



Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission

650 W. State St., Room 145 • Boise Idaho 83720

Telephone: 208-332-1790 • Fax: 208-332-1799

www.swc.idaho.gov

ITEM # 4a

IDAHO SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC MEETING & TELECONFERENCE

Date and Time:

Wednesday April 4 , 2012

From 8 am to 11 am MDT

Location:

Soil & Water Conservation Commission

650 West State St, Rm 145, Boise Idaho

DRAFT MINUTES

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dick Bronson

Dave Radford

Norman Wright

Jerry Trebesch

ADVISORS AND STAFF PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE:

Karma Bragg, President, IDEA

Bret Rumbleck, IASCD Executive Director

Delwyne Trefz

COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT:

Teri Murrison

Kristin Magruder

Jan Webster

Terry Hoebelheinrich

Erin Seaman

PARTNERS AND GUESTS PRESENT:

Harriet Hensley, Deputy Attorney General

Ray Houston, LSO Budget & Policy Analyst

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ITEM #1: WELCOME AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dick Bronson, Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission (Commission), at 8:04 a.m. Roll call: Dick Bronson, Dave Radford, Norman Wright, and Jerry Trebesch present. Roger Stutzman was not present. A quorum being reached, the meeting began.

ITEM #2: REVIEW AGENDA

Chairman Bronson reviewed the agenda. No items were added.

ITEM #3: PARTNER REPORTS

Karma Bragg, President, Idaho District Employees Association (IDEA), presented the partner report. Discussion followed.

Bret Rumbeck, Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts (IASCD), presented the partner report. Discussion followed.

ITEM #4: MINUTES

Commissioners reviewed the February 21, 2012 meeting minutes.

Vice Chair Radford moved to approve February 21, 2012. Commissioner Wright seconded. No further discussion. Motion carried.

ITEM #5: FY 2012 FINANCIAL REPORT

Teri Murrison, Administrator, provided the February 2012 financial report.

Vice Chair Radford moved to accept the February 2012 financial report. Commissioner Wright seconded. No further discussion. Motion carried.

ITEM #6: CHAIR APPOINTMENTS FOR FINANCE COMMITTEE

Chairman Bronson appointed Commissioner Jerry Trebesch as Chairman and Vice Chair David Radford as co-chair.

ITEM #7: ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Ms. Murrison reported on agency activities since the February Conservation Commission meeting. Discussion followed.

No action taken; for information only.

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ITEM #9: BLM/ COMMISSION COOPERATING AGENCY CONSIDERATION

Chairman Bronson moved this item to earlier in the Agenda to accommodate Commissioner Trebesch's schedule.

No action taken.

ITEM #8: OFFICE OF SPECIES CONSERVATION UPDATE

Ms. Murrison provided an update on a meeting with the Office of Species Conservation relative to coordination. Discussion followed.

No action taken.

ITEM #10: OTHER BUSINESS

There were no other business items for discussion.

ITEM #11: COMMISSIONER REPORTS:

Commissioners reported on their attendance at the Spring Division Meetings. Commissioners Radford and Wright attended Division 5 & 6 Spring meetings. Commissioner Bronson attended Division 3 meetings; Jerry Trebesch attended Division 1 & 2 meetings; Roger Stutzman attended Division 4 meetings.

ITEM #12: RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND RANGELAND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Ms. Magruder presented the FY 2012 RCRDP Financial Report and Status Report. Discussion followed.

Ms. Magruder presented a report on RCRDP Loan Committee Update. Discussion followed.

Vice Chair Radford moved to approve the January and February 2012 RCRDP Financial Reports. Commissioner Wright seconded. No further discussion. Motion carried.

ITEM#13: EXECUTIVE SESSION

Vice Chair Radford moved to enter into executive session pursuant to Idaho Code § 67-2345(d) for the purpose of considering pending RCRDP loan business only. Commissioner Wright seconded. No discussion. Roll call vote was taken with all voting in the affirmative. Motion carried.

The Commission moved into executive session after a five-minute break. Ms. Murrison, Mr. Hoebelheinrich, Ms. Magruder, Ms. Hensley, Ms. Seaman, and Ms. Webster were invited to stay.

Executive session ended at 11:06 am.

97 In open session, Commissioners discussed the disposition of pending RCRDP loan business.

98

99 Loan No.665

100 Amount: \$72,300

101 Term: 4 years

102 Rate: 2%

103 Conservation benefit: Water efficiency increased from 45% to 85% annually; soil saving of 372 tons per
104 year (6.0 tons/acre). Directly addresses TMDL 303(d) listed segment and ground water quality
105 protection area and nitrate priority area. Pollutants addressed: sediment & phosphorus.

106

107 **Commissioner Wright moved to approve Loan A-665 pursuant to the loan officer recommendation as**
108 **the application meets criteria for conservation benefit and meets the loan criteria established in**
109 **IDAPA 60.05.01 and loan policy with conditions that all approved parties, as outlined in corporate**
110 **bylaws, that have authority to sign a contract must sign. Commissioner Radford seconded. No further**
111 **discussion. Motion carried.**

112

113 **At 11:12 am, Chairman Bronson adjourned the meeting.**

114

115 Respectfully submitted,

116

117 Roger Stutzman

118 Commissioner and Secretary,

119 Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission



Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission

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ITEM # 4b

IDAHO SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC MEETING & TELECONFERENCE

Date and Time:

Wednesday May 2 , 2012
From 8 am to 5 pm MDT

Location:

Soil & Water Conservation Commission
State Capitol, Rm EW20, Boise Idaho

DRAFT MINUTES

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dick Bronson
Dave Radford
Roger Stutzman

Norman Wright
Jerry Trebesch

ADVISORS PRESENT VIA TELECONFERENCE:

John Homan, AG
Steve Becker
Ken Stinson

COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT:

Teri Murrison
Kristin Magruder
Jan Webster

Terry Hoebelheinrich
Erin Seaman
Delwyne Trefz

PARTNERS AND GUESTS PRESENT:

Harriet Hensley, Deputy Attorney General
Bret Rumbeck, IASCD Executive Director
Karma Bragg, IDEA
Terry Halbert, North Side
Kari Schwendiman, Latah
Art Beal, Squaw Creek
Ray Houston LSO-BPA
Norm Semanko IWUA

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3 **ITEM #1: WELCOME AND ROLL CALL**

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5 The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bronson at 8:05 a.m. Roll call: Dick Bronson, Dave
6 Radford, Norman Wright, Roger Stutzman and Jerry Trebesch present. A quorum being reached, the
7 meeting began.

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9 **ITEM #2: REVIEW AGENDA**

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11 Item 18 was moved to Item 8A. No items were added.

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13 **ITEM #3: PARTNER REPORTS**

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15 Reports were received from Karma Bragg, President, Idaho District Employees Association (IDEA), and
16 Bret Rumbeck, Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts (IASCD). Discussion followed.
17 Action: No action taken, for information only.

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19 **ITEM #4: MINUTES**

20 Action: Due to lack of second, approval of the April 4, 2012 minutes will be taken up at the next
21 meeting. No action taken.

22
23 **ITEM #5: Technical Assistance Working Group Update**

24 Action: No action taken, for information only.

25
26 **ITEM #6: FY 2012 FINANCIAL REPORT**

27 Action: Commissioner Radford moved to accept the March 2012 financial report to include Items A-C.
28 Commissioner Stutzman seconded. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

29
30 **ITEM #7: Budget Blueprint**

31 Action: Commissioner Radford moved to approve the FY 2013 blueprint report. Commissioner Wright
32 seconded. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

33
34 **ITEM #8: LOAN COMMITTEE REPORT**

35 **ACTIONS:**

- 36 a. Draft Practices and Projects Matrix: Commissioner Wright moved to approve the RCRDP
37 Conservation Plan Practices and Matrix. Commissioner Trebesch seconded. No further
38 discussion. Motion carried.
- 39 b. Working Group to determine process and compensation for district services provided to loan
40 program: Staff received direction to form a working group to propose incentives to promote the
41 program. The Chair appointed Commissioners Radford and Trebesch to the working group,
42 along with others to include Art Beal, Karma Bragg and Harriet Hensley.
- 43 c. Modify loan officer approval authority: Commissioner Wright moved to approve granting the
44 RCRDP Loan Officer approval authority subject to amounts and conditions contained in the staff
45 report presented by staff. Commissioner Trebesch seconded. No further discussion. Motion
46 carried unanimously.
- 47
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49 **ITEM #8a (18): EXECUTIVE SESSION**

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51 Action: Commissioner Wright moved to enter into executive session pursuant to Idaho Code § 67-
52 2345(d) for the purpose of considering pending RCRDP loan business only. Commissioner Stutzman
53 seconded. No discussion. Roll call vote was taken with all voting in the affirmative. Motion carried.

54

55 The Commission moved into executive session 10:15. Ms. Murrison, Mr. Hoebelheinrich, Ms. Magruder,
56 Ms. Hensley, Ms. Seaman, and Ms. Webster were invited to stay.

57

58 Executive session ended at 11:06 am.

59

60 In open session, Commissioners discussed the disposition of pending RCRDP loan business.

61

62 a. Loan #18a. 667

63 Amount: \$20,000

64 Term: 7 years

65 Rate: 3%

66 Reported conservation benefit: Water efficiency increased from 10% to 15% annually; soil saving of
67 14 tons per year. Directly addresses TMDL Watershed area not 303(d) listed. Rocky Mountain audit
68 shows a 21.2% savings of energy with using a new motor pump.

69 Action: Vice Chairman Radford moved to approve Loan A-667 pursuant to the loan officer
70 recommendation as the application meets criteria for conservation benefit and meets the loan
71 criteria established in IDAPA 60.05.01 and loan policy. Commissioner Wright seconded. No further
72 discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

73 b. Loan #18b: A-666

74 Amount: \$75,200

75 Term: 10 years

76 Rate: 3%

77 Reported conservation benefit: Water efficiency increased from 35% to 80% annually. Directly
78 addresses TMDL 303(d) listed segment and ground water quality protection area and nitrate priority
79 area. Pollutants addressed: sediment & nutrients.

80 Action: Commissioner Wright moved to approve Loan A-666 pursuant to the loan officer
81 recommendation as the application meets criteria for conservation benefit and meets the loan
82 criteria established in IDAPA 60.05.01 and loan policy. Commissioner Stutzman seconded. No further
83 discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

84

85 c. Status Report

86 Action: Commissioner Wright moved to authorize staff to investigate initiating foreclosure
87 proceedings on the one loan identified in closed session, report back to Commission, and directed
88 loan officer to go visit potential foreclosure site. Vice Chairman Radford seconded. Motion carried
89 unanimously.

