 & 10 of this document.

Along with the public's survey results, staff worked with the Board of Supervisors, who are the only local government charged specifically by state statute with natural resource management, and other local, state, and federal partners to prioritize the goals and objectives of the District through 2030.

This document is intended to be reviewed annually by the staff and Board of Supervisors of the LWRCD. The Resolution of Adoption of this plan can be found at the end of the document.

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.

History & Authority of the LWRCD

During the 1930's, the Dust Bowl made the need to conserve natural resources, particularly soil, very clear. In February 1937, President Franklin D. Roosevelt urged all states to pass legislation authorizing a soil conservation program. In March of that same year, the first Soil Conservation District law was enacted in Arkansas. Four years later in February of 1941, Washakie County Senator Earl Bower introduced a bill establishing the Wyoming Soil Conservation Act.

Dust Bowl Era, NACD Photo

District Law - 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 by Governor Smith on March 5, 1941, which enabled the formation of local Conservation Districts and the election of Conservation District Supervisors. The Wyoming Conservation Districts Law (§11-16-101) clearly states that conservation districts are legal subdivisions of the state of Wyoming.

Wind River SCD Supervisors meeting, March 1958

The first Conservation District to be formed in our area was the Pavillion Soil Conservation District which was formed on July 16, 1942. On March 15, 1945, the Wind River Soil Conservation District was formed. On June 16, 1969, the Pavillion and Wind River Soil Conservation Districts were merged to form the Riverton Conservation District. The original Board Members were Marvin Heil, Richard Haun, Richard Donelson, Harvey Woolery and Harold Schmidt. Since 1969, the name of the District changed twice. In 2004, the name changed to the Lower Wind River Conservation District (LWRCD) which remains today.

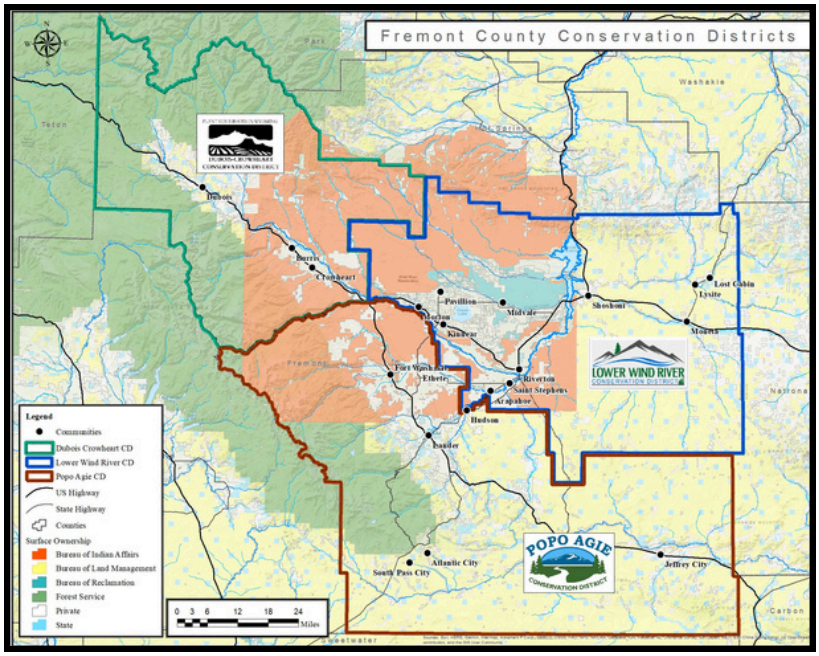
As per W.S. §11-16-122, xvi, the LWRCD is authorized to develop plans for range improvement and stabilization, conservation of soil, water and vegetative resources, control and prevention of soil erosion and for flood prevention or the conservation, development, utilization and disposal of water within the district while considering the customs and culture of residents of the district. Further, conservation districts may serve as cooperating agencies with special expertise (**W.S. §11-16-122, viii**) in federal or state land planning and implementation actions.

It is hereby declared to be the policy of the legislature to provide for the conservation of the soil, and soil and water resources of this state, and for the control and prevention of soil erosion and for flood prevention for the conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water, and hereby to stabilize ranching and farming operations, to preserve natural resources, protect the tax base, control floods, prevent impairment of dams and reservoirs, preserve wildlife, protect public lands, and protect and promote the health, safety and general welfare of the people of this state.

-Wyoming Statute 11-16-103.

Structure of the LWRCD

The LWRCD is one of 34 Conservation Districts in Wyoming and three in Fremont County. The district encompasses the northeast part of Fremont County, covers nearly 2 million acres and contains 21,500 residents. More demographics about the District can be found on page 4.



The District is governed by a five-member Board of Supervisors, elected by the residents within the District's boundaries. Board members serve staggered four-year terms without compensation. As per Wyoming Statute, three positions are designated for individuals living in rural areas, one position is for an individual residing in an urban area, and one at-large position; either residing in rural or urban area. A Conservation District Supervisor plays a crucial role in managing and protecting local natural resources, as well as overseeing and prioritizing conservation programs that address local needs.

The primary programs offered by the Lower Wind River Conservation District include: Surface water sampling, Well water and soil testing, No-till drill rentals for residents within Fremont County, Tree and shrub program, Rangeland project assistance, Cost share assistance for resource and community enhancement projects- such as irrigation rehabilitation, stock water ponds, urban storm drain protection, windbreaks, and demonstrations on natural resource education, Education and information outreach and Engineering technical assistance. Over the past ten years, these programs have expanded due in large part to the passing of the mill levy, necessitating additional staffing to effectively meet their requirements.

During the 2016 general election, voters in the District approved a mill levy proposal, providing critical funding to support the operations and programs of the LWRCD. The District began receiving mill levy revenues in the fall of 2017. As a petition recall measure, the mill levy remains in effect unless a petition signed by at least ten percent (10%) of registered voters in the District is submitted to the board of county commissioners. If such a petition is received, the proposal to discontinue the tax must then be approved by voters in the next general election or via a mail ballot, in accordance with Wyoming statutes.

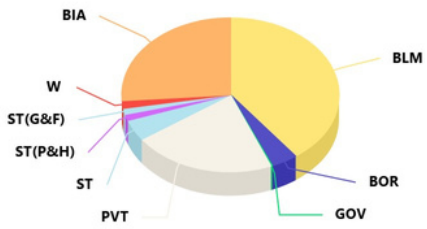
Since 2017, mill levy revenues for the LWRCD have fluctuated, largely influenced by changes in mineral severance taxes, and approved property tax exemptions in 2023 and 2024. The LWRCD saw peak revenue from the mill levy in 2022. The district has balanced the budget by increasing grants with federal and state partners and by using savings and investment accounts.

