

Payette Ditch Wetland Project

***WEISER RIVER SOIL
CONSERVATION DISTRICT***

847 East 9th Street
Weiser, Idaho 83672

Resource Conservation Business Plan
July 1, 2015—June 30, 2020



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Executive Summary

The Five-Year Plan is a statement of facts, objectives, and policies of the Weiser River Soil Conservation District (WRSCD); hereafter referred to as the “District”.

The Weiser River Soil Conservation District Five-Year Plan is the guide for its operations within the next five years. It identifies the major resource needs, objectives, goals, and activities. The District will act as a catalyst to bring people and programs together, to bring about a quality way of life, a quality resource base, and a quality environment. The program includes the annual work plan, annual report, and future goals.

The Weiser River Soil Conservation District was organized by farmers and ranchers within its boundaries on December 22, 1941. Originally, the Weiser River Soil Conservation District included only the area in Washington County drained by the Weiser River. In May of 1971, the remaining area in the County was annexed into the District. It is a legal subdivision of the State of Idaho, in accordance with Idaho State Law, Title 22, Chapter 27, of the Idaho Code, as amended. It was formed to provide local leadership in the conservation development and productive use of soil, water, and related resources. The District includes all of Washington County, except the corporate limits of the Cities of Cambridge and Midvale.

The District is governed by a seven-person board of Supervisors elected by the local people. They serve without pay and are responsible for coordinating all conservation activities being carried on in the District. Regular monthly meetings are held. Through knowledge and cooperation, all concerned can ensure an adequate natural resource base for present and future generations in the Weiser River Soil Conservation District.

Weiser River Soil Conservation District Conservation Partners

The following agencies work with the Weiser River SCD to help carry out the Five Year Resource Conservation Business Plan. They have in the past participated in tours, workshops, and information and education meetings, as well as been a partner in seeking funds for District grant projects.

Idaho Association of Conservation Districts
Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission
West Central Highlands RC&D
Lower Weiser River CWMA
Bureau of Land Management
Friends of the Weiser River Trail
Washington County Farm Bureau
Washington County Commissioners
University of Idaho
Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Idaho State Department of Agriculture
Weiser River Watershed Advisory Group
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Southwest Idaho RAC (Idaho Dept. of Forestry)



Five-Year Resource Conservation Plan Business Plan (2013 to 2018) Weiser River Soil Conservation District

For More Information Contact: Vicki Lukehart 208-549-4250



Organization of the Weiser River Soil 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. Organized in 1941 to provide voluntary land and water conservation technical and financial assistance to landowners and uses within Washington County.

Function of the Weiser River Soil Conservation District

To make available technical, financial and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land manager with conservation of soil, water and related natural resources.

Who We Serve & Why

The people and natural resources in the Weiser River SCD, to conserve the natural resources for the beneficial and sustainable use by all.

Mission of the Weiser River Soil Conservation District

To provide local leadership in the conservation development and productive use of soil, water and related resources. To act as a catalyst to bring people and programs together, to bring about a quality way of life, a quality resource base and a quality environment.

Vision of the Weiser River Soil Conservation District

The WRSCD is to be an effective, efficient governing organization without partiality. The District Supervisors will fulfill their responsibilities and duties wisely in promoting and implementing soil and water conservation.

Values of the Weiser River Soil Conservation District

WRSCD willingly accepts the responsibility inherent to agricultural nonpoint source pollution as set forth in the 1987 Water Quality Act-Section 319; the Safe Drinking Water Act 1986; and the Clean Water Act of 1972 Anti-degradation Program. The WRSCD accepts this responsibility in order to preserve a locally administered voluntary approach, for control and abatement of agricultural nonpoint source pollution, to protect and enhance the quality and value of water resources of the State of Idaho.

Natural Resource Priorities and Goals:

- District Operations
- Water Quantity
- Irrigated and Non-Irrigated Cropland
- Rangeland
- Animal Waste Management
- Urban

Section 1: Physical Characteristics of the District



Washington County was established in 1879 when Idaho was a territory. It was named after President George Washington. Cities located within the County are: Weiser, Midvale and Cambridge, with Weiser being the County Seat.

Land Area: 1,474 sq miles of which 1,456 sq miles or 98.83% is land.

- Washington County is one of the largest onion producing counties in Idaho. The County has an agricultural economy based chiefly on row crops, hay and livestock.
- Major crops include hay, silage, onions, wheat, sugar beets, potatoes, corn, barley beans and specialty crops.
- Ranching and farming is one the major industries of the area. Average size of farms is 954 acres.
- The County is 55% urban and 47% rural.

Water Area: 17.3 sq miles is water or 1.17%. There are two main rivers within the County and four major reservoirs.

- Snake River
- Weiser River
- Brownlee Reservoir
- Crane Creek Reservoir
- Mann Creek Reservoir
- Paddock Valley Reservoir

Climate:

Washington County climate is characterized as semi-arid. Air temperatures range from 20 degrees F. in winter to 90 degrees F. in the summer. Average annual precipitation ranges from 10-12 inches a year. These variables in temperature are due to different elevations within Washington County. The lowest elevation is the City of Weiser with the highest elevation being Cambridge.