90

91 Executive session ended at 11:06 am.

92

93 **ITEM #9: DISTRICTS 5 YEAR PLANS FOR FY 2012**

94 Action: Vice Chairman Radford moved to accept 49 FY 2012 District Plan submissions and authorized
95 staff to accept the one Plan yet to be submitted by the Camas District. Commissioner Stutzman
96 seconded. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

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ITEM #10: FY 2012 ANNUAL SURVEY TO DISTRICTS

Action: Vice Chair Radford moved to approve survey as presented and Commission Wright moved to direct staff to expedite annual survey by 30 days next year. Commissioner Stutzman seconded. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM #11: REPORTS ON LAST YEARS CAPACITY BUILDING AWARDS TO DISTRICTS:

Action: No action taken, for information only.

ITEM #12: DISTRICT BUDGET HEARING

Action: Pursuant to Idaho Code 22-2727, Chairman Bronson opened the 2012 District Budget Hearing. Part 1: Project/Program Priorities was considered. Part 2: Capacity Building Priorities was presented for approval as follows:

40 District requests identified in staff report	\$ 40,000
State Forestry Contest	\$ 500
Grazing Conference	\$ 1,000
Ag Symposium	\$ 1,000
Grant writing training	\$ 3,180
Online Software training	\$ 2,250
Bear Lake	\$ 600
<u>Gooding</u>	<u>\$ 240</u>
Total Remaining	\$ 1,230

Commissioner Wright moved to approve the above distribution and Vice Chair Radford seconded while directing staff to return with more information about the request for remaining funds from the Franklin District. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

ITEM #13: PROPOSED LEGISLATION

Action: Vice Chair Radford moved to direct the Administrator to investigate the feasibility of such a program, reporting back on her decision. Commissioner Wright seconded. No further discussion. Motion carried.

At 1:28 pm, Chairman Bronson adjourned the meeting for lunch.

ITEM #19: HUMAN RESOURCES: EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Pursuant to Idaho Code § 67-2345(b), the Commission will convene in Executive Session for the purpose of considering the evaluation of a public employee only. Executive Session is closed to the public.

Action: A performance evaluation of the Administrator was conducted in closed session.

Executive session ended at 2:57 pm. Open Session reconvened at 3:01pm.

ITEM #14: STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Action: None taken. Edits were directed by Commissioners. The Administrator will forward the draft to districts for input by May 25, 2012. A final draft will be considered by Commissioners at their June meeting.

ITEM#15: ADMINISTRATORS REPORT

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146 Action: Vice Chair Radford moved to approve a \$1,500 donation to IASCD for partial sponsorship of the
147 statewide Envirothon event and donate staff time of Brian Reed and Allan Johnson. Commissioner
148 Stutzman seconded. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

149
150 Vice Chair Radford moved to pay NASCA dues of 1500.00 and send a letter to NASCA requesting a report
151 and justification of our dues. Commissioner Stutzman seconded.

152
153 Vice Chair Radford moved to withdraw motion and Commissioner Stutzman seconded.

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155 The commission has asked Ms. Murrison to gather more information on NASCA before sending dues. No
156 action taken.

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158 **ITEM #16: IDAHO STATE WATER PLAN**

159 Action: No action taken; for information only.

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161 **ITEM #17: OTHER BUSINESS**

162 No other business was discussed.

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164 **ITEM #20: ADJOURN**

165 At 4:24 pm, Vice Chairman Radford moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Stutzman seconded.
166 Meeting adjourned Next meeting set for June 5th at 8:00am.

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168 Respectfully submitted,

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170 Roger Stutzman
171 Commissioner and Secretary,
172 Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission

April 2012**ITEM #5b**

	CURRENT	YEAR TO DATE
BEGINNING CASH BALANCE	\$ 4,043,103.47	\$ 2,984,698.51
Interest Received		
- 2515 Interest Income:	\$ 2,695.05	\$ 24,357.19
- 2523 Loan Interest:	\$ 31,919.32	\$ 259,507.25
- 2535 Default Interest:	\$ 332.00	\$ 4,587.96
Principal payments received	\$ 282,916.72	\$ 1,620,420.51
Suspense items cleared	\$ -	\$ -
Miscellaneous		
TOTAL INCREASES	\$ 317,863.09	\$ 1,908,872.91
ADJUSTED CASH BALANCE	\$ 4,360,966.56	\$ 4,893,571.42
<u>Decrease of funds</u>		
1) Personnel costs	\$ (5,212.44)	\$ (44,234.48)
2) Operating Expense (less P-Card liability)	\$ (17,862.78)	\$ (93,021.26)
3) State Holdback	\$ -	\$ -
4) Loan Disbursements	\$ (10,000.00)	\$ (428,424.34)
5) Capital Outlay	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL DECREASES	\$ (33,075.22)	\$ (565,680.08)
ENDING CASH BALANCE as of Apr 30, 2012	\$ 4,327,891.34	\$ 4,327,891.34

Cash as of 4/30/2012	\$ 4,327,891.34
3 % Minimum Contingency Reserve	\$ (200,480.56)
Funds Approved - Not Disbursed	\$ (420,864.00)
FUNDS AVAILABLE TO LOAN	\$ 3,706,546.78
Pending Approval at 6/5/2012 Meeting	\$ (82,582.00)
Funds Available after 6/5/2012	\$ 3,623,964.78

LOAN STATUS REPORT:

Outstanding Principal Loan Balance beginning 3/31/2012	\$ 6,955,602.15
Disbursements during April 2012	\$ 10,000.00
Principal payments made during April 2012	\$ (282,916.72)
Adjustments to STARS balance	\$ -
ADJUSTED PRINCIPAL LOAN BALANCE as of 4/30/2012	\$ 6,682,685.43



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ITEM #6

TO: Chairman Bronson and Commissioners Radford, Stutzman, Wright, and Trebesch
FROM: Teri Murrison, Administrator *Teri Murrison*
DATE: May 30, 2012
RE: Administrator's Report

Activities

Idaho Forestry Contest and Northern Districts Outreach

The week of May 7th Delwyne Trefz, Karie Pappani, Mark Hogen, Bill Lillibridge, and I helped out with the 30th Annual Forestry Contest at the Delay Farm in Careywood. As you know, the Commission regularly funds the Forestry Contest. Attached is an update from Bonner District's Linda O'Hare. It was, as you will see, a great event.

While in Northern Idaho, Delwyne spent a day doing field work with Eileen Rowan in the Orofino area and we all attended board meetings/toured district (and partner) projects including Benewah (Upper Hangman Creek and Santa Creek), Kootenai-Shoshone (Mica Creek), and Boundary Districts (Karie and Mark Hogen attended this one). I accompanied Bill Lillibridge to the Moiyee Creek area about 25 miles from the Canadian Border to strategize on engineering issues with a small dairy farmer. I am very proud of our staff – they do amazing things – and of the districts. We had a great time.

Planning

Leadership Team (L-Team) members (Chuck Pentzer, Delwyne Trefz, Carolyn Firth, and Kristin Magruder) completed a one week course in Project/Program Management in May. While the course centered around project management, it dealt with concepts and practices applicable to program management including budgeting. Assisted by Bill Lillibridge, the L-Team (minus Kristin who created a template and budgetary guidance before she left) is coming up with FY 2013 budgets tied to work elements in the Strategic Plan. They will monitor elements for which they are responsible throughout the year. It is the first time Conservation Commission managers have been involved in establishing and monitoring their own budgets. They will produce draft components of the Official Work Plan (OWP) by June 7th to guide our efforts in implementing the Strategic Plan in FY 2013.

Programs

Staff convened our annual OnePlan Executive Committee Meeting this month. It was attended by representatives of NRCS, EPA, ISDA, and other agencies. We received reports from Wayne Newbill and Dick Johnson (NRCS) on pesticide management, nutrient management, and other OnePlan modules. We also discussed the future of the system. As a result of a request for possible adaptation of OnePlan by the Montana Extension Dept., we are putting together a cost estimate for consideration by Executive Committee members to enhance the system and prepare for adaptation by Montana. It is clear that OnePlan is at a critical juncture due to the lack of ongoing funding and constrained agency resources. The Executive Committee will reconvene in June to consider options.



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Personnel and Administrative Issues

During the past month, both Kristin Magruder and Erin Seaman resigned. Kristin accepted a communications job with the Idaho Education Network. She'll be working out of the Department of Administration office next door. We wish her well. Our loss is their gain, for sure. Erin has resigned to return to full-time homemaker status. We appreciate the time she was with us and hope that at some point, she will reenter the full-time out of the home workforce and look us up! They will both be hard to replace.

We have made the following changes to our Boise office staffing to cover operations: Delwyne Trefz will take over all district related duties and tasks; Jan and I will assume a number of Kristin's administrative duties; the Department of Administration will take some of Kristin's duties; we are seeking a loan servicing assistant to replace Erin; and until we hire a permanent loan officer (pending), Terry Hobbelheinrich will serve as the RCRDP program manager and loan officer. These changes insure a very stable transition for the Conservation Commission both in the near and long term future.

There have been big changes in the Division of Financial Management (DFM), as well. Shelby Kerns, our analyst since before I joined the Commission has been promoted to chief of DFM's Budget Bureau. Congratulations, Shelby! Wayne Hammon, head of DFM state:

"As bureau chief, Ms. Kerns will provide leadership and supervision to the agency's budget analysts, direct the training of new staff, and assist the agency's administrator with applying the Governor's policies and budget priorities across all agencies of State government in an uniform manner. The position of budget chief has been vacant since March 2008.

Ms. Kerns joined DFM in April 2009 as a senior financial management analyst and has a long history of state service. In addition to her work at DFM, she served as executive director of the Idaho Rural Partnership and as an international trade specialist for the Idaho State Department of Agriculture. She holds a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Idaho and a master's in business administration from Northwest Nazarene University."

Keith Reynolds, Shelby's colleague at DFM, has been assigned as our new budget analyst and every indication is that we will have a seamless transition there, as well. While we have greatly appreciated Shelby's steady hand on the budget plow, we'll now benefit from Keith's knowledge and expertise, as well. Welcome, Keith!

2012 Envirothon

Attached is a copy of an article that appeared in the Challis Messenger re the 2012 Envirothon. As you know, Allan Johnson and Brian Reed attended on behalf of the Commission. Allan's picture is in the article. In addition, attached is a letter of appreciation from IASCD for the Commission's sponsorship this year.



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Wind-borne Dust on Idaho Roads

Attached is another copy of an article published by Capital Press last week regarding the dust issue on Idaho highways. NRCS held a meeting with stakeholders the week of May 7th. Chuck Pentzer will attend your meeting to give a report and discuss NRCS' next steps. He's also provided a history of wind-borne dust issues in Idaho for your information.

Specialty License Plate Program

At your direction, staff corresponded with Ray Houston (Legislative Services Office) and Shelby Kerns (Division of Financial Management) about the prospect of the Commission pursuing a funds-generating specialty license plate program. Ray Houston directed me to the Idaho Transportation Department website to review statistics for how many specialty license plates overall were sold in last year, a summary of which follows.

