

IDAHO SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT SUPERVISOR HANDBOOK



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Introduction: Purpose of the Supervisor Handbook

This handbook was developed to provide conservation district supervisors with information, materials, and guidance to better understand their role as public officials and local conservation leaders. It is intended that this handbook be used as a learning tool for conservation district supervisors. It may also be used as a reference for supervisors and employees as questions arise during the course of conducting district business. Although this handbook is not intended to be a comprehensive manual containing *everything* a supervisor should know, it will hopefully become a valuable resource for Idaho's conservation districts and supervisors.

As a conservation district supervisor you have been elected to fulfill the roles and responsibilities inherent to the position. To succeed you must first be fully aware of your statutory powers, duties, and authorities. Conservation districts in Idaho are unique governmental entities with unique opportunities. We hope this handbook will clarify that each of the 50 districts in Idaho possesses the potential to achieve tremendous conservation accomplishments together with private landowners to positively impact their local communities.

Among other responsibilities, you have been entrusted with the power to administer local conservation programs, receive and spend public funds, and educate the public on natural resource conservation issues. You are not alone in this endeavor. Statewide there are over 270 conservation district supervisors, and nationwide there are more than 17,000 supervisors serving as local leaders for over 3,000 conservation districts.

We hope this handbook provides you with an understanding of the "big picture" and of your responsibilities as a public official representing your local conservation district.

History of the Conservation Movement and Creation of Conservation Districts

This brief summary is intended to provide an historical understanding of the circumstances, factors, and events that led to the creation of soil conservation districts. For a comprehensive history, including a summary of each of Idaho's conservation district's history, please refer to the publication entitled *Serving People and the Land: A History of Idaho's Soil Conservation Movement*, which can be found as **APPENDIX A** of this handbook.

National Background

In the early 1930s, along with the greatest depression this nation ever experienced, came an equally unparalleled ecological disaster known as the Dust Bowl. Following a severe and sustained drought in the Great Plains, the region's soil began to erode and blow away, creating huge black dust storms that blotted out the sun. Growing agricultural crops proved impossible and thousands of "dust refugees" left the black fog to seek better lives.

These dust storms persisted until they stretched across the nation, eventually reaching as far south as Texas and all the way east to New York. Ultimately, dust from this disaster even sifted into the White House and onto the desk of President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In the years leading up to this occurrence, a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) soil scientist by the name of Hugh Hammond Bennett had been witnessing first-hand the negative effects of soil erosion during the course of his duties as a soil surveyor in the southern states. Bennett was an active advocate for soil conservation and had emphasized in a 1928 bulletin entitled *Soil Erosion, A National Menace*, that every aspect of life in the United States could be affected if erosion continued.

Years later as the effects of the Dust Bowl crippled the nation, Bennett was on Capitol Hill testifying about the national soil erosion problem. During his testimony he threw back the curtains to reveal a sky blackened by dust. After Bennett's testimony, Congress unanimously passed legislation declaring soil and water conservation a national priority. The resulting action was signing of the Soil and Water Conservation Act on April 27, 1935 by President Roosevelt and the creation of the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), now known as the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) within the USDA. Hugh Hammond Bennett was selected as the first Chief of the new agency. His simply stated philosophy, "If we take care of the land, it will take care of us" continues to guide the work of NRCS today.

Since nearly three-fourths of the continental United States is privately owned, USDA officials and Congress eventually realized that only active, voluntary support from landowners could enable the success of conservation work on private land. It was determined that leadership for soil conservation should be implemented from the ground up through local units of government, rather than top down from the federal government. As a result, President Roosevelt eventually wrote all state governors on February 27, 1937 urging them to adopt legislation allowing for the creation of soil conservation districts within their state. Included with each letter was a carefully drafted model state law, the "Standard State Soil Conservation Districts Law" to be used as a template for the states.

State Background

In Idaho, it wasn't until 1939 at the urging of SCS State Coordinator R. Neil Irving that Arthur Snow, a Latah County legislator, was persuaded to introduce the "Standard State Soil Conservation Districts Law" as a bill to the legislature. Several members of the legislature suggested revisions. In addition to allowing for the creation of soil conservation districts, the new bill included provisions for the creation of a state soil conservation commission to help organize and coordinate the districts. The bill was then successfully passed as Idaho's Soil Conservation District Law by the 25th Legislature on March 1, 1939. It was signed into law by Governor C.A. Bottolfson on March 9, 1939.

Conservation district organization progressed rapidly in Idaho after passage of the soil conservation district law. In fact, just over one year later on May 1, 1940, the Latah Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and the Bear Lake SWCD became the first two conservation districts to be formally organized in Idaho. Less than three weeks later the Portneuf SWCD joined them, and by the end of 1940 two more conservation districts (Squaw Creek SCD and Elmore [originally Mayfield] SCD) were officially organized. Collectively, these became the first five conservation districts in Idaho.

By 1944 the number of conservation districts in Idaho had reached 11 and the supervisors of the districts recognized a need for an association that could represent and speak for districts at the statewide and national level. On March 25, 1944, the Latah district organized a meeting in Boise of all districts that led to the creation of a non-profit organization called the Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts (IASCD). This organization continues to represent Idaho's conservation districts.

By the end of 1947, 22 districts had organized and ten years later that number reached 48 conservation districts. The number of districts in Idaho reached an all-time high of 55 in 1962, but through consolidations that number was eventually reduced to 51 conservation districts in Idaho in 1974. Over thirty-five years later, in 2010, that number has been reduced by one more through consolidation to give us our current total of 50 conservation districts in Idaho.