The District also receives funding through the seedling tree and shrub program, No-Till Drill rentals, and soil and water tests. These sources, along with the Fremont County Commissioners, City of Riverton and subdivision soil reviews, were the Districts sole revenue before the mill levy passed in 2016. The LWRCD is extremely grateful to provide the current services and programs that we do, thanks to the approval of the mill levy.

Resource Description

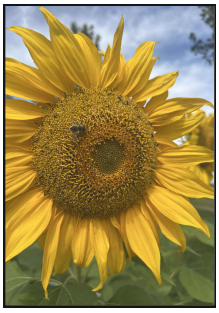
Demographics & Population

The LWRCD encompasses 1,905,025 acres or 2977 square miles, which is slightly larger than the state of Delaware. The population within the district as of 2020 is 21,582 residents with the rural and urban population almost equal. The largest incorporated town within the District and Fremont County is Riverton with a population of 10,808, followed by Shoshoni with 629 residents and Pavillion with 284 residents. The Arapahoe and St. Stephens unincorporated areas include nearly 1460 residents (2023 *Census Reporter*). The remaining residents reside in rural areas of the District and within the unincorporated towns of Kinnear, Lysite, Lost Cabin, Moneta, and Midvale.



Land Ownership and Land Uses

39.75% of the surface ownership in the District is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), followed by the Wind River Indian Reservation (BIA) at 26.19%, private ownership (PVT) at 21.24%, State of Wyoming (ST) at 7%, the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) at 4%, and Other in the form of Local Government (City-GOV) and water (W) from the Wind River and it's tributaries, Morton Lake, Ocean Lake, Bass Lake and Boysen Reservoir at 2% (*SuiteWater*, 2025).



Agriculture - Agriculture is the primary land use within the LWRCD, playing a central role in both the economic strength and cultural heritage of the region. In 2022 the market value of agricultural products in Fremont County totaled $98,882,000 which was a 20% increase since the Ag Census of 2017 (*USDA, NASS 2022*). Fremont County ranked 1st in fruits, tree nuts and berries, as well as nursery, greenhouse, floriculture and sod crops. Fremont County ranked 3rd in the state for all cattle and calves with 87,000 head. (*USDA, NASS 2024*) In 2022 there were 1,203,097 acres of farmland within Fremont County. (*USDA, NASS 2022*). The Riverton Valley, Paradise Valley, Missouri Valley, Riverview, Pavillion, Kinnear and Shoshoni areas within the LWRCD, are major contributors to the Agriculture totals for Fremont County.

Irrigation - Riverton was founded in 1906, the same year that construction began on the Riverton Reclamation Project. The success of agriculture in the region is due in large part to the pioneering efforts of early homesteaders and the construction of hundreds of miles of irrigation infrastructure—a legacy that continues to support productivity today. There are three major irrigation districts within the LWRCD: The Midvale Irrigation District is the largest, managing a U.S. Bureau of Reclamation project, followed by the LeClair Irrigation District and the Riverton Valley Irrigation District. There are approximately 169,120 irrigated acres within the District (*SuiteWater*, 2025).

Of the 21,582 residents in the LWRCD (*SuiteWater*, 2025), an estimated one-third rely on irrigation water for agricultural operations. Primary crops that not only benefit Fremont County and Wyoming, but the nation as a whole - include the nearly 100,000 acres irrigated and farmed for alfalfa hay, and native hay, along with other forage crops, beans, sugar beets, corn, oats, and barley, and the specialty crops mentioned above as well as other vegetables & berries. The availability of irrigation water varies annually and relies on the limited amount of precipitation in the form of mountain snowpack and seasonal rains. As a result, the productivity of agriculture and the economic viability of the region are closely tied to water availability.

Rangeland - Nearly 90% of the land within the LWRCD is classified as rangeland. The landscape ranges from hills and low mountains to broad plains. Vegetation is predominantly sagebrush steppe, interspersed with native grasses, forbs, and shrubs. Wyoming's vast rangelands are home to a diverse array of abundant wildlife, including large game species as well as a variety of birds, small mammals, and reptiles. The eastern portion of the LWRCD encompasses a Sage Grouse core area connectivity area and numerous Sage Grouse leks.

Along with being a home for wildlife, this area also encounters wild horses and supports grazing for domestic animals. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 recognized grazing as the primary use of federally managed lands. Because most of the rangeland in Fremont County is federally managed, ranchers must rely on obtaining federal and state grazing leases and permits. In the LWRCD, rangelands have traditionally supported summer livestock grazing across federal, state, and private lands. It is customary for cattle and sheep to be trailed between pastures or from rangelands to irrigated lands in the fall. This seasonal cycle—spring and summer grazing followed by fall and winter movement—is vital to the livestock industry, as well as to the cultural and economic fabric of our region. Any significant reduction or elimination of rangeland grazing would have devastating impacts on our local economy.

Energy Development – Energy development on federally and state-managed rangelands within the LWRCD has historically included oil and gas extraction, uranium mining, and limited coal-bed methane production. There has been a slight increase in oil and gas production in total wells for 2025; however, overall production has declined since the early 2000s, impacting the central Fremont County economy, which has long been shaped by boom-and-bust cycles.

Fremont County, WY Oil & Gas Activity Stats

Category	Last Year Value	Current Year Value	YoY Trend	YoY % Change
Total Wells	1,866	1,888	Up	1.18%
Total Producing Wells	724	702	Down	-3.04%
Percentage of Wells Producing	39%	37%	Down	4%
Active Producers	21	16	Down	-24%
Total Permits	0	0	Flat	0%
Average Well Depth	6,562	6,580	Up	0%
Average BOE per Well	342	313	Down	-8%

Powered by: MineralAnswers.com

Although uranium mining in the Gas Hills area has ended and the lands have been reclaimed, new exploration is underway north of Shoshoni. The BLM has authorized Rush Uranium Wyoming, LLC to drill up to 222 exploration holes and construct related infrastructure at Cooper Mountain (*BLM*, 2025). The King Solomon Project is also assessing Wyoming's mineral potential for nickel, cobalt, and platinum group elements—critical materials used in stainless steel, electric vehicle batteries, and catalytic converters (*Fact sheet*, 2024).