2011 IDAHO SPECIAL PROGRAM PLATE REGISTRATIONS

<u>License Plates</u>	<u>Total New, Re- new & Transfers</u>
Ag. In Classroom	1,587
Appaloosa Horse	2,225
Breast Cancer Education	820
Idaho Mountain Biking	635
Basque Heritage	318
Capital Commission	3,405
Collegiate	5,915
Corvette	1,025
Elks Rehab Hospital	97
Earth Science & Lapi.	251
Fire Fighter	2,753
Free-mason	283
Historic Preservation	508
Idaho Rangeland	1,105
Lewis & Clark	1,333
Natural Res & Mining	242
National Rifle Assoc.	334
Police Officer Mem.	2,127
Potato	1,419
Sawtooth	2,516
Snowskier	4,271
Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness	238
Snowmobile	1,087
Special Olympics	72
Support Our Troops	896
Technology & Science	47



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Timber	2,710
White-water Rafting	1,169
Wildlife	45,676
Youth	2,088
<hr/>	
Total	87,152

Two-year registrations began in 2000. Since the above numbers count "registrations", 2-year registrations are counted as one registration.

It is Ray Houston's opinion that the competition for sales would be tough.

Shelby Kerns' caution was from a fiscal standpoint. She recommended that if we are serious about such a program, we do a survey to gauge interest. She states that special plates aren't always the money maker that people anticipate. There are set-up costs and plates that do not meet the minimum sales are cancelled. For instance, the Department of Commerce started a program that only sold 47 plates, well below the 1000 necessary.

She noted that the Ag community seems to be very supportive of the various programs with special plates, but there is also a lot of competition among that group – Ag plates, Rangeland plates, etc. In fact, it is possible we might end up with opposition from those groups if they felt the Conservation Commission would be taking revenue currently coming to them.

Given this input and the fact that we are short staffed with many other commitments at the present, it's the Administrator's decision not to pursue initiating conservation specialty plates at present.

2012 NASCA Dues

Attached is a copy of an invoice for \$3,000 for the 2012 National Association of State Conservation Agency (NASCA) dues. NASCA is asking for full or partial payment for the State of Idaho to remain a member. At your last meeting, staff was directed to contact the Executive Director of the National Association of State Conservation Agencies (NASCA) to obtain more information on the benefits of membership. We have done so, however have not received a response to date. NASCA is currently involved in advocating in NRCS' Field Office of the Future Initiative and as an association is involved with national issues in Washington, DC. Should Commissioners decide after deliberation to continue the NASCA membership, this item can be considered on the June agenda. If not, we will notify NASCA of its discontinuance.

ACTION: Consider approving payment of 2012 NASCA membership dues.

Attachments:

- Forestry Contest Update
- Article from Challis Messenger re 2012 Envirothon, Letter from IASCD
- Article from Capital Press re wind-borne dust on Idaho roads, History of Wind-borne Dust in Idaho
- 2012 NASCA Invoice

Idaho State Forestry Contest - 2012

To: Teri Murrison and Kristin Magruder
Fr: Bonner SWCD, Linda O'Hare
Re: Report on 2012 Forestry Contest
Dt: May 15, 2012

Bonner SWCD would like to thank the Soil Conservation Commission for their \$1500 donation to this year's Idaho State Forestry Contest. 2012 was the 30th anniversary of the contest, and to help celebrate this year we added a "museum" which had photographs from all 30 years of the Contest, we gave 30th Anniversary T-shirts to all the team winners (24) for the top 3 places, and added a 30th Anniversary Cake for dessert. Our expenses were higher than usual, and every donation was very much appreciated.

The weather was nice this year, which makes every part of the Contest easier. Honorary Chairman Bill Love, one of the original founders of the Contest, took credit for the good weather ☺.

There were 127 competitors in the Junior/Senior Division competition. This Division includes both junior and senior high school age students who compete in all ten stations covered in the Forestry Contest Manual. The Rookie Division which includes fourth through sixth grade school students who study the same manual but compete in only 4 areas had 154 competitors. Novices make up the last category, and we had 87 grade school students ranging from 1st graders to 5th graders participate in this area. Instruction tailored after Project Learning Tree is given to these students - just a learning environment with no testing. Overall attendance at the Contest which includes around 200 volunteers is estimated at 570 - and the number of burgers cooked and eaten is estimated at 720.

Careywood Eager Beavers 4-H won the Senior Division competition, while the winning team in the Junior Division was from Post Falls Middle School. Both of the top individual scorers for the Junior and Senior Divisions were from Post Falls. The Rookie Division top scorer was from Borah Elementary in Coeur d'Alene, and the winning Rookie team consisted of 6th graders from Farmin Elementary in Sandpoint.

The responses received so far from this year's participants have been very positive! We thank the Soil Conservation Commission for helping to put on this event which brought youth all the way from Genesee to Bonners Ferry together with forestry professionals for a fun and creative contest in the forest at Careywood.





Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts

May 14, 2012

Chairman Richard Bronson
Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission
650 W. State Street, Room 145
Boise, ID 83702

RECEIVED
MAY 18 2012
IDAHO SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Dear Chairman Bronson: *Dirk -*

On behalf of the Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts and the Idaho Envirothon Committee, I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank you for your support of the 2012 Idaho Envirothon. Your commitment and support contributed tremendously towards making this year's contest a successful event.

A copy of the 2012 newsletter summarizing this year's Envirothon competition will be sent to you following the program in May. The 2012 winning team will represent Idaho at the Canon International Envirothon competition to be held July 22 - 28 at Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania.

Again, we thank you for your participation, commitment, and support. We literally could not function without the generosity of our sponsors and volunteers, and hope you will continue to find Envirothon a program worthy of your support in the future. If you do not already, please consider sending a representative (as our guest) to next year's program to check us out! We would love to show you how proud we are of the students and the program.

Sincerely,

Bret Rumbek
Executive Director

Serving Challis and Custer County, Idaho Since 1881.

The Challis Messenger is published every Thursday.

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Students practice environmental science

BY ROSE CHEFF

Over 100 high school students, their advisers and 30 volunteers from around Idaho participated in the 25th Annual Idaho Envirothon at Living Waters Ranch.



The same group studies an issue together. Karma Bragg photos

Envirothon is a nationwide natural resource competition for high school students. Three Challis High School teams participated and were sponsored by Custer Soil and Water Conservation District.

This year's competitors came from Butte, Carey, Challis, Gooding, Jerome, Kimberly, Mackay, Rigby and Weiser high schools and Dennis Technical Education Center, a mix of all Boise area schools.



Instructor Allan Johnson provides instruction to the students on water quality. Students are Madisen Garlie, K.C. Anderson, Hayley Lutgen, Joy Black and Julianne Hunter.

Teams of five members competed for recognition and scholarships last week by demonstrating their knowledge of environmental science and natural resource management. In addition to Enviro-thon's primary focus areas of soil and land use, aquatics, forestry and wildlife, the student's created poster presentations on solutions for the 2012 Envirothon issue of "Nonpoint Source Pollution/Low Impact Development."

Challis High School student Julianne Hunter said of the event, "We have to put together a poster presentation about the current Envirothon issue. We can't use computers or anything like that. We have to use our own knowledge and skills to make the poster for our presentation. We have to defend our presentation, as well. So we have to know a great deal about the issues. It is challenging."

Challis High School has been involved in the program since 1997 and has sent two teams to the international competition. Challis Adviser Jackie Ingram said, "I am proud of our teams. They competed very well in the oral presentations. Their community service projects were well done and the students gained a great deal by participating."

Final round judges for the event were Sue Ellis, retired National Resource Conservation Service, Chris Banks from the Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts, Alexis Collins with Natural Resources Conservation Service, Kent Watson from Thompson Creek Mine and Allan Johnson with Soil and Water Conservation Commission.

Top honors went to Gooding High School Team B, with Gooding Team A placing second, Mackay High School placed third, Dennis Technical Education Center placed fourth and Kimberly High School, competing for the first time, placed fifth.

The winning Idaho team represents Idaho in the International Envirothon at Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania this summer.

[Comment on this story](#)

The Challis Messenger • P.O. Box 405 • Challis, Idaho 83226
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Weather forces sugar beet replanting

Idaho farmers got early start, but winds, frost damage seeds

By JOHN O'CONNELL
Capital Press

Strong winds in Idaho claimed about 200 acres of Dirk Driscoll's first sugar beet planting in the Pleasant Valley area between Aberdeen and American Falls. Some seeds were whisked away, while others were covered too deep by chalky dust to emerge.

Frost dealt the blow to some of Driscoll's neighbors, as well as his brother, Thane, who had to replant 15-20 percent of his own sugar beets in Pleasant Valley.

Idaho farmers got an early start to planting this season thanks to record high April temperatures. A few recent unseasonably cold nights and gusty days have forced many of them, however, to break out



David Juarez moves a wheel line May 8 to irrigate recently replanted sugar beet fields at Dirk Driscoll's farm in the Pleasant Valley area between Aberdeen and American Falls. Driscoll had to replant about 200 acres of beets due to strong winds.

John O'Connell/Capital Press



Sugar beets

him, but was so close to completing his planting he opted against it.

"If we encounter this kind of winter again, we'll do more groundwork when it's wetter," Driscoll said.

Oakley grower Randy Hardy noticed while driving from his home town to Burley that about half of the sugar beet acres he passed had been replanted, mostly due to wind damage. A friend of Hardy's had to start over on 1,000 acres of sugar beets.

On his own farm, Hardy worries his winter malt barley may have been damaged by temperatures that dipped below 25 degrees on May 5.

"I think there will be some damage. It could be all of it or it could be some of it," Hardy said. "This spring it's been about as opposite as it could

be from last spring. Last spring we were cold and wet, and this spring we're dry and windy, and both of them have been a pain."

National Weather Service Meteorologist Gary Wicklund said spring and fall are typically gusty in Eastern Idaho, and statistically, this spring has been no windier than usual. He suspects the challenges are more tied to soil conditions and early plantings.

As of May 6, the USDA reported Idaho farmers had planted 99 percent of sugar beets, 4 percent more than average; 89 percent of barley, 23 percent above average; 90 percent of spring wheat, 16 percent above average; and 82 percent of potatoes 38 percent above average.

Kelly Olson, Idaho Barley Commission administrator, hasn't heard of widespread weather problems for barley.

"I don't think we're alarmed by anything yet," Olson said.

still ample time to grow a good crop.

Some neighbors watered their fields prior to seeding to hold the soil down. Driscoll considered doing the same on the two fields that "took off" on

sparse winter moisture melted the ground this spring.

"We've had this much wind before but not this much soil moving, and that's because of the type of winter we've had," Driscoll said, adding there's

their planters again.

In Jerome, despite receiving some early spring moisture, Driscoll's brother, Brock, had 10 acres of sugar beets blow away. Driscoll believes the combination of frost heave and

Wind Erosion in Eastern ID

1) History of conservation in the area of concern.

