

# ANNUAL PLAN OF WORK

FISCAL YEAR 2019

July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019



## **MEETEETSE CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

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**INTRODUCTION**

The Meeteetse Conservation District (MCD) 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 Districts Law”. Elected by the people of the District at general elections, by popular vote, the MCD Supervisors are the only locally elected board charged specifically with the responsibility of representing local people on natural resource issues and, as stated in:

W.S. § 11-16-103 *Legislative declarations and policy:*

“(a) It is hereby declared that the farm and grazing lands of Wyoming are among the basic assets of the state; that improper land use practices cause and contribute to serious erosion of these lands by wind and water; that among the consequences which would result from such conditions are the deterioration of soil and its fertility and the silting and sedimentation of stream channels, reservoirs, dams and ditches; that to conserve soil, and soil and water resources, and prevent and control soil erosion, it is necessary that land use practices contributing to soil erosion be discouraged and that appropriate soil conserving land use practices be adopted.”

“(b) 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.”

and,

§ 11-16-135 *Special expertise of supervisors of conservation districts:*

(a) When representing a conservation district as a cooperating agency in matters related to the National Environmental Policy Act and in federal land planning, implementation and management actions, supervisors of a conservation district shall be deemed to have special expertise on all subject matters for which they have statutory responsibility, including but not limited to all subject matters directly or indirectly related to stabilization of the agriculture industry, wildlife habitat, protection of water quality and water yield, silviculture and forestry practices, range management, range improvement and stabilization, conservation of soil and water resources, control and prevention of soil erosion, flood prevention or the conservation, development, utilization and disposal of water within the district.

The 2019 Annual Plan of Work has been prepared under the authority of and to further the implementation of the MCD Land Use Management and Resource Conservation Plan 2011, and to provide partial fulfillment of the requirements for Wyoming Conservation District funding through the Wyoming Department of Agriculture.

The 2019 Annual Plan of Work is one of the principal tools used by the Meeteetse Conservation District (MCD) Board of Supervisors and the MCD staff to keep the general public, other governmental entities, and non-governmental organizations informed of the direction that MCD will take in FY 2019. MCD encourages comments from the public at any time, which ensures the effectiveness of the District.

**SUPERVISORS & STAFF**

<u>MCD Board of Supervisors as of July 1, 2018</u>			<u>MCD Staff as of July 1, 2018</u>		
<b>OFFICE</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>POSITION</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>POSITION</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Chairman	Tim Morrison	Urban	Steffen Cornell	District Manager (DM)	FT, Hourly
Vice-Chairman	George (Tracy) Renner	Rural			
Treasurer	Merilee (Kathy) Gilbreath	Rural	Josh Kipley	Resource Specialist (RS)/ Firewise Coordinator	FT, Hourly
Secretary	Lionel Ostrander	At-large			
Member	Joe Thomas	Rural			

**SPECIAL COMMITTEES & STAFF ASSIGNMENTS**

- DISTRICT OPERATIONS - Steffen Cornell, Tim Morrison and Josh Kipley
- BLM ISSUES - Steffen Cornell, Tim Morrison and Josh Kipley
- EDUCATION - Steffen Cornell, Tracy Renner and Josh Kipley
- FOREST ISSUES - Steffen Cornell, Tim Morrison, Josh Kipley
- WATER - Steffen Cornell, Tim Morrison and Josh Kipley
- RANGE AND FIRE - Lionel Ostrander and Josh Kipley
- WILDLIFE - Steffen Cornell, Tracy Renner and Josh Kipley

## SUMMARY

The list below provides the framework for implementing the Meeteetse Conservation District's Plan of Work (POW) using information derived from the MCD Land Use Management and Resource Conservation Plan (LUP). The listed activities represent a "best efforts" implementation of the MCD's LUP, taking into account the District's capacity.

### **ADMINISTRATION**

- Board Meetings
- Budget / Payroll
- Administrative Training for Staff & Board
- Governmental Networking and Legislative Issues affecting MCD and its constituents

### **COOPERATOR ASSISTANCE**

- Assist MCD Landowners and Partners on natural resource issues

### **EDUCATION**

- Outdoor Classroom
- Meeteetse Schools and FFA
- Community outreach through Trail News, Website & Facebook
- Informational and Technical Workshops for the public

### **FIREWISE TITLE III**

- Identify "at risk" communities in accordance with Wildfire Protection Plan
- Market the program through presentations and outreach
- Coordinate hazard fuels reduction efforts in areas identified in the Wildland Urban Interface
- Train other staff in the Firewise Program

### **NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT & PLANNING (NRM&P)**

- Land Use Plan updates
- NRCS Local Work Group Participation
- BLM Bighorn Basin Resource Management Plan Implementation
- UAS (drone) aerial imagery acquisition, physical feature / natural resource inventory and land use classification
- Shoshone National Forest Travel Management Planning
- Wildlife Issues (Wild Horses, Grizzly Bear delisting, Wolf, Sage-grouse, Black-footed Ferret, Crop Damage, Migration corridor enhancement, Brucellosis mitigation)

