

HIGH COUNTRY CONSERVATION



Ruins at 971 N. Cedar, part of LRCD's urban brownfield cleanup project - Photo by Doc Thissen



Greetings,

We hope you enjoy this special edition of our newsletter, which for the first time, also contains our annual report. We want the public to understand our mission and the projects in which we engage to accomplish it. Our conservation mission began after the dust bowl years and was originally focused exclusively on agriculture and soil erosion. We still work on many projects with ag producers related to land and water quality and ag viability. We also recognize that people in town provide a large portion of our revenue, so we are also focused on conservation tree plantings, low water landscaping, and community beautification projects which will help bolster the local economy and improve our quality of life. Also very importantly, our conservation education programs are the envy of the state and of extreme importance in creating land stewards for the next generation. In most of our monthly board meetings, the topic comes up "Is this where we should be headed and is this a good use of taxpayer dollars?" In the past years we have seen emerging issues like rural subdivision, pine beetle, and renewable energy, and have adjusted our annual and long range plans accordingly. This fall we are working on a new five year plan and are asking for your input. Please take a few minutes and think about our community and how LRCD might serve it better, and return our survey. This is your conservation district and we are here to serve you.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony Hoch".

Tony Hoch, Director

Annual Report 2013-2014



LRCD Board of Supervisors:

- Nancy Bath - Board Chair
- Larry Munn- Vice-Chair
- Jim Rogers - Secretary/Treasurer
- Kelly Kennedy
- Ruth Shepherd



LRCD Staff

- Tony Hoch - Director
- Trish Penny - Education Co-ordinator
- Martin Curry - Resource Specialist/Bookkeeper
- Laura McGinley - District Clerk



69

YEARS

of Service to the Albany County Community

2200

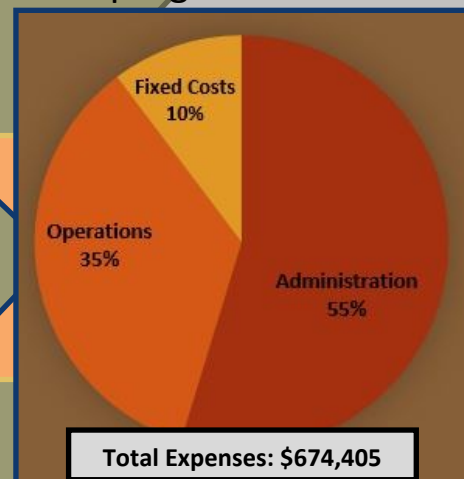
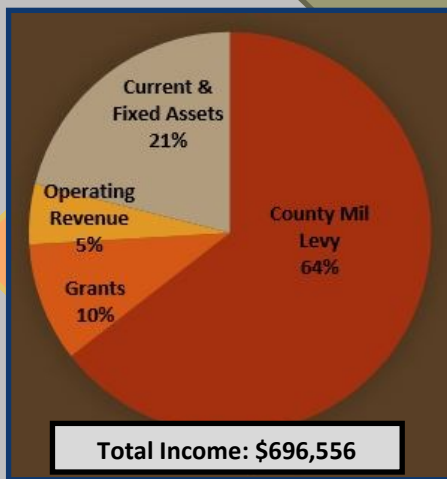
Adults participated in LRCD sponsored workshops and events.

3115

K-12 children participated in LRCD Conservation Education programs

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide leadership for the conservation of Albany County's soil and water, promote and protect the quality of Albany County's waters, and promote sustained use of Wyoming's water and all other natural resources. Preserve and enhance wildlife habitat, protect the tax base and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of Albany County through a responsible conservation ethic.



4700

Trees & shrubs sold at the Annual Tree Sale

\$49,000

Cost Share program grants awarded for

- Solar livestock pumps
- Erosion Abatement
- Living Snow Fence
- Riparian Fencing
- Beautification
- Junk Removal
- Education
- Xeriscapes

55,000

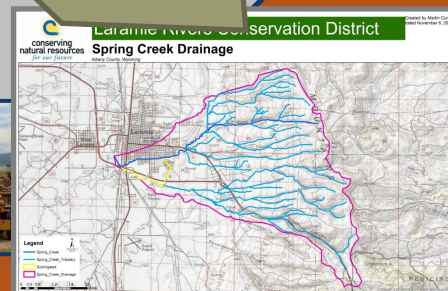
Acres of land mapped for range plans, weed management, and watersheds.

LRCD 27th Annual Christmas Tree Sale

Download tree order form [HERE](#)

Pre-orders accepted up till March 31st, 2014

Pick-up and general sale May 9th -10th Albany County Fairgrounds





Community Enhancement

The “ruins on Cedar” are the crumbling remains of the Midwest Oil Refinery built in 1920. This 5.3 acre industrial site ceased operation in 1932 and housed a variety of other businesses over the years, including a yttrium plant and auto repair shop. But it was the unofficial use as a junkyard and canvas for graffiti that made it into an eyesore and health hazard.

LRCO saw that we had the unique knowledge, skills and resources to take on this remediation and community enhancement project. We purchased the property in 2012 and have since, made great strides in seeing the site cleaned up for future use. We were awarded an EPA Targeted Brownfield Grant to assist with costs of the Environmental Assessments and we enrolled in WYDEQ Volunteer Remediation Program that oversees that the work is done legally and safely. A partnership with the City of Laramie secured a \$330,525 Community Development Block Grant that helped pay for the costs of the demolition and as of the end of our 2013-14 Fiscal Year, local contractor Stonehouse Construction was awarded the project and had most of the old buildings razed.

