

BEAR LAKE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

5 Year Plan -----July 1, 2014 thru June 30, 2019

Annual Work Plan-----July 1, 2014 thru June 30, 2015

Garth Boehme—Chairman
Kerry Romrell---Vice-chairman
Jennifer Jenson---Sec/Treasurer
James Hardcastle---Supervisor
Mark Parker---Supervisor
Lisa Transtrum---Admin. Assist.

2014



Email:
lisa.transtrum@gmail.com
Phone: 208-847-0585 ext. 101
Fax: 208-847-1517

785 No. 4th St. Suite B, Montpelier, Idaho 83254

Forward

Soil and Water Conservation Districts are subdivisions of the state government, and are charged with the conservation of the natural resources on the private lands of Idaho. The Bear Lake Soil and Water Conservation District is one of 50 Districts in Idaho.

The long-range goal of the Bear Lake SWCD is to set high standards for the wise use of the natural resources in the district. This document serves to identify the resource needs in the District and presents a long-term approach for meeting these needs. This plan was developed to help guide the District, local landowners, and cooperating agencies in the wise use of our natural resources, and ensure an adequate resource base for future generations in the Bear Lake SWCD.

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History

The Bear Lake Soil and Water Conservation District was the first District to be organized under the authority of the Idaho Soil Conservation District Law of March 1, 1939. The District was organized on May 1, 1940. William J. Hunter and Silas Wright were appointed by the Idaho Soil Conservation Commission to serve as District Supervisors. Earnest W. Allred, Walter E. Clark, and Ivan K. Rigby were elected by the landowners in the District to complete the five member board of supervisors.

The major soil and water resource related problems that existed in the District at the time of its organization were:

1. Poor irrigation application due to irregular field surfaces.
2. Lack of adequate control structures in most of the existing irrigation facilities.
3. Low forage production on the poorly drained bottomlands.
4. Lack of adequate equipment and funding to implement plans for attacking the problems.
5. Shortage of irrigation water after mid-summer.

During the 73 years since the organization of the District, there have been significant accomplishments in correcting the problems in each of the respective areas. The District applied for and was granted war surplus heavy equipment, enabling it to assist the District cooperators in land leveling, rebuilding irrigation systems, drainage of semi-wet cropland, and applying other soil and water conserving practices.

The improvement in both quantity and quality of hay and pasture forage, is vital to the successful farmer and rancher, this has been of particular significance to the District. New and improved varieties of grasses and legumes, have been made available to District cooperators through working arrangements with the cooperating state and federal agencies, this has enabled area farmers and ranchers to greatly increase forage production within the district. As landowners have recognized the benefits, of improved management on hay and pastureland has increased yields have resulted.

The District has co-sponsored several major projects over the years, which have enabled local irrigation companies to provide season-long irrigation water to their respective stockholders. Small Watershed Projects were constructed with District assistance during 1965-75. The Montpelier Irrigation Company constructed the Montpelier Creek Dam in Montpelier Canyon and improved the distribution system with adequate canal capacity and control structures to furnish water to 3,000 acres of cropland served by the Company. Total cost of this project was \$1,500,000 with the Irrigation Company and the Soil Conservation Service sharing the cost. This project was planned with a combination of flood control and irrigation water storage benefits. The City of Montpelier has suffered no damage from flooding since the installation of the project.

In 1975 the Georgetown Irrigation Company completed the installation of a gravity pressured sprinkler system covering 3,175 acres of cropland at the mouth of Georgetown Canyon. This

project has had a significant positive effect upon the production of hay, grain, and pasture on cropland served by the system.

The Skinner Irrigation Company, in Nounan Valley, installed a gravity sprinkler system involving 6 farms and 600 acres. This project was installed with cost-sharing and technical assistance from the Soil Conservation Service under authority of the Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Program. In addition to these major projects, hundreds of District cooperators have developed conservation plans with the District and installed countless soil, water, and related resource conservation practices on their cropland, hay and pasturelands, and private rangelands over the years.