Occasional flooding occurs along the Weiser River during spring snow melt. Unpredictable flooding has occurred where there is a large storm event and can occur at any time throughout the year.

Geology and Topography:

The land in the northern part of Washington County is mainly mountainous with many rivers and streams running through it. It is known for the picturesque Hells Canyon with the Snake River flowing through. Through the central part of the County runs the Little Weiser River which flows into the Weiser River. The Weiser River flows through the cities of Cambridge, Midvale and Weiser where it eventually flows into the Snake River.

Section 2: Economic Condition and Outlook



Washington County

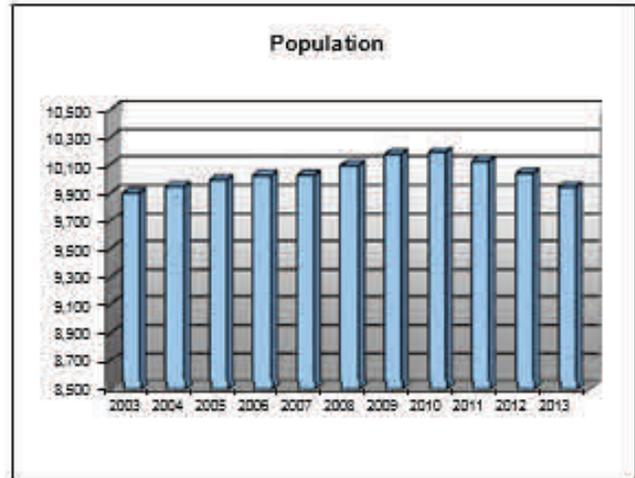
January 2015



Workforce Trends

Population

Washington County ranks 20th in area among Idaho's 44 counties. Its population began to decline in 1999 as some residents left to seek jobs in more diversified economies. But after the 2001 recession, the population began growing consistently, albeit slowly, into 2010. Since then the population has started to decline again. At 9,944, the 2013 population for the county is 245 less than its 2010 peak.

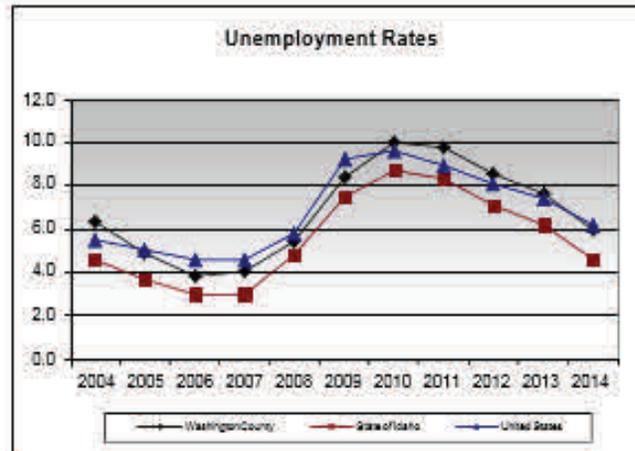


Labor Force & Employment

Washington County's unemployment rate continued to decline in 2013 ending at 7.6 percent. The county's labor force was essentially unchanged.

Covered employers added 85 jobs in 2013, most in manufacturing and construction. These gains were offset by losses in trade, utilities and transportation, which shed 45 jobs.

For the decade though, the county is up 124 covered jobs. The best performing sectors in 2013, are manufacturing and education and health care with 67 jobs and 58 jobs respectively. The hardest hit industries were agriculture, information and government with a total job loss of 125.



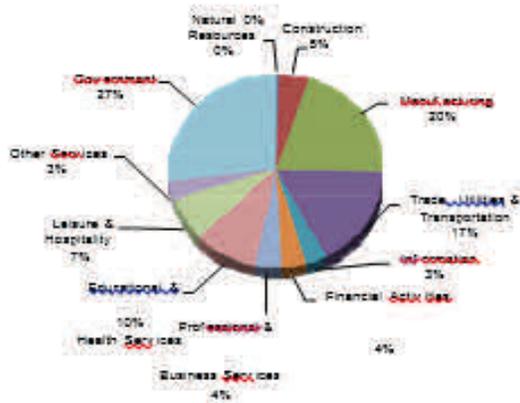
Labor Force	Dec 13	Dec 14
Civilian Labor Force	4,750	4,569
Total Employment	4,421	4,345
Unemployed	328	225
% of Labor Force Unemployed	6.9	4.9
State of Idaho % Unemployed	5.6	3.7
U.S. % Unemployed	6.7	5.6

Labor Force	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Civilian Labor Force	4,975	5,008	4,897	4,656	4,660	4,875	4,775	4,791	4,804	4,789	4,643
Unemployment	316	246	189	189	255	411	476	467	409	365	279
% of Labor Force Unemployed	6.3	4.9	3.9	4.0	5.5	8.4	10.0	9.7	8.5	7.6	6.0
Employment	4,659	4,762	4,708	4,468	4,405	4,464	4,299	4,324	4,395	4,424	4,365

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Section 2: Economic Condition and Outlook

Nonfarm Payroll Jobs for 2013



Per Capita Income & Employment

Washington County reported an increase of over \$1,500 in its per capita income in 2012, enough to hold its 37th ranking among the 44 counties.