- 1838 First known irrigated agriculture in Idaho
- 1894 Carey Act & 1902 Newlands Act - length of Snake River plain and resulted in most of the irrigated acreage
- Conventional tillage primarily used (inversion/moldboard plow)
- 1930's Dust Bowl - increased nationwide awareness of wind erosion concerns.
- Stubble mulch tillage began around 1938
- 1950's first conservation tillage methods and use of herbicides
- 1985 HELC provisions were established in 1985 Farm Bill
 - Remove incentives to produce commodities on Highly Erodible Land (HEL) unless it is protected from excessive soil erosion
 - Approved conservation system required to remain eligible for most federal farm program benefits.

2) Wind Erosion Concerns

- Wind erosion is a constant resource issue in Idaho on both irrigated and dryland acreages
- High prices, strong demand is putting increased pressure on land resources
- Loss of small farms; larger farming operations; increase of leased acreage, absent landowners, increased row crop production
- Unintended consequences with the conversion of surface irrigation to sprinkler: removal of ditch and fence line barrier's result in larger fields with a greater unsheltered distance
- Extensive eroded fields for which the originally mapped soil has change and thus original conservation system is no longer adequate to protect the soil
- Complacency - thinking we have the soil erosion problems under control
- Perceptions - blowing "dust" is a normal part of farming
- Reduced focus on Compliance - NRCS & FSA & Producers
- Changes in priorities as a result of increased farm bill program workload
- The 1996 Farm Bill reduced the number of required compliance reviews

3) Major crops in affected areas:

Spring Wheat (SW), Winter Wheat (WW), Alfalfa

Row Crops - Potato, Beet, Bean, Corn (grain, silage, sweet)

Crops Associated with the Highest Erosion Rates: Beets, Potato, Bean, SW, Late plant WW, SW

Common crop rotations currently used within the target areas.

N. Bingham, Bonneville (Osgood area), Jefferson (Mud Lake area), Fremont

Rotations: Potato/SW, Annual SW, some Potato/WW, Alfalfa Rotations

S. Bingham/N. Bannock - Fort Hall area

Rotations: Potato/WW, Potato/WW/WW

Power, S. Bingham

Rotations: Potato/WW, WW/potato/beets, Spring Wheat also in rotation

Magic Valley (Burley/Rupert)

Rotations: various combinations of SW, WW, potato, beet, bean, alfalfa

Common crop tillage systems used within the target areas.

- Potato, Beet, Bean – conventional (plows, subsoil, disk). In general there is very little residue after seedbed preparation and harvest.
Alfalfa – conventional for stand breakout
- Grain, Corn– reduced tillage (chisel, light disk). Generally varying amounts of residue maintained after harvest. Fall seedbed preparation for Beets and Beans leaves very little residue.
*recent years increasing use of strip tillage systems for beets and corn

4) Principal Occurrence of Erosion Events:

Typically erosion events will occur with:

- Conventional tillage
- Recreational, excessive tillage
- Fields with little or no residue or surface roughness for protection
- During low residue crop years (potato, beet, bean)
- Row Crop production on erodible soils (sands, sandy loams, silty clay & silt loams)
- High Erosion occurs in the Fall/Winter/Spring
 - After harvest of low residue crops (potato, beet, bean)
 - Conventional fall tillage without planting or field bedding
 - Late plant winter wheat, after Sept. 20th
- High Erosion occurs in the Spring
 - Spring Wheat following low residue crops
 - Beets, Beans with conventional tillage and minimal surface roughness

5) Alternatives that should be promoted and implemented to reduce the wind erosion

Practices with potential NRCS financial assistance:

- Cover Crops – utilize cover crops after low residue crops on potato ground
*Fremont County currently has a CIG grant to implement this, with good initial results
- Increased residue management/reduced tillage practices including strip till, no-till, mulch till with potato and direct seed corn into wheat stubble (Strip Till beets and corn is increasing in Magic Valley)
- Utilize more field strip-cropping and grass barrier strips (issues with pivots and chemicals)
- Conservation Crop Rotation - increase the amount of high residue producing crops in rotations that include beets, potato, bean (increased corn and alfalfa production to support the dairy industry has been a benefit for some areas of the Magic Valley)

Other practices and management:

- Re-emphasis on the reduction of soil erosion, both from a conservation and compliance perspective.
- Use early harvest potato on highly erodible soils. This facilitates early plant winter wheat
- Higher plant populations, closer rows – corn and beans
- Improved Residue Management – maintain previous crop residue with reduced cutting height, baling, chopping and straw removal and the increase use of mulch till and no-till.
- Reduce field width - field widths are actually increasing with the conversion of surface irrigation to sprinkler. Do not plant the same crop on adjacent pivots and fields
- Maintain field roughness until just prior to planting
- Supplement residue cover
 - Manure with straw, not dried compost
 - Straw with pinning/anchoring
- Emergency Tillage when needed, however it is only effective on heavier soils

Erosion Events Nov 2011 -Feb 2012



Figure 1. I-15 closure north of Idaho Falls, 1/19/12.



Figure 2. I-15 closure north of Idaho Falls, 1/19/12.



Figure 3. I-15 closure north of Idaho Falls, 1/19/12.



Figure 4. Mud Lake Area, Jefferson County, April 2012.

Erosion Events - Spring 2008



Figure 5. I-86 between Pocatello and American Falls, Spring 2008.



Figure 6. I-86 Pocatello to American Falls, access road between pivots, Spring 2008.



Figure 7. American Falls area, fall bedded potato with on field deposition from fall & spring, Spring 2008.



Figure 8. I-86 between Pocatello and American Falls, bedding during erosion event, Spring 2008.

Management and Practices



Figure 9. American Falls, late plant winter wheat after potato, 10/10/07, Spring 2008.



Figure 10. Winter Wheat mid field blow-out, late plant winter wheat after potato, Spring 2008, American Falls.



Figure 11. Early plant winter wheat, before September 20th, Spring 2008, Fort Hall Reservation.



Figure 12. Typical sugar beet field, Cassia County, Spring 2008

New Practices to SE Idaho – Limited Use



Figure 13. Cross Wind Grass Strips – Jefferson County.



Figure 14. Bedding potato into standing grain stubble, Minidoka County.

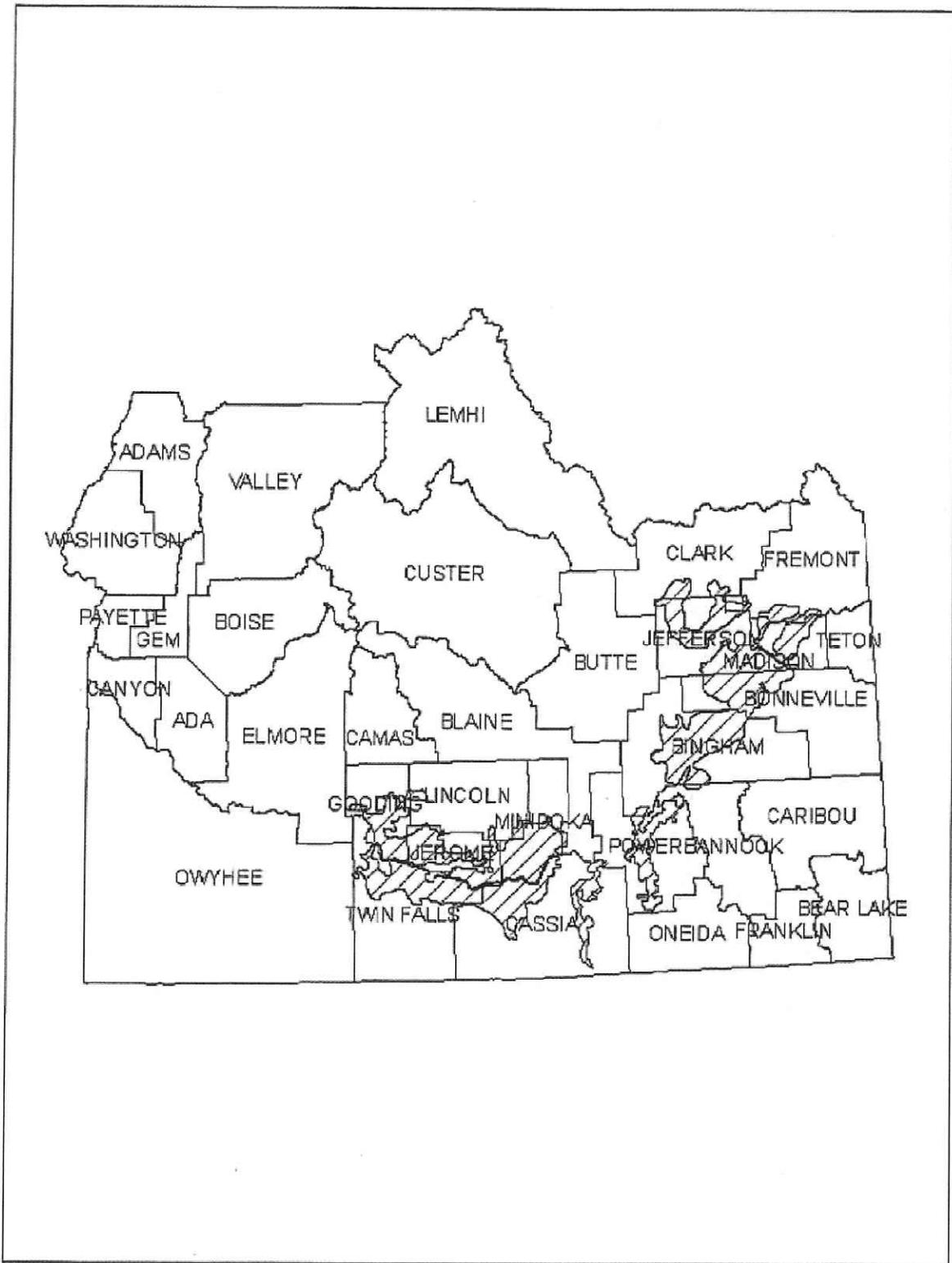


Figure 15. Strip till beets into corn stubble, Minidoka County.



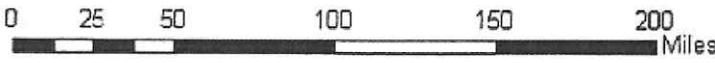
Figure 16. Barley cover crop, winter killed, Spring 2012, Fremont County.

Soil Erosion Priority Areas



Legend

-  Counties
-  Erosion Priority Areas



1:3,500,000



NASCA

RECEIVED

JAN - 4 2012

IDAHO SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MIKE BROWN

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MIKE-BROWN@NASCANET.ORG

302-535-1236

December 28, 2011

Kristin Magruder
Soil and Water Conservation Commission
PO Box 790
Boise, ID 83701

Dear NASCA State Representative:

Our members have discovered the value of their involvement with NASCA. Through exposure to their counterparts from around the country, the NASCA network makes contacts which facilitate information exchange for its membership. Through membership dues, our association is able to provide tools and resources using this network, enhancing a state's capacity to deliver conservation. This benefit alone is a tremendous return on a state's investment.

We want to ask you to support NASCA's efforts in two ways: one, financially, by submitting 2012 dues; and two, through your *participation*. Please contact me and discuss what the association is currently working on, and ways you can join us in addressing those issues. In the year ahead, our goal is to better serve your state's needs and be further engaged with conservation concerns relevant to our membership. All the best for 2012!