Physical Characteristics of the District

A. Land

The Bear Lake Soil and Water Conservation District covers all of Bear Lake County. The District is located in the extreme southeast corner of Idaho with Utah bordering on the south and Wyoming bordering on the east. The total surface area of the District is 668,160 acres.

Major land uses in the District are as follows:

Irrigated Cropland	27,565 acres
Irrigated Meadow Hayland	49,176 acres
Non-Irrigated Cropland	52,921 acres
Forest & Range	474,956 acres
Bear Lake Wildlife Refuge	17,600 acres
Municipalities, Farmsteads	12,696 acres
Water Surface	33,246 acres

Approximately 45,000 acres of wetland are included in the above figures.

Percentage of Major Land Uses in the Bear Lake SWCD

7.3%	Irrigated cropland
13.0%	Irrigated Meadow hay
14.0%	Non-Irrigated Cropland
53.5%	Forest and Rangeland
3.4%	Urban and Farmsteads
8.8%	Water Surface

Ownership of the 668,160 surface acres is broken down as

43.5%	Federal	290,400 ac
46.0%	Private	307,087 ac
2.7%	State	17,712 ac
5.0%	Water Surface	33,246 ac
3.0%	Unidentified	19,715 ac

B. Geology and Topography

The general geology of the county can be divided into 9 broad classes of rocks and landforms with minor inclusions. These broad classes of rocks are (1) mixed alluvium on alluvial fans, streams terraces, pediments and glacial till (2) mixed alluvium on stream bottoms and alluvial fans (3) mixed alluvium on alluvial fans, pediments and loess- covered limestone hills (4) mixed sedimentary rocks in hills and mountains (5) Lacustrine sediments on lake bottoms, (6) loess-covered alluvial fans, lava plains and mixed alluvium on alluvial fans, (7) loess- covered lake terraces, (8) loess-covered alluvial fans and (9) loess-covered limestone hills, basalt hills and alluvial fans. The entire county lies within the Basin and Range Province.

The normal high water surface elevation of Bear Lake is 5,923 feet above sea level. The lowest point in the District, where the Bear River leaves the county is 5,853 feet above sea level. Meade Peak located on the District's northern boundary is the highest point, with an elevation of 9957 feet. The Cultivated lands of the District are situated mainly between the 5,900 and 7,000 foot elevations.

C. Climate:

The District is located in the semi-arid belt of the United States and has the cool, invigorating climate typical of the Northern Rocky Mountain Plateau Region. The District includes parts of three Major Land Resource Areas as follows:

- MLRA 13B Eastern Idaho Plateaus
- MLRA 47 Wasatch and Uinta Mountains
- MLRA 43B Central Rocky Mountains

Climatic data for selected locations in the District is tabulated as follows:

Rainfall 37 year record

Montpelier	13.9"
Paris	12.6
Geneva	12.6
Lifton	9.8
Border	12.9

Temperature 37 year record

Montpelier
 (Yearly average) 41.8 degrees F
 High month average (July) 66.9 degrees F
 Low month average (January) 17.6 degrees F

Lifton
 (Yearly average) 42.0 degrees F
 High month average (July) 67.4 degrees F
 Low month average (January) 17.8 degrees F

Frost free period

Montpelier 23 years record 6/9 to 9/9 90 days

Lifton 23 years record 5/18 to 9/22 127 days

D. Soils:

The Bear Lake Soil survey was completed in 2011. All information is available on the web or a copy is in the USDA Service Center, 785 No. 4th St., Suite B, Montpelier, Idaho 83254.

<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm>

Economic Condition and Outlook

Bear Lake was discovered in the mid-1990s by the recreation communities and has been labeled as the “Caribbean of the Rockies” for its blue water. Areas around the lake have experienced the most growth with seasonal residents but this has not been able to offset the overall decline in population since 2002. This decline in population has had an effect throughout the county from road maintenance, school programs offered, local businesses closing.