Idaho's 50 Conservation Districts

Today, Idaho's 50 conservation districts are locally led by over 270 publicly elected officials recognized as conservation district supervisors. Individual districts are governed collectively by a board of either 5 or 7 supervisors. Each conservation district is unique according to geographic boundaries, but all districts are unified in their effort to provide non-regulatory, incentive-based assistance to private landowners and land users in the conservation, sustainment, improvement and enhancement of Idaho's natural resources. This effort is successfully executed through the dedicated work of conservation district supervisors, district staff, and partnerships at the local, regional, state, and federal level.

Future Conservation Leadership Roles for Idaho Conservation Districts

Traditionally, conservation districts have engaged primarily in conservation activities with private landowners in the agricultural sector such as farmers and ranchers. While this partnership with agricultural producers is essential to the function of conservation districts and remains intact, additional conservation opportunities in Idaho are presenting themselves.

As more people discover the quality of life in Idaho, increases in population occur and a subsequent

change in the landscape inevitably follows. What once was a farm or ranch may soon become a neighborhood, an organic farm, a park, or a ranchette/hobby farm. The local conservation districts have the authority to work with these new landowners and land users for the purposes of natural resource conservation. What may be considered a new challenge can also present new opportunities. However, it is up to each conservation district and the governing supervisors to determine priorities and plan appropriately to address local conservation issues.

The roles and responsibilities that conservation districts may have regarding urban conservation and land-use planning are also being discussed at the national level by the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD). Representing over 3,000 conservation districts nationwide, the NACD network may be a good resource for supervisors looking to lead their district into these newly emerging roles.

Roles and Responsibilities of Conservation Districts and Supervisors

Districts are Public Bodies and Supervisors are Public Officials

As defined in soil conservation district law (chapter 27, title 22, Idaho Code), a conservation district is a governmental subdivision of the state and a public body corporate and politic. The law also states that each conservation district must be composed of a governing body (commonly referred to as a “district board”) consisting of either five (5) or seven (7) supervisors. District supervisors are not simply interested residents, farmers, and ranchers forming a social group. District supervisors are locally elected public officials that constitute the governing body of a conservation district. chapter 27, title 22 of Idaho Code is attached as **APPENDIX B** of this handbook. A document titled “Statutes Referenced in Soil Conservation District Law” is attached as **APPENDIX C** of this handbook for your reference.

Whether you are a newly elected supervisor, a supervisor with decades of district board service, or an individual interested in serving on your local conservation district board, it is essential for you to understand 1) the powers, authorities, and responsibilities of conservation districts as governmental subdivisions of the state (i.e. public bodies), and 2) the powers, authorities, and responsibilities of district supervisors (i.e. elected public officials).

It is the duty of each individual supervisor to comply with the statutes and rules governing public officials and to understand and properly execute the authorities of conservation districts. It is important to know that conservation districts and supervisors must comply with much more than simply the statutes defined in soil conservation district law. Districts and supervisors must also comply with state and federal laws relating to elections, ethics, open meetings, public records, public officers, and public funds.

Authorities of Districts and Supervisors

Although soil conservation district law (chapter 27, title 22, Idaho Code) has undergone various revisions since its origination, the core elements and intent of district law remain unchanged. Namely, conservation districts in Idaho are important and relevant to the State and they are recognized as possessing real authorities and responsibilities as defined in law. In turn, conservation district supervisors are important, relevant, and possess real authorities and responsibilities as elected public officials.

Section 22-2716, Idaho Code, among other sections of state statute, declares the importance of conservation districts and supervisors to the State of Idaho. To summarize this portion of Idaho Code:

It is the determination of the state of Idaho that:

- Forest lands, rangelands and agricultural lands maintained in a healthy condition are a legitimate land use contributing to the economic, social and environmental well-being of the state and its citizens
- It is essential that conservation improvements be implemented on a broader scale on both public and private lands

It is in the best interest of the state of Idaho:

- To emphasize non-regulatory, science-based technical assistance, incentive-based financial programs and informational and educational programs at the local level
- That soil conservation districts and the state soil and water conservation commission 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
- That soil conservation districts and the state soil and water conservation commission lead nonregulatory efforts to conserve, sustain, improve and enhance Idaho's private and state lands

It is the policy of the state of Idaho:

- That all conservation programs shall deliver services fairly and equitably and strengthen the conservation district delivery system

As a conservation district supervisor or potential supervisor you have been tasked not simply with *participating* as a board member at monthly meetings; you have been tasked by law, to *lead* one of the *primary entities* in the state in *nonregulatory* efforts to *conserve, sustain, improve, and enhance Idaho's natural resources*. Your challenge is great.

Powers of Districts and Supervisors

The following summary includes excerpted text from soil conservation district law section 22-2722, Idaho Code, entitled "Powers of Districts and Supervisors." Since these are simply highlights and paraphrases from statute, it is recommended that all current supervisors and potential supervisors review and understand soil conservation district law in its entirety and section 22-2722, Idaho Code, in particular. To effectively carry out the duties of a district supervisor you must have a clear understanding of your responsibilities and of the programs you represent. By becoming an active and involved supervisor you can make an important difference in your community. As the saying goes, "With great power comes great responsibility." A copy of chapter 27, title 22, Idaho Code can be found as **APPENDIX B** of this handbook.

