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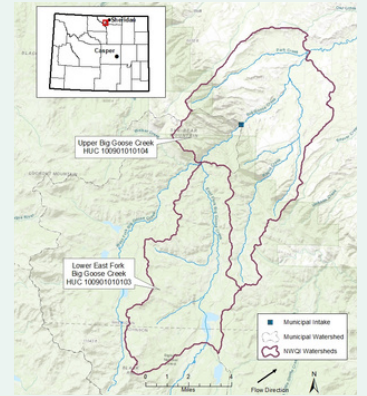
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CALENDAR

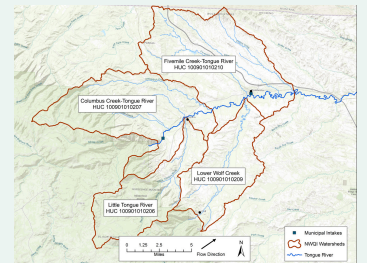
- NOV 01 Begin 2024-2025 Tree Program
- NOV 05 Monthly Board Meeting
- NOV 11 Veteran's Day **Office Closed**
- NOV 19-22 WACD Annual Convention
- NOV 28 Thanksgiving Day **Office Closed**
- DEC 03 Monthly Board Meeting
- DEC 25 Christmas Day **Office Closed**
- JAN 01 New Year's Day **Office Closed**
- JAN 07 Monthly Board Meeting
- JAN 20 Martin Luther King Day **Office Closed**
- FEB 04 Monthly Board Meeting

NATIONAL WATER QUALITY INITIATIVE FUNDING

The USDA National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) provides targeted funding for assistance in small watersheds to benefit water quality. Eligible practices include invasive grass treatments, irrigation improvements, fencing, and stockwater. Project applications within the NWQI watersheds do not have to compete with other areas for funding.



Funding assistance is available **now** for the Upper Goose Creek subwatersheds (above Beckton and around the municipal intake). Funding assistance for subwatersheds in and around the Towns of Dayton and Ranchester (Fivemile Creek, Columbus Creek, Little Tongue River, and Lower Wolf Creek) will be available in FY2025.



OTHER FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to the NWQI focus areas, funding opportunities exist for Sheridan County with the USDA-NRCS and SCCD. If you have been thinking about a project, please contact the office as soon as you can to begin some of the pre-application activities.

WORKING LANDS COLLABORATIVE

The Working Lands Collaborative is a group of local landowners and agency partners committed to offering programs and resources on soil health and regenerative agriculture. It was born from the Working Lands Workshop Planning Committee, which consisted of a group of agency partners and landowners that hosted the Working Lands Workshop Series. The goal is to bring subject matter experts and teachers into the community to grow our local knowledge base on next-level adaptive agricultural practices. With a motto of "Growing Local Wisdom to Cultivate Resilient Futures," the Collaborative hopes to encourage operators to take the next step themselves, and in time, become a resource for others as they take on new-to-them challenges. We invite your participation and welcome your input. In addition to the annual workshop/event, the group hopes to host some additional, more informal, opportunities for ranchers and land managers to share ideas and experiences with each other. For more information on upcoming meetings, please contact the District.



**LONG-RANGE PLAN
PUBLIC COMMENT
PERIOD NOW OPEN!**

Every five years, the District develops a Long-Range Plan to identify the natural resource priorities for Sheridan County. The plan is used by the Board and staff to develop programs and services for Sheridan County residents. As with other Districts across the nation, the SCCD was born out of the dustbowl to provide local oversight over federal conservation programs. Today the District continues to coordinate informational, financial, and technical resources so they can be used to benefit Sheridan County.

The Long-Range Plan is intended to respond to the changing needs of Sheridan County, especially as they relate to natural resource conservation. As demographics and land uses evolve, the District strives to address emerging natural resource challenges. The Plan outlines the goals and objectives of the Sheridan County Conservation District natural resource program for 2025-2029.

The District will accept public comments on the 2025-2029 Long Range Plan through November 29, 2024. Copies of the document are available on the District website (www.sccdwy.org) or at the District office, located at 1949 Sugarland Drive, Suite 102 in Sheridan.