Employment has been stable in the county with an average unemployment rate about 4.4% from 1990 to 2008 when the rate spiked to over 6% in 2010. With Bear Lakes economy tied to recreation the recession has had very large impact on the economy will less people coming to the area. Wages in this tourism-based economy are lower paying under \$10.00 per hour which has kept the average wage well below the national and state average. With this low average wage the county has been limited on how much it can support the local Conservation District.

2010 census population in Bear Lake County was 5,986 which is a -6.6% reduction from the 2000 census.

Assessment

Trends Impacting Conservation in the Bear Lake Soil & Water Conservation District

- Urban impact on agriculture production
- Poorly planned growth in agricultural areas – ‘Planning & Zoning’
- Alternative Power Generation
- Limited availability of State funds for conservation
- Fuel Costs
- Mining

Strategies to Address Trends

- Step up our education, and outreach programs
- Raising awareness of conservation values with state legislature and elected officials - help decision makers be better informed
- Strengthen Locally Led efforts
- Supervisors become more informed on current issues impacting working lands, Farm Bill programs, and information from agencies instead of relying on NRCS District Conservationist
- Determine how to become involved with County Planning and Zoning issues impacting natural resources
- Continue to be involved with Highlands CWMA to assist with mapping information and eradication of noxious weeds
- Host the Cooperator of the Year Tour and annual fair booth to make public aware of goals
- Solicit input to improve Annual Plan/Five-Year Resource Conservation Business Plan
- Take a proactive approach to funding water delivery systems on irrigated cropland
- Sponsor project proposals with other districts
- Training for Conservation District Supervisors and staff
- Continue annual tree sales program

Staffing Needs

- Part-time Conservation District Administrative Assistant is currently employed
- Conservation District Technician
- Part time engineer shared with other districts

Identify and Prioritize Objectives

Rangeland/Pasture

- Encourage landowners and operators to participate in conservation programs to install offsite water facilities, cross fencing, rotational grazing, and pest management.

Non-irrigated cropland

- Encourage landowners to install BMPs to reduce sheet and rill erosion.

Irrigated cropland

- Assist landowners with incentive based programs to increase irrigation efficiency and water savings.

Pasture and Hay land

- Promote the development of pasture and hay land.
- Educate landowners with pest management BMPs.

Woodland

- Not a priority with the Bear Lake SWCD very few acres of private forestland in the District boundaries.

Fish and Wildlife

- Stay up to date on the issues and concerns within the District with fish and wildlife.

- Work with wildlife partners to identify and address negative impacts to wildlife.
- Keep abreast of the endangered species list. <http://www.f.s.gov/idaho/species/htm> (click on county species list for proposed Federal actions)

Water Quality

- Work to implement the Ag TMDL implementation plan. This will reduce sediment and nutrients in the stream segments of concern.
- Apply for water quality grants through state, federal, and private sources.

Information and Education

- Recognize a Cooperator of the year at a banquet.
- Promote an annual poster contest in the 6th grade science class.
- Sponsor a Fair booth at the county fair.
- Conduct a tree sales program to promote windbreaks, shelterbelts, and explore carbon sequestration.
- Using tree sales income to make available scholarships to graduating seniors from Bear Lake High School.
- Promote innovative BMPs for cold climate conditions.
- 2nd grade tree planting field day with partners.
- Conduct a weed tour each summer co-sponsored with the Highlands CWM A and the Bear Lake County Weed Department.

Water Quality Component

List of stream segment of concern

Bear River

St Charles Creek

Ovid Creek

Thomas Fork

Stauffer Creek

Description of water quality

Streams within the Bear Lake SWCD boundaries are impacted by sediment, nutrients, and temperature. The Bear Lake SWCD identified stream bank modifications, over utilized pastures, sheet and rill erosion, classic and ephemeral gully erosion, and stream bank erosion as problems in the watershed. They also identified critical erosion periods as spring rains and runoff and summer thunderstorms.

Under section 303(d) of the 1972 Clean Water Act, states, territories, and authorized tribes are required to develop lists of impaired waters. These impaired waters do not meet water quality standards that states, territories, and authorized tribes have set for them, even after point sources of pollution have installed the minimum required levels of pollution control technology. The law requires that these jurisdictions establish priority rankings for waters on the lists and develop TMDLs for these waters.

