

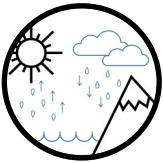
LARAMIE RIVERS CONSERVATION DISTRICT

LRCDD's mission is to provide leadership for the conservation of Albany County's soil and water, promote and protect the quality of Albany County's waters, and to promote sustained use of Wyoming's water and all other natural resources, to 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.


ANNUAL REPORT FY2018-2019

ACCOMPLISHING OUR MISSION ~ Project Highlights


WATER

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- **Microbial source tracking** for E.coli in Laramie basin streams and then presenting the data to many groups throughout the county and state.
 - **River restorations** in three private landowner projects in the Laramie Valley to improve environmental health, biodiversity, and erosion control. Two projects included obtaining Wyoming Natural Resource Trust grants.
 - **Irrigation diversion** restoration project located south of Laramie at the Goforth Reservoir on the Monolith Ranch. The renovation will provide better hay meadows and will provide increased wetland habitat for migratory birds.
 - **Gutter Bins**—designed and built by WY company Frog Creek Partners, are designed to filter stormwater before emptying into waterways. In a city the size of Laramie, an estimated 30 million cigarette butts and other contaminants like petrochemicals wash into stormwater systems each year. LRCDD is involved in ongoing conversations and planning about installing these in a few key locations in downtown Laramie.


WILDLIFE

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- **Wyoming Toad reintroduction** and a continued partnership with US Fish & Wildlife assisting with funding for Wyoming Toad projects including attaching telemetry tracking devices to a few released toads in order to track movements and get a better understanding of predation, hibernation, habitat preference, and how and why they disperse.
 - **Pollinators** are vital to the production of crops and are an essential component of the habitats and ecosystems that many wild animals rely on for food and shelter. Through financial and technical assistance, LRCDD assists property owners in establishing healthy pollinator landscapes and educates residents of all ages on the importance of these insects, birds, and animals.

RANGE and FOREST LAND

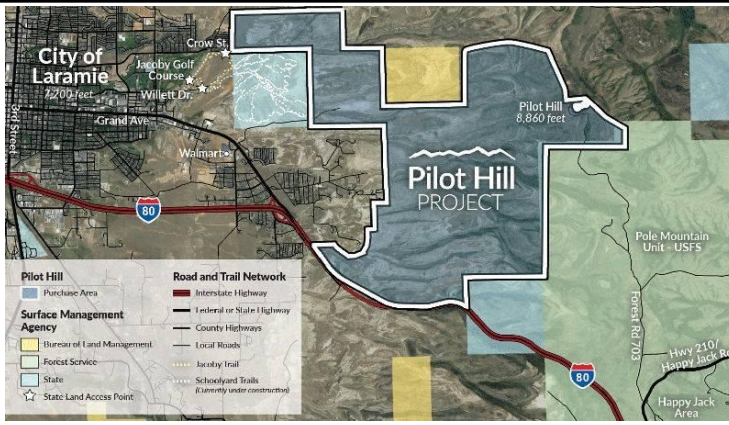
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- **Rangeland Monitoring** and project planning to maintain or increase range health. Stock-water systems, grass seeding, weed management, and an appropriate number of foraging animals per acre are all important aspects of assuring the land is productive now and for future generations.
 - **Landscape Vegetation Analysis (LaVA) Project** — LRCDD has been involved with the planning process for this project launched by US Forest Service which entails looking at the Snowy Range and Sierra Madre mountain ranges to identify and treat the vast beetle-kill areas to restore forest health and plan for improved responses to wildfires.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