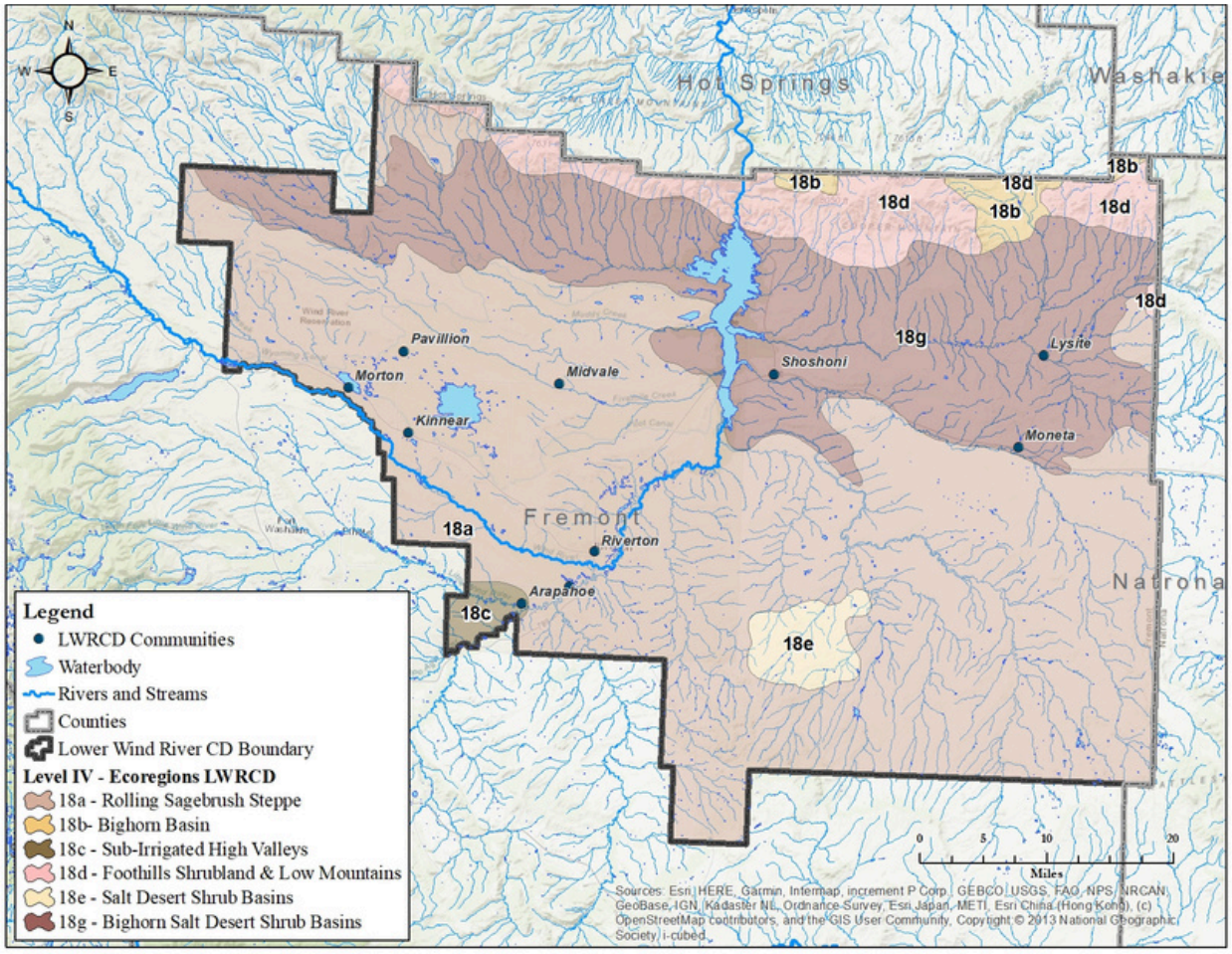
Recreation - Recreational use also contributes significantly to the local economy. Hunting for antelope, deer, elk, waterfowl, and upland game birds is popular, as are activities like camping, biking, ATV riding, and motorcycling—especially on federal and state lands. Tourists frequently pass through the region en route to the Tetons and Yellowstone National Park or to experience the cultural heritage of the Shoshone and Northern Arapaho Tribes on the Wind River Indian Reservation. Local reservoirs—Pilot Butte, Ocean Lake, Bass Lake, and Boysen Lake—attract visitors for fishing, boating, water skiing, swimming, and camping. The Little Wind and Big Wind Rivers are particularly valued for their fishing opportunities.

Urban Development - Expansion of urban areas is gradually occurring. Between 2022-2023 the population of Riverton, grew from 10,733 to 10,803, a 0.652% increase (*Data USA*, 2025). The subdividing of land has been moderate in recent years, particularly with the decline in oil and gas prices. However, the real estate market is active as people from large cities are moving to our less populated, rural area to enjoy wide-open spaces, beautiful scenery, customs and culture.

Ecoregions of the LWRCD

The topography of the LWRCD features a range of landscapes, from relatively flat river bottomlands and terraces to rolling rangelands and the foothills of the Owl Creek Mountains in the northern part of the District. Elevations vary from 4,557 feet near Boysen Reservoir to 8,637 feet within the Owl Creek Mountains (*SuiteWater*, 2025). The elevation changes also lead to diverse native vegetation. The area includes Cedar and Juniper woodlands in the Owl Creek Mountains foothills, to native grass and Sagebrush/Greasewood shrublands in the lowlands. The native grasses, forbs, shrubs and sagebrush are very resilient. However, continual improper use and/or management of the land can result in increased invasive species, lack of vegetation and soil erosion.

The District encompasses the majority of the Level IV Ecoregions within the Level III Wyoming Basin (18) Ecoregion, as depicted in the map below. Ecoregions represent areas of general similarity in ecosystems and in the type, quality, and quantity of environmental resources. Ecoregions were designed to be used as a spatial framework for the research, assessment, management, and monitoring of ecosystems and ecosystem components (*UwyoExtension Wyoming Rangelands*, 2025),. The primary Level IV Ecoregions represented in the District are 18a -Rolling Sagebrush Steppe which covers 62% of the District, and 18g - Bighorn Salt Desert Shrub Basins, which covers 27% of the District. More detailed information about the Level IV Ecoregions can be found in the table on page 7 derived from the EPA Ecoregions....