Sincerely,

Michael K. Brown

Please note

As of December 1, 2011, for cost and efficiency reasons, NASCA has combined its correspondence and remittance address to the following:

**NASCA
PO Box 211
Hartly, DE 19953**

If you need us to complete new vendor information, please call Sarah Hickling at 703-399-5594 or email her at sarah-hickling@nascanet.org. We apologize for any inconvenience.



May 31, 2012

Teri Murrison, Administrator
Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission
650 W. State Street, Room 145
Boise, Idaho 83720

Dear Teri:

Thank you for the opportunity to explain to you and your commissioners the benefits of membership with the National Association of State Conservation Agencies (NASCA). In these economic times it is wise to scrutinize costs, and I would agree that your commissioners should feel comfortable that NASCA dues represent a worthwhile investment of funds on Idaho's part.

NASCA concentrates on two primary areas of concern: member services and national conservation policy. We do not focus on these endeavors because we believe these things are easiest to market to potential dues-paying members. On the contrary, these have been identified as priorities by our members. Keep in mind that NASCA is not a consulting company, a trade group, or a marketing firm. This organization was created by State Conservation Agency officials who got together and saw the potential for collaboration across state lines. Thus, NASCA is simply a collection of you and your peers rather than an outside organization with something to sell.

For a number of years I was a NASCA member representing the State of Delaware. I quickly realized that NASCA provided me with the opportunity to gather with my colleagues from all over the country to share ideas, innovation, strategies, and data. This is extremely valuable and let me remind you that we have concentrated on opening up these interactions to our members' field staff personnel as well as the State Directors. For example, over the last five years at our Annual meetings we have provided special sessions dedicated specifically for field staff personnel to "show and tell" their most innovative programs from all over the country. Idaho's Kristin Magruder attended more than one of these programs and reported that they were extremely beneficial to her.

As important as our national and regional gatherings are, NASCA does not limit the opportunity for information exchange to only these venues. We also provide educational seminars and webinars throughout the year. For example, we recently hosted a webinar with presentations from ten different states on *Technical Training Programs for Conservation Personnel* on May 23. We have two more webinars scheduled prior to our annual meeting in September. The first is scheduled for July 12 and will focus on *District Core Competency and Structure*. The second is scheduled for August 14 and will examine *Conservation District Election Processes*.

NASCA will also provide specialized training and presentations upon request. At times we can find speakers for our members from nearby states that have a particular expertise in an area of interest. Also, when this expertise is not readily available from within a region, NASCA will make its Executive Director available to present on a variety of conservation delivery topics. For example, in the recent months I made these presentations on behalf of NASCA:

- Two day Conservation District Official training program in New Hampshire
- Presentation on *Sustainability and Conservation Innovation* for the Ohio River Basin Alliance in Tennessee
- Presentation on large scale conservation initiatives for the National Watershed Coalition in Oklahoma
- Presentation on potential roles of State Conservation Agencies in promoting native pollinator habitat through conservation practices in Michigan

In addition I am scheduled to provide a conservation delivery seminar for the NASCA Southeast Region meeting next month in Florida.

Although we spend considerable time and energy in providing formal training sessions around the country, we also recognize the need for our members to get immediate answers to questions from their peers in other states. We therefore developed and maintain *Ask NASCA*, an online tool that allows our members to seek information from NASCA members all over the country with the touch of a button. This tool is available on the NASCA website by visiting <http://www.nascanet.org/Index/asknasca.php>.

Another goal of our member services strategy is to provide tools that will help our members do a better job at their home agency. A good example is the District Official Training matrix we developed that is designed as a self-assessment tool for state conservation agencies to evaluate their district official training programs. The tool helps each State complete a thorough evaluation of its program in a matter of just a few hours. It points out strengths and weaknesses, and we have numerous examples of successful training programs from various states on the NASCA website to help states improve those areas where a weakness has been detected. The tool is available online at http://www.nascanet.org/Index/DO_Training_Checklist.php. The next big tool we

plan to develop is a template which will help states develop agricultural certainty programs more easily. Work on that project is scheduled to begin this summer.

I mentioned earlier that NASCA concentrates on national conservation policy as well as member services. We represent you at quarterly National Conservation Partnership meetings where we meet with NRCS Chief Dave White and key NRCS staffers, NACD President Gene Schmidt and CEO John Larson, NCDEA President Irene Moore and Executive Director Rich Dueterhaus, and NARC&DC President Olga Walter and Executive Director Andy Gordon. This has been a particularly busy year for us with the impending Farm Bill. NASCA has its own Farm Bill Committee and also has a representative on NACD's Farm Bill Task Force. Additionally, I represent NASCA as a member of the DC-based 2012 Farm Bill Conservation Coalition. I meet at a minimum on a monthly basis with NACD CEO John Larson and with NRCS Chief Dave White to discuss conservation delivery issues, all on behalf of our members.

Although this is an abbreviated summary of the services NASCA provides its membership, I hope you will agree with me that NASCA membership provides a litany of technology transfer opportunities as well as a direct conduit to some of the most important decision-makers in natural resource conservation policy at the federal level. We depend on member dues to operate, but we attempt to leverage every dollar we collect in dues with other funding sources such as grants and other contractual agreements. I hope that I have been able to demonstrate to you and your commission that payment of NASCA dues provides an excellent return on investment. If I may be of further assistance or can provide more information please contact me at (302)492-8881 or mike-brown@nascanet.org. Thank you for your support!

Very Truly Yours,



Michael K. Brown
NASCA Executive Director



Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission

650 W. State St., Room 145 • Boise Idaho 83702

Telephone: 208-332:1790 • Fax: 208-332:1799

www.swc.idaho.gov

ITEM #7

TO: Chairman Bronson and Commissioners Radford, Stutzman, Wright, and Trebesch
FROM: Teri Murrison, Administrator *lamo*
DATE: May 29, 2012
RE: Strategic Plan Update

As you know, an ad hoc advisory committee was convened in April to review staff edits and propose additional recommended edits and updates to the existing Strategic Plan. Your Board considered the recommendations and directed staff to circulate an updated draft Strategic Plan for conservation partner comments in May.

The deadline to submit comments for your consideration was Friday, May 25, 2012. Just one comment was received on the draft: from Commission staff member Karie Pappani.

A copy of the revised May 2nd updated draft is attached. Since there were only a few proposed changes, Ms. Pappani's comments are recorded on the attached as tracked changes.

Staff recommends that the attached Draft FY 2013-2016 Strategic Plan be approved (with an updated Message from the Chair).

ACTION: Approve updated FY 2013-2016 Strategic Plan Update

Attachments:

- Draft FY 2013-2016 Strategic Plan



IDAHO SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION



FY 2013-2016

DRAFT Strategic Plan

650 W. State Street, Rm. 145
Boise, Idaho 83701
208-332-1790
www.swc.idaho.gov

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Our shared history of conservation in Idaho is a long one: seven score and counting. Our tenure - no matter how long - will be short. We look to our predecessors for counsel and to the past to see how far we have come, but we live in the now and look forward to tomorrow.



Comment [AdvGrp1]: TO BE UPDATED

Formatted: Small caps

My grandfather farmed on the Minidoka Project and was so thrilled on the completion of Palisades Dam because he felt that water shortages would be a thing of the past. With the innovation of new sprinkler technology and the implementation of new farming techniques led by local soil and water conservation districts we have seen water use drop from over five acre feet per season to two and a half acre feet. Our production increased, runoff decreased, water use decreased and quality of life improved through wise conservation practices.

"There are two spiritual dangers in not owning a farm. One is the danger of supposing that breakfast comes from the grocery, and the other that heat comes from the furnace." (Leopold)

Moving ahead, partnerships with our districts and others are stronger than ever and our vision clear. The Soil and Water Conservation Commission is committed to locally-led, non-regulatory, and science-based solutions to the new challenges ahead.

Forging stronger relationships, seeking new partners, and employing innovative ideas - just as our predecessors did - will insure a bountiful future.

What we do together today insures healthy, vibrant soils, clean water, and an improved quality of life for generations of future Idahoans.

Dick Bronson

INTRODUCTION

The Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission (the Conservation Commission) was established by the legislature in 1939 to address soil erosion concerns associated with the Dust Bowl Catastrophe of the 1930's. Since then, the Conservation Commission has evolved into a leader for voluntary natural resource conservation in Idaho with the responsibility to facilitate locally-led conservation planning and implementation activities statewide.

KEY EXTERNAL FACTORS

There are key external factors that could affect the agency's ability to meet goals and objectives. They include:

- State and federal regulatory pressure and mandates that could shift priorities and resources away from current activities
- Changing economics of agriculture, which could result in significant increases or decreases in conservation program participation
- Changing economics of state and federal budgets, which could result in additional agency cuts or fewer conservation dollars being spent in the state

VISION

Conservation in Idaho reflects locally-led natural resource conservation leadership and priorities, is voluntary and incentive-based, non-regulatory, and demonstrates scientifically sound stewardship. The Conservation Commission and local conservation districts are the primary entities to lead coordinated conservation efforts to provide landowners and land-users with assistance and solutions for natural resource concerns and issues.

MISSION

To facilitate coordinated non-regulatory, voluntary, and locally-led conservation by federal, state, and local governments including Idaho's conservation districts and other partners to conserve, sustain, improve, and enhance soil, water, air, plant, and animal resources.

PHILOSOPHY

The Conservation Commission is dedicated to guiding principles for each goal and related activity.

- Satisfy legislative intent and statute
- Benefit the environment and Idaho's agricultural-based economy
- Benefit conservation districts' locally led, voluntary, non-regulatory priorities and projects
- Benefit the Commission's ability to serve
- Promote fiscal responsibility
- Strengthen existing and build new conservation partnerships
- Incorporate valid scientific data and practices

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL #1: TECHNICAL AND OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES

The Conservation Commission provides leadership and assistance to local conservation districts as established in Title 22 Chapter 27, Idaho Code.

OBJECTIVE # 1.1: DISTRICT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

Develop and implement ongoing process for allocating available staff time to provide specific and other technical assistance to districts as resources permit – technical services also include some current and future grant and project obligations consistent with Conservation Commission priorities and objectives. Support services may include:

Specialized Technical Assistance is defined as: That technical assistance used to support districts in the wise use and enhancement of natural resources which can only be provided by someone possessing a specialized, science-based skill set and an ability to integrate local knowledge of the site-specific interactions between environmental, economic, cultural and social concerns into the assistance provided.