Living Snow Fence Program

A Living Snow Fence (LSF) is a valuable tool that provides wind protection, hydrates dry soils with stored precipitation in the form of snow, creates wildlife habitat and beautifies the landscape. The Living Snow Fence program began 28 years ago and offers landowners help with snow fence designs, irrigation plans, installation labor and financial assistance.

In 1986 LRCO planted their first LSF at the Albany County Fairgrounds. This began a long-term relationship that has resulted in a beautification of the Fairgrounds landscape as well as provide an “outdoor laboratory” for district staff to test tree varieties for this region. This past spring LRCO planted the 7th LSF on the west side of the Fairgrounds, which will provide shelter for the RV spaces.

The number of Living Snow Fences installed each spring has grown over the years and is one of the District’s most successful programs. This year, a total of 7055 feet of trees and shrubs were planted and \$7575 awarded through our Cost Share program to help owners with planting costs.



Conservation Kids

The Conservation Education curriculum for kids is a great way to incorporate science, math, writing, history and even visual arts with lessons that connect our upcoming generations with the land and all it provides for our survival. One teaching tool that is gaining popularity with teachers and kids alike is the educational garden. These gardens, usually consisting of multiple raised wooden beds, are planted with vegetables, fruit bearing shrubs and flowers that provide food for pollinator insects like bees and butterflies. Kids learn how to make fundamental connections from where food comes from, how it is grown and how it fits into the cycle of life on our planet. Kids also learn that growing food is fun and helps them see that food production and agriculture is a livelihood they could pursue and enjoy.

This year the District secured funding for gardens through grants, designed and planted garden beds, and provided volunteer labor for the construction of raised beds for gardens at Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Feeding Laramie Valley, Lincoln Community Center, and Bietel, Indian Paintbrush and Centennial Elementary schools.

Education & Outreach

In recent years, people have seen the term “green” used to describe everything from the food they eat to the homes they live in, yet ,for many, they are not certain what “green” means or how it affects their lives. In 2006 the District organized the first Conservation Expo designed to answer questions about what it means to be green and live sustainably in our world. This past year LRCO continued their relationship with the UW Haub School of Environment & Natural Resources with an “Expo Kickoff” presentation of the documentary film: “Tiny - A Story About Living Small”. The film explored the trend toward building smaller houses and with over 150 attending, it was the most successful Expo Kickoff film event to date. The Conservation Expo followed the next day and saw over 500 people visit with local businesses, agencies and organizations about wildlife preservation, alternative energy, local food production, water-wise gardens, resource conservation and much more.



**LARAMIE RIVERS
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

5015 STONE ROAD
LARAMIE, WY 82070
PHONE: (307) 721-0072



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82070



LIKE *Laramie Rivers Conservation District* on Facebook to keep up-to-date on activities and events.

Check out LRCD's NEW

Soil, Water, and Plant Analysis

Cost Share Program!!

Great for:

- Soil testing for gardens or crops
 - Potable Water
 - Trace Minerals in water
- Irrigation and Livestock water
- Forage testing for nutritional value

The Soil, Water, and Plant Analysis Cost Share a matching program in which up to 50% of project costs may be reimbursed by the District up to \$500 total.

If interested or want to know more, please contact us @ 721-0072. Our knowledgeable staff can assist with understanding the different tests that are available, where testing labs are located and how to read results.

Equipment Rentals

Dew Drop Seeder
Poly Pipe Welder
Tractor-pulled Rototiller
Backpack Sprayer

Call for availability and pricing

**Transfilm[®] Anti-Transpirant
Available Now!**

Protect evergreen shrubs and trees from our dry winters with this spray-on solution
\$6.00 + tax/pint

Backpack Sprayer for application is available



Laramie Rivers Conservation District

5015 Stone Road
Laramie, WY 82070
(307) 721-0072

Long Range Planning Survey: Return this survey by October 10, and pick up a free seedling tree at our 2015 tree sale in early May of 2015, and be registered to win a drawing for a \$100 gift certificate to a local retailer of your choice.

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Our major areas of focus have always been in these areas:

Agricultural viability, including grazing management, range quality, irrigation management, and water quantity.

In the past 25 years we have added:

Conservation tree planting and conservation education for school kids, water quality, working with private landowners on wildlife and endangered species issues.

In the past 10 years we have added:

Community beautification projects to enhance economic development, energy conservation, giving local input on federal land use planning, garden plot scale production of local foods, and working with people living on subdivided ranch lands (small acreages) to be better stewards of the land.

Examples of projects include: Living snow fences, annual tree sale, maps and grazing plans with livestock owners, community gardens and kids garden programs, annual Conservation Expo, Laramie River Restoration Project, small water development for livestock and wildlife, LRCD Cost Share program for a variety of conservation projects, water testing program, educational hikes, and more (see www.lrcd.net).

Are there in any emerging conservation/natural resource issues in Albany County we should be working on?

On which topics would you like to see us more focused?

...less focused?

Is there any way we can better get our word out?

Name & Phone or email if you wish to be entered in our drawing: _____