

**EAST CASSIA SOIL & WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

**1361 East 16<sup>th</sup> Street  
Burley, ID 83318**

**ANNUAL PLAN**

**FIVE-YEAR RESOURCE CONSERVATION**

**BUSINESS PLAN**

**JULY 1, 2014 – JUNE 30, 2019**

## **Forward**

The East Cassia Soil and Water Conservation District is one of 50 Conservation Districts in Idaho. Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Districts are political subdivisions of state government but are not state agencies. Conservation Districts are charged with carrying out a program for the conservation, use and development of soil, water, and other natural resources.

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

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

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

## **Certificate of Adoption**

The Board of elected supervisors of the East Cassia Soil and Water Conservation District, this 31<sup>st</sup> day of March, 2014, do hereby approve the following document known as the Resource Conservation Business Plan. This Plan will be in effect for a five-year period ending June 30, 2019 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.

\_\_\_\_\_ Mark Streeter, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_ Mark Webb, Vice Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_ Ken Woodworth, Secretary/Treasurer

\_\_\_\_\_ Steve Ward, Member

\_\_\_\_\_ Richard Ward, Member

\_\_\_\_\_ Member

\_\_\_\_\_ Member

Supporting Idaho Conservation Partners:

\_\_\_\_\_ Natural Resources Conservation Service

\_\_\_\_\_ Soil Conservation Commission

\_\_\_\_\_ Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts



# Five-Year Resource Conservation Plan Business Plan (2014 to 2019) East Cassia Soil & Water Conservation District

For More Information Contact: Mark Streeter, Chairman 645-2377

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## Organization and Function of the East Cassia Soil & Water Conservation District

A political subdivision of the State of Idaho – authorities, powers and structure contained in Soil Conservation District Law, Title 22, Chapter 27, Idaho Code

- Officially organized on September 5, 1956 to provide voluntary land and water conservation technical and financial assistance to landowners and uses within the eastern half of Cassia County.
- To make available technical, financial and educational resources, to meet the needs of the local land manager with conservation of soil, water and related natural resources.

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## Who We Serve - and Why

- We serve the people in East Cassia SWCD by educating and assisting them in the conservation of natural resources for beneficial and sustainable use by all.

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## Mission of the East Cassia Soil & Water Conservation District

- *To set high standards for conservation of natural resources.*
- *To educate both youth and adults in conservation practices and needs.*
- *To encourage cooperation among landowners, government agencies, private organizations, and elected officials to accomplish conservation goals.*
- *To carry out a well balanced resource conservation program centered around reduced soil erosion, water management improvements, and reduction of flood damages on the Raft River.*

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## Values of the East Cassia Soil & Water Conservation District

- Sustainable use of natural resources
- Support for agriculture activity that uses sustainable, economic feasible practices
- Value and respect for the Idaho Conservation Partnership
- Conservation education for adults and youth

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## Natural Resource Priorities and Goals:

- District Operations
- Information and Education\*
- Irrigated Cropland
- Non-irrigated Cropland
- Rangeland\*
- Water Quality\*
- Water Resources (quantity)

\* *Meets Anti-degradation Plan for Agriculture criteria*

(-- See Annual Plan for specifics and goals on each priority area)

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## Land Ownership within East Cassia SWCD:

- *Water* 3,220 acres (0.3%)
- *USFWS* 7,438 acres (0.8%)
- *State* 34,850 acres (3.6%)
- *National Forest* 165,069 acres (17.0%)
- *BLM* 335,137 acres (34.5%)
- *Private Land* 426,681 acres (43.9%)

*Private Land Use breakdown: Of the 426,681 acres,  
22.2% is dry cropland,  
28.5% is irrigated cropland,  
27.6% is range,  
1.6% is forest use, and  
20.0% is other.*

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## Physical Characteristics:

East Cassia SWCD is located in the south central part of Idaho and encompasses the entire eastern part of Cassia County, some 900,000 acres, or 1,357 square miles. Elevations range from 4,156 feet above sea level to about 10,000 feet in the higher mountain areas. A dominant feature of East Cassia is the Raft River Valley, which extends north from the Utah border to the Snake River. Other smaller valleys, including the Albion, Almo, Elba, and Junction Valleys, occur between the mountain ranges. The Sublett, Albion, Cotterel, Cassia, Black Pine, and Jimsage Mountains constitute the major topographic relief. The valley floor and lands along the Snake River Plain are generally flat to very gently sloping to the mountainous area ranging from sloping to very steep. For more information on the physical characteristics of the district, please refer to the published soil Survey of Cassia County, Idaho, Eastern Part.

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## Economic Conditions and Outlook:

Population within the district is concentrated in the towns of Malta, Albion, Elba, and Almo, with small population numbers scattered throughout the district. Some goods and services are obtainable in these communities but most services must be obtained in nearby Burley.