Government continues to make up the largest portions of nonfarm employment with 27 percent. Manufacturing followed with 20 percent and then trade, utilities and transportation at 17 percent.

Major Employers

Appleton Produce
City of Weiser
Champion Home Builders
Hometown Ford
Cambridge School District
Weiser Memorial Hospital
Ridley's
Washington County
Midvale School District
Weiser School District

Occupational Wages*

Occupation	Starting Wage
Bank Teller	\$9.63
Bookkeeper	\$11.08
Retail Salesperson	\$8.14
Nursing Aides	\$8.58
Truck Driver	\$13.09
Farm Equipment Operators	\$11.54
Agricultural Workers	\$8.05
Shipping & Receiving Clerks	\$9.88
Construction Laborer	\$10.46
Carpenter	\$11.85

*Additional occupational wage data can be found on the Idaho Department of Labor website at lmi.idaho.gov.

Covered Employment & Average Annual Wages Per Job for 2003, 2012 & 2013	2003		2012		2013	
	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages	Average Employment	Average Wages
Total Covered Wages	2,803	\$20,668	2,842	\$27,130	2,927	\$27,936
Agriculture	364	\$13,534	276	\$20,934	286	\$21,787
Mining	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Construction	95	\$20,115	73	\$29,984	125	\$26,785
Manufacturing	496	\$23,147	509	\$28,295	563	\$31,064
Trade, Utilities & Transportation	410	\$20,636	490	\$28,672	446	\$30,428
Information	117	\$30,357	85	\$52,214	85	\$54,212
Financial Activities	64	\$22,333	81	\$43,351	89	\$53,633
Professional and Business Services	80	\$16,798	102	\$23,438	97	\$23,106
Educational and Health Services	210	\$21,924	278	\$21,400	269	\$22,261
Leisure and Hospitality	185	\$9,091	173	\$9,649	192	\$8,856
Other Services	49	\$20,331	59	\$20,623	59	\$19,257
Government	734	\$23,919	715	\$30,030	719	\$28,864

Per Capita Income	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Washington County	\$23,011	\$24,182	\$25,432	\$27,192	\$27,198	\$26,624	\$27,437	\$28,601	\$29,834	\$31,621
State of Idaho	\$28,974	\$29,989	\$32,035	\$33,057	\$32,819	\$31,688	\$32,100	\$33,677	\$35,142	\$36,146
United States	\$34,300	\$35,888	\$36,127	\$36,804	\$40,873	\$39,379	\$40,144	\$42,332	\$44,200	\$44,765

Data sources are cited by the Bureau of Economic Analysis.



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This publication is produced by the Idaho Department of Labor and is funded at least in part by federal grants from the U.S. Department of Labor. Costs associated with this publication are available upon request. The Idaho Department of Labor is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Dial 711 for Idaho Relay Service.

Section 3: Assessment

Soil Resources:

Soil Erosion

Dry cropland use to contribute approximately 50% of the total agricultural soil loss in Washington County while irrigated cropland yields about 40% and pasture and hay-land supplies about 10%.

Washington County has approximately 50,000 acres of highly erodible land. Most is dry cropland that occurs in the uplands where steep slopes or shallow soils are the major limitations to cultivating crops. Soil erosion degrades the soil resource base as a medium for plant growth. Erosion results in a loss of soil, organic matter and commercial fertilizer. The effectiveness of pesticides is reduced along with the ability of the soil to intake and hold water. These effects are reflected in reduced yields, increased production costs and a loss of income. Soil erosion on surface irrigated project areas contribute to sedimentation of the Lower Weiser and Snake Rivers. Over the past 30 years, the agricultural trend in the county has changed from small dairies with pasture and hay-land to intensive row cropped farming systems. Winter wheat, onions and sugar beets are the primary crops in rotation. Other crops produced include beans, silage corn, sweet corn and potatoes. Pesticide and fertilizer use has steadily increased due to these changes.

Soil Quality

Implementation of conservation practices has long term benefits. Some of those benefits are increased soil health, benefits to water quality and wildlife habitat. Following are several of the practices currently being promoted by the Weiser River Soil Conservation District.

- Erosion control
- Irrigation water management
- Water quality (surface and ground water)
- Education and outreach
- Pasture and rangeland management
- Nutrient management

Water Resources:

Surface and Ground Water Supply and Demand

Controlling erosion not only sustains the long-term productivity of the land, but also affects the amount of soil, pesticides, fertilizer, and other substances that move into the nation's waters.

Surface water is a tremendous resource to the WRSCD. Without the surface water and stored reservoir water, the amount of irrigated agriculture in the District would be severely limited. The water also is important for recreation and fish and wildlife needs. There is a growing awareness of pesticide and fertilizer contamination of surface water by the local farmer, ranchers and the general public.

There is a need for more education as to appropriate Best Management Practices (BMP's) to use in reducing sediment, nutrients and other potential contaminants in irrigation return flows and methods of control for stream channel erosion.