Soil conservation districts and supervisors have the following powers:

- To conduct surveys, investigations, and research relating to soil erosion, floodwater and sediment damages
- To publish the results of surveys, investigations, or research

- To conduct demonstrational projects for soil erosion and flood prevention, and soil and water conservation
- To carry out preventive measures for flood prevention or the conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water
- To enter into agreements to provide financial or other aid to agencies, governmental or otherwise, or any landowners within the district to carry out erosion control, flood prevention, and water conservation operations
- To acquire property or rights or interests therein
- To receive income from properties
- To sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of any of its property or interests therein to carry out authorized activities and provisions in soil conservation district law
- To make agricultural and engineering equipment available to landowners within the district for the conservation of soil resources and for flood prevention or the conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water
- To construct, improve, operate and maintain structures necessary for the performance of soil and water conservation activities and operations
- To develop detailed, district-wide comprehensive plans for the conservation of soil and water resources
- To publish comprehensive plans and information and bring them to the attention of landowners and operators within the district
- To take over, administer, or manage any soil conservation, flood prevention, erosion control, or erosion prevention project undertaken by the United States or any of its agencies, or by the state of Idaho or any of its agencies
- To accept contributions in money, services, materials, or otherwise from state or federal agencies, and use or expend such moneys, services, materials, or other contributions in carrying on district operations
- To receive tax-deductible charitable contributions, donations, or gifts from private individuals and organizations for exclusively public purposes
- To sue and be sued in the name of the district
- To make and execute contracts to carry out district duties and powers
- To make, amend, and repeal rules to carry into effect the purposes and powers set forth in soil conservation district law
- To require and accept contributions (moneys, services, materials, or otherwise) for conservation services provided to landowners on lands within a conservation district

Conservation districts and supervisors also have the ability to execute other powers including, but not limited to: initiating the consolidation of two or more existing districts, hiring and employing staff, and requesting funding to use for any purpose authorized by law. In addition, conservation districts may contract for legal services with the office of the attorney general or with other counsel.

Who can be a Conservation District Supervisor?

Simply stated from section 22-2721(1), Idaho Code, “All supervisors shall be landowners or farmers of the district where they are elected or appointed and shall be registered to vote in the state of Idaho.”

Election Process

The full process for electing conservation district supervisors is set forth in section 22-2721, Idaho Code, and in Uniform District Election Law (chapter 14, title 34, Idaho Code) which is included in this handbook as **APPENDIX D**. Conservation district supervisors are also subject to the statutes governing Recall Elections as stated in chapter 17, title 34 Idaho Code, **APPENDIX E** of this handbook. If you are unsure of the election requirements and unfamiliar with the terms of the supervisor elections process including declaration of intent or candidacy, nominating petition, qualified candidate, qualified electors, or notice of election, please refer to these statutes (included in this handbook) for further guidance.

Conservation district elections for supervisors shall be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of each even-numbered year. Nominating petitions for prospective supervisors are available from your county clerk or from your local conservation district office. The county clerk or county clerks of the county or counties in which the district is located shall perform all necessary duties of the election including, but not limited to, notice of filing deadline, notice of the election, and preparation of the election calendar.

Section 22-2721(4), Idaho Code provides straightforward guidance for a situation that sometimes occurs during elections for district supervisor positions. It states:

“In any election for supervisor, if after the deadline for filing a declaration of intent as a write-in candidate, it appears that the number of qualified candidates who have been nominated is equal to the number of supervisors to be elected, it shall not be necessary for the candidates to stand for election, and the board of supervisors shall declare such candidates elected as supervisors, and the state soil and water conservation commission shall immediately make and deliver to such persons certificates of election.”

Compensation

District supervisors are volunteers elected to serve as public officials. Section 27-2721(8), Idaho Code, clearly states, “A supervisor shall receive no compensation from regular district funds, county funds..., or state funds...” The same section of law additionally states, however, that soil conservation district supervisors “...shall be entitled to expenses, including travel expense, necessarily incurred in the discharge of duties.”

Special district projects provide the only exception under which supervisors may be compensated for performance of conservation district duties. Still, the compensation may not be provided from district, county, or state funds. To clarify, section 22-2721(9), Idaho Code, reads, “In the event the district has a special project, approved by the state soil and water conservation commission, making project funds available from federal or other sources, a supervisor may receive compensation not to exceed thirty-five dollars (\$35.00) per day plus actual and necessary expenses from project funds for services directly

related to the project.”

Conservation District Board Administrative Structure

Conservation district supervisors are required to designate a chairperson and may also designate other such officers to serve various board positions. Here are some examples of the duties generally associated with these positions.

Chair

The chairperson provides leadership for developing agendas, conducting and presiding over regularly scheduled meetings, and fulfilling the duties of the conservation district. Additional duties may include appointing committees, assigning responsibilities and tasks to board members and/or staff, and orienting new supervisors. The chair is the face of the district to outside partners, agencies, and organizations and therefore, the Chair’s conduct and leadership on behalf of the conservation district is critically important to the district’s success.

Vice-Chair

The vice-chair fills the duties of the chair in his or her absence and is responsible for advising the chair on programs, policies, and committee designations.

Treasurer

Conservation district finances are often managed by paid staff such as an administrative assistant. Management duties include maintenance of financial records, preparation of checks as authorized by the board, and presentation of monthly financial reports. It is typically the responsibility of the treasurer to oversee the financial records and accounts of the district.

Secretary/Clerk/Administrative Assistant

Often, the role of attending meetings and keeping an accurate record of the proceedings in the form of meeting minutes is designated by the supervisors to a paid district employee, such as a clerk or administrative assistant. In lieu of a paid district employee, the supervisors must designate a supervisor as secretary or designate a note taker to compose meeting minutes that comply with Idaho Open Meeting Law, section 67-2344, Idaho Code.

Associates

Associate supervisors are optional and informal positions whereby interested members from the community serve as advisors and representatives to the board. Associates are not allowed to vote on board decisions but they can augment the knowledge and experience of the supervisors and assist, as requested, with district programs. It is important to consider orienting associates just as you would supervisors and encourage their involvement in meaningful activities and projects. The associate position is often a stepping stone to board supervisor.

Conservation District Board Meetings

Overview and discussion of Idaho Meeting Law

Regularly scheduled meetings are fundamental to conducting conservation district business. Monthly

board meetings serve several purposes including scoping, planning, determining board policy, identifying conservation needs, monitoring program and project implementation, and reviewing and approving district expenditures. These meetings are critical to fulfilling legal responsibilities, communicating conservation needs within the district, and taking district action in the community.