In addition to the SWCD's list we would like to list the 2008 impacted waters in the District

Bear Lake 16010201

Bear River
 St Charles Creek
 North Creek
 Ovid Creek
 Pearl Creek
 Bennington Canyon and tributaries
 Wood Canyon
 Dunn's Creek
 Stauffer Creek
 Spring Creek
 Co-Op Creek
 Emigration Creek
 Middle Mill Creek
 Sleight Canyon
 Upper Paris Creek
 Indian Creek
 Montpelier Creek
 Little Beaver Creek
 Whiskey Creek
 Home Canyon
 Snowslide Creek
 Upper Georgetown Creek

Central Bear 16010102

Thomas Fork
 Preuss Creek
 Dry Creek
 Pegram Creek
 Bear River
 Beaver Creek
 Sheep Creek

Identify and Prioritize Projects

The district has assisted many producers with RCRDP loans, Conservation Improvement grants, Environmental Coordination Committee (ECC) grants, Water Smart grants through Bureau of Reclamation, and 319 grants to increase irrigation water efficiency, providing containment for animal feeding operations, installing practices on dryland ag to reduce soil erosion, and improving rangeland conditions. They have also recommended NRCS program assistance; EQIP, CSP, CRP etc.

Past projects:

- Mast stream bank restoration 319
- Dingle CAFO 319
- Skinner Creek CAFO ECC
- Conservation Improvement Grants 10 different landowners
- 2 Irrigation Structures with Fish Passage Paris Creek
- Bio Engineering Workshop I 2009
- Bio Engineering Workshop II 2011
- Bureau of Reclamation Ditch to Pipe Conversion
- Jarvis Springs Fuel Reduction Grant
- Camp Bartlett Fuels Reduction Grant

Current projects:

- Administer Highlands CWMA
- Georgetown SRF 319 Grant
- PBJ 319 Grant
- ECC Grant-Paris Creek
- ECC Grant-Bear River
- ISDA Phragmites Grant

Future projects:

- Paris Hills Fuels Reduction Grant
- 319 Grant
- ECC Grants-3
- Bureau of Reclamation Grant

Implementation

Implementation will follow our Annual Plan of Work.



**FY2014 (7/1/14 – 6/30/15) Annual Plan of Work
Bear Lake Soil & Water Conservation District
Bear Lake County, Idaho**

For Information Contact: Garth Boehme, Chairman

(208) 847-0585 ext. 101 Fax (208) 847-1517

Email: lisa.transtrum@gmail.com

Legislative District: 31

Mission of the Bear Lake Soil & Water Conservation District: To coordinate technical, financial, and educational assistance for responsible natural resources management that conserves and improves air, soil, water quality and fish and wildlife habitat.

Trends & Issues Impacting Conservation in the Bear Lake Soil & Water Conservation District:

- Urban Sprawl
- Alternative Power Generation
- Mining
- Fuel costs
- Planning & Zoning

Bear Lake Soil & Water Conservation District
ASSISTING LAND MANAGERS WITH THEIR CONSERVATION CHOICES

Projects Planned, Coordinated or Managed by the Bear Lake Soil & Water Conservation District:

- Georgetown SRF 319 Grant
- Highlands Cooperative Weed Management Area
- 6th Grade Outreach Program
- ECC Grants
- Scholarships
- Tree Sales
- Elementary School Tree Planting
- Fuels Reduction Grants
- Bureau of Reclamation Grants

Funding Sources for District Operations and Projects Coordinated:

- Bear Lake County
- State of Idaho
- Grants
- Cities
- Highlands CWMA
- Annual Tree Sales
- NRCS Farm Bill Assistance
- Idaho Department of Lands

Conservation District Priority Number 1: Water Quality and Quantity:

Objective: Meet the objective of the Idaho Clean Water Act 393601, the Federal Clean Water Act, and the Anti-Degradation Plan for Idaho on private land.