### **RANGE AND RANGE MANAGEMENT**

- Grazing Management Assistance
- Rangeland Health Assessment Program (RHAP)
- UW Soil Moisture and Forage Yield Project

### **TRAINING**

- WCDEA Winter Training
- WACD Convention
- Webinars & Workshops

### **WATER QUALITY**

- Level 1 Watershed Study
- TMDL Implementation
- Water Quality Monitoring
- WY Dept. of Agriculture Surface Water Quality Baseline Sampling
- Watershed Management Plan Implementation
- SAP Revision
- Data Analysis

**WEATHER**

- o CoCoRaHS
- o Weather Station Maintenance (Citizen Weather Observation Program)

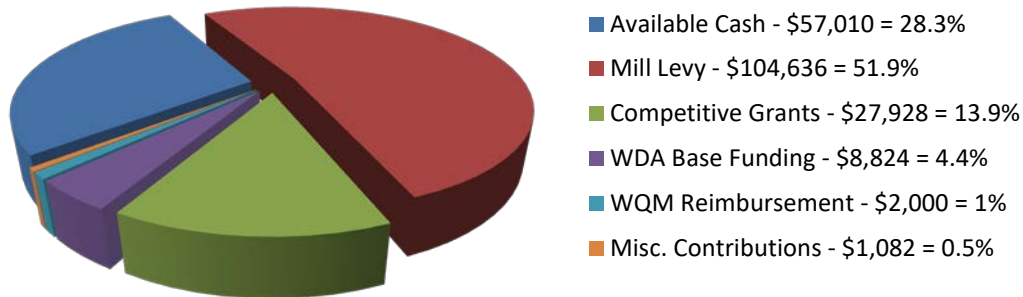
**WEBSITE & FACEBOOK**

- o Educational Outreach
- o Information Dissemination & Advertising

**BUDGETING:**

Financial information is projected according to the FY19 Budget, approved by the MCD Board of Supervisors at the July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018 Budget Hearing.

**FY 2019 CASH & REVENUES**



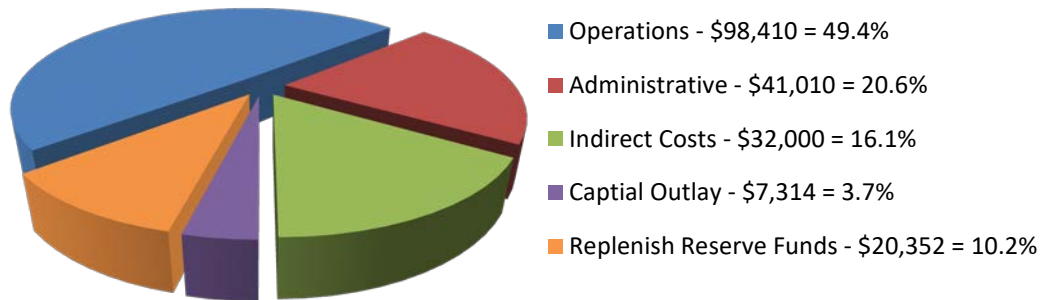
The MCD will operate on a cash basis from total cash available and forecasted revenues of \$201,480. Budgeted cash available is \$57,010 (28.3%). Revenues of \$104,636 (51.9%) are expected from its 1 mill tax levy, \$27,928 (13.9%) from Competitive grants, \$8,824 (4.4%) from WDA base funding, \$2,000 (1.0%) from WDA WQM Reimbursement Grant, and \$1,082 (<1%) from miscellaneous sources including outside contributions, interest, and refunds. The Depreciation, Emergency, and Natural Resources Management & Planning Reserves will be funded to a small degree by additions from accrued interest.

\$102,211 will fund reserve accounts, of which \$20,000 is budgeted to fund the Startup Reserve that will fund the District from July through December of FY 19, when the first major mill levy disbursement is received from the county. \$20,352 will be refunded to an Emergency Reserve account after the December mill disbursement. It is anticipated that another \$20,000 will fund the FY 20 Startup Reserve at the end of FY 19.

In order to better evaluate its accomplishments and attainment of objectives, MCD continues to define its administrative activities and differentiate between District Administration and District Operations.

MCD defines *Administration* activities as those activities that primarily keep the office and District functioning. Activities are referred to in budgeting and tracked in the accounting system as *Classes*. Administrative activities are anticipated to require 12 staff-hours per week. Approximately 57% of the MCD’s administration activities are expected to be performed by the District Manager, who is generally responsible for the day-to-day activities of the MCD, including district budgeting and finances, performs bookkeeping and associated reporting tasks. The RS generally performs administrative tasks related to district operations but will also perform general secretarial tasks since there is no District Clerk.