Flooding

A stream gage has been used for defining the Snake River frequency-discharge relationship. It has been operated from 1910 to the present and is located at the U.S. Highway 30N Bridge over the Snake River at Weiser.

The gage on the Weiser River near Weiser has several periods of discontinuous record from 1890 to 1952, with operation at the current site from 1952 to the present year. The gage on the Weiser River near Cambridge has been in operation from 1939 to the present year. The Weiser gage is located approximately 15 miles upstream from Weiser, and the Cambridge gage is located approximately 2 miles upstream from Cambridge.

Section 3: Assessment

Flooding (cont'd.)

Two types of flooding on the Weiser River affect the county in the vicinity of Weiser and Midvale. These are general rain/snowmelt floods and ice jam floods.

Minor flooding occurs on tributaries annually and greatly adds to sediment and soil loss. Extensive damage has occurred to cropland, roads, bridges and buildings.

Surface Water Quality

See Section 5

Ground Water Quality Problems

- Arsenic in ground water exceeds the drinking water standards. Idaho DEQ attributes the elevated levels to the geology of the project area and considers the arsenic to be at natural or "background" levels for the area.
- This area ranks in the top 3 in priority concern for nitrates in the state. Trends from water quality testing conducted since 1991 indicate the problem is increasing and IDEQ considers the present ground water quality problems as a serious threat to the domestic drinking water supply for the project area residents who rely on private wells. The 2004 monitoring results indicate 53% of the 38 wells consistently sampled in the project area exceed 10 mg/L with a maximum value of 41 mg/L. The drinking water standard is 10 mg/L. The highest concentrations are northwest of Weiser and between Weiser and Crystal.
- The most likely sources of nitrogen within the project area are presented in Table B.

Table B. Major Sources of Total Nitrogen Input and Loss in the Project Area

Total N Source	Estimated %	Total N Loss	Estimated %
Precipitation	1	Crop Uptake	52
Fertilizer	54	Beef & Dairy Manure	31
Septic Systems	< 1	Decomposition	17
Legumes	4		
Beef & Dairy Manure	40		
Total N Input 6,977,130 lbs.		Total N Loss 5,733,869 lbs.	
Net Increase = 1,243,261 lbs.			

The District is doing the following to address the issues:

- To improve and further protect the quality and quantity of surface and ground water within the project area
- To identify the major non-point pollution sources in the area, as well as their origin
- To determine the water quality effects on the project area from implementation of planned conservation measures
- To develop a program to accelerate the transfer of knowledge and technology to the agricultural producers within the project area
- To develop a water quality program promoting voluntary cooperation in solving water quality problems

Section 3: Assessment

Air Quality: (Cont'd)

- Air quality is worse during the fall when producers in Washington County and neighboring counties burn field stubble.
- Air Quality – Positive effect from tillage systems due to reduced suspended dust from wind erosion.
- Chemical Drift-encourage proper pest management in accordance with IPM regulations.

Forest Lands, Grassland, Pasture, Hayland and Rangeland:

Forest Lands

- The riparian forest consists of mixed conifers and deciduous trees. The associated understory is comprised of grasses and brush species with inclusions of wetter areas.
- Soils are silt loams and clay loams that are shallow to deep, and can have low to high rock fragment content. They range from somewhat poorly to well drained.
- Average annual precipitation ranges from 18 to 35 inches.
- Ponderosa pine and Douglas fir habitat types are found at elevation ranges from 1,800 to 4,000 feet on a variety of soil types. Livestock grazing occurs during the summer and early fall period. Important wildlife species include elk, deer, moose, bear, raptors and songbirds.

Pasture and Haylands

Pasture management for forage production and livestock grazing is located in lower elevation pastures as well as moderate elevation mountain valleys near Cambridge. Slopes vary from 0-7%. Irrigation consists of surface, sprinkler, non-irrigated (dryland), and riparian pasture. Surface irrigation can include concrete ditches with siphon tubes, but typically occurs with the use of earthen ditches or tarps on contour ditches. Sprinkler irrigation is less common and dryland pasture can be found primarily in the higher elevation portions of the watershed. Precipitation in the pastureland portions of the watershed ranges from less than 12 inches to more than 26 inches annually. Typical forage species may be introduced, including wheat grasses, fescues, bromes, orchard grass and alfalfa. The older established stands are of low vigor, with encroachment of invasive weed species. Management varies but typically includes continuous season-long grazing with below-optimum forage production. Nutrient, pest, and grazing management practices are limited. Livestock water is generally inadequate and may include free access to streams associated with pasture units. Adjacent riparian areas are important for wildlife habitat.

Conventional tillage is used when rotating pasture and grain. The average rotation is ten years of pasture and two years of small grain. Irrigation induced erosion is less than T but may exceed T during the grain rotation. Commercial fertilizers are occasionally applied but typically without soil testing or nutrient management. Animal waste deposited on the fields is harrowed on an irregular basis. Fencing and irrigation field ditches are generally existing practices.

Livestock utilization in riparian pastures is from late spring through fall. Typically these pastures are adjacent to perennial or intermittent streams. Vegetation ranges from native grass/sedge/rush complexes to improved forage species such as timothy, smooth brome grass, creeping meadow foxtail, orchard grass and clover.