The main economic base of the West Cassia SWCD is agriculture. Crops grown include wheat, barley, alfalfa, corn (sweet and field), sugar beets, potatoes, dry beans and peas and other specialty seed crops. Much of the harvested agricultural products are sold and processed locally. McCains processes potatoes, and sugar beets are processed at Paul, Idaho by Amalgamated Sugar Company. The county is diversifying beyond agriculture. Marketing Cassia and Minidoka counties together through a community partnership has attracted new businesses. The area offers an abundance of natural resources and recreational opportunities with Burley located on the banks of the scenic Snake River. The City of Rocks National Reserve and the Pomerelle Ski Area are close recreational destinations.

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## Climate:

The total annual precipitation is about 11 inches. The growing season for most crops falls within April and September. Many years, drought conditions are a concern. Sections of East Cassia have westerly to southwesterly winds that can cause erosion and dangerous driving conditions. This concern has been addressed through windbreak education, planting windbreaks, and holding an annual seedling tree sale. Flooding can occur on the Raft River and other areas as a result of high spring flows. Some erosion due to spring runoff flooding occurs each year. Flash flooding from summer storms can also occur.

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## **Stream Segments of Concern:** (followed by pollutants addressed)

### **Raft River**

- Raft River – temperature, sediment, bacteria
- Sublett Creek – nutrients
- Cassia Creek – nutrients, sediment
- Fall Creek – nutrients, bacteria
- Lake Fork Creek – nutrients
- Sublett Reservoir – nutrients

### **Lake Walcott Watershed**

- Snake River – sediment, oil & grease, total phosphorus
- Milner Reservoir – sediment, oil & grease, total phosphorus

### **Lake Walcott**

- Marsh Creek - total phosphorus, bacteria, temperature

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## **Trends Impacting Conservation in the East Cassia Soil & Water Conservation District**

- Animal waste management and composting improvements
- Increased education needed in water and wind erosion, crop residue, irrigation improvements, etc.
- Limited availability of State funds for conservation
- Focus on water quality compared to other conservation and environmental issues

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## **Strategies to Address Trends**

- Animal waste management practice improvements including odor and pest controls, and nitrate and phosphate levels. Animal waste composting efforts through conservation plans and providing information to the public. Encourage use of BMPs.
- Implementation and education concerning conservation practices which reduce water and dust erosion, conversion to sprinkler systems, promoting the benefits of crop residue, conservation tillage, and cross slope farming practices.
- Continued and increased education.
- 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, Information from agencies instead of relying on NRCS District Conservationist
- Determine how to become involved with County Planning and Zoning issues impacting natural resources.
- Work with Weed Supervisor to increase education on noxious and invasive weeds.
- Advertise Board Meetings where district goals are discussed to improve public awareness.
- Work together with West Cassia and Minidoka Districts.
- Training for Conservation District Supervisors and staff

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## **Staffing Needs**

- Full-time Conservation District Administrative Assistant with benefits.
- Information & Education Specialist with benefits.
- Conservation District Technician.

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## **Annual Budget Needs**

- Annual budget completed to carry out the plan of the East Cassia Conservation District based on the included needs and information. *More funding is needed.*

### Key Decision Makers

- Citizens in Conservation District
- Cassia County Commissioners
- Cassia County Planning and Zoning Board Members
- Elected City Officials including City Mayors, and City Council and/or Planning and Zoning Board Members for Burley, Albion, Declo, Malta, and Oakley cities.
- State Legislators representing District 27  
Denton Darrington, Scott Bedke, and Fred Wood
- Idaho's U.S. Senators, Representatives and Staffers
- East Cassia's Conservation District Supervisors
- Burley City Administrator
- Cassia County Administrator
- Burley Chamber of Commerce

### Priority Actions – 6 Months

Action	Begin Date	End Date
▪ Seek public comments on Annual Plan/Five-Year Resource Conservation Business Plan	April 2014	October 2014
▪ Board of Supervisor review of Annual Plan/Five-Year Resource Conservation Business Plan priorities, actions, and public comment	April 2014	October 2014
▪ Complete written update of Annual Plan/Five-Year Resource Conservation Plan	April 2014	October 2014
▪ Identify budget and staff needs	April 2014	October 2014
▪ Develop, adopt and submit annual budget	March 2014	October 2014
▪ Adopt and submit Annual Plan/Five-Year Resource Conservation Business Plan		March 31, 2014

**Idaho Conservation Districts assisting land-owners and operators with their conservation choices.**

**FY2014 (7/1/13 – 6/30/14) Annual Work Plan**  
**East Cassia Soil and Water Conservation District**





## **FY2014 (7/1/13 – 6/30/14) Annual Work Plan East Cassia Soil and Water Conservation District**

### **For More Information Contact:**

**Mark Streeter, Conservation District Chairman  
Conservation District Telephone Number 678-1225  
Serving Cassia County and Legislative District #27**



