

**Yellowstone Soil Conservation District
1210 South Industrial Park Road
St. Anthony, Idaho 83445**

**Annual Plan
Five Year Resource Conservation Plan
July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2020**

Executive Summary

The Yellowstone Soil Conservation District is one of fifty Soil Conservation Districts in Idaho. Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Districts are political subdivision of State government, but are not State agencies. Conservation Districts are charged with carrying out a program for the conservation use and development of soil, water and other natural resources.

Conservation Districts are the primary entities to provide assistance to private landowners and land users in the conservation, sustainment, improvement and enhancement of Idaho's natural resources. They are catalysts for coordinating and implementing conservation programs, channeling expertise from all levels of government into action at the local level. Program are non-regulatory, providing science-based technical assistance, incentive-based financial programs, and information and educational programs at the local level.

Both by legislation and by agreement, the USDS Natural Resources Conservation Service provides technical assistance to landowners and land users through Conservation District. Each Conservation District in Idaho has a signed Mutual Agreement with the Secretary of Agriculture and the Governor of Idaho that establishes a framework for cooperation.

This Annual Plan/Five Year Resource Conservation Business Plan was developed not only to guide the Conservation District, but also to encourage cooperation among landowners, government agencies, private organizations, and elected officials. Through knowledge and cooperation, all concerned can ensure a sustainable natural resource base for present and future generations in the Yellowstone Soil Conservation District.

This document identifies the resource needs in the Conservation District and presents a resource conservation action plan for meeting those needs.

Mission of the Yellowstone Soil Conservation District

To provide service, information and opportunities to the residents of Fremont County, Idaho.

Vision of the Yellowstone Soil Conservation District

Our Vision....Responsible care for Fremont County's natural resources.

Values of the Yellowstone Soil Conservation District

Sustainable use of all natural resources

Conservation education for youth and adults.

Support for agriculture activities that uses sustainable, economic and feasible practices.

Value and respect for the Idaho Conservation Partnership.

History of the Yellowstone Soil Conservation District

The YSCD is located in southeast Idaho and encompasses Fremont County. The Certificate of Organization was issued by the State of Idaho on August 3, 1944. The YSCD was organized to develop and carry out programs of erosion and sediment control and land and water management. An organizational goal was to provide the farmers and ranchers of Fremont County with a unified means of solving their problems systematically and effectively.

The original objectives of the YSCD will pertain today. The YSCD is dedicated to developing and carrying out programs of water and soil conservation, flood control and prevention and soil improvement. The YSCD continues to provide landowners and operators of Fremont County with information and support in solving soil and water problems. The supervisors continually work in their communities to build good working relationships between the YSCD and Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Charter members were: Paul Allen, Max Franz, Willard Bonneru, J.J. Remington and H.G. Bauer.

The YSCD provides landowners and land users technical assistance with an increasing number of land and water uses, conservation and rural development problems. A primary goal of the Board of Supervisors is the continued improvement of soil conservation, water quality and education of citizens in Fremont County on matters of natural resources. The YSCD strives to create an awareness of the need for wide land use and provides leadership and technical assistance necessary to carry out its objectives.

Section 1: Physical Characteristics & Critical Geographic Area

Yellowstone SCD Boundaries

The Yellowstone SCD is located in the toe of the “boot” that makes up the state of Idaho. It borders Montana to the north and Wyoming to the east. The borders of the conservation district are also the boundaries of Fremont County. Totalling 1,220,500 acres, the Yellowstone SCD services Fremont County and a population of approximately 13,200 people.

Fremont County ranks 23rd among Idaho counties in population and 16th in area. Nearly 29 square miles of the county are water. The federal government owns nearly 60 percent of the county. The southwest corner of Yellowstone National Park is located in Fremont County. The close proximity to Yellowstone NP and grizzly bear habitat has various impacts on growth, recreation and development within the county.

Climate

The weather conditions in Fremont County are varied and extreme. Blizzard conditions are frequent during the late fall through early spring. Intense summer thunder-showers occur most commonly in the foothills above the Upper Snake River Valley and throughout the mountains.

The mean annual temperature at St. Anthony, the Fremont County Seat, is 43 degrees F.