As a governing body of a public agency, a conservation district Board of Supervisors is required to comply with the Idaho Open Meeting Law (67-2340 through 67-2347, Idaho Code). As stated by the Office of the Attorney General, “The Open Meeting Law codifies a simple, but fundamental, Idaho value: The public’s business ought to be done in public.”

The Attorney General’s Open Meeting Law and Ethics in Government Manuals are included as **APPENDIX F** and **APPENDIX G** of this supervisor handbook, respectively. As a district supervisor you are expected to understand the requirements and comply with state statutes regarding open meetings. Included here for your benefit are some of the critical elements of open meetings that apply to conservation district board meetings:

- All meetings shall be open to the public
- Meetings must not be held in a location where discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, age, or national origin is practiced
- Notice of meetings must be given no less than 5 calendar days in advance
- Agendas for meetings shall be required and must be posted at least 48 hours in advance
- Special meetings require at least 24 hours meeting and agenda notice unless an emergency exists
- Written minutes must be recorded for all meetings and be made available to the public
- Meeting minutes shall include at least the following:
 - Members of the governing body present
 - All motions, resolutions, orders, or ordinances proposed and their disposition
 - The results of all votes
- Any member who conducts or participates in a meeting which violates open meeting law shall be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed fifty dollars (\$50)
- Any member who knowingly violates open meeting law provisions shall be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500)

Since most conservation districts hold regularly scheduled monthly board meetings on the same day and the same time every month (e.g., the first Thursday of every month at 7:00 p.m.), the following provision in section 67-2343(1), Idaho Code, is important to understand:

“Provided however, that any public agency that holds meetings at regular intervals of at least once per calendar month scheduled in advance over the course of the year may satisfy this meeting notice by giving meeting notices at least once each year of its regular meeting schedule. The notice requirements for meetings and agendas shall be satisfied by posting such notices and agendas in a prominent place at the principal office of the public agency, or if no such office exists, at the building where the meeting is to be held.”

The Idaho Public Records Law (Idaho Code sections 9-337 through 9-350) governs the documents and

minutes associated with board meetings as well as district records. The intent of the law is that all records maintained by public agencies are open to the public for inspection and copying at all reasonable times, unless the information is specifically exempted from disclosure by law. Public record, as defined in section 9-227(13), is an extremely broad concept. It "...includes, but is not limited to, any writing containing information relating to the conduct or administration of the public's business prepared, owned, used or retained by any state or local agency regardless of physical form or characteristics." Unless exempted by state or federal law, it should be assumed that all records pertaining to district business, including draft documents, emails, and handwritten notes, are available for public inspection upon request. With respect to federal law, it is important to note that section 1619 of the 2008 Farm Bill prohibits the release of certain categories of information gathered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and certain information gathered by cooperators from producers and landowners in the delivery of technical and financial assistance for USDA programs. As a result, this information is also exempt from disclosure under the Public Records Law. However, districts should consult with legal counsel regarding the federal statute's specific requirements. A copy of the Idaho Public Records Law is attached as **APPENDIX H** of this supervisor handbook.

Parliamentary Procedure

It can often be challenging to conduct an efficient and effective conservation district board meeting. To do so the chairman must be organized and disciplined while running the meeting. To ensure discussions during the meeting occur in an orderly and fair fashion, most conservation district boards follow parliamentary procedure. This brief summary of parliamentary procedure that follows was adapted from the National Association of Conservation Districts' (NACD) quick reference guide for conservation district supervisors and other NACD resources.

Although not required by law, the rules of parliamentary procedure originated from court decisions concerning the proper way to conduct business. Parliamentary procedure assures all sides of an issue are treated fairly, and allows all supervisors the opportunity to voice an opinion and to vote. Parliamentary procedure protects individuals and groups in their exercise of free speech, free assembly, and freedom to unite in groups and organizations. The guidance included here is not intended to cover all principles of parliamentary procedure, but can be used as a basic guide for conducting conservation district board meetings.

Basic Principles of Parliamentary Procedure:

- 1) Only one subject may be dealt with at a time
- 2) Extend courtesy to everyone
 - a. Each person in the meeting should be treated respectfully and should be given an equal opportunity to speak and present ideas
- 3) Observe the rule of the majority
 - a. When items of business are voted on, the resulting decision will be based on the will of the majority
- 4) Ensure the rights of the minority
 - a. Even those with opinions different from that of the majority shall have an equal opportunity to express their ideas

- 5) According to parliamentary procedure, proceedings (and motions in particular) must be carried out in the correct order (referred to as “precedence of motions”)

Basic Terms and Definitions of Parliamentary Procedure:

- **Abstain:** to give up one’s vote when a vote has been called
- **Amend a motion:** to add, insert, substitute wording, or delete wording from the original motion; or to substitute an entire motion for the original motion
- **Assembly:** the group of members at a meeting
- **Aye:** used in a voice vote to vote in the affirmative (i.e., “All those in favor of the motion, say ‘aye.’”)
- **Call the question:** to attempt to stop debate of a motion; an immediate stop to debate requires a second and a two-thirds vote
- **Chair, Chairman, Chairperson:** the person in charge of conducting the meeting
- **Consideration:** to discuss and decide on an item of business in a meeting
- **Commit:** to refer a motion to a committee
- **Committee:** a small group of people within an organization who have a specific task or project to complete
- **Delegate:** to give someone a task or job to be completed
- **Discussion:** debate that occurs after the presiding officer (typically the chair) restates the motion, and prior to a vote on the motion
- **Floor:** to have the “floor” is to have been recognized by the chairperson and have the right to speak
- **Germane:** to be relevant and to relate to the pending motion or to the business at hand
- **Maker of the motion:** a person who makes a motion during a meeting
- **Motion:** a proposal that the group take a particular action or stand; for a motion to proceed it must have a second, and once it is seconded it can be followed by discussion and, finally, a vote
- **Nay:** used in a voice vote to vote in the negative (i.e., “All those opposed to the motion, say ‘nay.’”); Robert’s Rules of Order alternatively suggests using the word “no.”
- **Pending:** the current motion or business before the assembly
- **Point of Order:** if a member feels the rules are not being followed, he or she can use this motion which requires the chair to make a ruling and enforce the rules
- **Question:** another way of saying “the vote”, as in “Are you ready for the question?” or “Call the question.”
- **Quorum:** the number of voting members who must be present in order that business can be legally transacted
- **Second:** to announce “second” once a motion is made in a meeting is to indicate that you also support bringing the motion before the assembly for discussion; a motion must receive a sustained second in order to be discussed, or it dies
- **Sustain:** to support and uphold a ruling
- **Recognized:** to be given the right to speak by the chairperson
- **Yield the floor:** when a member finishes speaking, he or she “yields the floor,” or gives the floor back to the chairperson