Goal(s): Seek conservation programs & implementation practices on 303(d) listed streams. Implement Agriculture Pollution Abatement Plan for private and State Agricultural lands.

Actions	Target Date	Individual(s) Responsible
Secure funding through 319, ECC grants; NRCS program funds.	On going	Lisa Transtrum, Steven Smith, Chris Banks, Larry Mickelsen, Beth Rasmussen, Dell Transtrum, Supervisors
Participate in Bear River Bag Meetings.	Semi-Annual	James Hardcastle, Kerry Romrell, Lisa Transtrum, Steven Smith, Chris Banks
Pursue funding through NRCS programs and assist landowners in improving irrigations systems, implementing natural resource plans in livestock grazing, riparian management, agri-chemical management, and water quality.	Year round	Larry Mickelsen, Beth Rasmussen, Dell Transtrum, Supervisors
Work with landowners to apply ditch to pipe, irrigation water management, and convert from flood to sprinkler irrigation. Possible funding through the Bureau of Reclamation Grant process	October-May	Larry Mickelsen, Supervisors, Dell Transtrum, Beth Rasmussen, Chris Banks
Attend the Water Quality Task Force meeting when possible.	Quarterly	Supervisors, Lisa Transtrum, Steven Smith

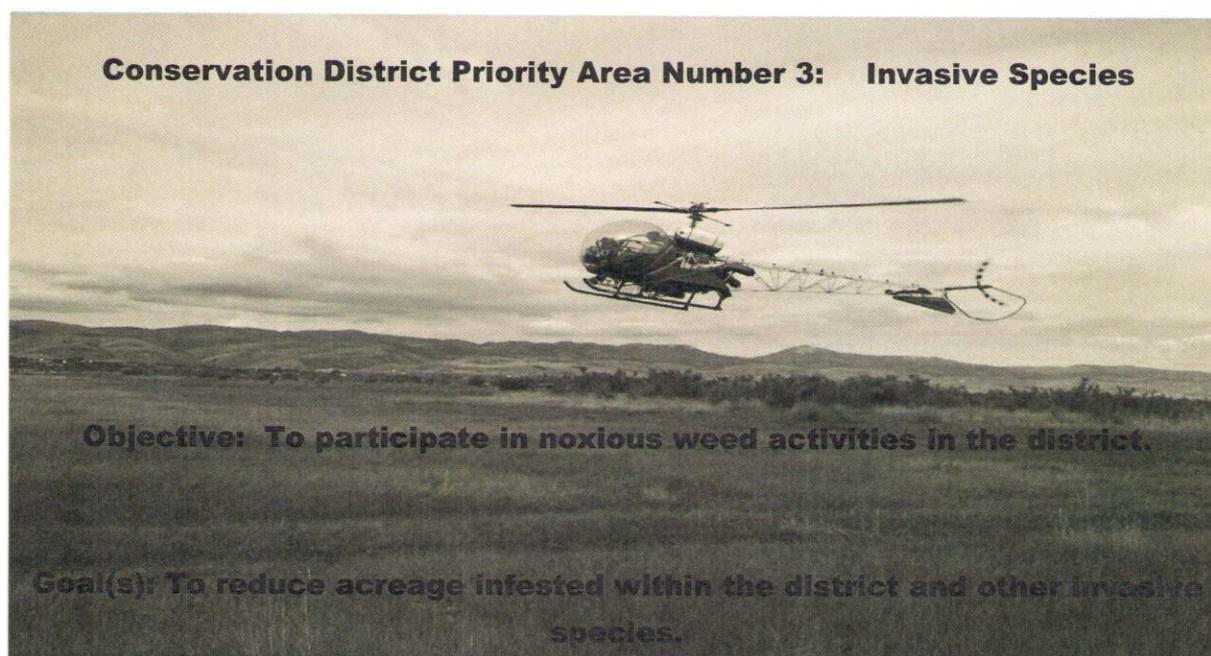
Conservation District Priority 2: Rangeland

Objective: Assist landowners in Livestock Management on private land.