## FY 2019 EXPENDITURES



Budgeted administrative expenditures of \$41,010 are anticipated to be about 20.6% of FY 19 total expenditures of \$199,086.

MCD defines services and associated activities for which the District was formed as *Operations*.

MCD operations include natural resource management & planning, monitoring and reporting of water quality, soil moisture, range, local weather conditions, natural resource education, and other special projects and natural resource-related activities of value to the community. The MCD may assist other entities in providing similar activities, and participation in many technical training activities may be considered part of operations.

On an annual basis, about 52% of the MCD's operations activities are expected to be performed by the Resource Specialist, who has general responsibility for day-to-day operations. The Resource Specialist works with, and provides guidance for seasonal employees, as well as working on independent projects. Operations direct costs of \$98,410 are anticipated to be about 49.4% of FY 19 total expenditures of \$199,086.

Indirect costs of \$32,000 and capital outlay of \$7,314 are expected to be 16.1% and 3.7% of the FY 19 total expenditures respectively, for a grand total of \$199,086 in expenditures for FY 19.

## COOPERATORS AND INTERAGENCY RELATIONSHIPS

Our Cooperators include all residents, businesses, and organizations within the boundaries of the District. In addition, the MCD has developed varying degrees of relationships with:

- ❖ Counties
  - Big Horn
  - Fremont
  - Hot Springs
  - Park
  - Washakie
- ❖ Special Districts
  - Conservation Districts of Wyoming, individually
  - Greybull Valley Irrigation District
  - Meeteetse Schools, Park County District 16
  - Park County Fire Districts
  - Park County Weed and Pest Control District
  - Predator Management Districts in the Big Horn Basin, individually
- ❖ Meeteetse, Town of (including Meeteetse Volunteer Fire Department)
- ❖ Meeteetse Visitor Center
- ❖ Meeteetse Local Planning Area Advisory Committee
- ❖ Meeteetse FFA
- ❖ National Association of Conservation Districts

- ❖ State of Wyoming
  - Agriculture, Department of
  - Animal Damage Management Board
  - Department of Environmental Quality
  - Game and Fish Department
  - Governor's Office
  - Forestry Division
  - Local Legislators
  - State Engineer's Office
  - Wyoming Water Development Commission
  - Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
- ❖ The Nature Conservancy
- ❖ Trout Unlimited
- ❖ University of Wyoming College of Agriculture and Cooperative Extension Service (UW & UW-CES)
- ❖ University of Wyoming Department of Renewable Resources
- ❖ US Army Corps of Engineers
- ❖ US Department of Agriculture
  - APHIS-Wildlife Services
  - Farm Service Agency
  - Forest Service
  - Natural Resources Conservation Service
- ❖ US Department of the Interior
  - Bureau of Land Management
  - Fish and Wildlife Service
  - National Park Service
- ❖ Wyoming Animal Damage and Management Board
- ❖ Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts
- ❖ Wyoming Conservation Districts Employees Association
- ❖ Wyoming County Commissioner's Association
- ❖ Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation and Big Horn Basin Farm Bureau Federations
- ❖ Wyoming Stock Growers Association

The MCD will continue to be a Government Cooperator and Cooperating Agency with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Greater Sage-Grouse Resource Management Plan; the U.S. Forest Service National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Analyses for Greater Sage-Grouse in the Shoshone National Forest's Forest Plan Implementation; and in the BLM Big Horn Basin Resource Management Plan (RMP).

The MCD particularly relies on the USDA-NRCS for technical assistance and other support. This is despite the fact that, unlike many conservation districts that are able to share office space and other local resources with the NRCS, the nearest NRCS offices are located in Powell and Thermopolis, both approximately 53 miles distant.

The MCD will continue to be a member of the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts, The National Association of Conservation Districts, American Stewards of Liberty, the Wyoming Wolf Coalition, and become more involved with the National Horse & Burro Rangeland Management Coalition.

### **MCD ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES**

Overall, the MCD will, through its Board of Supervisors and staff, and to the best of its ability:

- ❖ Act to represent the members of the District (Cooperators) and their needs wherever possible, especially as a member of the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts, pursuant to Wyoming State



Statutes and the Meeteetse Conservation District - Land Use Management and Resource Conservation Plan, as adopted or amended.

- ❖ Work to improve its ability to provide services and operational programs to landowners.
- ❖ Strive to improve its ability to work with Cooperating Agencies, Partners, and Associates.
- ❖ Improve its ability to obtain technical assistance from outside the District.
- ❖ Support District employee certification and training, and the WCDEA.
- ❖ Provide for the training of supervisors and staff on administrative and legislative issues.

#### **MEETINGS:**

The MCD Board meets on the second Wednesday of each month at the District Office, 1906 State Street, in Meeteetse. In order to accommodate the schedules of the ranchers on the Board who are busier during the summer months (May – October), meetings are regularly held at 3:00pm. During winter months (November – April) the Board meets regularly at 1:00pm.