Upland pastures are also present and located above flood plains on steeper, dissected hill sides or mountain sides. Vegetation is typically introduced species, such as orchard grass and smooth brome. Native species such as bluebunch wheatgrass, Idaho fescue, pine grass, elk sedge and native shrubs and trees may be found at higher elevations along mountain sides. The majority of grazing animals are cattle, sheep and horses. Big game utilize pasture for early spring and winter grazing. Wildlife includes elk, black bear, whitetail and mule deer, and moose.

Section 3: Assessment

Hayland

Rotation typically consists of alfalfa hay (4-6 years) with grass hay (2 years) and spring oats. Slopes range from 0-30%. Conventionally tilled surface and sprinkler irrigated hayland on 0-7% slopes. Irrigation water is normally plentiful. Small grains and alfalfa hay are grown in rotation, with alfalfa typically maintained for 4 to 6 years. Grazing of crop aftermath may occur. Nutrient, pest, and irrigation water management may be less than desirable. Threatened and endangered species, cultural resources, artificial and natural wetlands, 303(d) listed water bodies and groundwater sensitive areas are present.

Rangelands

Consists of low elevation desert to high elevation steep rangeland. Rangeland vegetation is characterized by sagebrush, rabbit brush, bitterbrush interspersed among perennial bunchgrasses and forbs. Some areas where fires or overgrazing have occurred exhibit problems with invasive species such as cheatgrass. Ecological status is typically less at lower elevations and improves with elevation.

Fencing is generally an existing practice. The typical planning unit is 640 acres. Riparian grazing units exhibit impacts to riparian vegetation and a loss of woody species. Riparian vegetation consists of grasses, sedges, rushes and a variety of woody species. Streams are primarily low gradient and depend on vegetation for lateral stability. The riparian rangeland areas are important habitat for a variety of fish and wildlife. Water quality is often a concern for sediment, temperature, and nutrients. Moisture for vegetative growth is primarily from high water tables and stream flows.

Livestock Production:

Coordinate with producers to install Animal Feeding Operations (AFO's) and pasture management: exclusion fencing, offsite watering, waste management facilities and riparian treatments.

Fish and Wildlife:

Fisheries management emphasis during the last decade or more in the Weiser River sub-basin and elsewhere in the region tended to be focused on salmonids due to their historic dominance, social value, and a general association with higher quality habitats. The presence of these species is generally considered an indicator of high quality aquatic ecosystems and habitats.

Assessments of native salmonids (steelhead trout, *Oncorhynchus mykiss*, Chinook salmon, *O. tshawytscha* and sockeye salmon, *O. nerka*) across watersheds throughout the Columbia River Basin (ICBEMP 1997) suggest that the Weiser River sub-basin contained anadromous salmonid habitat and a high proportion of species strongholds relative to other sub-basins in the region. Many of the sub-watersheds within the sub-basin supported strong populations of one or more native species of non-anadromous salmonids, including populations with large fluvial (migratory) adults. The installation of the Hells Canyon complex of dams from the late 1950s through the late 1960s effectively eliminated anadromous salmonids from the Weiser River. Anadromous Pacific lamprey are also thought to be present in the Weiser River sub-basin prior to construction of the Hells Canyon Dam complex (NWPPC 2002).

Native Fish Include:

Bull Trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*)
 Redband/rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*)
 Largescale sucker (*Catostomus macrocheilus*)
 Shorthead sculpin (*Cottus confusus*)
 Mottled sculpin (*Cottus bairdi*)
 Longnose Dace (*Rhinichthys cataractae*)

Section 3: Assessment

Wildlife listed for Washington County, Idaho as threatened, endangered or a species of concern are noted below. Not all of these species are likely to occur within the project area. Not all of these species have status under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), but land management activities should consider impacts to their population status and long term viability.

Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)

- Bald eagles have been observed in the project area. The Weiser and Snake Rivers are considered wintering bald eagle habitat.

Animal Species of Concern

Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*)

Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse (*Tympanuchus phasianellus*)

Townsend's Western Big-eared Bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii*)

Pygmy Rabbit (*Brachylagus idahoensis*)

Southern Idaho Ground Squirrel (*Spermophilus brunneus endemicus*)

District Operations:

The Weiser River SCD currently receives approximately \$10,000 annually from Washington County and approximately \$16,500 from the Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission. The funds from the Commission include the \$8,500 base allocation which is a base for all 50 Idaho Districts.

- Funds received provides the salary for the Office Manager, cost of newsletters, meetings, education and information projects.
- The District has a technician that is funded through grants. Sharona is currently working on the Cove Creek Wetland Project, Weiser Flat Wetland Project and the Weiser River Automated Head Gate Project.

The Weiser River SCD applied for a wetland project for the Cove Creek, the area is confluent with the Weiser River. As a District we have ranked this project high due to the fact that Cove Creek is confluent with the Weiser River and the Weiser River is confluent with the Snake River. Both rivers have completed TMDL's on them . The District applied for and received funding for 319 grants on the Weiser Flat for wetlands and The Weiser River Automated Headgate Project. The Weiser River SCD is meeting with IDEQ, NRCS, ISWCC as well as other agencies to create a plan to work on the Snake River as it enters Oregon.