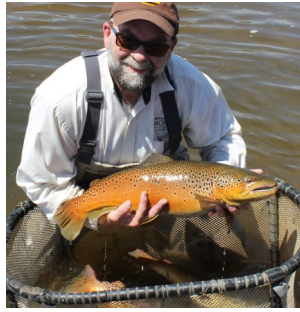
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- **K-12 Conservation Education** teaches kids about water and soil health, wildlife, invasive non-native weeds & pests, and agriculture production. Urban agriculture is quickly growing throughout the world as small “cottage” industry supplies fresh produce, provides jobs, beautifies neighborhoods, and provides unique vegetables and products not commonly found in chain stores.
 - **Drip irrigation workshop** for adults that provided instruction on this important tool for saving water, minimizing erosion, and decreasing disease, weeds, and pest problems.
 - **11th Laramie Conservation Expo** with 50 exhibitors from local government, agencies, and the University of Wyoming; wildlife organizations; conservation science groups and agencies; gardening/landscaping/ and pollinator aficionados; and local food producers and services—our biennial event had over 500 visitors learning about topics that help them be better stewards of our land and resources.

PILOT HILL PROJECT

An important project that aligns well with our mission is the Pilot Hill project. The purpose of the project is to



provide new public access to 5,472 acres of undeveloped open space east of Laramie. This land acquisition will offer recreational opportunities for residents as well as protect the Casper Aquifer drinking water resource. The plan is that this area would be co-managed by Wyoming State Parks and Wyoming Game and Fish Department for its recreation and wildlife values. The protected land would also offer a wide variety of educational opportunities and be a draw to the area that would benefit Laramie and Albany County's economy. Tony Hoch has been representing LRCD by as Co-chair of the Oversight Committee and the Chairman of the Land Management Committee for the project.



Tony has been Laramie Rivers Director for 16 years and handles most of the conservation district's water quality and quantity testing and projects. He enjoys educating residents on conservation issues through the many presentations, walking tours, and workshops he does throughout the year as well as through participation in community groups and committees.

LARAMIE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL GEO-DOME

Seven elementary schools in ACSD1 have seasonal gardens, greenhouses, or both. This year Laramie High School was the eighth to install a small raised bed garden and an eighteen-foot geo-dome. This dome features heat-activated automatic opening vents, under soil heating-and-cooling system powered by a solar fan, and an above-ground 700-gallon water tank to stabilize temperatures year-round. With Laramie's short growing season and extreme temperature variation, the hopes are that this geo-dome will extend the ability to grow plants throughout the school year.

Gardens and greenhouses are an effective way to integrate what students are learning in other classes. Gardening can cultivate curiosity and an opportunity connecting book learning while allowing students to become active in their learning process. These types of projects also serve as a training ground for life-long learning as students foster an understanding of their relationship with nature and their community.

Over the last several decades, the Ag industry growing practices and human consumption may have contributed to a negative impact on caring for our environment. By teaching youth about sustainable agriculture practices, they learn how their actions and choices affect the environment.

Partial funding for ACSD1's garden/greenhouse programs obtained through the Department of Ag's Specialty Crop

Block grant, Laramie Rivers Conservation District, and many volunteers from ACSD1 staff and students.

Trish Penny is going on her 16th year with the district and is passionate about providing essential conservation education to K-12 students and adults. She is a Master Gardener and has been successful in implementing educational gardens throughout the county. She has also put together a beautiful and instructive learning center and community garden at LaBonte Park that is an excellent example of successful growing techniques for high-altitude gardens.



IMPROVING LIVESTOCK GRAZING DISTRIBUTION

Laramie Rivers Conservation District (LRCD) teamed up with USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), US Fish & Wildlife Service, and The Nature Conservancy on a range improvement project north of Laramie. The plan called for installing a wildlife-friendly cross-fencing and upland livestock watering systems to improve the grazing distribution of livestock and reduce overgrazing that can lead to soil erosion. Along with the installed best management practices (BMPs), LRCD, with assistance from USFWS, established four Cover-by-Life-Form Transects (an estimation of the relative amounts of different vegetation on a site) for long-term upland monitoring. Fence markers were installed on the wildlife-friendly fencing to improve the visibility of the smooth wire and reduce wildlife collisions. The wildlife benefits resulting from this project are more watering locations for upland birds, elk, deer and antelope. These sites will be reevaluated on a 5-year rotation to monitor long term plant diversity trends.



