



Star Valley Conservation District

FY 2011 ANNUAL REPORT

Mission Statement

It is the mission of Star Valley Conservation District to pursue the wise use, conservation and protection of our natural resources and encourage Star Valley residents to do the same in order to preserve our quality of life.

S V C D Board Members FY 2008

Garry M. Crook— Chairman

Roger Coles—Vice Chairman

Shane Crook—Secretary-Treasurer

Rollin Gardner—Supervisor

Larry Hodgson—Supervisor

Leron Allred—Associate Supervisor

Star Valley Conservation District Staff

Brenda Ashworth, District Manager

Aimee Nelson, Water Sampling Intern

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SALT RIVER WATERSHED PLAN UPDATE

In 2002, the Salt River appeared on the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality's 303(d) List of impaired water-bodies. Specifically, that section of the Salt River for an undetermined distance upstream and downstream of the Etna Gauging Station (3.4 miles NW of Etna), on Table C, Water-bodies with Water Quality Threats, listed as threatened for recreational contact by fecal coliform. In 2008, the Salt River was listed on Table A (impaired) of the 303(d) list. In addition, Stump Creek was added to Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality's 303(d) List of impaired water-bodies on Table A in 2008..

In October 2003, in response to the 303(d) listing of the Salt River, the Star Valley Conservation District submitted a grant proposal to fund the development of a locally led watershed plan to the Wyoming Department of Agriculture. That proposal was subsequently awarded and under the guidance of the Salt River Watershed Steering Committee, organized in May of 2003, the Conservation District made the commitment to address the fecal coliform water quality issue. The Salt River Watershed Plan (SRWP) was approved by WDEQ on July 20, 2005 and included as an amendment to the Lincoln County Comprehensive Plan in December 2005.

Tasks completed as part of the Salt River Watershed Plan include development of the Star Valley Conservation District Website (www.starvalleycd.org), Adopt-the-Salt River, Storm Water Education Workshops, and annual water sampling activities. A total of 200 samples were collected and analyzed for *E. coli* from the 10 regular sampling sites on the Salt River and Stump Creek during the 2011 sampling season .

Since the stream impairment in Star Valley is due to Non-point Source (NPS) Pollution, all land users must work to improve water quality.



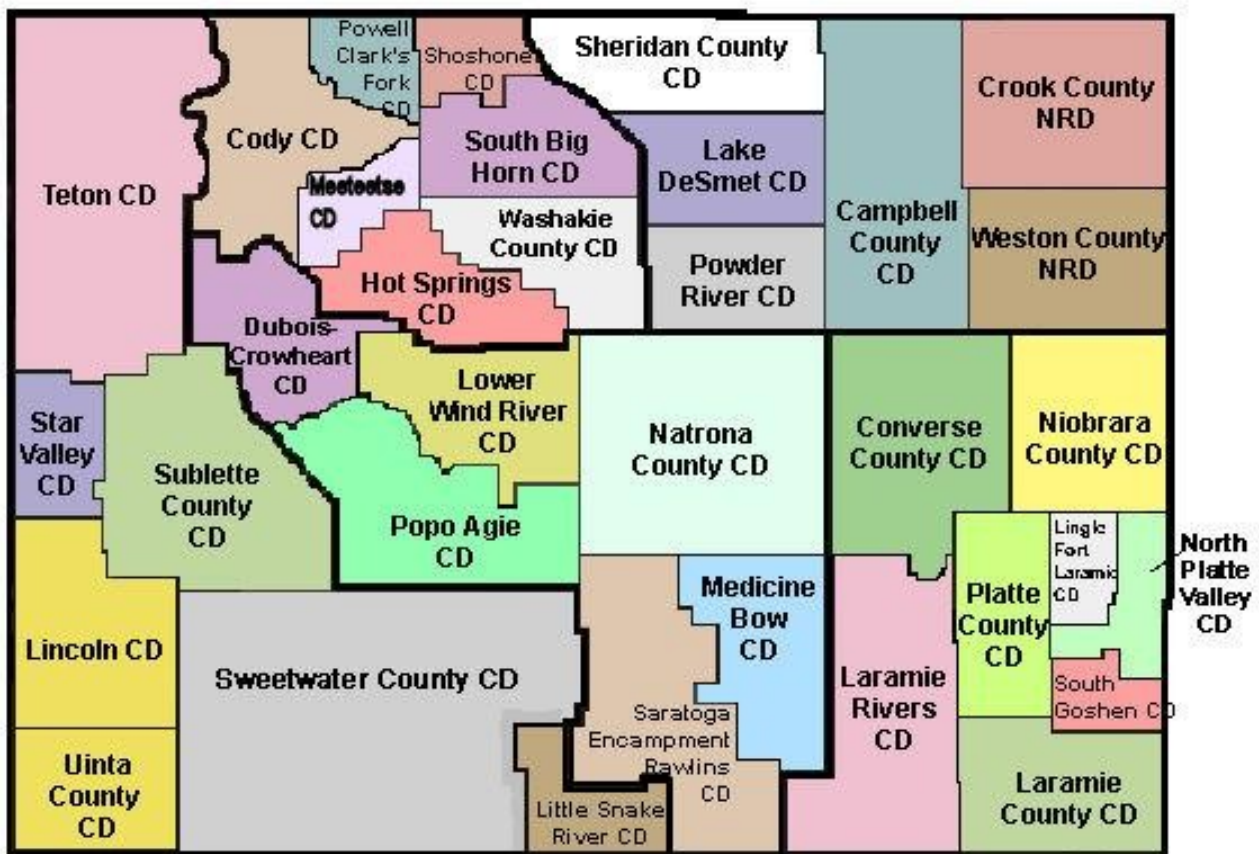
As residents of Star Valley, we must all realize both the water quality problems we