The MCD will actively participate at the Area III and State level meetings as a member of the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) and as a member of the NRCS Local Work Group and State Technical Advisory Committee.

#### **DISTRICT OPERATIONS ACTIVITIES**

The Meeteetse Conservation District will continue to experience change driven by a variety of social, economic, and natural resource issues and concerns. Local input and involvement, through the MCD, is a necessity in responding to change.

Overall, the MCD, through its Board of Supervisors and staff, will, to the best of its ability:

- ❖ Continue to be involved and provide leadership in addressing natural resource issues and concerns by providing scientific and technical assistance at the local level.
- ❖ Act to educate and provide technical assistance with respect to new natural resource conservation innovations, techniques, and government agency programs regarding natural resource conservation, utilizing existing educational forums, newsletters, and website.
- ❖ Be committed to the continued implementation of conservation and natural resource programs in the field, classroom, community, and in the planning arena that improve, maintain, or enhance the social, economic and human/physical environment within the Meeteetse Conservation District.
- ❖ Utilize advancing technology for maintaining an extensive inventory of District resources.
- ❖ Strive to assist in the development and acquisition of programs for our Cooperators in order to address natural resource management concerns across political boundaries.
- ❖ Seek involvement in developing and amending governmental policies regarding soil, water, and all other components of natural resource conservation.
- ❖ Provide technical training for staff and supervisors, especially in the area of water quality, range & soil science, NEPA, remote sensing, and newly emerging technologies.

Principal operations Classes of the MCD are outlined as follows. Overlap may occur between classes:

- Big Horn Basin Sage Grouse Predation Project (SGPP)
- Cooperator Assistance - Programs for Producers/Cooperators
- Education (providing)
- Firewise Title III
- Level 1 Watershed Study
- Natural Resources Management and Planning (NRM&P)



- Other Op
- Range and Pasture Management
- Training (for Supervisors and staff)
- Water Quality
- Weather
- Website
- Trail News/Facebook
- YU Bench Fence Project

**COOPERATOR ASSISTANCE:**

Cooperator Assistance is an overarching function of the MCD and a component of nearly every other MCD operational activity as described in this Plan of Work. Providing assistance to its Cooperators is a fundamental purpose of the MCD.

- ❖ The MCD will continue to support its conservation partnership with the NRCS in order to enhance cooperator assistance.
- ❖ The MCD will continue to support the Wyoming Department of Agriculture Rangeland Health Assessment Program grant project as funding is available.
- ❖ Additionally, the MCD will continue to loan certain District equipment to producers.

**EDUCATION:**

The MCD recognizes the overarching and continual need to provide credible natural resource information to all members of the community while honoring the contextual relationships of custom, culture, and socio-economics.

The MCD recognizes the need and importance of educating our local youth in regards to natural resources and their conservation and proper use, with an emphasis on the importance of agriculture and proper agricultural management practices as well as forestry and its related proper land management practices.

While education is a key component of most MCD operations, certain specific educational actions are planned:

- ❖ The MCD will publish its newsletter, “Trail News”, on a bi-weekly basis (Every other Thurs)
- ❖ The District will host or co-host at least one educational workshop for the community in conjunction with UW extension office.
- ❖ The District will proactively work with the Meeteetse School District (and youth organizations where appropriate) inside and outside the classroom to enhance those portions of its curriculum and activities pertaining to natural resources and agriculture during the school year, intending to meet at least three times with youth or activity groups.
- ❖ The District will promote the Ag in the Classroom Program to Meeteetse School faculty and staff.
- ❖ The District will support and promote *Barnyards & Backyards* as an educational tool.
- ❖ The MCD will assist the Meeteetse FFA to send qualified students to FFA Leadership Camp and other important educational and character-building events.
- ❖ The District will be constructing a native landscape Outdoor Classroom to provide students, educators and community organizations the opportunity to explore the natural environment through applied learning.
- ❖ The District will conduct at least one educational function for elected officials.
- ❖ The District will have an Open House or other public meeting to provide an opportunity for direct dialogue between cooperators and the District.
- ❖ MCD will continue public outreach in regards to Firewise standards and disseminate information on the wildland-urban interface (WUI), hazardous fuels reduction, forest health, and additional related topics using the Firewise website and Title III Firewise funds.

- ❖ The District will attend meetings of the Park County Board of County Commissioners, the Meeteetse Local Planning Area Advisory Committee, the Meeteetse Town Council, or other local organizations to ensure that local government understands the role that the District has in the community and to provide information on specific MCD activities as appropriate.
- ❖ The MCD will attempt to leverage its ability to provide educational activities by partnering with other districts and other cooperators and partners.

**FIREWISE TITLE III:**

The following are activities to implement the Firewise goals and objectives for the 2019 fiscal year.