Soils

In the Rolling Sagebrush Steppe (18a), soils are typically loamy, calcareous, and moderately saline with low organic matter, supporting sagebrush-grassland vegetation. They are generally loamy to sandy-loam surface textures, and are relatively well-drained. Common soil series consist of: Haterton, Ryark, Almy, Blackhall, Alcova, Blazon, Delphill, Garsid, Cotopaxi, and others as listed in the table below, referenced from the "Ecoregions of Wyoming." In the Bighorn Salt Desert Basins (18g), soils are fine-textured (clay/clay-loam), often saline/sodic soils on basin floors and playas; higher clay content, seasonal saturation/poor drainage, high soluble salts. Due to the high clay and salt content, these soils are more prone to low permeability, crusting, and limited vegetation recovery when disturbed. Common soil series consist of: Persayo, Haverdad, Kishona, Griffy, Garland, Chipeta, Greybull, Sayles, Stutzman, Worland, Torchlight, Youngston, Apron, Wallson, Mudray, and rock outcrops. (*Ecoregions and Characteristics Ecoregions of Wyoming, 2004*)

Level IV Ecoregions		Physiography		Soils			Potential Natural Vegetation
	Area (square miles)		Elevation/ Local Relief (feet)	Order (Great Group)	Common Soil Series	Temperature/ Moisture Regimes	
18a. Rolling Sagebrush Steppe	22857	Unglaciated. Plains with hills, Nearly level floodplains and terraces, and rolling alluvial fans. Streams and rivers originating in mountains have moderate gradient with cobble substrates of granite or limestone. Streams originating in the center of the basin are more incised, low gradient with finer gravel substrates derived from shales. Small streams are ephemeral or weakly intermittent with sand or platy shale substrates.	4900-7200 50-400	Entisols (Torriorthents, Torripsamments), Aridisols (Haplargids, Haplocalcids, Calciargids)	Haterton, Ryark, Almy, Blackhall, Alcova, Blazon, Delphill, Garsid, Cotopaxi, Cambarge, Pepal, Huguston, Teagulf, Ryan Park, Bosler, Bowbac, Shingle	Frigid, Mesic/ Ardic, Udic	Shrubland dominated by sagebrush steppe, which may include western wheatgrass, needle-and-thread grass, blue grama, Sandberg bluegrass, junegrass, rabbitbrush, fringed sage,Wyoming big sagebrush, silver and black sagebrush in lowlands and mountain big sagebrush in the higher elevations.
18b. Bighorn Basin	3285	Unglaciated. Basin with rolling plains, terraces, and alluvial fans. Streams and rivers originating in mountains have moderate gradient with cobble-sized substrates of granite, volcanic rock or limestone. Incised stream channels. Many ephemeral streams. Severely altered hydrology due to mosaic of irrigation diversion ditches. Many ephemeral streams become perennial during irrigation season due to return flows.	5000-7500 50-150	Entisols (Ustifluvents, Torrifluvents, Torriorthents), Aridisols (Haplargids, Haplocalcids)	Haverson, Glenberg, Griffy, Garland, Worland, Hiland, Bowbac, Blackhall, Thermopolis, Haverdad, Forkwood, Shingle, Copeman, Trook, Wall, rock outcrops	Mesic, Frigid/ Aridic, Udic	Shrubland dominated by sagebrush steppe, which may include Wyoming big sagebrush, western wheatgrass, bluebunch wheatgrass, needle-and-thread grass, blue grama, Sandberg bluegrass, junegrass, rabbitbrush, fringed sage, and other grasses, forbs, and shrubs.
18c. Sub-Irrigated High Valleys	2259	Unglaciated. High elevation valleys, nearly flat floodplains, and low terraces. Many wetlands. Streams and rivers are moderate gradient, riffle/run. Substrate is generally cobble-sized, glacial outwash material consisting of granite, limestone, and quartzite.	5200-8000 25-175	Entisols (Ustifluvents, Ustorthents), Aridisols (Haplocalcids, Calciargids, Haplargids), Mollisols (Haplustolls, Argiustolls, Haplocryolls, Cryaquolls, Argicryolls)	Havre, McFadden, Bosler, Patent, Forelle, Lander, Evanston, Outlet, Dobrow, Greyback, Gelkie	Frigid, Cryic/ Ustic, Aridic, Aquic	Wet meadows and riparian areas may include, willows, narrow leaf alders, cottonwood, horsetail, spikerush sedges, and tufted hairgrass. Shrubland dominated by sagebrush steppe, which may include Wyoming big sagebrush, western wheatgrass, needle-and-thread grass, blue grama, Sandberg bluegrass, junegrass, rabbitbrush, and fringed sage.
18d. Foothill Shrublands and Low Mountains	6911	Unglaciated. Footslopes, alluvial fans, hills, ridges, and valleys. Streams originate in adjacent Rocky Mountains or are small spring-fed streams that originate on the flanks of higher basin ranges. They are steep gradient with riffle/run and plunge pools. Substrate is generally cobble or larger, composed of limestone and granite material.	5000-9100 200-800	Aridisols (Haplargids, Haplocalcids, Haplocambids), Entisols (Torriorthents, Cryorthents), Mollisols (Argicryolls, Haplocryolls), Inceptisols (Dystrocryepts, Calciustepts), Alfisols (Glossocryalfs, Haplocryalfs)	Nathrop, Lymanson, Saddle, Worland, Starman, Burgess, Jenkins, Starley, Dell, Amsden, Decross, Poker, Indart, Farlow, Owen Creek, Fossilon, Langspring, Chittum, Glassner, Uhl, Woosley, Rentsac, rock outcrops	Cryic, Frigid, Mesic/ Ustic, Aridic	Rocky Mountain juniper, lodgepole pine, limber pine, aspen, and Douglas-fir forests are found at higher elevations. Ponderosa pine is also found at the higher elevations in the west. Rocky Mountain juniper, Utah juniper and mountain mahogany woodlands occur on rock outcrops. Sagebrush steppe and grassland dominated by big sagebrush, rabbitbrush, prickly pear, bluebunch wheatgrass, Idaho fescue at lower elevations.
18e. Salt Desert Shrub Basins	3858	Unglaciated. Plains, nearly level floodplains and terraces, and rolling alluvial fans. Streams are ephemeral or weakly intermittent. Many streams are incised and flow into playa areas. Substrate is commonly fine textured material or platy shale gravels. Playas are seasonal and have high level of soluble salts.	5800-7200 50-200	Entisols (Torriorthents, Torripsamments), Aridisols (Haplocalcids, Haplocambids, Natrargids)	Dines, Chrisman, Kandaly, Teagulf, Shellcreek, Debone, Blazon, Moyerson	Frigid/ Aridic	Desert shrublands dominated by alkaline tolerant shrubs and grasses; greasewood, Gardner saltbush, shadescale, bud sage, and big sagebrush. Areas with stabilized sand dunes are dominated by alkali cordgrass, Indian ricegrass, blowout grass, alkali wildrye, and needle-and-thread grass.
18g. Bighorn Salt Desert Shrub Basins	4624	Unglaciated. Plains, nearly level floodplains and rolling alluvial fans. Incised stream channels. Many ephemeral streams. Severely altered hydrology due to mosaic of irrigation diversion ditches. Many ephemeral streams become perennial during irrigation season due to return flows. Heavy sediment loading during run off events.	4000-5800/ 10-100	Entisols (Torriorthents, Torrifluvents), Aridisols (Haplargids, Natrargids)	Persayo, Haverdad, Kishona, Griffy, Garland, Chipeta, Greybull, Sayles, Stutzman, Worland, Torchlight, Youngston, Apron, Wallson, Mudray, rock outcrops	Mesic/ Aridic, Udic	Desert shrublands dominated by alkaline tolerant shrubs and grasses; greasewood, Gardner saltbush, shadescale, birdfoot sagebrush, bud sage, saltgrass, and alkali sacaton. Riparian vegetation along the major rivers consists of open deciduous woodland with plains cottonwood, narrow leaf cottonwood, peachleaf willow, and wild plum. Introduced woody species such as Russian olive and tamarisk are common invaders.