Parliamentary Procedure Precedence of Motions

The motions in this table are ranked in order of precedence from the top row to the bottom row and indicate the order in which specific motions should be processed. This is called the Precedence of Motions. When a motion is immediately pending, any motion above it is in order and any motion below it is out of order.

YOU WANT TO:	YOU SAY:	INTERRUPT?	2nd?	DEBATE?	AMEND?	VOTE?
Close meeting	I move that we adjourn.	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
Take break	I move to recess for...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Register complaint	I rise to a question of privilege.	Yes	No	No	No	None
Lay aside temporarily	I move that the main motion be postponed temporarily.	No	Yes	No	No	Varies
Close debate and vote immediately	I move to close debate <i>or</i> call the question.	No	Yes	No	Yes	2/3
Limit or extend debate	I move to limit debate to...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3
Postpone to certain time	I move to postpone the motion until...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Refer to committee	I move to refer the motion to...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Modify wording of motion	I move to amend the motion by...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Bring business before assembly (a main motion)	I move that...	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

Conservation District Supervisor Recruitment Guide

Effective conservation district programs are built and sustained by qualified, knowledgeable, and committed board members. A district board whose members exhibit a diverse combination of skills will be more responsive to the needs of the community and better able to gain support for local conservation efforts.

The Need for Recruitment

Turnover of board members presents challenges as well as opportunities for districts. On the one hand, districts may have a difficult time finding a replacement with the same skills, knowledge, and commitment as a departing board member. On the other hand, turnover provides an opportunity to re-evaluate the district's needs and develop a strategy to meet those needs through strategic recruitment of new board members.

Recruitment begins with identification of the qualities desired in current and prospective district board members. An important first step is evaluating the current make-up of the district board and defining roles and expectations for all board members. This process helps determine the skills and talents of current board members and identify additional skills and talents that will enhance the board's ability to achieve the district's goals and objectives. District boards can then use a variety of recruitment strategies to help identify potential members who possess the desired skills and interests that are compatible with the district. Once found, these "new recruits" can not only be integrated into district programs and activities as elected or appointed board members, but can also become involved as associates or volunteers.

Although the recruitment process can appear time consuming and intimidating, a well developed recruitment plan can be rewarding. A district can gain committed and responsible district board members. Ultimately, strong boards are those that strive for the diversity of experience, ideas, and backgrounds needed to achieve successful program development and implementation.

The Importance of Community Outreach

Community outreach is at the heart of building a responsive district that can provide the best possible customer service to the people in your community. An effective district board will reflect the ideas and culture of the entire community which allows all individuals to share ideas and feel comfortable coming to the conservation district for assistance. Implementing an inclusive community outreach process is an important step for engaging the interest of potential board member recruits and partners for the district. Although it requires time and energy to initiate a community outreach process, this guide is intended to help you develop a plan and strategy for effective recruitment.

Board Member Recruitment and Diversity

Recruiting people of different skills, backgrounds, and ethnicity is also a positive method of enhancing creativity on your board and promoting ideas that will appeal to a wide audience. Ethnically and culturally diverse boards with a variety of experiences, perspectives, and expertise can produce comprehensive and powerful solutions to community problems. Before you begin your recruitment efforts you might consider assessing the demographics of your board to see if it is representative of your community. Answering the following questions can help guide your recruitment efforts:

- Who in your community is affected by your conservation district's actions?
- Does the representation of your district board mirror the diversity in your community?
- Is there an adequate community cross-section and expertise among your board members?
- Can your conservation district do more to help deliver conservation programs and services to a broader group of customers in your community?

Recruitment Tips

- Conduct an analysis of the current demographic composition of the area you serve so that you are able to develop appropriate recruitment goals
- Identify recruitment barriers and ways of overcoming those barriers
- Ask your local partners, neighbors, friends, and associates whom they would recommend to serve with your organization
- Include articles on diversity in your publications and presentations to communicate the message that your board is open and accessible to all
- Ask recruits to attend meetings and accompany board members on project site visits.
- Share with potential recruits the benefits, tasks, and responsibilities associated with being a board member
- Share diversity recruitment and retention achievements with other conservation districts

You may want to establish a process to continually cultivate potential new supervisors. For example, asking individuals to serve in an associate supervisor position provides an opportunity to prepare prospective board members. Or, you may want to invite someone from the community to advise the board on specific issues as a way to identify potential board members and as a strategy to expand your customer base. For example, if your conservation district does not have a strong conservation education program, your board might recruit someone with a strong educational background as an associate or consultant on a specific educational project. If your board is interested in branching out into the urban or suburban conservation community, you might recruit an appropriate representative from the urban sector. These recruitment activities also provide an opportunity to evaluate the interpersonal and leadership skills of potential board members. The ability to work productively in a group is an important attribute for successful board functioning.