Examples of Specialized Technical Assistance may include but are not limited to:

- Conservation planning
- Engineering services
- Project implementation and construction inspections
- BMP effectiveness monitoring
- Watershed planning and riparian assessments

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Provide technical assistance and engineering services as capacity and resources allow.
 - Benchmark: Inventory and award available field staff hours to provide technical and engineering assistance based on ranking criteria adopted by Conservation Commission to assist districts with new and existing project and maximize number of landowners served.
 - Benchmark: field staff presence at district Board meetings as resources allow
- Initiate Conservation Commission, district, region, IASCD, and partner technical assistance needs assessment and capacity inventories.
 - Benchmark: Oversee planning for Conservation Commission staffing, preparation of annual agency work plan, maintain technical assistance capacity inventory.
- Convene ad hoc stakeholder workgroup(s) to rank and recommend provision of technical assistance to districts.
 - Benchmark: Utilize workgroup to annually compile list of recommended ranked and prioritized district requests for technical assistance.
 - Benchmark: Document provision of district technical assistance in annual performance measures report.

OBJECTIVE # 1.2: DISTRICT ALLOCATIONS.

Distribute district allocations pursuant to Idaho Code 22-2727 and IDAPA 60.05.04 Rules for Allocation of Funds to Conservation Districts (annually).

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Distribute base allocations to districts in compliance with reporting requirements set forth in IDAPA 60.05.04.
 - Benchmark: Distribute base allocations by July 31st of each year.
- Convene workgroup annually to review Financial & Match Reports and make recommendation to Conservation Commission.
 - Benchmark: Receive recommendations for district allocations from workgroup by October 15th annually.
- Distribute match allocations to districts in compliance with reporting requirements set forth in IDAPA 60.05.04.
 - Benchmark: Distribute 90% of match allocations no later than October 31st annually. Distribute remaining 10% by April 1st annually.
- Provide assistance to districts to support the development and submission of materials required under IDAPA 60.05.04.
 - Benchmark: As needed, assist with or provide training to districts.

OBJECTIVE # 1.3: COMPREHENSIVE DISTRICT SERVICES.

Assist and provide services that encourage capacity development to independently and collectively strengthen districts.

Comprehensive District Assistance is defined as:

That assistance which supports the independent and collective strengthening of conservation districts by: a) providing services which expand resources or otherwise enhance district capacity to assist private landowners and land users in the conservation, sustainment, improvement and enhancement of Idaho's natural resources, or; b) providing assistance required to support routine district activities or projects.

Examples of comprehensive assistance may include but are not limited to:

- District secretarial and accounting tasks
- District information and outreach activities
- Administration of district-sponsored cost-share programs
- Development of a district needs assessment
- Grant writing assistance
- Development of 5-year and annual work plans

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Identify and document unmet district project and program funding needs as identified and prioritized in 5-year and other district plans.
 - Benchmark: Conduct district budget hearing by June 15th annually.
- Provide capacity building services and/or funding to districts as resources allow.
 - Benchmark: If funds are available, by June 15th of each year solicit district requests for funding for capacity building activities.

GOAL #2: CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

OBJECTIVE # 2.1: INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

Provide and promote non-regulatory, science-based incentive programs to accelerate the development of conservation projects and practices throughout the state.

2.1.1 RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND RANGELAND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (RCRDP).

Administer and further develop the loan program to provide increased conservation benefits to agricultural, woodlands, and rangelands within the state and provide financial assistance to eligible applicants for the implementation of resource management projects.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Administer and further develop the loan program to meet statewide conservation efforts.
 - Benchmark: Maintain or improve annual levels of funding.
- Monitor and evaluate loan policies on ongoing basis to ensure continued accountability and recommend improvements, if necessary.
 - Benchmark: Annual evaluation of loan policies by RCRDP Loan Committee.
- Monitor timeliness of loan review process as established by Conservation Commission.
 - Benchmark: Conduct bi-annual tracking of two loan applications and report results to Conservation Commission.
- Promote RCRDP program.
 - Benchmark: Develop and update marketing plan annually.
 - Benchmark: Provide training to all field staff and districts as identified in Marketing Plan.
- Implement district compensation process and payments for services provided to loan programs
 - Benchmark: Present recommendation for district compensation to participate in the loan program.

2.1.2 STATE REVOLVING FUND

Upon request, assist the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) with their water quality loan program addressing non-point source pollution.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Administer existing and/or future loans.
 - Benchmark: Service and track one loan.
- Determine potential to administer additional loans under SRF.
 - Benchmark: Report to Conservation Commission on potential for future program funding, and pursue if appropriate.
- Provide information on SRF as an alternative for \$319 grants.
 - Benchmark: Assist districts in identifying opportunities to partner with local SRF loan recipients to fund qualifying \$319 grant applicants in accordance with protocols for funding nonpoint source projects as established by DEQ.

2.1.3 CONSERVATION IMPROVEMENT GRANTS.

This currently unfunded program has financed conservation projects in the past by providing cost sharing for the installation of conservation practices. Evaluate feasibility of continuing program.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Evaluate future funding and operation and actively pursue, if appropriate.
 - Benchmark: Report to Conservation Commission on potential for future funding and operation and actively pursue, if appropriate.

2.1.4 WORKING LANDSCAPES CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Evaluate feasibility of outcomes-based program as an alternative to permanent conservation easements and that provides incentives for landowners to conserve working landscapes, viewsheds, and other beneficial uses of lands and natural resources.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Evaluate feasibility of establishing a Working Landscapes Conservation Program.
 - Benchmark: Report on status of similar projects and identify possible funding sources.

2.1.5 WATER QUALITY PROGRAM FOR AGRICULTURE (WQPA)

Evaluate feasibility of continuing program and actively pursue funding opportunities as identified.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Evaluate future funding and operation and actively pursue, if appropriate.
 - Benchmark: Report on potential for future program funding, and pursue if appropriate.

OBJECTIVE # 2.2: CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

Provide policy and program mechanisms that enhance the environmental quality and economic productivity of the state.

2.2.1 CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (CREP).

Provide technical leadership and oversight to improve water quantity and quality, enhance wildlife habitat, reduce groundwater use, and decrease agriculture-related chemical and sediment runoff to the waters of the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Serve as lead agency for statewide CREP program.
 - Benchmark: Achieve goals and objectives for the CREP program as outlined in the 2006 agreement with the USDA Farm Service Agency.
 - Benchmark: Meet increased program goals as outlined in CREP 2011 annual report
 - Benchmark: Update agency's CREP goals and create implementation plan
 - Benchmark: Investigate feasibility of enhancing Idaho OnePlan for interagency CREP data sharing and reporting.

- Benchmark: Submit annual report to Farm Service Agency and other partners.
- Benchmark: Conduct annual leadership and regular interagency meetings.

2.2.2 TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS (TMDL) IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING.

The Conservation Commission is the designated lead agency for agricultural and grazing components of TMDL Implementation Plan development for water quality impaired surface waters in the state.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- In coordination with the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), complete existing TMDL Agricultural Implementation Plans, initiate new plans or addendums, and assist with five-year reviews on existing DEQ Subbasin Assessment (SBA) TMDLs Plans.
 - Benchmark: Complete TMDL Agricultural Implementation Plans within 18 months of TMDL approval.
 - Benchmark: Provide technical assistance to districts with demonstrated need for implementation phase of BMPs outlined in TMDL agricultural implementation plans, ~~to districts with demonstrated need~~ as resources allow.
 - Benchmark: Support partner priorities and funding initiatives as resources allow.
 - Benchmark: Conduct annual meetings with six DEQ regional offices to coordinate TMDL activities.

2.2.3 IDAHO GROUNDWATER QUALITY PLAN.

Facilitate cooperative groundwater protection programs in conjunction with other state agencies pursuant to a 2008 Interagency Cooperative Agreement. Promote and support implementation of water quality projects across the state to reduce nitrate, phosphorus, and sediment loads.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Assist districts with demonstrated need in planning and implementation efforts in Nitrate Priority Areas to ~~impact reductions in nitrate, phosphorus, and sediment as designated by DEQ~~ reduce nitrate contamination, as resources allow.
 - Benchmark: Conduct planning and implementation to meet responsibilities as outlined in the Cooperative Agreement and in coordination with the Idaho Agricultural Pollution Abatement Plan.
 - Benchmark: Deliver quarterly reports to NRCS on progress.

2.2.4 IDAHO AGRICULTURAL POLLUTION ABATEMENT PLAN.

Lead effort to maintain guidance document in support of control and abatement of agricultural non-point source pollution.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Maintain guidance documents in support of the control and abatement of agricultural non-point source pollution as resources allow.

- Benchmark: Research feasibility of updating the Ag Plan and related Best Management Practices (BMP) Effectiveness Guide and report findings.
- Benchmark: Provide training to staff on BMP Effectiveness Guide.
- Benchmark: Convene BMP working group as needed.

2.2.5 IDAHO ONEPLAN.

Provide for the establishment and enhancement of Idaho OnePlan as a primary computer-based conservation planning process and repository for natural resource concerns.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Encourage and promote the use of OnePlan within Idaho.
 - Benchmark: Conduct annual Executive Committee meeting
- Seek funding to create online enhancements.
 - Benchmark: Report on potential for enhancements, ongoing funding, and operation.
 - Benchmark: Propose update to statute for specific requirements for steering committee, etc. and ensure flexibility for continued participation and funding.

2.2.6 CARBON SEQUESTRATION.

Under Idaho statute, Conservation Commission is the lead agency for a currently inactive program related to carbon sequestration and greenhouse emission reductions associated with agricultural and forestry practices, management systems, and land uses occurring on cropland, forest land, and rangeland in Idaho.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Seek to identify potential funding sources.
 - Benchmark: Monitor ongoing carbon issues and determine feasibility of and funding for re-activating program.
 - Benchmark: Evaluate and consider proposing changes to Idaho Code to delete specific requirements for committee meetings and membership or reconvene planning group upon securing funding for program.

2.2.7 WATERSHED IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS.

Oversee the creation and discontinuance of watershed improvement districts throughout the state.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Oversee creation and discontinuance of watershed improvement districts as provided for in statute.
 - Benchmark: As necessary, perform duties specified in statute for formation and dissolution of districts.

GOAL #3: COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

Inform partners, local, state and federal agency officials and others about the Conservation Commission's mission. Develop beneficial intergovernmental and other relationships to maximize

resources, funding, and streamline conservation delivery that is consistent with locally led, voluntary, and non-regulatory conservation plans and policies and harmonizes with regulatory efforts in an effort to meet statewide conservation goals.

OBJECTIVE 3.1 PARTNER PARTICIPATION

Engage districts and other partners in programs and activities. Seek to expand involvement in consideration and decision making. Disseminate information about services and activities of the Conservation Commission, encourage and increase district and public knowledge and participation in activities and processes.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Increase Conservation Commission transparency through greater public access.
 - Benchmark: Post online agendas, supporting documentation, and meeting minutes for Conservation Commission meetings
 - Benchmark: Where feasible, utilize live online video streaming and interactive stakeholder participation to increase district and public participation in meetings and processes.
- Disseminate information to encourage partner participation in planning processes.
 - Benchmark: Distribute meeting and activities announcements to our audience using Commission website, distribution lists, and social media accounts.