- ❖ Continue to incorporate the MCD Firewise Program into the National, State and local Firewise Communities Program, as funds are available.
- ❖ Continue to work with State Firewise Coordinators in Firewise planning, direction, implementation, training, and resource sharing.
- ❖ Present Firewise I & E program to interested publics.
- ❖ Upgrade Power Point Programs and presentations as needed. Create new programs as needed.
- ❖ Continue operation and maintenance of the Park County Firewise Website.
- ❖ Identify and prioritize “at risk” communities and landowners in accordance with the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) for the following areas
  - North Fork
  - South Fork
  - Meeteetse
  - Crandall and Sunlight
- ❖ Basin agriculture and riparian areas (Shoshone River) with hazard fuels and homes at risk.
- ❖ Contact landowners and complete landowner defensible space and hazard fuels assessments when requested in at risk areas.
- ❖ Establish landowner defensible space assessments when requested.
- ❖ Analyze the need for hazard fuels cost share program and work with Park County Fire Districts and State Forester for cost share and implementation.
- ❖ Coordinate hazard fuel reductions in the Greybull River Watershed WUI (2014 Farm Bill) if projects materialize.
- ❖ If requested by Park County Planning or Park County Emergency Management, map homes and areas where hazard fuels and defensible space activities have been completed (accomplishments entered into County Data Base).
- ❖ Work with USFS in doing defensible space assessments on summer home and lodge special use sites on National Forest.
- ❖ Work with Mountain West Farm Bureau Insurance to develop a Firewise assessment program that can be applied by their agents on their existing or potential insurance policies in the Mountain West WUI.
- ❖ Other duties as assigned by Board.

**NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING (NRM&P):**

The MCD takes an active role in promoting proper and responsible management and use (conservation) of natural resources. Wyoming Conservation District Law provides specific definitions for certain terms with regard to conservation district statutory authorities:

*"Conservation" means development, improvement, maintenance, preservation, protection and use of natural resources, and the control and prevention of floodwater and sediment damages, and the disposal of excess waters; "Renewable natural resources," "natural resources" or*

*"resources," means land, soil, water, vegetation, trees, wild rivers, wilderness, natural beauty, scenery and open space;*

At all levels, management of the resource and the associated planning are key components of resource stewardship. This includes promoting the use of renewable resources to help stimulate the local economy (including but not limited to grazing, timber, and biomass products).

Through time, the relative value of natural resources change and new management paradigms emerge. The MCD will attempt to improve the mineral cycle, water cycle, and energy flow of the public and private lands within the District through improved planning and management.

Local landowners can be impacted by planning decisions at the local, state, and federal level. Conservation District Law provides statutory expertise and other support for the MCD to be involved in those planning decisions. It is a reality that many landowners do not have the time or finances to review relevant documents, rules, and regulations or voice their concerns/opinions or attend meetings on a regular basis. MCD will continue to support the partnership between the District's Cooperators and landowners, and local, State, and federal governmental agencies in creating and implementing programs and policies that pertain to soil and water conservation, and to the economic stability of the Meeteetse Conservation District.

Management and planning are often controlled by governmental entities that lack local connections, are unresponsive to local needs, or that do not desire local input. Local input may have improved stature when provided by a locally elected board. The MCD strives to be a governmental entity that provides a means of local involvement. The MCD, as an elected local governmental entity, should provide a way for cooperators to express themselves in a readily accessible forum.

A goal of the Meeteetse Conservation District is to continue to represent local interests in the planning, policy formation and implementation efforts of local, State, and federal government agencies within the jurisdictional boundary of the MCD.

With respect to planning and agency interaction the MCD will:

- ❖ Continue to be involved in State, county, local, and federal planning processes and programs, including reviewing and commenting on Environmental Assessments, Environmental Impact Statements, NEPA process, and proposed rules as time and /or budget allows, and voicing comments at appropriate venues.
- ❖ At its discretion, formally comment on new rules and regulations that may affect local landowners and District Cooperators.
- ❖ Participate as a Cooperating Agency in federal planning and implementation processes whenever possible.
  - Continue participation in the Shoshone National Forest (SNF) Plan implementation, including the SNF Travel Management Plan, and Greater Sage-Grouse NEPA analysis.
  - Participate as a Cooperating agency in the BLM Big Horn Basin RMP implementation.
- ❖ Strive to obtain coordination and consistency of federal land management and planning with the MCD Land Use Management and Resource Conservation Plan through consultation and action.
- ❖ The MCD will strive to develop improved inventories of infrastructure and resources. Inventory data must be suitable for their purpose in terms of quality, accuracy, and completeness.
- ❖ Continue to oppose management initiatives which restrict or limit existing and potential uses. This includes designation of “special areas” of restricted use, including wilderness, and the overlap of multiple “special areas”.
- ❖ Inform public land managers of any negative impacts on the livelihoods and/or quality of life of the people of the MCD which may arise from public land management mandates, regulations and laws.