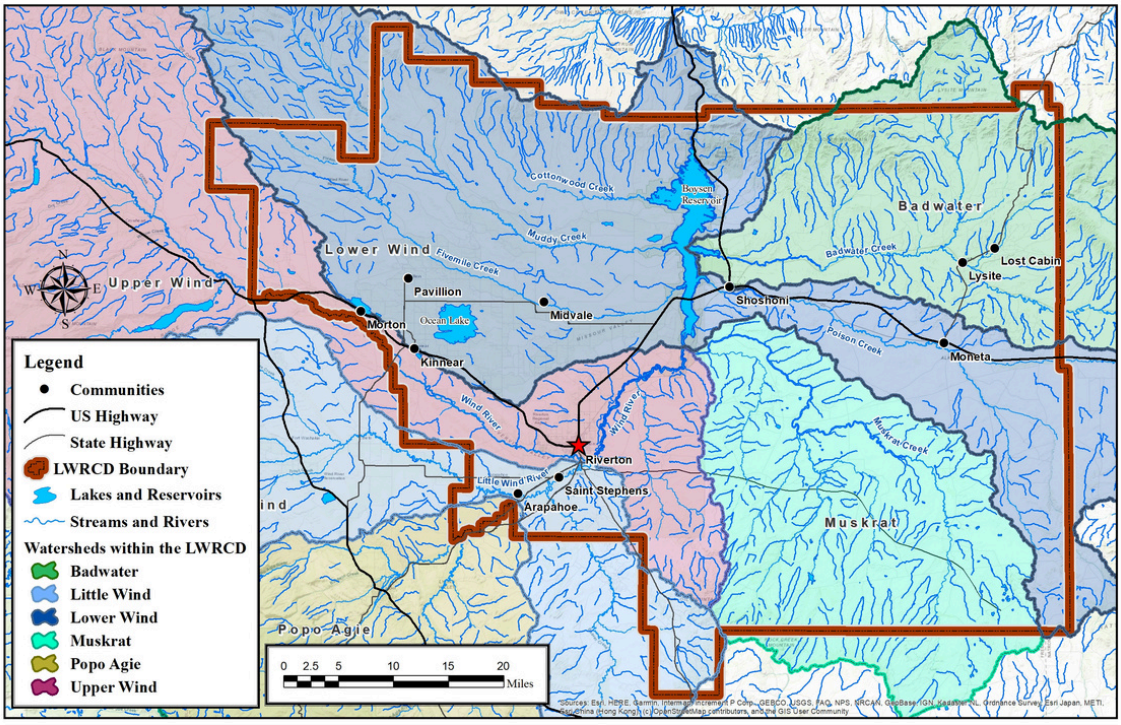
Climate

The majority of the District's annual precipitation varies from 5-9 inches, however the northern boundary and pockets within the District can receive an average of 10-15 inches. Dry periods are frequent, while heavy downpours or cloudbursts of various intensities are not uncommon. Rapid, heavy rainfall can lead to severe soil erosion depending on soil types and conditions. Moisture from snowfall constitutes 50-60% of the total precipitation. In recent years, 2023 was outside of the average and was the 3rd wettest year on record with 15.51 inches of precipitation. It was also the snowiest year on record with 92 inches which was 208% of normal (NWS, 2023).

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 with the 30 year annual mean temperature of 44° F. The annual mountain snowpack and precipitation are extremely important factors in the annual agricultural productivity.

Water Resources

The conservation and protection of surface waters within the Lower Wind River Conservation District is a main goal of the District as all of the water resources within the District, flow to Boysen Reservoir. With an average annual rainfall of 10 inches, water in our semi-arid region is highly valued. From lakes and reservoirs, small ephemeral and intermittent streams to the Big and Little Wind Rivers and irrigation canals, our District features unique water conveyance and storage systems that support a large part of our economy. Why do watersheds matter? They influence water quality and supply, contribute to flood control and ecosystem health, and the activities within our watersheds impact downstream areas.