The average growing season (frost free days) ranges between 80 days in St. Anthony – Ashton area to 120 days along the extreme southern portion of the county. In the Island Park area, the average growing season is approximately 46 days. Approximately two-thirds of the annual precipitation comes in the form of snow. Snow packs of 40 – 60 inches in depth are found on cropland at the higher elevations. This heavy snow pack may contain as much as 15 inches of water content. Snowmelt normally begins in April and may continue into June/July at the higher elevations. Snow packs at lower elevations near Ashton and St. Anthony often reach three feet in depth.

The southwestern portion of the county has an average annual precipitation of less than ten inches with the rest of the county ranging upward from 13 inches at St. Anthony to over 48 inches in Island Park, Henry's Lake and the Continental Divide areas.

Land Use

Fremont County/Yellowstone SCD is divided into two distinct economic areas – agriculture and recreation. More than half of the county's 1,220,500 acres is owned by the federal government, the majority of which is open to recreation use.

Agriculture production land makes up some 17 percent of the total county acreage. Primary crops include wheat, barley, hay and seed potatoes. Agriculture continues to be the economic base for the county.

Tourism/recreation is very important to the Fremont County economy. Idaho Recreation Region 6, of which Fremont County is part, makes up to 12 percent of the total state wide travel spending by visitors. According to the Idaho Dept. of Parks and Recreation, of the \$1.7 billion spent by visitors during 2007 in Idaho, about \$166 million was spent in Region 6. Fremont County travels pending along was about \$40 million, making recreation second only to agriculture as an economic base.

Section Two

Economic Condition and Outlook

Fremont County's population, according to the 2010 census is 13,242 residents. The number reflects a 12% increase from 2000 to 2010. The County population has shown various ups and downs over the last years. The population dipped in 2000 to 11,784 then climbed back 599 residents through 2004, before slipping again in 2005 and then steadily growing by 370 to hit 12,691 in 2009. Fremont County is ranked 23rd in the state in population. Concentrated economic development and the change from a two-year college to the four-year Brigham Young University-Idaho in neighboring Madison County have contributed continued future growth. The recreation areas of Fremont County also contribute to a high number of second homes adding to the overall seasonal economy.

Fremont County, bordering Montana and Wyoming, has three significant communities located on U.S. Highway 20 – St. Anthony, Ashton and Island Park. This route is heavily traveled by tourists headed for Yellowstone National Park, Henry's Lake and Harriman State Park. Upper and Lower Mesa Falls are also located in Fremont County. The waterfalls attract over 100,000 visitors annually.

The closure of a sawmill in the 1980's and relocation of the U.S. Forest Service office to nearby Idaho Falls several years ago hurt the local economy and rebounding has been difficult.

Since 2011, the unemployment rates have fluctuated to a low of 2.6 percent in 2007 to a high of 8.1 in 2009. The labor force grew by 1,508 from 1998 to 2007 before losing over 900 in the national recession.

Government provides the most non-farm payroll jobs, primarily through the Idaho Juvenile Correction Center in St. Anthony. Federal and state government owns 70 percent of the land. As a result land management agencies employ numerous workers in the area. Trade, leisure and hospitality and construction also represent a large percentage of the county's employment.

Section Three – Assessment

Soil Resources

Soil Quality

Water Resources (quantity)

Water Resources (quality)

 Nitrate priority areas

Air Quality

Forest Lands

Livestock

Fish and Wildlife

YSFWS Endangered Species listings and occurrences for Fremont County, Idaho

Summary of Animal, Fish and Bird listings:

Candidate for Listing:

Yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*)

Great Sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*)

Listed Threatened:

Grizzly Bear (*Ursus arctos horribilis*)

Canadian Lynx (*Lynx canadensis*)

Summary of Plant Listings

Listed as Threatened:

Ladies' tresses, Ute (*Spiranthes diluvialis*)

Section Five – Water Quality

Streams in the Upper Lower Henry's Fork sub basin listed as impaired waters, according to the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality 2007 Integrated Report, are listed below.

The Henry's Fork sub basin as designated for cold water aquatic life, salmonid spawning, primary contact recreation, domestic water supply and special resource water.

