

Water Development Commission

Mission and philosophy

The Wyoming Water Development Program was founded on the sound philosophy of utilizing a portion of the financial resources the state receives from the development and use of its non-renewable resources, such as coal, oil, and gas, to develop a renewable resource, water. Water development is achieved by providing and rehabilitating the infrastructure necessary to deliver water to Wyoming citizens in an economical and environmentally responsible manner and thereby preserving Wyoming's water entitlements for its future. Further, sound water planning serves to promote the effective and efficient use of available water resources.

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 managing Wyoming's water investment portfolio.

Results of outcomes

During FY04, the Water Development Office closed nineteen (19) planning projects and ten (10) construction projects. Unspent appropriated funds in the amount of \$2,159,055 reverted to the appropriate water development account. These funds were then available for re-appropriation by the legislature. Applications for twenty-one (21) new projects were reviewed and, through the legislative process, twenty (20) projects were accepted into the program.

Water Development Account I and II loans generated revenue of \$3,933,280 in principal payments and \$3,336,207 in interest payments. All loan payments were collected and there are no delinquencies in the loan program.

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.

The WWDC has two roles relevant to the instream flow law. One is assigned by statute, the other is implied by duty as the water development planning agency for the state. To date, ninety-two (92) applications for instream flow water rights have been prepared by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. As of June 30, 2004, the WWDC has published seventy-nine (79) feasibility studies.

The WWDC is conducting an ongoing statewide water planning process. This is a dynamic, intensive effort that will be repeated every five to seven years on a state-wide

General information

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Year established and reorganized

Established in 1979 and reorganized in 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

Authorized personnel

22 full time employees

Organizational structure

Planning Division, Construction Division, River Basin Planning Division, Administrative 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

Water Development Account I.....	\$2,428,056
Total	\$2,428,056

basis. Each cycle will culminate in the completion and update of river basin plans for the entire state. These plans will include compilation of an exhaustive water resources database, as well as an analysis of future water demands, and water development opportunities that could satisfy those demands.

The first cycle of the Green, Bear, Powder/Tongue, Northeast Wyoming, Wind/Bighorn and Snake/Salt River Basin plans have been completed. The Platte Basin plan was started recently and is scheduled for completion in June, 2005. Following the completion of the Platte River Basin plan, a framework plan will be prepared for the entire state. With the completion of that plan, the update process will be initiated for each of the completed river basin plans for a five (5) to seven (7) year cycle. This process will ensure that current, accurate water resources information is always available.

The WWDC is conducting an extensive public outreach effort as part of the river basin planning process, including formation of basin advisory groups (BAGs), presentations to interest groups, informational presentations and displays at conferences, etc. The BAGs serve as an information exchange mechanism for the river basin planning process and have been invaluable in identifying basin water issues. These groups are also being utilized in review of draft products received from river basin planning consultants. During FY2004, twenty-four (24) BAG meetings were held by the Water Development staff.

A river basin planning website is being maintained to provide a quick and accurate mechanism whereby current information can be provided to BAGs, the general public, agencies, and others. Peak activity on the website was 150,000 accesses per month, with a steady upward trend. The website will be the primary presentation mechanism for river basin plans.

Strategic plan changes

The Wyoming Water Development Commission will continue to develop and fund water projects, within budgetary restraints, to preserve and protect Wyoming's water. River basin planning efforts will continue as a valuable tool for future water development.

Water Development Commission organization chart