create and the steps we can take to eliminate these problems.

The Clean Water Act affects all of us.

CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Conservation Districts trace their formation to the 1930's when national attention was focused on the soil erosion crisis of the Dust Bowl. From that point, they have evolved to a unit of local government that uses state, federal and private sector resources to solve today's conservation problems, such as water quality issues, urban activities, wetlands protection and enhancement, range conservation and education. While natural resource conservation is a national priority, the guiding philosophy of all Conservation Districts is that decisions on conservation problems should be made on the local level, by local people, with technical assistance provided by government. There are 34 Conservation Districts in Wyoming, each is governed by 5 elected volunteer board members. **Star Valley Conservation District was formed in December of 1941**, and has been working since that time for the wise use and conservation of our natural resources. Funding for SVCD comes from Lincoln County, WY Department of Agriculture and from federal grants for specific projects. NRCS provides technical assistance to the agriculture producers in the District.



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



Serving on the **Star Valley Conservation District Board of Supervisors** is Chairman Garry Crook, Vice Chairman Roger Coles, Secretary/Treasurer Shane Crook, and Supervisors Rollin Gardner and Larry Hodgson. Volunteer supervisors attend monthly local meetings, area and state meetings. They oversee and direct district programs. Supervisors help with water sampling and other district programs. Supervisor time is used as in-kind match for grants from WY Department of Agriculture and WY Dept of Environmental Quality.

Pictured: Shane Crook, Michelle Crook, Garry Crook, Brenda Ashworth, Leron Allred, Rose Allred, Roger Coles, Tammie Gardner, Rollin Gardner.

Not Pictured: Larry Hodgson.

Financial Statement FY 2011

Revenue

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Cash from FY 2010 | \$55,747.32 |
| County Appropriation | \$27,000.00 |
| WY Dept of Ag Appropriation | \$8,822.00 |
| Grants | \$30,000.00 |
| Subdivision Reviews | \$1,900.00 |
| Other Revenue | \$7,169.34 |
| | \$130,638.66 |

Expenses

| | |
|----------------|-------------|
| Administration | \$48,553.75 |
| Operations | \$28,964.49 |
| | \$77,518.24 |

Cash Balance 06/30/11 \$58,942.03

PERSONNEL

Brenda Ashworth: Brenda was hired by the Star Valley Conservation District as the District Manager in July of 2005. Her duties include bookkeeping, grant writing, subdivision reviews, implementing the Salt River Watershed Plan, water sampling and monitoring. She has lived in Star Valley for nine years.