5. List the knowledge, experience, abilities, and skills provided by each current board member.

6. Who does your district serve? List your clients/partners.

7. What new types of board members could help diversify your board, accomplish your mission, and better serve your clients or partners?

Recruitment Strategies and Materials – Part I

Board member recruitment of qualified and talented individuals requires looking beyond just your current circle of friends, neighbors, relatives, and business associates. It can be helpful to begin with a list of groups, organizations, and individuals to contact when recruiting a new member or soliciting input regarding qualified or interested prospects.

Some examples to consider include:

- Community groups that represent minority cultures and women
- Conservation and environmental special interest groups
- Commodity or grower groups
- Irrigation districts or companies
- Agricultural or natural resource lobbyists
- Board members of key funding organizations (i.e. banks, charities, etc.)

- Advertising agencies and marketing firms
- Teachers and college professors
- Researchers and writers
- Accountants, bankers, and investment managers
- Timber harvesting contractors and professional foresters
- Horticulturists, nursery operators and tree farmers
- Farmers and ranchers
- Hobby and part time farmers
- Organic farmers
- Former legislators and public servants (e.g. county commissioners, city officials, etc.)
- Retired local, state, or federal employees
- Public relations professionals
- Geologists and engineers
- Professional fund-raisers
- Agronomists and soil scientists
- Economists and social scientists
- Urban interest groups

A recruitment prospectus (detailed in the next section) could be provided by your conservation district to each of the groups, organizations, and individuals on your list to help inform them of your organizational needs and objectives.

Identifying Qualities and Qualifications of a District Board Member

Effective conservation district board members will typically have a strong conservation ethic and knowledge of key natural resource issues in your community. Often, just as important are management skills, meeting participation, and leadership abilities. Regardless of the qualities your district is looking for, board members should not simply be recruited using the criteria, “Who is available that we know?”

Desirable qualities for district board members may include:

- Open minded
- Good listener
- Organized
- Strong leadership skills
- Innovative
- Professional
- Understands conservation issues
- Effective speaker
- Progressive thinker
- Willing to learn
- Fundraising abilities
- Personnel management skills
- Legislative experience/understanding
- Well respected in the community

- Leadership network in the community

In addition to the listed qualities, other considerations may include:

- Whether the potential board member can devote an adequate amount of time to meeting attendance and other duties
- Whether the potential board member has effective communication skills and is willing and able to get along well with other district board members, staff, and agency personnel
- Whether the potential board member can work on behalf of the entire community in addition to his or her constituents

List any additional qualities you want your district board members to have.

Recruitment Prospectus

In order to encourage individuals and potential board members to become involved with your conservation district, they need to know what the district does and the programs and services it offers. One way to provide this information to prospective members is through the development of a recruitment prospectus that may include:

- Mission and vision statements
- Your district's primary goals and objectives
- Legal authority
- Major issues
- Major programs and activities
- Funding sources
- Expectations of district board members
- Benefits of being a district board member

Included on the next several pages is a template that can be used and revised as needed to help create a recruitment booklet for your conservation district.

Recruitment Booklet Template

Becoming a Board Member of the _____ Conservation District
(name)

Concerned citizens in _____ County can help conserve natural resources by
(name)

serving on the _____ Conservation District Board.
(name)

If the issues and programs stated in this document interest you, please call _____
(name)

at _____.
(number)

Mission:

(insert your district's mission statement)

Vision:

(insert your district's vision statement)

Goals and Objectives (examples):

- Establish soil and water conservation policy for the district
- Assess natural resource needs
- Develop strategies to address resource needs
- Provide quality conservation education to school children within the district
- Provide land users with technical and educational resource assistance
- Develop programs to address local natural resource problems
- Serve as focal point for addressing natural resource issues and coordinating various programs to address identified concerns

Legal Authority:

Soil Conservation District Law (chapter 27, title 22, Idaho Code) defines a conservation district as a political subdivision of the state of Idaho and establishes the powers of districts and supervisors.

Current Major Conservation Issues (examples):

- Water quality
- Water quantity/conservation

- Open space and farmland preservation
- Wildlife habitat fragmentation
- Failing septic systems
- Irrigation induced cropland erosion
- Invasive species/noxious weeds
- Erosion from construction sites
- Feedlot and dairy management
- Land users needing technical assistance regarding natural resource conservation

Current Major Programs and Activities (examples):

- Agricultural cost-share program
- Water quality program for agriculture
- Water conservation education
- Conservation easement management
- Conservation equipment program
- Tree seedling sales
- Quarterly newsletter
- Conservation plan approval
- Review of county planning proposals
- Educational programs for schools, youth, adults, and civic groups
- Review and development of erosion and sediment control plans

Funding Sources (examples):

- Local governments (county, city, special districts)
- State government (Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission)
- Grants (special projects and district fund raising activities)
- Federal (programs, grants, agreements)
- Educational seminars, programs, forums

Expectations of Conservation District Supervisors (examples):

- Take advantage of training opportunities to develop abilities
- Regularly attend board and committee meetings
- Participate in district programs and activities
- Serve as chair of one committee
- Take responsibility for district program direction
- Develop policies and programs
- Promote soil and water conservation in the community
- Help manage staff
- Represent district in public
- Help secure financial resources
- Promote activities of the district

Benefits of Being a Conservation District Supervisor (examples):

- Being a voice for the citizens and natural resources in your community
- Gaining satisfaction by providing your time to improve the environment
- Being actively involved with assistance and educational programs
- Providing leadership in community resource conservation
- Developing leadership skills
- Contributing to the health and welfare of your district

Recruitment Strategies and Materials – Part II

Once you have identified your district's needs, determined the qualities of effective district board members, and developed a recruitment prospectus and position description, it is time to develop your recruitment strategy. The following sample strategies are just a few of the many recruitment strategies a district may find helpful. Choose the strategies that best suit your needs and be aware that continual recruitment requires a variety of strategies to increase the pool of potential nominees.