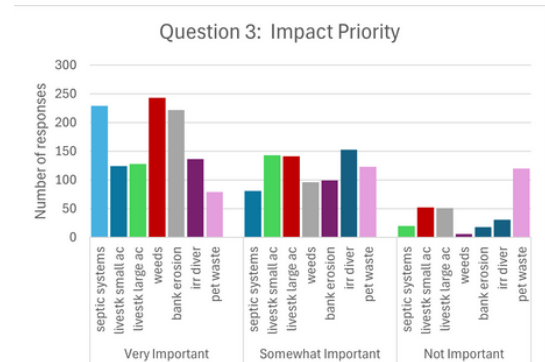
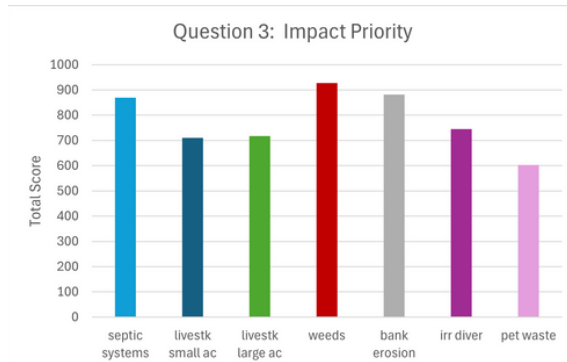
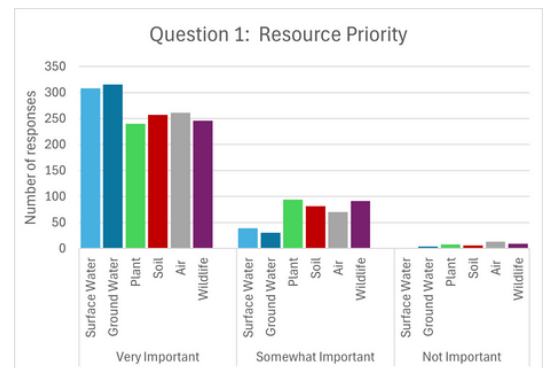
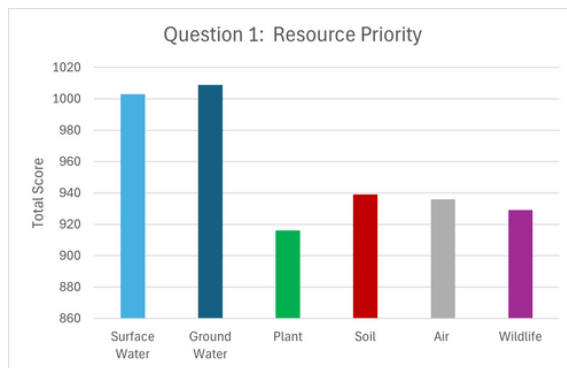
LONG-RANGE PLAN UPDATE SURVEY RESULTS

Earlier this year, the District distributed a mailer to ~9500 households in Sheridan County. The purpose was to increase awareness about the District and what it does, and to provide County residents an opportunity to tell us what is important to them. It also helps us understand where we can do better. In addition to the mailer, the District sought additional input at meetings and events and through social media. The survey included summary information about the District and three questions on the level of importance (Very Important, Somewhat Important, or Not Important) of natural resources, potential impacts the District should address, and current District programs.

As of October 22, 353 surveys were returned; 263 were returned via postal mail, 59 through the online platforms, and 30 through meetings/events. Of the respondents, 72% were from the Goose Creek watershed and 20% were from the Tongue River Watershed. "Large acreage producers with livestock" made up 9% of the responses; 61% were City/Town residents and 11% were small acreage (<100 acres) with livestock. The majority of the respondents were White/Caucasian (95%); 64% were over 60 years old, with only 8% under the age of 40. Of those that answered the question, 57% were male, 43% were female; 25% were veterans.

Consistent with past surveys, water quality issues (surface and ground) continue to rank the highest in terms of importance for natural resource priorities, with 88% and 90% of respondents identifying them as Very Important. The separation among other categories (air, soil, wildlife, and plants) was much smaller (69-76%).

It is interesting to note, that while Plant Health had the fewest number of "Very Important" responses, the majority of respondents considered "Weeds/Invasive Plants" as "Very Important" for the District to address. Septic Systems and Streambank Erosion/Instability were also considered "Very Important" by 66% and 64% of the respondents, respectively.



SURVEY RESULTS (CONTINUED)

For current District programs, 79% considered Water Quality Monitoring as “Very Important”; followed by project funding. The Acme Power Plant Cleanup Project had the lowest number of “Very Important” responses; however, it also had the highest number of “Don’t Know” responses. Though the Acme project was considered one of the least important, the low ranking is not consistent with the water and land quality benefits associated with the project. Future outreach efforts need to emphasize these benefits as well as details about funding and technical resources.

