

# Water Development Commission

## ☛ *Mission and philosophy*

The 1975 Legislature passed W.S. 41-2-112(a) which provided the following definition for the Wyoming Water Development Program:

"The Wyoming Water Development Program is established to foster, promote and encourage the optimal development of the state's human, industrial, mineral, agricultural, water and recreational resources. The program shall provide, through the commission, procedures and policies for the planning, selection, financing, construction, acquisition and operation of projects and facilities for the conservation, storage distribution and use of water, necessary in the public interest to develop and preserve Wyoming's water and related land resources. The program shall encourage development of water facilities for irrigation, for reduction of flood damage, for abatement of pollution, for preservation and development of fish and wildlife resources [and] for protection and improvement of public lands and shall help make available the waters of this state for all beneficial uses, including but not limited to municipal, domestic, agricultural, industrial, instream flows, hydroelectric power and recreational purposes, conservation of land resources and protection of the health, safety and general welfare of the people of the state of Wyoming."

The Wyoming Water Development Commission (WWDC) provides funding assistance to public entities for water supply projects, serves as the water planning agency for the state, performs technical services for public entities and other state agencies, and serves as the lead state agency in some of Wyoming's water investments. Public service is a public trust. The Wyoming Water Development Office will be open, ethical and responsive to the public served. Within the program's limited resources, innovation and creativity are the keys to long term success. Through management support, training and development of personnel, and a respect for the views of Wyoming residents, Water Development Office staff will be empowered to deliver quality services.

## ☛ *Results of outcomes*

### Goal I - Water Resource Development

*Develop unused and/or unappropriated water to meet the present and future needs of Wyoming and its residents and improve existing water projects so they remain effective and viable assets for their users and Wyoming.*

■ Completion of 17 new development Account I projects with a cost savings of \$1,452,078.

■ Acceptance of 16 new development Account I project applications.

■ Successful collection of all Account I loan payments in the amount of \$563,591 principal and \$1,455,801 interest. There are 59 active loan accounts.

### General information

L. Michael Besson, Director  
Wyoming Water Development Office

### Agency contact

Mike Besson  
(307) 777-7626  
Herschler Building, 4 West  
122 W. 25th Street  
Cheyenne, WY 82002  
Lbesso@missc.state.wy.us

### Year established and reorganized

Established 1979, reorganized 1982.

### Statutory references

W.S. 41-1-106 through 41-1-108 and W.S. 41-2-101 through 41-2-124 and W.S. 41-3-1004

### Number of authorized personnel

Full-time 15

### Organization structure

Planning Division, Construction Division,  
Managerial Services Division

### Clients served

Irrigation districts, conservancy districts, municipalities, water and sewer districts, joint powers boards, improvement and service districts, counties and state agencies.

### Budget information

Objective IA	\$544,291
Objective IB	268,898
Objective IIA	4,049
Objective IIB	61,406
Objective IIC	75,171
Objective IID	259,497
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,213,322</b>

- Completion of 12 rehabilitation Account II projects with a cost saving of \$639,576.

- Acceptance of four new rehabilitation Account II project applications.

- Successful collection of all Account II loan payments in the amount of \$476,182 principal and \$966,182 interest. There are 58 active loan accounts.

### **Goal II - Water Resource Planning**

*Update and maintain the database pertaining to Wyoming's water resources through information developed from project specific studies, management of the state's water investments, completion of instream flow feasibility studies, performance of general water related research, and basinwide research and planning.*

- The state's repayment and operation/maintenance obligations on Buffalo Bill, Fontenelle and Palisades Reservoirs were met and all payments were received from the state's storage contractors.

- Completion of 17 instream flow feasibility studies for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

- The office has been involved with three separate river basins where meetings with federal, state and tribal officials have resulted in discussions regarding water resources. The Wind River negotiating team met on an average of once per month, the Platte River Cooperative Agreement group met on an average of twice a month and the Colorado River Biological group met on a quarterly basis during FY98.

- Designed and administered a water issues public opinion survey, received 1,400 responses to 1,800 queries, published a summary report of the results.

- Initiated a feasibility study contract with an engineer consulting firm addressing the procedures and resources needed to implement a state-wide water planning process.

- Initiated a pilot water planning study in the Bear River Basin, including the organization and support of Basin Advisory Group, and produced a draft report.

- Initiated an ongoing public outreach, participation and education program consisting of an Internet Web page, quarterly newsletters, regular news releases, public meetings and reports to interest groups.

- Initiated a contract with a consulting engineering firm to complete irrigated lands mapping of the Snake and Salt River basins and verify irrigated lands mapping in the Bear River Basin.

## **❖ Strategic plan changes**

Please refer to strategic plan submitted September 4, 1998.

# Wyoming Water Development Office organization chart