OBJECTIVE 3.2 INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Inform and educate the public, partners, and others on Conservation Commission activities. Work with IASCD and the districts to publicize the successes of locally led voluntary, non-regulatory conservation efforts in Idaho.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Update Legislature and Executive Branch
 - Benchmark: Deliver annual reports to legislature germane committees, JFAC.
 - Benchmark: Deliver annual reports (performance measurements, etc.) to Governor
- Develop strategy for educating the public and other stakeholders about Conservation Commission activities.
 - Benchmark: Prepare and implement communication plan.
 - Benchmark: Conduct district and partner survey.
 - Benchmark: Maintain frequently weekly updated Facebook pages and posts on Twitter.
- Facilitate flow of information and communication with staff.
 - Benchmark: Distribute monthly activities summary/talking points to staff
 - Benchmark: Hold annual All Staff meeting

OBJECTIVE 3.3 INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

Facilitate non-regulatory, voluntary, and locally-led conservation activities by and between local, state, and federal governments.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Work with partners
 - Benchmark: Attend district meetings as resources allow
 - Benchmark: Coordinate with NRCS State Engineer on approval authority issues; propose changes to Standards and Specifications.
 - Benchmark: Work with other state agencies regarding technical assistance and engineering on TMDLs, WQPA, RCRDP, Ground Water Priority Areas, etc.
- Participate in natural resource groups and processes to focus attention on the roles, policies, and plans of the Conservation Commission and districts to attract partners and resources.
 - Benchmark: Attend Environmental Forum and other similar meetings monthly.
- Review federal, state, and local policies that are determined to impact the Conservation Commission and/or districts; review proposed and adopted plans, programs, environmental documents, activities and initiatives affecting conservation efforts.
 - Benchmark: Convene advisory group as needed.
 - Benchmark: Develop policies as needed.

OBJECTIVE 3.4 COLLABORATION

Collaborate with stakeholders to conserve, sustain, improve, and enhance Idaho's private and public lands.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Collaborate with stakeholders including the Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts (IASCD), the Idaho District Employees Association (IDEA) to advance on the ground conservation in Idaho.
 - Benchmark: Attend IASCD meetings including: annual conference, spring and fall division meetings, and Board meetings, as requested.
 - Benchmark: Conduct annual district listening session to solicit input from partners.
- Collaborate with IDEA to advance and promote district employee training opportunities.
 - Benchmark: Assist IDEA with employee training opportunities, as requested.
- Collaborate with resource and agricultural production groups to disseminate information on Conservation Commission activities and conservation planning and implementation activities.
 - Benchmark: Attend other association meetings including Food Producers meetings weekly during legislative session.
- Participate in, speak at, and attend field trips and tours, annual conferences, attend meetings, conferences, and other functions to represent the Conservation Commission and promote good stewardship of Idaho's natural resources.
 - Benchmark: Attend events as appropriate and present as requested.



Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission

C. L. "Butch" Otter, Governor

Richard "Dick" Bronson, Chairman

David Radford, Vice Chair

Roger Stutzman, Secretary

Gerald Trebesch, Member

H. Norman Wright, Member

Teri Murrison, Administrator

650 West State Street, Room 145

Boise, Idaho 83702

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ITEM #8

TO: Chairman Bronson and Commissioners Radford, Stutzman, Wright, and Trebesch
FROM: Teri Murrison, Administrator *tan*
DATE: May 30, 2012
RE: Continuation of District Budget Hearing

At your last meeting, the Commission conducted a hearing to consider the needs of the soil conservation districts based on district budgets, budget requests, district programs and work plans. The goals were to document unmet natural resource needs (projects and/or programs) based on districts' 5-year and annual work plans, and to continue last year's capacity building grants to districts. At last year's budget hearing, the Commission considered requests for funding from districts without distinguishing between project and capacity building requests. This year the budget hearing delineated between the two.

The deadline to submit both unmet needs and capacity building requests was April 24, 2012 for purposes of conducting the hearing and districts were also given the option to present their unmet needs at the hearing. After the hearing, the Camas District submitted Project/Program Priorities (see attached) and requested theirs be included in the previously considered prioritized unmet needs list. The District is currently without an administrative assistant and staff recommends that since they did not submit a request for capacity building funds theirs be included. An updated summary of Prioritized Unmet Project/Program Needs is as follows:

PART 1 – PRIORITIZED DISTRICT UNMET PROJECT/PROGRAM NEEDS

There were 26 districts that submitted a total of 63 funding needs ranked in order of district priority. Project and program needs were diverse and ranged from equipment needs to cost-share assistance for landowners:

<u>Updated Unmet District Needs Documented</u>	<u>\$ 5,303,335</u>
Priority 1 Total:	\$ 1,644,825
Priority 2 Total:	\$ 3,183,610
Priority 3 Total:	\$ 474,900



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PART 2 – CAPACITY BUILDING REQUESTS

A total of \$50,000 is available to be distributed for education and outreach related purposes (capacity building) in FY 2013. There were 40 districts that submitted requests for up to \$1,000 prior to or at your hearing on May 2nd and Commissioners approved those requests. The Commission awarded additional Capacity Building funds as follows:

State Forestry Contest	\$ 500
Grazing Conference	\$ 1,000
Ag Symposium	\$ 1,000
Grant writing training	\$ 3,180
<u>Online Software training</u>	<u>\$ 2,250</u>
Subtotal	\$ 7,930

Balance \$ 2,070

Bear Lake	\$ 600
<u>Gooding</u>	<u>\$ 240</u>
Total Remaining	\$ 1,230

Franklin District request for additional funding Franklin's project was not initially recommended for funding in the staff report during the hearing. Their funding request was originally included on the Project/Program Priorities work sheet, however the District requested the Commission consider awarding additional funding to them if there were funds left over. Your direction to staff during the hearing was to obtain more info on Franklin District's request and make a recommendation on awarding the remaining funds.

Further details for consideration about this project are as follows:

- Franklin received a source water protection grant that was designed to bring 14 community water systems together as a coalition
- DEQ requires these water communities to collect regular water samples
- The person designated to collect water samples is required to have specialized training in accordance with DEQ standards
- These water communities have small staff and do not have the resources to collect the water samples by DEQ quality standards
- As a part of this coalition, Franklin desires to send one of their technical staff to this specialized training and provide services to the water communities to collect the water samples

Staff doesn't recommend funding the District's request for additional funding. The training is highly specialized and is not likely to benefit other districts or beyond this coalition project. Capacity building grants are meant to have a large impact and this training impacts a small, specialized population.



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Should the Commission not act to fund Franklin's request, there are approximately \$1,230 dollars remaining for distribution. Staff recommends that remaining funds be awarded to the Bonner District to cover additional costs associated with outreach and education efforts related to the Forestry Contest given its statewide and significant educational benefits.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Include Camas District's Project/Program Priorities in Unmet District Needs consideration and award remaining funds to the Bonner District for outreach and education efforts related to the 2013 Forestry Contest.

Attachments:

- Camas District Project/Program Priorities

2012 District Budget Hearing: Project/Program Needs Worksheet for FY 2014 Budget Request

District: CAMAS SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Address: PO Box 156
Soldier Road, Fairfield Idaho 83327

Phone: 208-764-3223

E-mail: camasscd@yahoo.com

Contact: Steve Miller – Chairman (smiller@safelink.net)

PART 1: Project/Program Priorities

Project/Program Title: Soldier Creek Riparian enhancement and Urban development	
<i>Description of Project/Program:</i> Stabilize, enhance and expand the riparian condition on Soldier Creek one mile north of Fairfield utilizing fencing, vegetative seeding and trails to encourage urban use and education activities coordinated with the "Man-Made park project".	
<i>Project/Program Timeline:</i> 2013 -2014	<i>Priority:</i> 1
<i>Resource Concern(s) Addressed:</i> Development of a Plan of work, procure easement from landowner, identify scope of resource concerns including grazing, bank stabilization, vegetative demonstration plantings and walk-path development.	
<i>Funding Sources (list all sources):</i>	
<i>Federal:</i>	\$0
<i>State:</i>	8500.00
<i>District: Camas SCD.</i>	1500.00
<i>Other: (Northwest Farm Credit) Grant</i>	15000.00
<i>Notes: fencing - \$10,000.00, Bank Barbs/riprap - \$12,000.00, vegetative - \$2,000.00, Trail - \$1,000.00.</i>	
TOTAL FUNDS REQUESTED:	\$25,000.00

Project/Program Title: Native Nursery	
<i>Description of Project/Program:</i> Establish a native vegetative nursery operation for the propagation of plant materials native to the Prairie ecosystem. Production of upland shrubs as well as riparian vegetation would be the goal utilizing field plantings and a greenhouse operation.	
<i>Project/Program Timeline:</i> Spring 2014 -2016	<i>Priority:</i> 2
<i>Resource Concern(s) Addressed:</i> Provide a local source of vegetative material for environmental needs and fire rehabilitation.	
<i>Funding Sources (list all sources):</i>	

<i>Federal: NRCS / Design & Planning</i>	\$2000.00
<i>State and Grants:</i>	\$25000.00
<i>District: Camas - Supervisors time & management</i>	\$2500.00
<i>Other: Fairfield High School Students -</i>	\$500.00
<i>Notes: The Camas SCD will proceed with land acquisition and development of educational program within the School FFA instructors and students.</i>	
TOTAL FUNDS REQUESTED:	\$30,000.00

Project/Program Title: Mormon / Twin Lakes Reservoir	
<i>Description of Project/Program:</i> <i>Develop a reclamation project to restore and expand the functionality of Mormon reservoir for irrigation storage and enhanced fisheries.</i>	
<i>Project/Program Timeline: Spring 2014 -2017</i>	<i>Priority: 3</i>
<i>Resource Concern(s) Addressed:</i> <i>Resource concerns include large transport losses in delivery canals close to the dam and aquatic weed invasion creating a loss of access and increased fish mortality.</i>	
<i>Funding Sources (list all sources):</i>	
<i>Federal: NRCS/ Presentation</i>	\$100000.00
<i>State: CC Weed Management Area</i>	\$25000.00
<i>District: Camas SCD time / publication</i>	\$1500.00
<i>Other: IDFG & MVFlyFisherman</i>	\$2250.00
<i>Notes: Landowner irrigator match to NRCS contribution expected.</i>	
TOTAL FUNDS REQUESTED:	\$128,750.00



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ITEM #9

To: Commissioners Bronson, Trebesch, Radford, Wright, and Stutzman
From: Teri Murrison, Administrator *tan*
Date: May 28, 2012
Re: Election Law Revisions – Idaho Code 22-2721

During the 2012 legislative session, the Secretary of State's office made some procedural revisions to the election statute pertaining to local conservation districts. The revisions were not substantive in nature, but intended to correct deficiencies not addressed in election consolidation law revisions during the 2011 legislative session.

The 2011 election consolidation law was intended to make all election procedures consistent for all special districts across the state. The 2012 revisions remove redundancies requiring county clerks and the district/commission to do the same activity and direct that election activities of the conservation districts be consistent with other special districts across the state.