Assemble a Board Development Team: An important first strategy may be to form a board development team charged with examining board needs including recruitment, orientation, and training. The team could include representatives from underserved communities to help identify potential candidates in those communities. The board development team should have objectives broader than a simple nominating committee.

District Board Members Information Form: Develop a nomination form describing supervisor qualifications the district board has identified and distribute it to organizations in the community.

Letters to Organizations: Direct correspondence to organizations, including those representing women and minorities, about potential nominees for district board member positions is an effective way to attract qualified individuals. The letter should include qualifications the board is looking for in potential nominees.

Public Service Announcements: Radio and television stations run free public service announcements for community organizations.

News Releases: Another method of reaching a wide audience is through news releases in newspaper, radio, television, and other media.

Newspaper Advertisements: Well written and attractive advertisements in newspapers that target underserved populations may help create interest in a district board member position.

District Recruitment Brochure: An effective way of informing potential candidates about district programs and activities, and about the powers and authorities of a district board member is through a well-developed, clearly written informational brochure.

Recommendations from Staff and Cooperating Agencies: District staff and partnership staff can be a good source of ideas for potential candidates that possess the qualifications being sought by a district board. Staff members often have contacts throughout the community that may be different from the current board members' contacts.

Recruitment at Annual/Special Meetings: Make a special point to advertise your annual and special meetings in the media. Keep an attendance list at events to save the names and addresses of people who attend and participate.

Position Description and Recruitment Prospectus Distribution: Distribute your District Board Member Recruitment Booklet and Conservation District Supervisor Position Description to organizations

within the community.

Personal Contacts: Personal contacts with a variety of community and organization leaders by district board members can be an effective method to create a pool of candidates different from that of a current circle of friends, neighbors, and relatives. Efforts to personally contact organizations that represent women and minorities could pay off through the development of joint projects between your district and those organizations.

Sample District Board Member Information Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Resident of the county of: _____

a. Explain your interest in soil and water conservation and becoming a district board member.

b. Briefly describe what contributions and skills you will bring to the district.

How much time are you able or willing to commit to district activities?

c. What is your professional and/or educational background?

d. List other organizations, clubs, and affiliations (including dates of offices held and honors received):

e. Please provide a brief biography of yourself.

Sample District Board Member Self-Nomination Form

If you are unable to answer any of the questions listed below, please call the district chair at

_____ for more information.
(phone #)

1. Do you understand and are you committed to the mission of the conservation district?

2. Can you devote the time, resources, and energy required of a district board member?

3. Do you understand the roles and responsibilities of the district?

4. Are you willing to attend meetings regularly for the duration of your term?

5. Are you willing to participate in necessary training, education, and development activities?

6. Will you actively serve on district committees as assigned?

*Return completed form to: _____

Sample Public Service Announcement #1

_____ Conservation District

(insert address)

Public Service Announcement #1

Length: 30 seconds

For broadcast at will

Soil and Water Conservation District Board Member Contact:

(insert name & phone #)

AUDIO

“You may think that soil and water conservation affects only farmers and ranchers, but our soil and water quality affects the water you drink and the food you eat. If you’re concerned about these issues and want to have a voice in decisions affecting Idaho’s natural resources, consider becoming a board member of the (insert name) Conservation District. The (insert name) Conservation District includes the county/counties of (insert name(s)). As a conservation district board member you would help set conservation priorities and policy for your county. If you would like more information on this exciting opportunity to serve your community, please contact your district office today at (insert phone#) or look us up on the web at (insert web address).”

Sample Public Service Announcement #2

_____ Conservation District

(insert address)

Public Service Announcement #2

Length: 30 seconds

For broadcast at will

Soil and Water Conservation District Board Member Contact:

(insert name & phone #)

AUDIO

“You don’t have to choose between prosperous farms and a healthy environment --- you can have both. If you want to help landowners in your county maintain their farmland while also protecting soil and water resources, you should consider becoming a board member of the (insert name) Conservation District. As a board member you will help make important decisions about conservation in your county. Get involved....help make Idaho a better place for you and your family and for the next generation of Idahoans. For more information, contact the (insert name) Conservation District today at (insert phone#) or look us up on the web at (insert web address).”

Sample Public Service Announcement #3

_____ Conservation District

(insert address)

Public Service Announcement #3

Length: 15 seconds

For broadcast at will

Soil and Water Conservation District Board Member Contact:

(insert name & phone #)

AUDIO

“If you are interested in natural resources and want a voice in conservation decisions in your county, think about becoming a board member for the (insert name) Conservation District. For more information contact the district office today at (insert phone#) or look us up on the web at (insert web address). Isn't it time you made a difference in your community?”

Sample District Board Member News Release

News Release-For Immediate Release:

(insert date)

For further information contact: _____
(insert name & phone #)

Conservation district filings open until _____
(insert date)

Are you concerned about the water quality in our rivers, lakes, and streams? Do you have an interest in natural resources and conservation? Have you ever wondered what you can do to make a difference in your community? If you answered yes to any of these questions, you might consider submitting your name as a candidate for supervisor on the (insert name) Conservation District board by (insert filing date) for the upcoming election.

As (Insert chair name), chair of the (insert name) Conservation District, recently shared, “Conservation district supervisors have a direct, local influence in many important natural resource issues including water quality, wildlife habitat, and farmland preservation. Running for a district supervisor position is an excellent way to make a positive impact on our natural resources.”

Conservation districts lead non-regulatory efforts to conserve, sustain, improve, and enhance Idaho’s private and state lands by providing technical, financial, and educational assistance to private landowners and land users. The (insert name) Conservation District is governed by a (insert number) member board of supervisors that manages public funds and oversees a staff of (insert number). Supervisors are not paid but may receive compensation for expenses, including travel expenses, related to the supervisor’s duties. If the position of supervisor doesn’t appeal to you, you can always consider becoming an associate member.