Brenda has a Bachelor of Science degree in Geology and is experienced in many areas of environmental assessments and studies, which qualifies her to do the subdivision reviews that she is being required to do in the District. She has knowledge of soils and erosion and has made excavation pits (even in a blizzard where it was hard to see the bottom of the pit) to analyze the soils in the proposed subdivisions. She is a trained and qualified water sampler, has set up a lab and is in charge of the water sampling testing for the district. Brenda works with Lincoln County Planning and Zoning in relation to septic systems and storm water runoff from subdivisions that help protect our water from contamination.



Aimee Nelson: Aimee has worked for the Star Valley Conservation district for three summers. She attends Weber State University during the school year, studying for a double bachelor in Microbiology and Anthropology. She is also studying a double minor in Political Science and Chemistry.

During the summer Aimee works with Brenda as a water sampling technician to test the water on the Salt River for *Escherichia coli*. She is mainly in charge of processing and reading the results. After her first summer working for the District, Aimee was hired as a full-time summer intern assisting with office work as well as the watershed project. These duties include QAQC, writing the Watershed Report, and putting together the Annual Report as part of the learning experience. .

EDUCATION

Star Valley Conservation District Education and Media Events

Thayne Elementary (grades k-3) and Etna Elementary (grades 4-6) Science fairs. Students from each grade submitted projects using the scientific method to answer questions. Approximately 75 students participated in the science fairs.



EDUCATION

Etna Elementary Enrichment Express – Star Valley Conservation District personnel conducted four after school enrichment classes for Etna Elementary 4th to 6th grade students. Topics included dairy and paper recycling. Students visited a dairy and made cheese. Students used recycled paper to make ornaments.



Etna Elementary students used Wyoming Ag in the Classroom Dairy Shoppe curriculum to learn about the history of the dairy industry and run their own Dairy Shop. Students marketed and sold dairy products to students and teach-



EDUCATION

Paper Making - SVCD personnel conducted 15 paper making classes with Etna and Thayne Elementary students as part of the schools recycling program. Students used recycled paper to make cast paper and paper ornaments.



EDUCATION



OTHER ACTIVITIES

Agricultural Efficiency Program—Star Valley Conservation District, Lower Valley Energy, Bonneville Power Administration and High Country RC&D have partnered on a program to promote agricultural efficiency in the Lower Valley Energy Service area. Lower Valley Service area includes parts of eastern Idaho (Bonneville and Caribou Counties) and western Wyoming (Lincoln, Teton and Sublette Counties). The program provide irrigation customers with an energy audit and incentives toward the goal of reducing producers energy use by 10%.

Bridger Teton Forest Resource Advisory Committee—Brenda Ashworth serve as Chairman for the Bridger Teton Resource Advisory Committee (RAC). RAC met during winter of 2011. The purpose of the RAC is to improve collaboration among forest users and provide advice to the Forest Service about projects to invest in the land and create employment opportunities. Funding for RAC projects (approximately \$311,237) is from Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act. Bridger Teton RAC reviewed 34 proposed projects and recommended funding 16 of those projects. Four projects were selected for funding in Sublette County and 12 project were selected for funding in Lincoln County.

Projects funded included: noxious weed control in Kemmerer backcountry, Jensen Creek, Greys River and Big Piney/Pinedale backcountry; bridge and road work on Pole Creek, Mistim Creek and Alice Lake; Moose heard habitat and distribution in Sublette and Lincoln Counties; hazardous tree reduction Greys River area; trail maintenance on Scab Creek Trail and Dog Creek Loop; watershed restoration on Sheep Pass; fish ladder at East Side Canal on the Salt River.



Fish ladder construction at the East Side Canal, Salt River.

NRCS REPORT

USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is a Federal agency that works in partnership with the American people to conserve and sustain our natural resources. NRCS works with landowners through conservation planning and assistance designed to benefit the soil, water, air, plants, and animals that result in productive lands and healthy ecosystems. NRCS services can include direct assistance to urban and rural landowners, technical assistance to local units of government, technical and financial assistance to ranchers, farmers, and other agricultural producers in the county. The NRCS also cooperates with the other Federal and State agencies located in the valley on a wide variety of issues.