Goal(s): To achieve conservation range management on 2,000 acres of privately owned rangeland.

Actions	Target Date	Individual(s) Responsible
Co-operate with the Highlands CWMA and Bear Lake County Weed Control with a recertification class for members of the public	May	Mark Parker, Garth Boehme, Larry Mickelson, Lisa Transtrum
Encourage landowners to work with NRCS and their various programs.	On-going	Supervisors, Larry Mickelsen, Beth, Rasmussen, Dell Transtrum
Highlight previously install nose pumps partially funded by the district.	Year round	Supervisors, Lisa Transtrum, Larry Mickelsen, Dell Transtrum, Beth Rasmussen
Highlight installed range projects in an annual tour.	August or September	Jennifer Jenson, James Hardcastle, Larry Mickelsen, Lisa Transtrum

Have NRCS approved bird escape ramp samples and information available for landowners.	June to October	Lisa Transtrum, Steven Smith, Larry Mickelsen, Dell Transtrum and Beth Rasmussen
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Actions	Target Date	Person(s) Responsible
Provide information on weeds at the District office for public use.	January – December	Lisa Transtrum, Supervisors, Larry Mickelsen, Highlands CWMA
Work closely with the Bear Lake County Weed Control to insure effective use of resources that are available to landowners.	March – September	Garth Boehme, Jennifer Jensen, Lisa Transtrum

Work closely with the Highlands CWMA to insure effective use of I&E, volunteers, workdays in CWMA.	January – December	Lisa Transtrum, Garth Boehme, Jennifer Jenson
Work with County Weed Control to contact Union Pacific Railroad and the State of Idaho to control weeds in the right of way in various parts of the county.	January – September	Mark Parker, James Hardcastle, Lisa Transtrum
Work with Planning & Zoning to encourage weed control for landowners.	On-going	Lisa Transtrum, Kerry Romrell, Steven Smith
Continue Administering the Highlands CWMA to help support control of noxious weeds.	On-going	Supervisors, Lisa Transtrum
Work with neighboring states agencies, Bear Lake Regional commission and private landowners on controlling noxious weeds around Bear Lake and the Bear River	On-going	Supervisors, Lisa Transtrum
Apply for available grant funds to help eradicate the Phragmites growing around Bear Lake and on the Bear River.	On-going	Supervisors, Lisa Transtrum

Conservation District Priority Number 4: District Operations

Objective: Improve effectiveness and knowledge of SWCD board members responsibilities

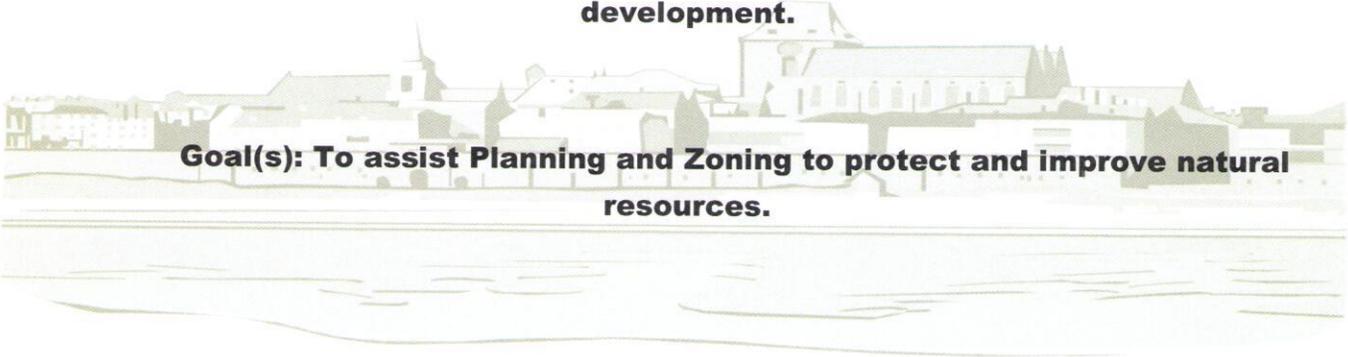
Goal(s): To increase effectiveness and efficiency of District Operations.