There was an “open-ended” question that encouraged respondents to think about and describe the most important service they need from the District or other concerns. Responses to this question varied considerably and indicated that there was still some uncertainty among respondents about how the District is governed, funding mechanisms, and its authority, specifically as related to water rights and ditches, regulatory enforcement, and growth/development.

As with the other Conservation Districts in Wyoming, the Sheridan County Conservation District (SCCD) is a local unit of government. It is a political subdivision of state government under the Wyoming Department of Agriculture.

DISTRICT BOARD

As a unit of government, the District operates under the direction of a locally-elected, volunteer, Board of Supervisors. By State Statute, the 5-member District Board consists of 3 rural representatives, 1 urban representative, and 1 at-large supervisor, who are elected on the non-partisan general election ballot to serve staggered 4-year terms. Next time you vote, look for your Conservation District candidates on your ballot!

FUNDING MECHANISMS

While some Districts in Wyoming receive local tax levies, the SCCD does not. The majority of local District funding comes through grants, including federal, state, and private foundations. What this means is that services/programs offered locally are somewhat limited by the grants or other funding resources available. However, it does NOT mean that the District won’t try to find funding for activities that the Board considers important; lack of funding has never been an excuse to not pursue a project/program-it just may take a bit longer!

AUTHORITIES

The Sheridan County Conservation District is NOT a regulatory agency; it cannot impose fines or penalties and does not have any enforcement authority. While the District works with many state and federal agencies on a variety of issues, all District services and programs are offered on a voluntary basis. Questions and concerns related to water rights, ditch maintenance, and regulations should be directed to the Wyoming State Engineer’s Office. Wildlife management issues, are addressed by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department and/or local animal control. Municipal and County governments have regulations related to housing, subdivisions, utilities, and transportation that consider population growth and available resources. Where appropriate, the District can provide technical information to help with decision making. The Weed and Pest District and USDA have programs for addressing noxious weeds.

THE COST OF CONSERVATION

\$550

Water quality demonstration or field day

\$25,000

For a season of water quality monitoring

\$3000-\$5000

In personnel time for technical assistance on an individual project

\$7500

per year in grant administration, including proposals and reporting

HOW TO CONTRIBUTE

As a political subdivision of state government that uses donations solely for public purposes, your investment in the SCCD is considered a tax-deductible charitable contribution.

Individual or business name

Mailing address

City, state, zip

Email address

Phone number

AMOUNT

- \$50 \$100
- \$150 \$500
- Other \$ _____

PREFERENCE

- Acme Project
- Watershed Programs
- Oil Recycling/Tree Program
- Invasive Grasses
- Information & Outreach
- Anywhere Needed

Please make checks payable to SCCD or donate online at www.sccdwy.org.





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The mission of the Sheridan County Conservation District is to protect Sheridan County's water and land quality through assistance programs, information and outreach, monitoring, and planning.

SCCD's regular board meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month at 4 pm.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Edith Heyward
Chair

Stephanie Masters
Vice Chair

Orrin Connell
Secretary-Treasurer

Emerson Scott
Supervisor

Jessica Western
Supervisor

SCCD STAFF

Carrie Rogaczewski
District Manager

Jackie Turner
Program Specialist

NRCS STAFF

Andrew Cassiday
District Conservationist

Oakley Ingersoll
Soil Conservationist

Chelsea Winslow
Soil Conservationist

Spencer Burkett
Range Management Specialist

2024-2025 TREE PROGRAM

The SCCD is now accepting orders for the 2024-2025 Tree Program. The Tree Program offers conservation grade seedling trees at a nominal price for conservation purposes such as living snow fences, windbreaks, visual screens, noise barriers, erosion control, and wildlife habitat. The SCCD also offers perennial pollinator packages in partnership with Piney Island Native Plants. As with the conventional tree program, these are intended to be used as a conservation planting for pollinator habitat.

For more information or to order, stop into the office, or order online at www.sccdwy.org/tree-program

DISASTER ASSISTANCE FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS IN WYOMING IMPACTED BY WILDFIRE

Agricultural operations in Wyoming have been significantly impacted by recent wildfires. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has technical and financial assistance available to help farmers and livestock producers recover from these adverse weather events. Impacted producers should contact their local USDA Service Center to report losses and learn more about program options available to assist in their recovery from crop, land, infrastructure, and livestock losses and damages.

Additional information/resources can be found through UW Extension at www.uwyo.edu/barnbackyard/resources/wildfire.html

To unsubscribe from our mailing list, please email jackie.turner@sccdwy.org