NRCS Farm Bill programs available to Star Valley Landowners:

CSP-Conservation Stewardship Program: Program that encourages producers to address resource concerns in a comprehensive manner by: Undertaking additional conservation activities and improving, maintaining, and existing conservation activities.

EQIP-Environmental Quality Incentives Program: Provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers through contracts up to a maximum term of ten years in length while addressing local resource concerns. (See conservation priorities below)

GRP- Grasslands Reserve Program: Helps landowners and operators restore and protect grassland, including rangeland and pastureland, and certain other lands, while maintaining the areas as grazing land.

FRPP- Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program: Provides funds to farmers and ranchers to preserve their agricultural land. The program provides matching funds to State, Tribal, and local governments and non-governmental organizations, who have farmland protection programs to purchase perpetual conservation easements. USDA provides up to 50 percent of the fair market easement value of the conservation easement, while the cooperating partners provide at least 25 percent of the acquisition price.

WHIP- Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program: Provides assistance to people who want to develop and improve wildlife habitat on private lands.

WRP- Wetland Reserve Program: Program offering landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property.

NRCS REPORT -CONTINUED

Conservation Projects Completed in Star Valley 2011:

Irrigation System installed addressing Irrigation Water Management, Soil Erosion, and Water Quality/Quantity treating approximately 110 acres. Stream improved by providing approximately 1,000 feet of pipeline and two troughs for an off stream watering source. Successfully installed a well for the offsite water source addressing vegetation, soil erosion, water quality, and wildlife habitat. Approximately 73 acres of Forest Stand Improvement. Willow plantings (cuttings and clumps) to improve streambank and address soil erosion and water quality approximately 500 feet. Wildlife friendly fence installed approximately 1000 feet.

Conservation Priorities/Resource Concerns for Lincoln County 2011:

Irrigation Water Management/Water Efficiency, Water Quality, Vegetation and Land Health (Including noxious weeds and forest health), Soil Erosion, Wildlife, and Brucellosis.

Highlights/ Updates for the NRCS of Lincoln County 2011:

Applications received for NRCS cost-share assistance in Lincoln County were ranked and more than \$300,000 were obligated for conservation contracts for Fiscal year 2011. Of that obligation approximately \$150,000 were obligated funds for contracts in Star Valley. A number of applications were deferred for consideration in future years. In order for projects to be ranked that require significant engineering or permitting must have those items ready before the application can be considered for funding. An example is all water right verification information needs to be in place prior to contract obligation.

The NRCS Afton field office has endured some changes of personnel. The former District Conservationist was replaced with Dayle Funka as a Soil Conservationist. The District Conservationist for Afton is now DeMont Grandy stationed in Cokeville. RC&D was dissolved by an act of congress. Maureen Meagher is now the Soil Conservation Technician to service Lincoln County stationed in the Afton field office.

DeMont Grandy- District Conservationist- (307) 279-3256

Dayle Funka- Soil Conservationist- (307) 886-9001 X:109

Wade Payne- Civil Engineering Technician-(307) 279-3256

Maureen Meagher- Soil Conservation Technician-(307) 886-9001 X:108

COOPERATING AGENCIES & ORGANIZATIONS

STAR VALLEY CONSERVATION DISTRICT would like to thank the following agencies and organizations for their support of our programs and assistance they provide to us for our common goal of the conservation and wise use of Star Valley's and Wyoming's precious natural resources.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Farm Service Agency

Rural Development

Forest Service

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Reclamation

Bonneville Power Administration

Geological Survey

LINCOLN COUNTY

Commissioners

Planning and Zoning Office

Weed & Pest

Extension Service

School District No. 2

WESTERN WYOMING RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

U. S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

WYOMING GAME AND FISH DEPARTMENT

WYOMING WATER DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

STATE ENGINEER'S OFFICE, WATER DIVISION NO. 4

STATE FORESTER

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS OF STAR VALLEY

LOWER VALLEY ENERGY

STAR VALLEY LAND TRUST

TROUT UNLIMITED