Actions	Target Date	Individual(s) Responsible
Encourage supervisors to attend all monthly meeting and other district activities including Fall and Spring IASCD Division meetings.	January – December	Supervisors, Lisa Transtrum
Have at least 2 supervisors attend IASCD annual conference and report back to board.	November	Supervisors, Lisa Transtrum
Attend the Regional SW Pacific NACD meetings when funds are available	Yearly	Supervisors, Lisa Transtrum
Take Annual Plan, Annual Report, and Performance Report and needs to Legislators, Locally Led Group and County Commissioners.	January	Chairman, Lisa Transtrum
Conduct a Conservation tour annually. The tour will be based on District priorities.	August	Supervisors, Lisa Transtrum
Submit at least 4 news releases to local radio and newspaper	Year round	Lisa Transtrum
Host annual Conservation Awards dinner and honor a Cooperator of the Year.	December	Supervisors, Lisa Transtrum, Larry Mickelsen, Beth Rasmussen
Conduct annual audit of SWCD financial resources.	September	Supervisors, Lisa Transtrum
Comply with Idaho Open Meeting Law requirements.	On-going	Supervisors, Lisa Transtrum
Establish job description for all employees.	January	Supervisors
Evaluate each employee's work performance at least twice a year.	May, December	Supervisors
Evaluate employee's salary based on work performance and available funds.	January	Supervisors

Conservation District Priority Area 5: Urban Interface

Objective: Identify and pursue conservation opportunities for urban development.

Goal(s): To assist Planning and Zoning to protect and improve natural resources.



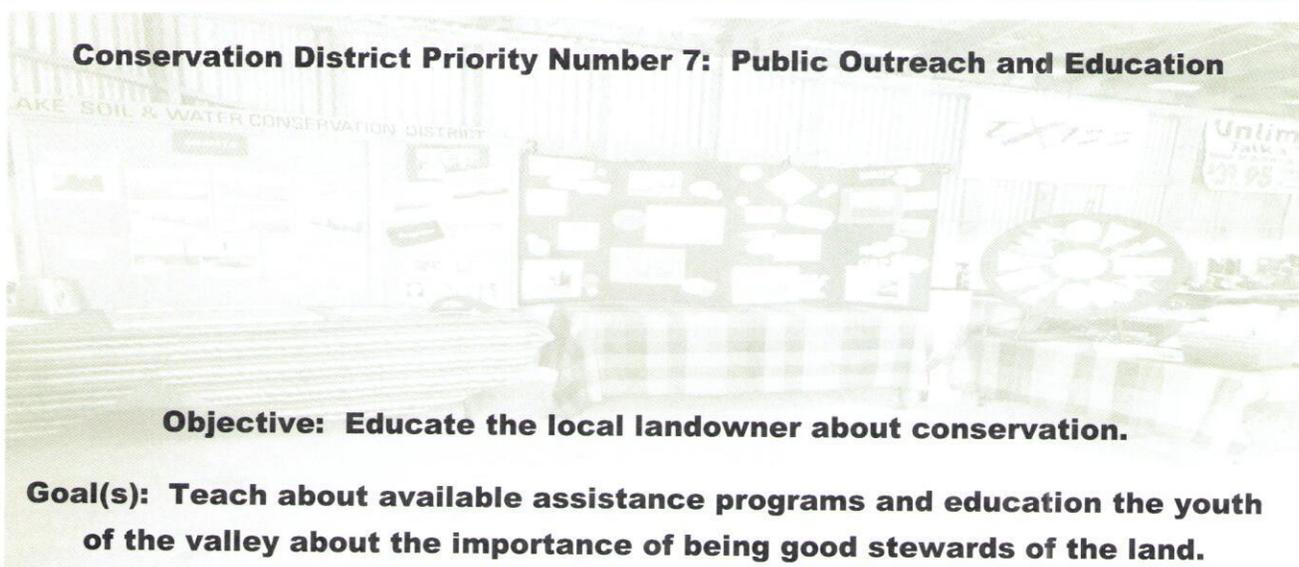
Actions	Target Date	Individual(s) Responsible
Acquire urban conservation measures to share with the local community and partners.	On-going	Supervisors, Steven Smith, Lisa Transtrum
Educate citizens about storm water management and non-point watershed protection issues.	On-going	Supervisors, Steven Smith, Lisa Transtrum, partners
Use tree program to provide plantings for disturbed areas.	May - June	Supervisors, Lisa Transtrum
As requested provide assistance to the county planning and zoning committee.	On-going	Supervisors, Steven Smith, Lisa Transtrum
As requested provide wetlands, soils, and flood plain data.	On-going	Supervisors, Steven Smith, Chris Banks, Lisa Transtrum, partners
Create and educate the public about a community garden.	February	Jennifer Jenson, Lisa Transtrum, and partners