The District meets monthly with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to work with them regarding the Environmental Quality Incentive Program, Conservation Service Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program and other programs related to agriculture. Between the local USDA Service Center and the District we have funded over \$1,400,000.00 worth of projects in the last couple of years.

The District holds a Conservation Sixth Grade Field Day event, which encompasses all of Washington County Sixth Grade students and teachers. This is a very large event held at Mann Creek Campground for over 250 individuals including seven local and state agencies. The District also helped to develop and oversee the creation of the First Grade Field Day event that has been held for the past 3 years. Due to budget cuts in education, this event was created to provide a local field trip for area first grade students. The District meets annually with local legislators, sets up educational displays at local fairs and the Idaho Statehouse, and holds conservation tours. A newsletter is distributed to over 525 local land-owners.

Section 4: Identify and Prioritize Objectives

- 1. District Operations**-To maintain, fund, and provide a viable District to land users, while promoting an effective education program.
 - Plan and conduct 12 monthly board meetings. Send agendas, minutes and advertise meetings.
 - Provide accurate record keeping and financial accountability by reconciling bank statements and preparing financial statements for review by the board. Continually secure District funding with the support of city and county and by pursuing grants.
 - District audit, annual report of accomplishments, five-year plan and budget plan sent to ISWCC.
 - Develop and utilize a yearly educational program addressing the needs of the public.
 - Organize tours of District demonstration projects.

- 2. Water Quality**-Fulfill responsibilities for water quality projects in progress.
 - Be a local participant with the Weiser River WAG and TAG
 - Promote and utilize the EQIP program through the NRCS and promote BMP installation of CAFO/AFO.
 - Continue to seek grant funding through 319 and other sources to install projects as set forth in the Weiser River TMDL Implementation Plan for Agriculture.

- 3. Irrigated and Non-Irrigated Cropland**-Promote effective irrigated and non-irrigated cropland management techniques through economically feasible means.
 - Promote Best Management Practice installation to solve resource problems.
 - Seek funding assistance for BMP's emphasizing the use of the EQIP or other programs through the NRCS.
 - Host Producer meetings to inform them of improved technology and organize a yearly public tour of the conservation practices the District is involved in.
 - Continue to develop Conservation Plans on irrigated and non-irrigated cropland.

- 4. Rangeland**-To protect soil, water, plant and animal resources on rangeland.
 - Promote improved management of private rangeland resources through reseeding and other management practices.
 - Be an active participant with the cooperative weed management area in the county. Received funding to do an Invasive Species Inventory Project of Jointed Goat Grass within the West Central Sage Grouse area.
 - Develop conservation plans for rangeland cooperators.
 - Utilize all NRCS available programs to assist operators in making resource improvements.

- 5. Animal Waste Management**-To improve and maintain land conditions while protecting natural resources.
 - Continually seek updated information
 - Promote Best Management Practice.
 - Seek grant or loan funding.
 - Conduct Supervisor Tours.

- 6. Urban**-Raise awareness within our urban communities of our natural resource issues and agriculture.
 - Provide cities with technical assistance and programs in addressing resource concerns
 - Create better urban awareness of District operations and programs.
 - Actively participate and seek opportunities to work with city officials addressing resource concerns.
 - Actively seek a liaison from county and city government to the board of supervisors.

Section 5: Water Quality Component

Ground water near Weiser, Idaho has been degraded by nitrate leaching. Domestic wells show elevated nitrate levels close to, or above, the national minimum standards. Nitrate leaching to ground water can occur from several sources, including irrigated agriculture. Approximately 26,000 acres near Weiser are farmed using surface furrow irrigation. Furrow irrigation is recognized as the least efficient method of applying water to crops. In addition, some crops in the area, such as onions, have historically used high amounts of nitrogen fertilizer. The combination of furrow irrigation and high nitrogen application often results in nitrate runoff or nitrate leaching.

In 2001, the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality announced the Weiser aquifer as the number one nitrate priority area in Idaho. In 2010, it was designated third in the state. With the assistance of the IDEQ, a county advisory committee was formed to develop a ground water management plan. The Weiser River Soil Conservation District applied for and received funding to do a demonstration project to install best management practices, such as drip and surge irrigation, along with sediment ponds and filter strips.

The U of I extension office introduced a demonstration project to evaluate the effectiveness of using soil moisture sensors and monitors. The goal was to help growers schedule irrigations more efficiently, prevent crop disease loss, and reduce soil and nutrient loss. This project has continued for five years and includes sugarbeets and onions. Results from the demonstration projects were presented in classes, conferences, and in reports.

Historically many growers in the Weiser area used excessive amounts of nitrate fertilizer, especially for onion production. At the conclusion of the 2004 season, growers were shown where water use was excessive and where there were opportunities for improvement. Soil and water tests also revealed locations of nitrate loss or leaching. As a result, two onion growers elected to reduce their 2005 nitrate applications from 300 pounds per acre to 150 pounds per acre. Another onion grower used soil sensors and monitors on his drip irrigated onions to schedule irrigations more efficiently. The resulting yields were among the highest that particular field has produced. The soil moisture sensors and monitors also showed growers where they had inadequate water for optimum crop production. These growers are converting to surge and drip irrigation so they can make optimum use of the water allocation they do have.