Windbreak along I-84 freeway

### **Mission of the East Cassia Soil and Water Conservation District**

- ◆ *To set high standards for conservation of natural resources.*
- ◆ *To educate both youth and adults in conservation practices and needs.*
- ◆ *To encourage cooperation among landowners, government agencies, private organizations, and elected officials to accomplish conservation goals.*
- ◆ *To carry out a well balanced resource conservation program centered around reduced soil erosion, water management improvements, and reduction of flood damages on the Raft River.*
- ◆ *To educate landowners on the importance of soil health.*
- ◆ *To have available for rent a direct seed drill where landowners will be able to test plots on their land to see the benefits of this practice.*
- ◆ *To educate farmers around the county on available conservation programs.*

### **Trends Impacting Conservation in the East Cassia Soil & Water Conservation District:**

- ◆ Implementation and education concerning conservation practices which reduce water and dust erosion, conversion to sprinkler systems, promoting the benefits of crop residue, conservation tillage, and cross slope farming practices.
- ◆ Animal waste management practice improvements including odor and pest controls, and nitrate and phosphate levels. Animal Waste Composting efforts through conservation plans and providing information to the public. Encourage use of BMP's.

### **Projects Planned, Coordinated or Managed:**

- ◆ *Direct seeding Project including rental equipment*
- ◆ *Work with water districts on AWEP projects*
- ◆ *Study alternative energy-including wind turbines and solar*
- ◆ *Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative*

### **Funding Sources for District Operations and Projects:**

- ◆ *Grants*
- ◆ *State & County Funds.*
- ◆ *Annual Seedling Tree Sale*

### **East Cassia Board of Supervisors**

Chairman – Mark Streeter  
Vice Chair – Mark Webb  
Sec/Treas – Ken Woodworth  
Member – Steve Ward  
Member – Richard Ward



## FY2014 (7/1/13– 6/30/14) Annual Work Plan East Cassia Soil and Water Conservation District

### Priority Area Number 1: WATER RESOURCES

#### Objective: Improve Water Quality and Public Awareness of Water Issues

##### Goal(s):

- ◆ Implement good water quality practices for TMDL's, Animal Waste Management, and erosion control.
- ◆ To improve water quality.
- ◆ Educate the public on water resource issues.

##### Action(s):

<b>Actions for FY2014</b>	<b>Target Dates</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
1. Keep current on Animal Waste Management practices and concerns. Inform the public through newsletters of acceptable practices. Be a sounding board for public concerns and reactions.	Year round	Entire Board, Doreen McMurray
2. Support Animal Waste Composting efforts through conservation plans and providing information to the public.	Quarterly	Mark Streeter, Mark Webb
3. Improve water quality through reduced water erosion and dust erosion by encouraging good conservation practices through education. (tours, newsletter, press releases as appropriate.)	Year round	Mark Streeter, Mark Webb
4. Promote the benefits of crop residue, conservation tillage, and cross slope farming practices through education. Inform land owners of irrigation practices available to them. Support new technology with tours, newsletters, and press releases.	Year round	Entire Board, Doreen McMurray



## FY2014 (7/1/13 – 6/30/14) Annual Work Plan East Cassia Soil and Water Conservation District

### Priority Area Number 2: IRRIGATED & NON-IRRIGATED CROPLAND

**Objective: Improve Conservation Practices on Irrigated and Non-Irrigated Cropland.**

**Goal(s):**

♦ Work with landowners to implement good conservation practices on their irrigated and non-irrigated cropland with emphasis on erosion, dust, and fire control.

**Actions(s):**

<b>Actions for FY2014</b>	<b>Target Dates</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
1. Encourage good conservation practices which reduce water erosion, dust erosion, and fire risks through education, newsletters, tours, etc.	Year round	Entire Board, I&E Specialist Doreen McMurray
2. Review and approve all conservation plans developed by NRCS for fields under the Conservation Compliance Provisions of the FSA (as appropriate).	Year round	Entire Board
3. Request NRCS assistance to help with design, layout, and approval of plans.	Year round	Mark Streeter, Chairman
4. Recognize farmers that are good stewards of the land and implement good conservation practices at an annual Awards Banquet.	March 2014	Entire Board
5. Inform land owners of irrigation practices available to them. Support new technology with tours, newsletter, and press releases. Promote CCPI project in conjunction with NRCS.	Year round	Entire Board, I&E Specialist Doreen McMurray
6. Manage the annual tree sale providing seedling trees for windbreaks and other conservation purposes.	Spring 2014	Doreen McMurray, Megan Heward
7. Continue to work on Direct Seeding Grant and the purchasing of direct seeding drills to rent to landowners.	Year round	Mark Streeter, Ken Woodworth, Megan Heward, Dawn Privett



## FY2014 (7/1/13 – 6/30/14) Annual Work Plan East Cassia Soil and Water Conservation District

### Priority Area Number 3: RANGELAND

**Objective: Reduce Erosion and Increase Production on Range and Graze-able Woodlands.**

**Goal(s):**

♦ To promote practices that will improve range and graze-able woodlands.