Conservation District Priority Number 6: Cropland

Objective: Encourage landowners to reduce erosion to meet the level of T.

Goal(s): Help landowners to install Best Management Practices to minimize soil erosion

Actions	Target Date	Individual(s) Responsible
Educate landowners on how BMP's will benefit their operations.	November-April	Larry Mickelsen, Supervisors, Dell Transtrum Beth Rasmussen
Encourage landowners to look into cover crops for fallow rotation.	September-May	Supervisors, Dell Transtrum, Larry Mickelsen



Conservation District Priority Number 7: Public Outreach and Education

Objective: Educate the local landowner about conservation.

Goal(s): Teach about available assistance programs and education the youth of the valley about the importance of being good stewards of the land.

Actions	Target Date	Individual(s) Responsible
Provide poster contest and outreach project for all sixth graders in conjunction with the Franklin SWCD.	March	Lisa Transtrum, Larry Mickelsen, Steven Smith, Franklin SWCD, Dell Transtrum, Beth Rasmussen
Sponsor 3-5 students and one teacher to attend the Natural Resource Workshop in Ketchum	June	Supervisors, Lisa Transtrum
Conduct a Conservation tour annually. The tour will be based on District priorities.	August	Supervisors, Lisa Transtrum
Participate in Legislative Outreach Program, and participate in Legislative Display at Capitol Building in Boise.	Feb, July, November	Adjoining Districts, Lisa Transtrum, Supervisors
Use the tree sales program to provide at least 2 \$250.00 scholarships for college bound graduating seniors in an Ag related field.	May	Jennifer Jenson, Kerry Romrell, Lisa Transtrum
Provide Soil Stewardship materials to schools, Churches, and other interested groups. Donate a tree to each school in the district for Stewardship Week and hold a tree planting ceremony at each school.	April – May	Supervisors, Lisa Transtrum
Sponsor a speech contest in conjunction with the national contest.	Yearly	Supervisors, Lisa Transtrum
Sponsor an Envirothon Team to attend the state contest and send a board member or staff to volunteer to help.	Yearly	Supervisors, Lisa Transtrum
Sponsor fair booth and invite other agencies to participate.	August	Supervisors, Lisa Transtrum
Education and encourage women and minorities to serve as board members, associate members and/ or volunteers.	Yearly	Supervisors, Lisa Transtrum

Certificate of Adoption

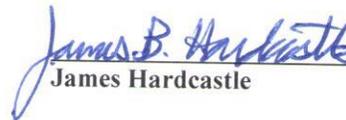
The Board of elected supervisors of the Bear Lake Soil & Water Conservation District on 4th day of March do hereby approves the following document known as the 5 Year Plan and Annual Work Plan. This Plan will be in effect for a five-year period ending June 30, 2018, during which time it will be updated annually and /or amended, as necessary.

As evidence of our adoption and final approval, we do hereby affix our signatures to this document.


Garth Boehme Chairman


Kerry Romrell Vice-Chairman


Jennifer Jenson Secretary/Treasurer


James Hardcastle Supervisor


Mark Parker Supervisor