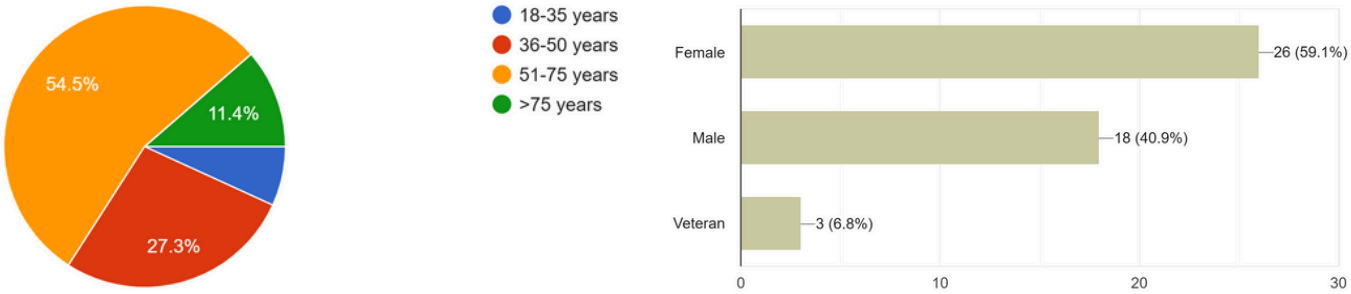
1. The largest watershed by size, number of streams and rivers, and water acreage within the LWRCD is the **Lower Wind**, which reflects our namesake! The water bodies in this watershed include Fivemile Creek, Muddy Creek, Cottonwood Creek, Poison Creek, Wyoming Canal, Ocean Lake, Boysen Reservoir, and many unnamed ephemeral and intermittent streams.
2. The second largest watershed in the LWRCD is the **Badwater** watershed, covering the northeastern part of the District. Its waters include Badwater Creek, Alkali Creek, Dry Creek, and Bridger Creek.
3. The third largest, and the least populated, is the **Muskrat** watershed, with waterbodies such as Dry Cheyenne, Conant Creek, and Horseshoe Creek.
4. The fourth largest in size, but containing the largest flowing waterbody and the primary source of irrigation water diversion, is the **Upper Wind** watershed. It is also the most populated, with Riverton located at the confluence of the Big Wind River and Little Wind River.
5. The Little Wind River watershed includes a small portion of the **Little Wind River**, which also provides irrigation delivery, and Beaver Creek, which join the Big Wind River just south of Riverton. A very small portion of the Popo Agie watershed encompasses the southwest corner of the District near Hudson, with about 1.5 miles of the Popo Agie River flowing through the LWRCD to its confluence with the Little Wind River.

There are five waterbodies within the LWRCD that are listed as impaired per Wyoming's 2022/2024 Integrated 305(b) and 303(d) Report (WDEQ, 2025). The LWRCD has been heavily involved in watershed planning, sampling, and restoration activities on these waterbodies.

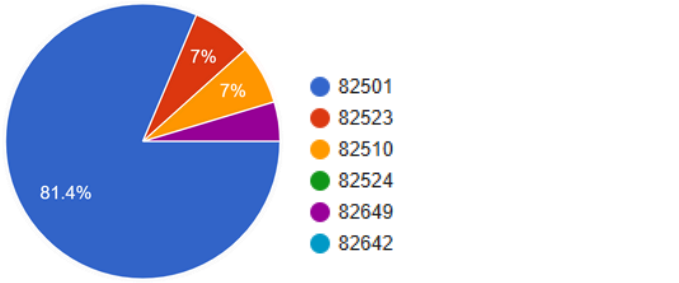
Survey Input and Results

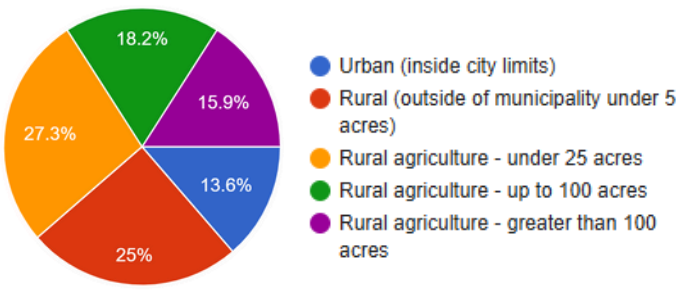
To gather input on the public's use of LWRCD programs, demographics of those who utilize our programs, and their natural resource concerns, the LWRCD staff developed a survey in the winter of 2024 to provide to constituents at Farm and Ranch Days and the Fremont County Fair. The LWRCD staff revised the survey and provided it again during the 2025 Fremont County Fair and promoted the survey on the District website, Facebook page and direct mailings. We received a total of 53 survey responses in 2024 and 2025. Even though the responses were a small percentage of the total number of constituents in our District, they provided valuable results to help us better understand the natural resource needs for residents within our District. The following pages provide a summary of the survey responses.

DEMOGRAPHICS 2025 (NOT SURVEYED IN 2024):

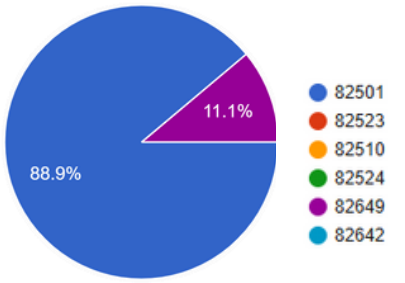


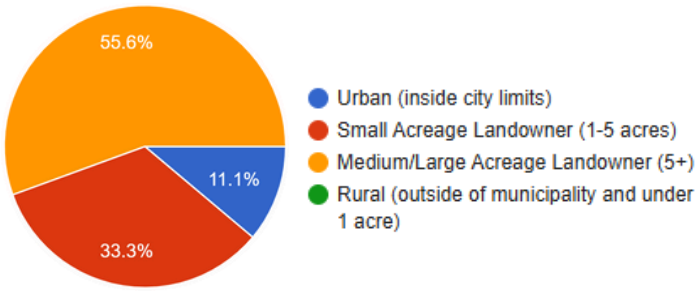
AREA REPRESENTED 2025:



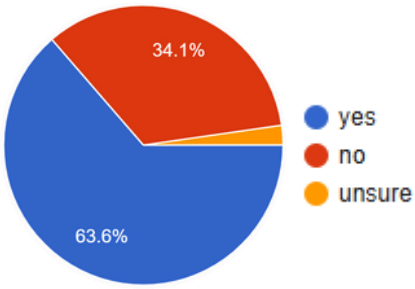


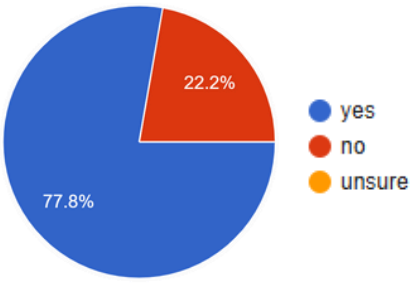
AREA REPRESENTED 2024:





HAVE YOU USED A LWRCD PROGRAM? (2025 LEFT, 2024 RIGHT)

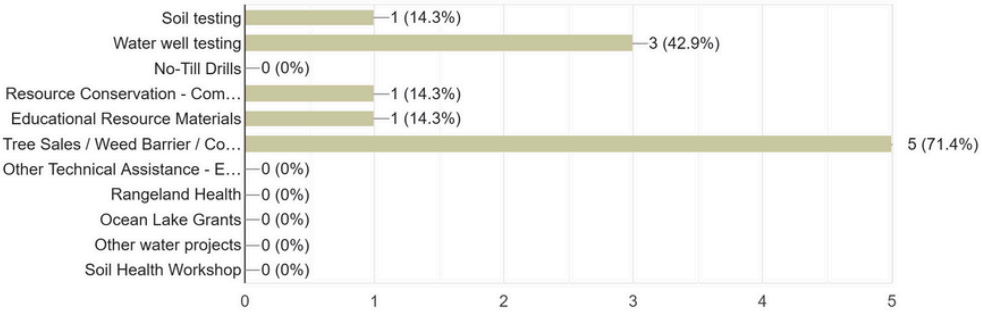




2024

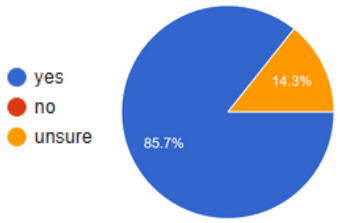
If yes, what programs and services have you used? Please check all that apply.