**Actions(s):**

<b>Actions for FY2014</b>	<b>Target Dates</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
1. Encourage brush management while protecting sage grouse habitat through education and tours where appropriate.	Year round	Richard Ward
2. Encourage range seeding through education and tours where appropriate.	Year round	Richard Ward, Steve Ward
3. Seek ways to educate the public concerning pest control.	Summer	Entire Board
4. Educate the public concerning fire control practices due to drought.	When conditions require	Entire Board, I&E Specialist Doreen McMurray
5. Encourage stock water systems combined with planned grazing systems.	Year round	Entire Board



## FY2014 (7/1/13 -- 6/30/14) Annual Work Plan East Cassia Soil and Water Conservation District

### Priority Area Number 4: INFORMATION & EDUCATION

**Objectives: To Keep the Public Informed of District Activities Completed and Upcoming.**

**Goal(s):**

- ◆ To promote Environmental Awareness.
- ◆ Provide information to cooperators, the general public, and to youth about agricultural information, activities, and opportunities.

**Action(s):**

<b>Actions for FY2014</b>	<b>Target Dates</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
1. Plan a tour and/or workshop to educate landowners on the importance of soil health and encourage direct seedling practices. Educate landowners of the availability of renting direct seed drills from the districts for test plots.	Summer/Fall 2014	Entire Board, Doreen McMurray, Megan Heward, Dawn Privett
2. Publicize tours, activities, and special events through local radio newspapers, and the Cassia County Fair.	Year round	Doreen McMurray
3. Co-sponsor the Idaho State Land & Soil Evaluation Event. (including arrangements, awards, and raising funds to support the contest)	Year round	Entire Board, Doreen McMurray, Megan Heward
4. Provide information to school age students within the district on the Natural Resources Workshop Camp, Know Your Government, 5th & 6th grade Poster Contest, High School Speech Contest, Envirothon, and annual Scholarship Awards.	Year round	Doreen McMurray
5. Seek out worthy recipients for Conservation and Education Awards. Conduct an Annual Awards Banquet to honor Cooperator of the Year and present other conservation awards.	March	Entire Board, I&E Specialist Doreen McMurray, Megan Heward



## FY2014 (7/1/13 – 6/30/14) Annual Work Plan East Cassia Soil and Water Conservation District

### Priority Area Number 5: DISTRICT OPERATIONS

**Objective: TO Develop and Carry out a Sound Resource Conservation Program and to Manage the Ongoing Business and Activities of the District.**

**Goal(s):**

♦ To manage and run the affairs of the district including the management of finances, supervisors, employees, monthly board meetings, and evaluate and update the annual plan.

**Action(s):**

<b>Actions for FY2014</b>	<b>Target Dates</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>
1. Revise and update the Annual plan.	February through May	Entire Board, Doreen McMurray, Megan Heward
2. Have representation to the Summer Picnic (July.) Division IV Meetings (Mar. & Oct.), and the IASCD Conference (Nov.)	Jan, Mar, Oct, Nov	Entire Board, Megan Heward
3. Conduct and attend monthly board meetings each month. The meetings are open to the public and the media. Guests are invited when appropriate along with county officials and agency and state personnel.	Monthly 1 <sup>st</sup> Tuesday of each month	Entire Board, Megan Heward
4. Review the USDA Memo of Understanding and the supplemental Memo of Understanding with the NRCS District conservationist.	November	Entire Board
5. Prepare, print, and mail three Newsletters which include an Annual Report of work activities accomplished during the fiscal year.	Three times yearly	Doreen McMurray
6. Secure advertising to cover printing and postage costs for the Newsletter.	February	Megan Heward
7. Manage Supervisor elections in the even numbered years. Will organize an outreach program to recruit and educate new supervisors.	October	Megan Heward

8. Will develop budget, prepare monthly financial statements, and have an Audit and financial review annually.	Monthly, July	Entire Board, Megan Heward
9. Inform board members of potential or existing legislation that impacts the district. Draft appropriate legislation for presentation at the IASCD annual conference. Support the Annual Summer Picnic.	Year Round	Mark Streeter
10. Meet with County Commissioners to review the proposed budget as a basis for requesting county funding.	February	Entire Board, Megan Heward
11. Review, revise if necessary, and approve the agreement with the Administrative Assistant, the I & E Specialist, and other employees. Hold employee reviews in January.	As needed yearly	Entire Board, All district employees