

Star Valley Conservation District



Annual Report FY-2018/2019



Star Valley Conservation District

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.

Board of Supervisors

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District Staff

Kay Lynn Nield, District Manager



Salt River Watershed

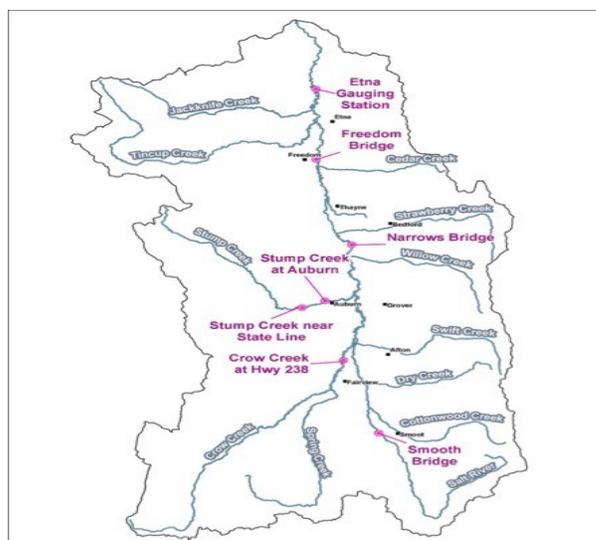
In 2002, the Salt River was placed on the Wyoming 303(d) list. A 7.5-mile segment of the lower section of the Salt River does not support its designated recreation use because of high counts of the pathogen-indicator bacteria *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*). Stump Creek, from the confluence with the Salt River upstream to the Idaho border, also violates the *E. coli* criteria. The Star Valley Conservation District worked with Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality and Tetra-Tech on the Salt River Watershed TMDL and Salt River Watershed Restoration Plan. Total Maximum Daily Loads were prepared for the Salt River and Stump Creek and are presented in the Water Quality Restoration Plan and *E. coli* TMDLs Salt River Watershed, Wyoming (Tetra Tech, 2015).

E. coli load reductions of up to 60 and 66 percent are necessary in the Salt River and Stump Creek, respectively, to achieve water quality standards. The Salt River Watershed Restoration Plan (SRWRP) provides a framework to initiate voluntary activities within the Salt River watershed to reduce *E. coli* loading from all sources and pathways to achieve water quality standards. The SRWRP represents the proposed activities for the first three to five years of implementation and contains the essential requirements of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to achieve improvements in water quality.

Water Quality

319 Grant - SVCD applied for and received a Section 319 Grant for implementation of the Salt River Water Shed Restoration Plan. Phase I of the 319 grant includes conducting septic system care and maintenance classes, providing cost-share for septic pumping and replacement. Phase I also includes funding for off-stream watering projects such as fencing, corral relocations, well drilling and trough installation. During 2018/2019 SVCD conducted 4 Septic Seminars and provided cost-share for pumping over 40 septic systems. SVCD drilled 1 well and installed one water trough for off stream watering. SVCD fenced off 1 mile of Stump Creek with electric fence and water gaps. There are two other off-stream watering projects in progress. The 319-grant paid for a grazing workshop put on by Jim Gerrish which covered rotational grazing and water quality. There were 17 people who attended the summer workshop.

Water Sampling - With the development of the TMDL and Salt River Watershed Restoration Plan the annual water quality sampling program was changed to a long-term trend monitoring program. Annual sampling consists of collecting samples from five sites on the Salt River, two sites on Stump Creek and one site on Crow Creek (see map). SVCD staff collected E. Coli and basic water quality parameters at each of the sampling locations during the 2018/2019 sampling season. Sampling was conducted from May 2018 to October 2018 and June 2019. SVCD District Manager completed the water quality training and certification in Lander, Wyoming put on by Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts. SVCD also attended the Watershed Conference put on by WDEQ and Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts.



Administration- SVCD worked with Miles CPA so that our accounting system matches the Budget form and F-32 that is submitted to Wyoming Department of Audit.

Subdivision Reviews- Star Valley Conservation District completed 33 subdivision reviews for 2018/2019.

Rangeland Health Assessment – Star Valley Conservation District is working with the Greys River Ranger District to re-issue vacant sheep allotments in our district that were turned back to the Forest Service with no preference. SVCD applied for and received one RHAP grant from the Wyoming Department of Agriculture for Blind Bull-Grizzly Basin-Deadman allotments. The grant will be used to get rangeland monitoring up to date. This will inform the NEPA process for re-issue of the permits. SVCD also worked with Sublette, Lincoln, and Teton County Conservation Districts to initiate work on Ecological Site Description monitoring.

Community Education- SVCD sponsored after school programs for Etna Elementary. SVCD had a dairy education program called “Dairy-licious.” The students took a field trip to a dairy farm and were able to milk cows and feed bottle calves. The students learned about how farmers care for animals and where milk and milk products come from. The students also taste tested different flavors of milk and cheese and made ice cream.

Greys River Forest Collaborative - SVCD and Lincoln County applied to Wyoming State Forestry for funds under the Forest Collaboration Assistance Program in 2016. The Greys River Forest Collaborative started in November of 2016 with a series of meetings through 2017 and 2018. Ruckelshaus Institute at the University of Wyoming has facilitated the meetings with collaborative members. In 2018/2019 we had 4 meetings. The Collaborative then presented the Greys River Ranger District / Bridger-Teton National Forest with recommendations to improve forest health in the Greys River. Greys River Ranger District is working to implement projects related to the recommendations of the Collaborative. The recommendations are the Tri-Basin timber sale and looped trails in the Greys River. The Tri-Basin timber sale facilitated road maintenance for recreation and 12 miles of fish habitat that was reconnected through culvert replacement. The Forest Service completed the Middle Greys Travel Management plan which opened new connecting trails in the Greys River. The next focus area for the collaborative is the Grover Park area. The collaborative is exploring what projects to pursue in this area. Through this process the Joint Chiefs grant was applied for with the Forest Service and NRCS to fund projects in the Salt River Watershed and Salt River Range. The funding didn't come through, but we are pursuing other funding options.

Teton Conservation District- SVCD partnered with Teton Conservation District for a composting project for Haderlie Farms. Haderlie Farms is located in Star Valley. They applied for a grant with Teton Conservation District to start a food waste pickup in Jackson which is then composted on the farm. Star Valley Conservation District worked with TCD to provide updates on the project in Star Valley.

Soil Health- SVCD purchased a no-till drill for agriculture producers to rent to promote soil health. This came about after a presentation by Marlon Winger from NRCS. He was one of the presenters at the Jim Gerrish grazing workshop.

NRCS - In 2018/2019 NRCS worked with agricultural producers in Star Valley to upgrade existing irrigation systems. Star Valley Conservation District is working with NRCS, Wyoming Game and Fish, and Trout Unlimited on restoration projects on Swift Creek which is a tributary to Salt River. This will improve fish habitat and provide bank stabilization.

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.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts

Bridger-Teton National Forest Service

Greys River Ranger District

Lincoln County Commissioners

Lincoln County Planning and Zoning Office

Lincoln County Weed & Pest

University of Wyoming Extension Service

Wyoming Department of Agriculture

Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality

Wyoming State Forestry Division

Teton Conservation District