- ❖ Continue to oppose material changes in land uses which hamper or otherwise negatively impact traditional land uses in order to avoid undue social and economic distress, dislocation, and hardship brought on the community by such changes.
- ❖ Review and comment on unincorporated area land use, subdivision proposals, and reclamation plans, as applicable.
- ❖ Help interested citizens become involved in the planning process.
- ❖ To the best of its capability, involve and inform District Cooperators on changes in federal, State, county and local natural resource management laws and regulatory procedures.
- ❖ Cooperate and assist local, county, State, and Federal Government agencies to implement programs that positively affect sound soil and water conservation, and economic stability.
- ❖ Continue to assist and represent Cooperators concerning natural resource policy changes, including water, proposed by government agencies or others in order to sustain and maintain the use of our natural resources and protect our tax base.
- ❖ Work to ensure that changes to Wyoming DEQ/WQD Ag Use Protection Policy truly protect the agricultural use of discharge water from oil and gas development and to support agricultural use of discharge water.
- ❖ Continue involvement in the implementation of the Park County Community Wildfire Protection Plan.
- ❖ Coordinate the Park County Firewise program with Federal, State, and local fire and hazardous fuel reduction programs and plans.
- ❖ Update the current MCD Land Use Management and Resource Conservation Plan.

With regard to Watershed Planning, which is recognized to have considerable overlap with the Water Quality Operations, MCD will facilitate the implementation of the Greybull River Watershed Water Quality Management Plan, as that Plan has been incorporated into the MCD Land Use Management and Resource Conservation Plan, 2011; support recommendations from the Greybull River Level I Watershed Study.

With respect to maintaining and improving the ecosystem processes, including the mineral cycle, water cycle, and energy flow of the public and private lands within the District, the MCD recognizes the importance of utilizing forest and range biomass in conjunction with fuels reduction projects and timber harvest. To the best of its ability, the MCD will:

- ❖ Encourage federal land managers to manage for multiple-use.
- ❖ Facilitate the availability of a broad range of forest products to the community, cooperating and coordinating with public resource managers as appropriate.
- ❖ Assist federal land managers to monitor resource conditions.
- ❖ Encourage producers to recognize the changes in value that may be occurring in their resource base.
- ❖ Encourage producers to consider new paradigms in their management efforts.

With respect to Prescribed Burning, managed under (DEQ) regulations, MCD's Firewise Coordinator will:

- ❖ Assist landowners in the inventory, analysis, and development of potential prescribed burn projects. This assessment will include: establishing prescribed burn goals and objectives, fuel analysis, and the environmental impacts to (but not limited to) soil, water, wildlife, grazing, and air quality.
- ❖ Promote the use of properly designed and conducted prescribed burns on public and private lands for vegetation and hazardous fuel management.
- ❖ Work to keep burn and air quality rules from being unnecessarily burdensome.

The MCD recognizes the complexity of management and planning related to wildlife and habitat. The MCD values improving or enhancing wildlife habitat to support viable and healthy wildlife populations in concert with agricultural activities, including livestock grazing.

Just as a plant out of place can be a weed, so can an animal out of place be a pest. That being said, the MCD will join with local landowners, government agencies, and organizations in maintaining, improving, and enhancing wildlife populations and habitat, complementary to and in conjunction with the other resources of the District.

Regarding wildlife and habitat management and planning, the MCD will:

- ❖ Provide or assist in providing educational materials, information, and programs for the community.
- ❖ Assist Cooperators and government agencies in obtaining technical assistance for prescribed burns, planned grazing, and conservation plans on privately owned property in the District.
- ❖ Support State management of Grizzly Bears, Wolves and other species.
- ❖ Attempt to increase engagement with Wyoming Game & Fish Department (WG&F) in order to provide:
  - Better communication.
  - Appropriate recognition and action by WG&F regarding Cooperator needs.
  - Better District Cooperator feedback to assist WG&F.
  - Balanced multiple use objectives of resource management.
  - MCD representation and participation on a local and regional scale.

Other natural resource management or planning actions:

- ❖ MCD will help Cooperators to find technical assistance for water rights and related permits, as requested.
- ❖ MCD will continue to encourage the use of MCD-owned equipment and services for conservation projects as time and budget allows.
- ❖ MCD will continue to obtain or provide assistance for Cooperators interested in using GIS and other mapping technologies, as requested.
- ❖ MCD will actively support implementation of newly emerging geospatial and sUAS technology, where appropriate for District operations. This includes training in the regulatory requirements and operation of sUAS and acquisition of aerial imagery and remote sensing products for a variety of projects including:
  - Landowner property mapping, technical assistance and operations assistance.
  - Invasive Species / Weed Detection
  - Wildlife Monitoring and Research
  - Stream Channel erosion and change detection and analysis due to flooding, etc.
  - Surveying and project monitoring
  - Various other agricultural / livestock monitoring activities

#### **RANGE AND PASTURE MANAGEMENT:**

The MCD believes in the proper use of pasture and rangeland forages by livestock for the sustainable long-term benefits for humans. Converting forage vegetation to meat for human consumption is one of the best uses of the renewable forage resource.