The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, Weiser Soil Conservation District, Washington County Extension, Idaho Department of Agriculture, Washington County Ground Water Quality Committee, and Weiser growers continue to collaborate on irrigation improvement projects.

The IDEQ has installed monitoring wells so nitrate levels can be measured and then compared to improve farming practices and reduced farm inputs.

The Weiser River Soil Conservation District has completed the installation of the Cove Creek Wetland off of Cove Road and the Smith/Hemmingway on the Weiser Flat. The Cove Creek Wetland is confluent with the Weiser River at Cove Creek. The wetland has been installed along with fencing and planting to be completed this spring. The Smith/Hemmingway wetland has also been installed with fencing to be completed this spring. We will then begin the Warm Springs Wetland. The District secured 319 funding through IDEQ and was able to automate several head-gates, which proved to be very successful this past year with a drought. The water savings allowed the Galloway Ditch to distribute water 30 days longer than anticipated.



Weiser - 17050124

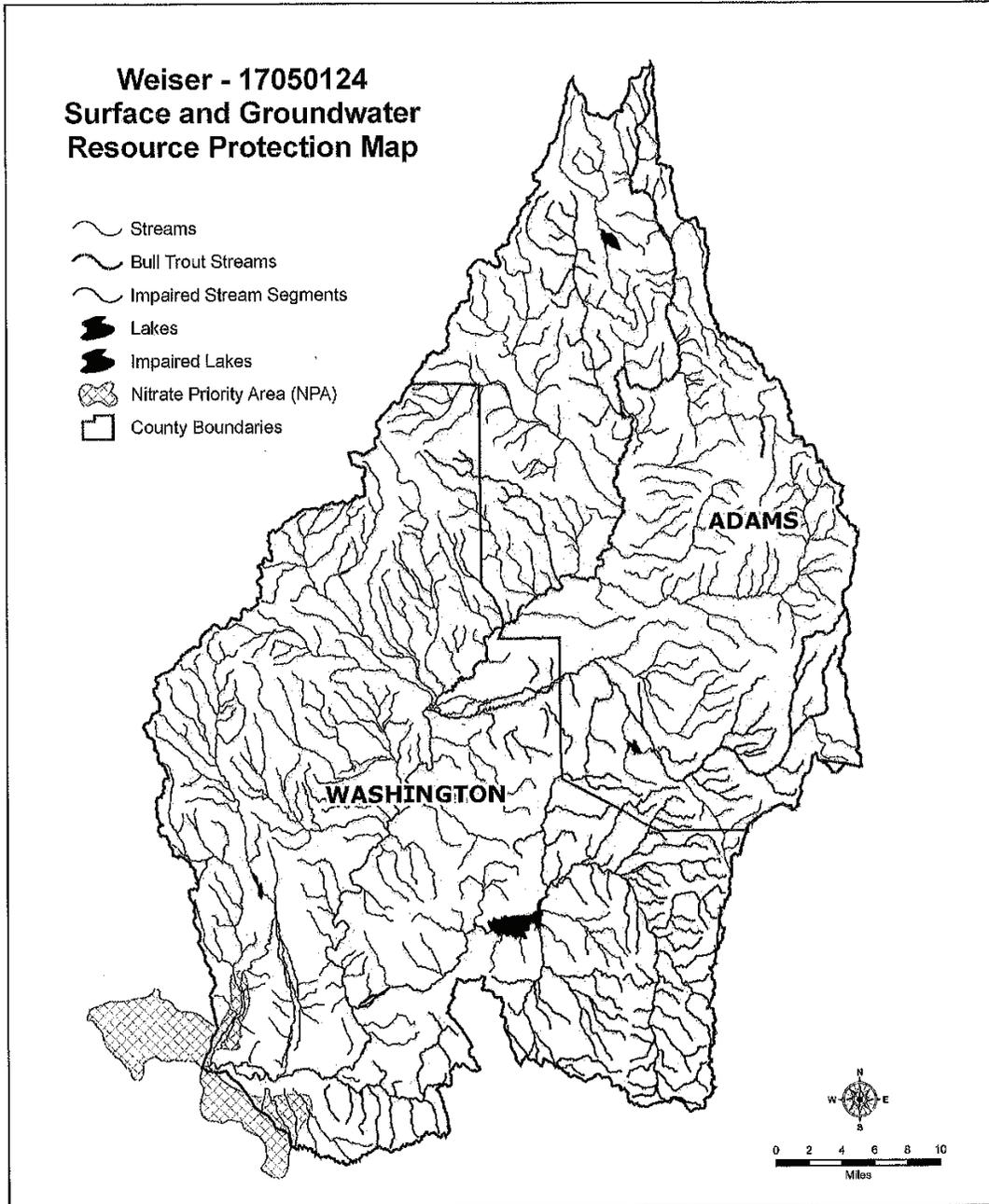
Idaho

8 Digit Hydrologic Unit Profile

June 2007

Resource Concerns - continued

Surface and Groundwater Resource Protection



Section 6: Identify, Prioritize & Implement Projects

The Weiser River SCD will take action to address the goals set forth. We will maintain a good relationship with landowners and continuously work with them and provide information and assistance to meet their conservation needs.