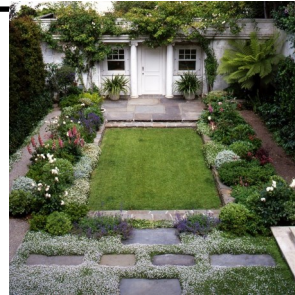
Martin Curry, Resource Specialist/Bookkeeper, has been with LRCD for 12 years and has managed the district's rangeland programs and projects. His skills provide landowners with essential information about land management on the high plains of Albany County. A few of his areas of expertise include livestock management, soil types, rangeland plants, wildlife migration, and land use strategy to conserve and restore wildland ecosystems.



PROJECT COST SUMMARY

WWNRT = \$25,344
LRCD = \$5,000.00
USFWS = \$7,950.00
TNC = \$5,000.00

NRCS = \$27,099
Landowner Contribution = \$12,318.00
Total Project Costs = \$82,712.24



URBAN CONSERVATION & AGRICULTURE

Growing populations and increased urbanization are putting greater demands on the natural systems in and around cities. To meet the mounting demands for clean water, food, and energy, we must find ways to maintain human well-being through sustainable land use, efficient resource use and the protection of biodiversity through innovative strategies. Along with environmental challenges, throughout the nation, urban agriculture pioneers are taking action in their communities and are an important part of the urban conservation system.

LRCD, along with conservation districts across the nation, has the specialized skills and knowledge to address these urban conservation and agriculture issues and provide guidance to the local population as well as municipal government and other local agencies. In our district, LRCD tackles issues like limiting wildlife hazards and preventing and resolving conflicts with wildlife, managing stormwater to better mimic natural hydrology, landscaping with native and low-water-use plants, utilizing raised beds and season extension structures to increase gardening success, and increasing tree stock in our urban forest.

Laura McGinley, District Clerk/Communication Coordinator, is going on her 8th year at LRCD. She utilizes her graphic design skills to create communications for practical and educational use as well as keeps the office IT systems up and running. She addresses many of the urban conservation issues, including solid waste reduction, low-resource use landscaping, native and pollinator plants, native grasses for turf and landscaping, and town trees. She also organizes the biennial Laramie Conservation Expo.





LRC Board of Supervisors
 (from left to right)
Larry Munn - Supervisor / Rural
Bob Shine - Vice Chair / At-large
Orville Johnson - Supervisor / Rural
Ruth Shepherd - Board Chair / Urban
Carol Price - Treasurer / Rural

Laramie Rivers Conservation District
2018-2019 Budget

for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2019

EXPENSES

Administration	\$ 343,141.51
Operations	\$ 532,550.00
Fixed Costs	\$ 43,644.58
Capital Outlay	\$ 271,215.91
Reserve Account	\$ 259,400.00
TOTAL	\$ 1,449,952.00

REVENUE

County Appropriations	\$ 521,395.00
Equipment Rental	\$2,000.00
Labor	\$3,000.00
Seedling Tree Sales	\$ 7,000.00
Biennial State Grant	\$8,823.00
WWDC Small Water	\$60,000.00
WACO NRCS Tech Funds	\$70,000.00
Education Grants	\$27,000.00
Wild life/CRM Grants	\$231,000.00
Interest	\$1,500.00
Miscellaneous Receipts	\$1,000.00
Donations	\$300.00
Tree Survival Aids	\$10,000.00
WACD/WDA Water Quality Grant	\$8,000.00
Locally Led Income	\$4,000.00
Cash on hand July 1	\$494,934.00

TOTAL **\$ 1,449,952.00**



LARAMIE RIVERS
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
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 307.721.0072

www.LRCd.net