7 responses

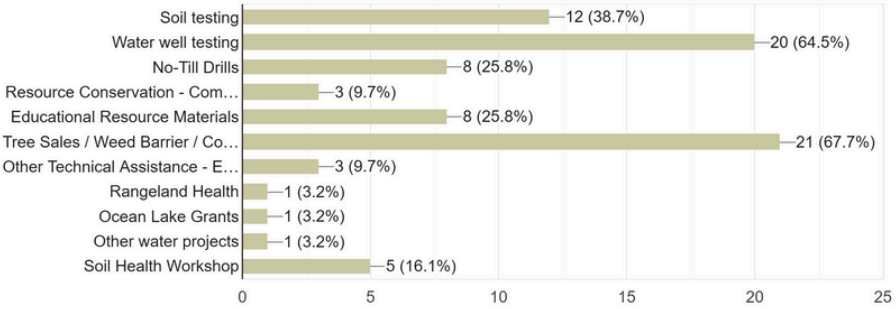


Did you find the program successful for your needs?

7 responses

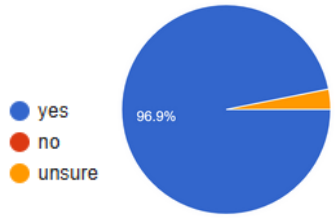


2025



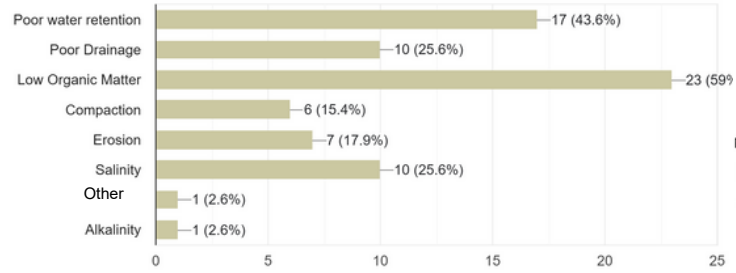
5. Did you find the program successful for your needs?

32 responses



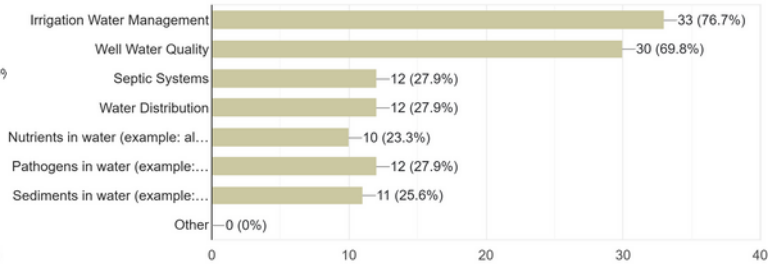
8. Which soil issues are most important to you?

39 responses



9. Which water issues are most important to you?

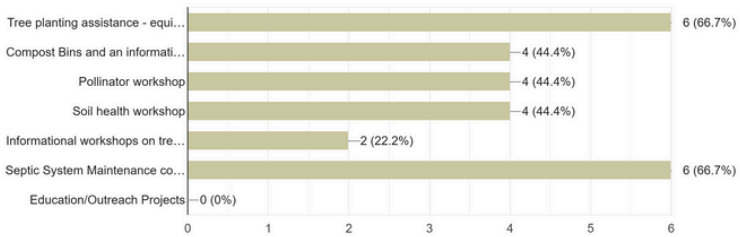
43 responses



2024

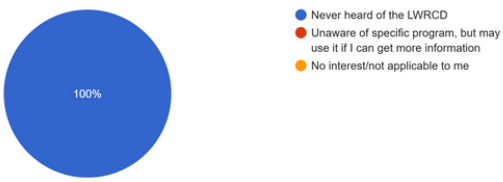
Select three programs or workshop topics, that would interest you if we were to offer any of the following:

9 responses



If you have not utilized any of the LWRCD programs or services, please tell us why.

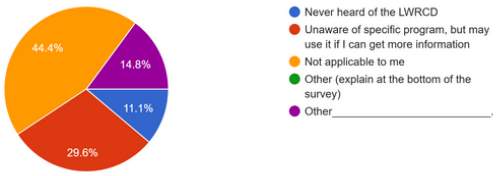
2 responses



2025

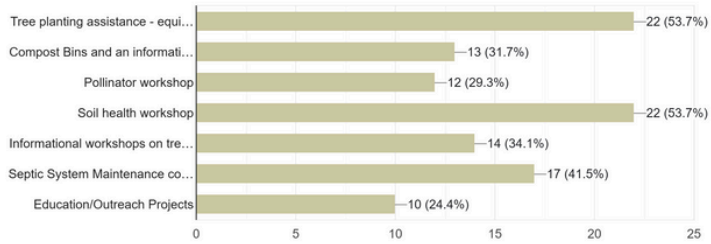
7. If you have not utilized any of the LWRCD programs or services, please tell us why.

27 responses



10. Select up to three programs or workshop topics, that would interest you if we were to offer any of the following:

41 responses



Long Range Plan

LWRCD staff compiled the information from the surveys in the fall of 2025 to help better understand program priorities and where to focus the goals and objectives of the District for the next five years. A summary of the survey results provided the following:

1. Over ½ of the responses were from the 51-75 year age bracket and were Female.
2. Over 80% of the responses were from residents in the Riverton area, followed by the Shoshoni area.
3. Over ½ of the responses were from rural residents owning 5 or more acres.
4. Over 60% of responses had utilized an LWRCD program.
5. Over 85% of the respondents found the program they utilized successful.
6. The largest program utilized per responses was the Tree, Weed Barrier, and Compost Bin program, followed by the well water testing program.
7. Low Organic Matter was the soil issue of greatest concern.
8. Irrigation Water Management and Well Water Quality were the water issues of greatest concern.
9. Responses varied on why respondents had not utilized our programs, with the majority in 2024 never having heard of us before, and the programs not applying to them in 2025.
10. The workshop topics of greatest interest from respondents was Tree planting assistance, soil health workshop, and Septic System maintenance.