The full act can be viewed online at <http://legislature.idaho.gov/legislation/2012/H0572.pdf> and the following is a highlight of the revisions:

22-2721 – ELECTION, APPOINTMENT, QUALIFICATIONS AND TENURE OF SUPERVISORS

Subsection (1):

- The appointing authority for the two new supervisors added when changing from a five-member board to a seven-member board is now the district rather than the commission.

Subsection (2):

- Directs the county clerk to conduct elections in compliance with chapter 14, title 34, Idaho Code to be consistent with all election-related statutes.
- Requires filing the nominating petitions with the secretary of the district.
- Deletes the provision requiring that the commission pay for all election expenses.

Subsection (3):

- Provides that the county clerk shall certify the names of the elected supervisors to the districts instead of the commission.
- Directs the district to issue the certificates of election to each elected supervisor.

Subsection (4):

- After the board of supervisors declares an uncontested candidate elected, the district (instead of the Commission) shall prepare and deliver the certificate of election to the supervisors.

Subsection (5):

- After the board of supervisors names a successor to a vacancy, the district (instead of the Commission) shall issue a certificate of appointment.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR EACH DISTRICT

- The county clerk (election official) will certify the names of elected supervisors to the district.
- After the election, the district will issue the certificate of election.
- After appointing a supervisor to a vacancy, the district will issue a certificate of appointment.



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- After an election or appointment, the district should notify the commission of the board member's name (and contact information if a new member, please).



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ITEM #10

TO: Chairman Bronson and Commissioners Radford, Stutzman, Wright, and Trebesch
FROM: Delwyne Trefz, District Support Services Specialist
DATE: May 30, 2012
RE: Technical Assistance Work Group Update

Since your last meeting, the Technical Assistance Work Group (WG) has met two times to consider criteria which may be useful in evaluating district requests for commission assistance (see meeting notes, attached).

During the May 15th meeting the WG agreed upon the relative weight which should be given to each criterion used to rank requests for comprehensive district assistance and during the May 22nd meeting relative weights were assigned to criteria used to rank requests for specialized technical assistance.

While acknowledging that the procedures for allocating commission resources to districts will need to be reviewed periodically in order to ensure that they are in fact facilitating the equitable allocation of assistance, the WG agrees that the criteria and weights they have developed represent a workable process for evaluating district requests for assistance.

ACTION: For information only

Attachments:

Copies of TAWG meeting minutes from May

MAY 15, 2012 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WG TELECONFERENCE RECAP

The TAWG met via teleconference on Tuesday, May 15, 2012, from 8:00-9:00 a.m. Mtn. time.

Work Group Members Participating:

Bret Rumbeck*

Karma Bragg*

Teri Murrison

Chuck Pentzer

Delwyne Trefz

Dick Bronson

Billie Brown*

Kyle Wilson*

(* denotes voting member)

Review and discussion of the relative weight that should be assigned to each of the criteria used to evaluate comprehensive district assistance:

The WG reviewed the list of draft criteria and weights which had been distributed prior to the meeting. Also discussed were suggestions submitted via e-mail by Matt Woodard, who was not able to call in due to other commitments.

While acknowledging that the procedures for allocating commission resources to districts will need to be reviewed periodically in order to ensure that they are in fact facilitating the equitable allocation of assistance, the WG agreed that the criteria and weights listed below represent a reasonable starting point.

I have added notes regarding how evaluators might look at a request for assistance in respect to these criteria.

Draft Criteria for Evaluating Requests for Comprehensive District Assistance:

- 1) **Does the proposed activity address a priority identified within the district's 5-year or annual work plan?**

Weight: 18

This criterion is weighted high because it is important that districts make progress towards achieving the goals they have established in their five-year and annual work plans. This is important because it demonstrates to area landowners and land users, conservation partners, local and state level decision makers and others that the district is maintaining its focus on local priorities.

If the WG chooses to assign a sliding weight to this criterion, we might consider awarding 18 points to an activity which addresses one district priority and an additional number of points—maybe 6—for each additional 5-year or annual work plan priority addressed by the project. For example, a district requests assistance with a project which will implement range management practices. By fencing a TMDL creek, constructing cross fences to facilitate prescribed grazing, developing a spring and installing a trough the activity will address the rangeland priority in the

district's 5-year plan which lists as an objective: "Promote and implement grazing management plans with owners and users", so the request for assistance would be awarded 18 ranking points. In addition, because the BMPs will contribute towards improving water quality, the district's water quality priority—"Lead community efforts to improve water quality in TMDL streams"—is also being addressed, and so the request would be awarded an additional 6 ranking points. And, because another priority in the district's 5-year plan is "Enhancing habitat for fish and wildlife", which is certainly accomplished by fencing riparian zones and developing off-site watering facilities, the request receives another 6 ranking points, for a total of 30 points awarded based on criterion 1.

- 2) Has the district provided documentation of support for the proposed activity, including: a) letters in support of the proposed activity from landowners and producers within the project area, and; b) letters in support of the proposed activity from entities which will be contributing resources towards achieving activity objectives?**

Weight: 18

This criterion is weighted high because local stake-holder buy-in is critical to the success of an activity. For projects dependent upon financial, technical, or other forms of support from entities other than SWC, it is important that SWC be provided a written commitment of those resources before committing resources of its own to the project.

- 3) Have the necessary steps been taken to ensure that the district will be able to utilize the assistance being requested within the time-frame indicated in the request for assistance?**

Weight: 15

This is important in order to ensure that the benefits of the SWC assistance allocated to a project will actually be realized, and to ensure the efficient scheduling of SWC resources to projects around the state, i.e., to enable us to have the right people in the right places at the right times to get the biggest bang out of every buck.

What we would be looking for here would be verification that all necessary preparatory work had been accomplished. For example, all required permits had been issued (IDWR, BOR, USCOE, etc., as applicable), contractors were available to complete work, and so forth.

- 4) Will the requested assistance be used to enhance district capacity by developing tools, strategies and successes which the district will be able to use to independently implement future projects?**

Weight: 12

The WG believes that activities which contribute towards building district capacity should be ranked relatively high as increased capacity is the key to long-term district sustainability.

- 5) Is the assistance required for use as either in-kind or hard match in order to enable the district to qualify for a specific grant or cost-share program opportunity?**

Weight: 1-12

The WG favors assigning a sliding weight to this criterion with relatively greater weight being given to projects which absolutely require SWC assistance in order to qualify for grant or other funding without which the project will not be possible.

- 6) Has the district provided evidence of having researched the availability of district, division, IASCD, IDEA or other resources which may be available to meet their need?**

Weight: 9

The WG agrees that it is important that districts explore any and all potential sources of assistance. This criterion awards ranking points based on evidence of the district's efforts in this regard, not on whether the district has been able to secure commitments of resources or assistance.

- 7) Has the district received activity- or project-specific comprehensive or specialized technical assistance from SWC within the last three years?**

Weight: 5

A "no" answer to this question will result in the request being awarded 5 ranking points, while a "yes" answer results in 0 ranking points. This criterion is intended to help ensure that SWC assistance is awarded equitably over time.

- 8) If the answer to question 7 is "yes", were the objectives of the activity or project which SWC provided assistance for achieved in a timely fashion?**

Weight: 1-4

This criterion provides a mechanism by which most of the ranking points lost due to a district having received SWC assistance in the recent past can be regained. The use of a sliding weight is recommended as a concession to the fact that in the real world even the best planned conservation activity may be thrown off-schedule due to factors over which the district has absolutely no control, e.g., weather or other environmental events and geo-political incidents.

MAY 22, 2012 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WG TELECONFERENCE RECAP

The TAWG met via teleconference on Tuesday, May 22, 2012, from 8:00-9:00 a.m. Mtn. time.

Work Group Members Participating:

Bret Rumbeck*

Karma Bragg*

Chuck Pentzer

Delwyne Trefz

Billie Brown*

Kyle Wilson*

Terry Halbert*

Terry Lebrecht*

(* denotes voting member)

Review and discussion of the relative weight that should be assigned to each of the criteria used to evaluate requests for specialized technical assistance:

During previous meetings the WG developed a list of criteria which could be used to evaluate requests for specialized technical assistance. A draft of this list which included suggested relative weights for each criterion was provided to the WG for their review prior to the May 22nd meeting.

The WG spent considerable time discussing how to ensure that the process we develop is objective enough to provide a high level of transparency while at the same time being subjective enough to allow the commission to exercise their decision-making authority. Transparency is important to assure districts that SWC assistance is being allocated fairly across the state. At the same time the WG recognizes that some level of subjectivity is important in order to enable the commission to apply its state-wide perspective to the decision making process.

The specific criterion which the WG gave a great deal of consideration to is number 6 in the list below. Some on the WG felt strongly that regardless of the weight assigned to this criterion ranking points should be awarded to a request on an all-or-nothing basis. Others felt that the weight assigned to this criterion should be a range, which would result in the number of ranking points awarded to a district needs request being dependent upon a somewhat subjective evaluation by the ranking committee.

Acknowledging that the procedures for allocating commission resources to districts will need to be reviewed periodically in order to ensure that they are in fact facilitating the equitable allocation of assistance, the WG suggest that the criteria and weights listed below represent a workable process for evaluating district requests for specialized TA.

Draft Criteria for Evaluating Requests for Specialized Technical Assistance:

- 1) Does the proposed activity address a natural resources conservation priority identified in the conservation district's 5-year or annual work plan?

Weight: 12

- 2) Has the district provided documentation of support for the proposed activity, including: a) letters in support of the proposed activity from landowners and producers within the project

area, and; b) letters in support of the proposed activity from entities which will be contributing resources towards project implementation?

Weight: 12

- 3) Have the necessary steps been taken to ensure that the district will be able to utilize the assistance being requested within the time-frame indicated in the request for assistance?

Weight: 11

- 4) Has the conservation district identified adequate resources to ensure that the objectives of the proposed project will be achieved?

Weight: 11

- 5) Has the district requesting assistance received activity- or project-specific comprehensive or specialized technical assistance from SWC within the last three years?

Weight: 11

- 6) If the answer to question 5 is "yes", were the objectives of the activity or project which SWC provided assistance for achieved in a timely fashion?

Weight: 1-10

- 7) Is the requested assistance necessary in order to address an urgent or emergency need?

Weight: 10

- 8) Will the proposed project deliver quantifiable natural resources benefits?

Weight: 8

- 9) Does the proposed project address the need for on-going operations and maintenance of the planned practices in order to ensure that conservation benefits are sustainable over time?

Weight: 7

- 10) Is the assistance required for use as either in-kind or hard match in order to enable the district to qualify for a specific grant or cost-share program opportunity?

Weight: 5

- 11) Will the requested specialized technical assistance help the district to develop a plan for a potential future project?

Weight: 5

- 12) Does the proposed project include plans to publicize project outcomes?

Weight: 5

- 13) Have entities other than the conservation district indicated a willingness to commit resources towards implementation of the proposed project?

Weight: 5

- 14) Does the district have technical staff or other resources which will be committed to the project?

Weight: 2