In order to protect against soil erosion and water loss, the MCD supports planned grazing, pastureland planning, and the development and use of best management practices on rangelands and pastures. The MCD believes that high quality community dynamics follow proper management of biological diversity and vegetative ground cover.

Proper management hinges on observation, understanding, and acting appropriately.

During the coming year, the MCD will strive to:

- ❖ Affect a change in Wild Horse and Burrow management and overpopulation on BLM Lands as they have a dramatic negative impact on rangelands as well as the wildlife on those rangelands and ranching and grazing operations of local landowners.
- ❖ Work to support and assist continued livestock grazing on public and private lands.
- ❖ Participate in cooperative monitoring with permittees and other MCD cooperators.
- ❖ Make range and pasture management education, training, services, and information available to all land managers and stewards within the District.
- ❖ Continually update and improve the MCD range monitoring program.
- ❖ Demonstrate monitoring methods so that cooperators can learn to collect data on their own.
- ❖ Make available information and technical assistance on wetland and riparian management.
- ❖ Assist in the dissemination of the holistic management decision-making framework, and co-sponsor workshops/seminars for the development of planned grazing and pastureland planning, as budget and time permits.
- ❖ Work to enable interested Cooperators to adopt and improve techniques for appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs) and management under Conservation Plans.
- ❖ MCD will strive to help producers and agencies follow Wyoming DEQ's air quality rules and regulations since fire continues to be an important management tool for producers within the District.
- ❖ Sponsor local area student(s) attendance at the Youth Range Camp, Wyoming Resource Education Days (WyRED).
- ❖ Assist cooperators in establishing grazing programs and strategies with the technical assistance of NRCS and the UW College of Agriculture Extension Service.
- ❖ Assist the local Meeteetse Schools FFA students with natural resource conservation.
- ❖ Assist the Shoshone National Forest in increasing allotment monitoring through activities contemplated in the cooperative monitoring MOU of June, 2009 between the USDA Shoshone NF and the MCD.
- ❖ Support and assist Cooperators with appropriate weed and pest BMPs.

Understanding the forage resource is critical to livestock and wildlife alike and the MCD will work to assist cooperators in management of the forage resource.

- ❖ The MCD will provide a cost-share program for forage analysis.
- ❖ The District may assist interested cooperators in using the NutBal fecal analysis (TAMU Grazing Land Animal Nutrition Lab) to obtain information on the nutritional quality provided to ruminant livestock.

The MCD has been actively participating in the statewide UW Soil Moisture Monitoring Program by collecting and reporting soil moisture, monitoring vegetation, and collecting forage yield data at the Little Buffalo Basin and Spring Creek stations. The MCD will continue to support this important program through data collection and annual reporting to UW-CES, with data analysis as appropriate. MCD will also work with NRCS and UW to implement collection of other soil data parameters not currently collected.

#### **RECYCLING:**

The goal is to reduce the waste of natural, community, and personal resources.

Objective: The MCD will support local recycling programs and be active in the development of future waste disposal plans by hosting the community recycling trailer on its property during the winter months when it is unable to be placed on Water St.



## **SOIL:**

Soil is the basis for plant life, which helps sustain livestock and communities. Soil is also the foundation for all crops. Therefore, MCD is committed to improving soil conditions within the District and helping interested parties learn more about soil.

### Planned MCD Actions:

- ❖ Continue to support the implementation of the NRCS Big Horn Basin Area soil survey.
- ❖ Collect and analyze soil samples for MCD Cooperators if time and budget allows.
- ❖ Provide educational materials on soil, as requested.

## **TREE PROGRAM:**

A goal of the MCD is to help alleviate and control soil erosion, improve energy flow, and improve the water and mineral cycle within the District. Trees improve the aesthetics of the community and selection of suitable species is critical with regard to energy flow. Furthermore, MCD recognizes the importance of educating the public regarding the beneficial uses of trees for windbreaks and living snow fences.

### Planned MCD Actions:

- ❖ Provide information regarding tree nurseries and proper tree planting techniques, and irrigation systems for trees to interested parties.
- ❖ Provide Cooperators with the knowledge and benefits of using trees as windbreaks, living snow fences, tree planting, propagation, and maintenance through our website and through educational workshops.
- ❖ Assist interested cooperators in obtaining funding through the Living Snow Fence Program.
- ❖ Provide Cooperators with technical and funding information regarding planting trees for windbreaks.
- ❖ Support other Conservation Districts' fund-raising efforts by referring qualified cooperators to those Districts' seedling tree sales programs.

## **WATER QUALITY:**

The MCD remains committed to the goal of maintaining, and improving, where possible, the water quality of groundwater, streams, rivers, reservoirs and lakes within the jurisdiction of the District. The District supports the **voluntary** approach to conservation and resource management including: education, coordination, consultation, cooperation, leadership, team building, and trust.