These survey results, coupled with an understanding of the land uses, ecoregions, soils, climate and water resources, help shape the Goals and Objectives for the Long Range Plan, and guide the LWRCD in addressing the District's most important conservation needs. The LWRCD will review the Long Range Plan while developing the Annual Plan of Work, which outlines the specific programs and activities for the year. Because community needs and priorities can change over time, the LWRCD will continue to adjust its programs to best serve the people and natural resources of the District.

References:

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- Data USA (2025) Riverton, Wyoming https://datausa.io/profile/geo/riverton-wy
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- MineralAnswers.com (2025, October 20). Fremont County, WY Oil & Gas Activity. https://www.mineralanswers.com/wyoming/fremont-county
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- United States Department of Agriculture, National Agriculture Statistics Service (2022). County Profile – Fremont County, Wyoming Census of Agriculture.
- United States Department of Agriculture, National Agriculture Statistics Service, Mountain Region, Wyoming Field Office (2024, May). Wyoming Cattle Facts Fact Sheet, 2024
- University of Wyoming Extension (2025, October 15). Wyoming Rangelands. Wyoming Ecoregions https://uwyoextension.org/uwrange/rangeland-resources/wyoming-ecoregions/
- University of Wyoming; WyGISC (2025) SuiteWater. https://suitewater.wygisc.org/
- Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality – Water Quality Division. Wyoming's 2022/2024 Integrated 305(b) and 303(d) Report Final. June 27, 2025. 200 West 17th Street, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002

*Pictures provided courtesy of Cathy Cline, Shirene Peterson, Cathy Rosenthal, and Robert (Bobby) Thoman



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 the LWRCD.
- Complete soil reviews for proposed rural subdivision as required by law and make recommendations to the Fremont County Planning Commission.
- Provide technical assistance, engineering when needed, and program information about soil health and best management practices to prevent soil erosion.
    - Continue to offer soil health programs (i.e. soil testing and No-Till Drills) to help constituents better understand soil composition and quality, reduce erosion, enhance biological activity, and overall improve their soil health.
- Continue to annually sell trees and shrubs to aid in preventing soil and wind erosion, to provide livestock, crop and building protection and to provide wildlife habitat.
- Work with landowners, local, state and federal agencies to maintain and enhance vegetative resources, reduce invasive species and maintain and enhance wildlife habitat.
- Expand water quality monitoring of well water, streams and lakes within the District and work with citizens and land managers to maintain and improve water quality.
- Continue implementation of the Muddy Creek, Poison Creek and Ocean Lake watershed water quality management plans.
- 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.

Information And Education

GOAL: Expand and strengthen the Information and Education programs to enhance Natural Resource Conservation.

OBJECTIVES:

- Organize and/or participate in workshops to inform the public about natural resource programs, best management practices and conservation technology.
  - Offer workshops that best suit the needs of the constituents within the LWRCD (i.e. Tree planting and program assistance, soil health, septic maintenance)
- Participate in local events to provide information about LWRCD programs and services.
- Coordinate with local schools and organizations to teach youth about the importance of wise use of our natural resources.
- Utilize local newspapers, radio, newsletters and social media to provide information to the community about conservation programs and activities.
- Maintain and regularly update the District's website and Facebook pages.
- Make available educational brochures about conservation programs.
- Continue to seek and incorporate citizen input for program planning, implementation and assessment.
- Communicate with locally elected officials about LWRCD projects and programs.
- Sponsor meetings with landowners, resource agencies, groups and other organizations to identify opportunities for cooperative identification and implementation of resource conservation efforts.

Maintain and develop partnerships between the LWRCD 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, the Northern Arapaho Tribe, The Eastern Shoshone Tribe, LeClair Irrigation District, Midvale Irrigation District, Riverton Valley Irrigation District, 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, Wyoming State Forestry, U.S. Fish and Wildlife 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.

District Operations

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

OBJECTIVES:

- Develop and adopt a fiscally responsible, annual budget, provide for public comment and file the adopted budget with the Wyoming Department of Audit and Fremont County Clerk.
- Publicize and conduct monthly Board of Supervisors meetings and encourage the public to participate.
- Complete and file financial reports, financial reviews or audits, meeting minutes and other reports as required by local, state or federal law.
- Pursue additional sources of funding for resource conservation projects and programs.
- Provide training and educational opportunities to staff and board members to more efficiently and expertly carry out their duties and responsibilities.
- Provide adequate facilities, equipment and personnel to meet the administrative and program needs of the LWRCD.

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. Protect the land within the LWRCD against soil deterioration.
2. Help maintain and improve water conservation, quality, management and distribution.
3. Help maintain and improve cropland, rangeland, recreation areas and wildlife habitat.
4. Provide planning, technical and material assistance to citizens and partners of the LWRCD for natural resource conservation projects.
5. Review, study and comment when possible on all local, state and federal legislation, rules, regulations and actions that may affect the LWRCD, its cooperators and its citizens as well as their economy, customs and culture.
6. Coordinate with cooperators, citizens of the LWRCD, public institutions and government agencies in the conservation (wise use) of the soil, water, and vegetative resources in the District.
7. Cooperate and coordinate with the private individuals and groups along with local, state and federal governmental agencies to pursue continued economically viable resource management while maintaining our customs and culture.

Resolution of Adoption

Whereas, the Lower Wind River Conservation District is empowered by Wyoming State Statute §11-16-101—135 to adopt and implement soil and water conservation management plans and programs; and

Whereas, the Land Use and Natural Resource Management Plan for 2026-2030 was developed and prepared by the Lower Wind River Conservation District Supervisors in cooperation with local individuals, groups and government agencies in an open and collaborative planning process; and

Whereas the Land Use and Natural Resource Management Plan for 2026-2030 provides direction and defines the role of the Lower Wind River Conservation District in the management of the District's natural resources; and

Whereas the Lower Wind River Conservation District publicly requested comments from November 7, 2025 through December 21, 2025;

Therefore, be it hereby resolved by the Board of Supervisors of the Lower Wind River Conservation District this 22nd day of December 2025 that the Land Use and Natural Resource Management Plan for 2026—2030 be approved and adopted.

_____

Rod Rivers

_____

Richard Denke

_____

Ron Lucas

_____

Nick Biltoft

_____

Scott Pettit