Streams and pollutants for which TMDLs were developed and completed:

Stream	Pollutant(s)
Upper Henry's Fork	
Henry's Lake	dissolved oxygen
Warm River	temperature
Buffalo River	sediment
Howard Creek	temperature
Targhee Creek	temperature
Duck Creek	temperature, sediment
Sheridan Creek	sediment

Lower Henry's Fork

Conant Creek	bacteria
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Key Decision Makers

Citizens in Yellowstone Soil Conservation District

Fremont County Commissioners

Jordon Stoddard, Board of Commissioners, Chairman

Leroy Miller, Commissioner

Bill Baxter, Commissioner

Tom Cluff, Fremont County Planning and Building Administrator

Ross Davis, Chairman, Fremont County Planning and Building Board

Elected City Officials

Mayor of Ashton, Teddy Stronks, Jr.

Mayor of St. Anthony, Nels Thuesen

Mayor of Island Park, Tom Jewell

State Legislators representing Yellowstone SCD

District 35 – Senator Jeff C. Siddoway
Representative Van Burtenshaw
Representative Paul Romrell

U.S. Senators, Representatives

Senator Mike Crapo
Senator Jim Risch
Representative Mike Simpson

Yellowstone Soil Conservation District Supervisors

Nathan Scafe, Chairman
Bill Bowersox, Vice Chairman
Ryan Crapo, Treasurer
Curtis Parkinson, Supervisor
Jordan Marsden, Supervisor
Jaren Raybold, Supervisor
Al Siddoway, Supervisor

Key Contacts for Cities

City offices and Chamber of Commerce centers

Chamber of Commerce

Visitor/Chamber Center located in Ashton, Island Park and St. Anthony

Special Interest Groups

Henry's Fork Foundation
Henry's Lake Foundation
Nature Conservancy



FY-2016 (7/1/15 – 6/30/20) 5-Year Work Plan Yellowstone Soil Conservation District

For Information Contact: Chairman Nathan Scafe

Telephone Number (208) 624-3341 ext 101

Email: tcikaitoga@co.fremont.id.us

Serving: Fremont County

Legislative Districts: 34 & 35

*Board = Nathan Scafe, Ryan Crapo, Bill Bowersox, Curtis Parkinson,
Jordan Marsden, Jaren Raybould, Alan Siddoway, Members.*

Mission of the Yellowstone Soil & Water Conservation District

To provide service, information and opportunities to the resident of Fremont County, Idaho.

Trends Impacting Conservation in the Yellowstone Conservation District

Continued need to improve soil conditions and lessen soil erosion impacts.
Increased development of production crop land for second/recreation homes.
Need to improve irrigation delivery systems for agriculture production
Continued need to improve acidity on agriculture land.
Continued need to monitor nitrate activity on agriculture lands.

Projects Planned, Coordinated or Managed

Ashton Groundwater Protection Plan
Continued Cover Crop Project

Funding Sources for District Operations and Projects Coordinated

Fremont County, Idaho Soil Conservation Commission, Natural Resources Conservation Service



FY-2016 (7/1/15 – 6/30/20) 5-Year Work Plan Yellowstone Soil Conservation District

Priority Area Number 1: Water Quality

Objective: To continue meeting the needs/requirements of Idaho Water Quality Law and the Clean Water Act, the YSCD will work in conjunction with IASCD, NRCS, ISCC, DEQ, land occupiers and special interest groups.

Goal(s): To reduce nitrates in drinking water in and around the Ashton area while helping producers better understand needs of production soils.