An MCD objective is to continue to provide effective management of water quality and the watershed, making improvements where and when possible.

During the upcoming year, the MCD will:

- ❖ Assist in the implementation of the Greybull River Watershed Plan to be led by the local steering committee under the joint auspices of the Wyoming Department of Agriculture (WDA), the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts (WACD), and the Wyoming DEQ Water Quality Division (WQD).
- ❖ Make decisions based on the Greybull River Level I Watershed Study final report recommendations & findings.
- ❖ Strive to implement the Greybull River TMDL; representing its Cooperators' interests.
- ❖ Continue to provide leadership for watershed planning, management, policy, and improvement programs within the District and the State, as funding and time allows.
- ❖ Encourage continued participation by landowners, producers, and other entities in maintaining and improving the water quality within the District.
- ❖ Promote appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs).
- ❖ Provide information regarding residential wells, septic systems and water quality.
- ❖ Consider using the WDA's CRM program to address local resource issues.



- ❖ Provide information to Cooperators on improved irrigation efficiency and flood water management and referring them to other agencies as needed.

The MCD will continue surface water quality monitoring and will, to the best of its ability:

- ❖ Maintain an updated Sampling and Analysis Plan (SAP), so that the SAP addresses needs.
- ❖ Compile and interpret water quality sampling data obtained to date; continuing with the development of MCD's Access database for water quality and related data.
- ❖ Sample for *E. coli*, coliform bacteria, and other water quality parameters as appropriate when requested by local landowners.
- ❖ Continue focusing on seasonal baseline sampling as funding is provided through the WY Dept. of Ag.
- ❖ Continue the ongoing program of water quality sampling and monitoring of the biological, chemical, and physical characteristics of the Greybull watershed within the District under the revised SAP as funding and time allows.
- ❖ Utilize information from the WDA grant project "Greybull River Streambed Processes & *E. coli* Distribution" in continuing efforts to understand the nature of the *E. coli* impairment of the lower reach of the Greybull River.
- ❖ Continue to seek out and research better science and methodology for monitoring, including Microbial Source Tracking techniques.

#### **WEATHER:**

Wyoming's weather not only changes frequently, but quickly - both temporally and spatially. Furthermore, prediction is difficult and weather stations are widely spaced. The District realizes that weather is a crucial factor in ranch and farm management. Current updates on weather conditions and accurate weather data can be invaluable to range, irrigation, and wildlife habitat management. MCD also recognizes that the general public is interested in local weather, such as inches of rainfall or snowfall, low and high temperature, and barometric pressure. Combined with soil moisture information, Meeteetse weather will help Wyoming's State Climatologist with drought forecasting and reports. Our weather data also helps the National Weather Service out of Riverton, Wyoming with "watches and warnings" and forecasting.

The MCD intends to be a provider of weather information and data, and as such:

- ❖ The District's weather station (located at the MCD office) will be used to collect weather data on a daily basis. Variables currently monitored are: temperature, wind speed, barometric pressure, relative humidity, dew point, wind chill, wind direction, solar radiation, and precipitation.
- ❖ Provide that current weather data will be automatically uploaded to MCD's website.
- ❖ The District will also keep cooperators and the general public up-to-date by publishing precipitation measurements and monthly weather summaries in the Meeteetse *Trail News*, and with appropriate permissions in place, provide accumulated weather data and soil moisture data from the Little Buffalo Basin and Spring Creek stations on the MCD website.
- ❖ MCD will continue as a participant in and to educate cooperators about the multi-state Community Collaborative Rain, Hail, and Snow Study network (CoCoRaHS).
- ❖ MCD will continue as a participant in the Citizen Weather Observation Program (Station DW0465).

**WEBSITE:**


The MCD website: [www.meeteetse-conservewy.net](http://www.meeteetse-conservewy.net) is a primary means of communication and education for the District, as well as MCD Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/MeeteetseCD/>. The MCD will continue to post information including:

- |   |                           |                          |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Weather   | Current topics            | Soil moisture            |
| MCD Newsletter  | Meetings & conferences    | Links to regulations     |
| Current work & projects   | Water quality information | Assistance MCD provides  |
| MCD Annual Report   | MCD Plan of Work.         | MCD's Goals and Policies |
| NRCS Information  | Firewise Information      | MCD's LUM & RCP          |
| Greybull River Watershed Planning Information                   |                           |                          |
| Links to related education sites & educational youth activities |                           |                          |

Additionally, the MCD will continue to refine and improve the website and Facebook page on a continuing basis.

**CERTIFICATION:**

The Supervisors of the Meeteetse Conservation District, as duly authorized by the provisions of the Wyoming Conservation Districts Act, hereby adopt the foregoing Annual Plan of Work as the guide for work efforts in the Meeteetse Conservation District during the 2019 Fiscal Year.

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Timothy J. Morrison, Chairman  
Meeteetse Conservation District Board of Supervisors

DECEMBER 13, 2018  
Date