- Weiser River SCD currently administers two grants. 319 Cove Creek Wetland Project and Weiser Irrigation District Wetland Project .
- Weiser River SCD will continue to obtain cost-share funding to control non-point source pollution and soil erosion.
- Continuously looking for funding in specific watersheds: Snake River and the Weiser River, both are TMDL listed .
- Continuously looking for funding to work with local landowners and their conservation issues.

The Weiser River SCD works with local schools to educate the youth about soil, water and other natural resources.

- In the Spring, the District partners with the local 1st grade classes to do a conservation field day with approximately 180 students and 25 teachers and volunteers. This came about when the economy made it difficult for them to fund any field trips. We saw this as an opportunity to do conservation by rotating through 6 different presenters; 2 sites with forestry, 1 with FFA, 2 with Weiser River SCD and the school itself. We also are involved in Envirothon, by taking 2-4 teams each year.
- In the fall, the students in 6th grade are given the opportunity to participate in the Annual IASCD poster contest.
- Summer brings tours and opportunities to work out in the field.

The Weiser River SCD also promotes projects by doing the following:

- Quarterly newsletters are published and mailed out. Articles are sent to 3 local newspapers within Washington county. We have created what is called the Conservation Corner in the Weiser Signal American where we can place conservation information monthly.

Section 7: Implementation

Information – Education Priorities and Goals:

- All 6th grade students in the surrounding area schools will have had the opportunity by September 30th, to participate in the poster contest for Division III.
- All eligible high school students will have had the opportunity to participate in the conservation speech contest, by September 30th.
- Each year all first grade students in the Weiser School District will have an opportunity to participate in the annual 1st grade campout field day. This was created to help the first graders with an annual field trip due to budget cost, which gave the District an opportunity to educate on conservation issues within the schools.
- In May of each year, Washington County students attend the state wide Envirothon competition, which is associated with the National Envirothon and is the largest natural conservation competition in the nation.
- Each year the Weiser River SCD mailing list will be updated to keep the information current and up to date. We send a newsletter of District projects and NRCS project information to over 500 local landowners.

District Operations Priorities, Goals:

- Retain Technical Assistance provided by ISWCC to assist with the planning, design and implementation of project funds through the District.
- Conduct public meetings for the watersheds with active TMDL implementation and assessment. Primarily the Snake and Weiser River TMDL and their listed tributaries.
- Professionally administer the grants for implementation of conservation best management practices.
- Dependent upon funding attend IASCD Division meetings and IASCD Annual Conference.
- Develop professional relations with other agencies and the general public.
- Encourage the implementation of best management practices that reduce soil erosion and improve water quality.
- Conduct Conservation District elections during even numbered years.
- Present annual budget to the County Commissioners each May.
- Schedule audit of the Fiscal Year activities in July, to provide financial accountability for funds administered through the District.
- Maintain an accurate accounting system.
- Explore alternative funding sources to meet conservation needs.
- Prepare monthly financial reports for the monthly Board meetings.
- Provide technical, educational and financial assistance to landowners and operators.
- Participate in Division III training.
- Hold annual tours of District Projects.

Staffing Needs

- Full-time Conservation District Administrative Assistant with equitable professional salary and benefits.
- Additional funding sources for our Resource Technician, this person is funded solely with grant funding at the current time.

Annual Plan of Work

Action	Begin Date	End Date
▪ Identify budget and staff needs and continue to pursue and research funding through different grant sources.	7-2015	6-2020
▪ Strengthen relationships with legislators and partner agencies.	7-2015	6-2020
▪ Write articles for local newspapers about different resource concerns and ways of addressing them.	7-2015	6-2020
▪ Continue educating the public and youth about conservation and natural resources. Continue sponsoring the 6th Grade Field Day, 1st Grade Field Day, Envirothon and Forestry Contest.	7-2015	6-2020
▪ Continue District participation in annual meetings and training sessions about various programs etc., to keep the employees and producers up to date on current events.	7-2015	6-2020
▪ Publish newsletters quarterly on District website and Facebook.	7-2015	6-2020

Certificate of Adoption

IDAHO SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION <u>FIVE-YEAR (5) PLAN and ANNUAL WORK PLAN CERTIFICATION</u>	DISTRICT: Weiser River SCD
	FOR FISCAL YEAR: FY 2015
	DUE : March 31, 2015

CERTIFICATION

On behalf of my local Board of Supervisors, I hereby certify that the attached Five-Year (5) Plan and Annual Work Plan is true and accurate, and further submit said Plan for the above named District and fiscal year.

A copy of this Five-Year (5) Plan and Annual Work Plan shall be kept at the District office and is available for public inspection.

Rodney C. Panike

Board Supervisor Signature

Rodney C. Panike

Printed Name

March 4, 2015

Date

208-549-2628 X112

Telephone

vicki.lukehart@id.nacdnet.net

District Email Address

FOR SWC USE ONLY:

DATE OF CONFIRMATION: _____