Action(s): Below

Actions for FY 2016	Target Dates	Person(s) Responsible
Continue working with producers contracts to soil test and use University of Idaho Guidelines for fertilizer application – Ashton Groundwater Protection Project.	Ongoing	District Board, Staff/NRCS
Coordinate and sponsor workshop with project participants to discuss project results regarding Ashton Groundwater Protection Project.	Summer'15	District Board, Staff/NRCS
Work with producers regarding interest in CCI program for the application of lime to fields based on University of Idaho Guidelines.	Ongoing	District Board, Staff/NRCS
Collect all data following 3-years of lime application and provide findings to project participants and public.	Summer'15	District Board, Staff/NRCS



FY-2016 (7/1/15 – 6/30/16) 5-Year Work Plan Yellowstone Soil Conservation District

Priority Area Number 2: District Operations

Objective: Provide leadership and business management for continued successful district operations

Goal(s): Maintain district operations at optimum level of efficiency

Action(s): Below

Actions for FY2016	Target Dates	Person(s) Responsible
Maintain a comprehensive financial management system using QuickBooks software including an annual financial review/audit, submittals of financial reports, and budget to the Idaho Soil Conservation Commission.	Ongoing	Treasurer Ryan Crapo and Financial Manager Denise Dalling
Seek, Identify, secure and administer funds for Conservation District goals and actions.	Ongoing	Board of Supervisors and Tamra Cikaitoga, staff
Develop and submit Conservation District Budget	Ongoing	Treasurer Ryan Crapo and Financial Manager Denise Dalling
Maintain administrative procedures for the Conservation District; update Conservation District Policy and Procedures Manual, assist Fremont County with annual elections, complete Annual Plan of Work, provide administrative assistance to NRCS	Ongoing	Board of Supervisors and Tamra Cikaitoga, staff
Secure funding to upgrade district office equipment and software	Ongoing	Board Members and Tamra Cikaitoga, staff



FY-2015 (7/1/15 – 6/30/20) 5-Year Work Plan Yellowstone Soil Conservation District

Priority Area Number 3: Soil Improvement

Objective: Reduce soil erosion to T on croplands

Goal(s): Reduce water erosion on 200 acres of cropland to T

Action(s): Below

Actions for FY2016	Target Dates	Person(s) Responsible
Promote the installation of sediment ponds/dams through EQIP	Ongoing	Board of Supervisors and NRCS Staff
Promote the testing/application of lime in soils through field trials	Ongoing	Board of Supervisors and NRCS Staff
Assist in the installation of underground water delivery systems to reduce soil erosion and improve water quality	Ongoing	Board of Supervisors and NRCS Staff
Assist to research additional information and funding sources to promote the use of cover crops.	Ongoing	Board of Supervisors and NRCS Staff



FY-2016 (7/1/15 – 6/30/20) 5-Year Work Plan Yellowstone Soil & Water Conservation District

Priority Area Number 4: Information and Education

Objective: To inform the public of all available conservation programs

Goal(s): Inform the public of Yellowstone SCD operations and objectives. Provide natural resource awareness through educational outreach.

Action(s): Below

Actions for FY2016	Target Dates	Person(s) Responsible
Conduct in-class and field workshops for school students focusing on the headwaters of the Henry's Fork of the Snake River as well as the importance of the river/water for irrigation purposes.	Ongoing	Staff – Tamra Cikaitoga and Denise Dalling
Carry out the work plan objectives and actions in the YSCD water quality projects including news articles, direct mailing to project participants and interested organizations.	Ongoing	Staff – Tamra Cikaitoga
Organize and publicize workshops featuring lime use and cover crops, etc. Provide follow up information field trials, etc.	Ongoing	Staff – Tamra Cikaitoga and Denise Dalling
Provide results, data of water quality projects, etc., to public and government agencies.	Ongoing	Staff – Tamra Cikaitoga and Denise Dalling



FY-2016 (7/1/15 – 6/30/20) 5-Year Work Plan Yellowstone Soil Conservation District

Priority Area Number 5: Rangeland

Objective: Improve range and pasture conditions on 1,000 acres

Goal(s): Assistant in seeking funds to implement BMPs on grazing land

Action(s): Below

Actions for FY 2016	Target Dates	Person(s) Responsible
Provide assistance to special use/land development organizations(s) regarding grazing on production land and recreation areas.	Ongoing	Board of Supervisors and NRCS Staff
Provide assistance to county Planning and Building Board regarding grazing on production land and recreation areas.	Ongoing	Board of Supervisors and NRCS Staff
Seek funding sources for stream bank restoration projects in grazing/recreation areas.	Ongoing	Board of Supervisors and NRCS Staff