For further information, contact the (insert name) Conservation District at (insert phone#) or look us up on the web at (insert web address).

Conservation District Supervisor Position Description

Conservation Districts

A conservation district in Idaho is a governmental subdivision of the state and a public body corporate and politic organized in accordance with the chapter 27, title 22 Idaho Code. Conservation districts lead non-regulatory efforts to conserve, sustain, improve, and enhance Idaho's private and state lands by providing technical, financial, and educational assistance to private landowners and land users.

Conservation District Supervisors

There are currently fifty conservation districts in Idaho and each district is governed by a locally elected or appointed board consisting of five or seven supervisors. Each supervisor should be willing to represent the interests of landowners within their district and possess the ability to provide effective leadership for local landowner conservation needs.

Qualifications

- Must be a landowner or operator within the district
- Must be a registered voter in the State of Idaho
- Must be willing to comply with all governing state and federal laws, specifically the statutes regarding ethics in government, open meetings, and public records law pertaining to publicly elected officials
- Must support a non-regulatory, incentive-based approach to natural resource conservation
- Should have an interest in the conservation of soil, water, and other natural resources
- Should be willing to be a leader and represent the interests of citizens within the district

Term of Office

The term of office for a conservation district supervisor is four (4) years beginning on the first day of January following an election. A supervisor holds office until a qualified successor has been elected or appointed.

Compensation

Conservation district supervisors serve voluntarily and receive no compensation, but are entitled to reimbursement for expenses, including travel expenses, incurred in the discharge of district duties.

Primary Duties and Responsibilities

- Participate in district policy and program development
 - Help prepare strategic (long range) plan and annual plans of work
 - Establish and implement district policies regarding natural resource conservation issues as well as personnel and office matters

- Develop and/or implement conservation programs (financial, technical, and educational) to meet the needs of landowners and land users within the district
- Provide financial direction
 - Be accountable for expenditures, management, and reporting requirements related to public funds
 - Review and approve annual budget, financial statements, and treasurer reports
- Participate in personnel management
 - Determine staffing needs and provide guidance and direction to district staff
 - Maintain and implement fair and equitable personnel policies
- Attend and participate in regularly scheduled monthly board meetings
- Participate on district committees and work groups as requested or assigned
- Represent the interests of citizens within the district regarding conservation issues

Time Required

Conservation district supervisors are expected to attend and participate in twelve (12) regularly scheduled (open to the public) district board meetings per year. The average duration of a board meeting is approximately three (3) hours. Supervisors may be required to attend field tours or participate in other training, committee meetings, and special sessions as necessary during the course of the year. Including preparation, review, and follow-up, a conservation district supervisor can expect to contribute an average of ten (10) hours per month to the service of the district.

Benefits

Serving on a district board is a unique and rewarding experience. Conservation district supervisors are presented with several opportunities for personal and professional networking, growth, development, and training during their term of service. Supervisors are community leaders who achieve satisfaction by helping others and are committed to conserving natural resources for future generations. As locally elected public officials, supervisors are entrusted with the power to administer local programs, receive and spend public funds, implement conservation practices, educate the public on natural resource issues, and much more.

Conservation Partnerships

While districts are considered the local leaders for conservation efforts, they often rely upon a cohesive partnership network that includes other local, regional, state, and national partners. Districts need these partnerships to coordinate assistance from all available sources -- public and private, local, state and federal -- in an effort to develop locally driven solutions to natural resource concerns.

Idaho's core conservation partnership consists of six (6) essential conservation groups. These groups include:

- Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWC)
- Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts (IASCD)
- USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- IASCD Auxiliary
- Idaho District Employees Association (IDEA)
- Idaho Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Association

Additionally, section 22-2716 (3)(d), Idaho Code, states, “It is in the best interest of the state of Idaho: To establish policies for cooperative working relationships between local soil conservation districts, the state soil and water conservation commission, local, state and federal agencies and public and private groups to plan, develop and implement conservation goals and initiatives with local landowners and land users.”

To supplement the core conservation partnership in Idaho, there are other cooperative working relationships that enable districts to operate more effectively to accomplish conservation objectives. These unique and important partnerships enhance the districts' ability to efficiently work with private landowners to implement non-regulatory conservation programs and projects. Each of the core partners as well as some of the most important other conservation district partners is included here. For additional information regarding potential partnerships for conservation districts, please refer to the “Summary of Agencies and Acronyms” section of this handbook.

Local

Private Landowners and Land Users

The most critical element to the success of a conservation district is recognition and support of the organization from private landowners within the district. Private landowners and land users are not simply partners to conservation districts; they are the primary customers and implementers of non-regulatory, incentive-based conservation programs and projects.

To summarize section 22-2716 (3)(c) and 22-2716 (3)(e), Idaho Code, conservation districts, “...provide assistance to private landowners and land users in the conservation, sustainment, improvement and enhancement of Idaho's natural resources;” and also, “...provide assistance to private landowners and land users to plan, develop and implement conservation plans addressing soil, water, air, plant and animal resources.” In short, without the cooperation, support, and partnership of private landowners and land users, conservation districts cannot achieve their basic and essential functions.

Additionally, conservation districts are eligible to receive deductible contributions from private individuals and organizations under federal and state statutes, so long as the contribution is made “for exclusively public purposes.” A federal statute, 26 U.S.C. 170, provides (in part): “...There shall be allowed as a deduction any charitable contribution payment of which is made within the taxable year.” A “charitable contribution” in this statute is defined as “...a contribution or gift to, or for the use of, a state, a possession of the United States, or any political subdivision of any of the foregoing, or the United States or the District of Columbia, but only if the contribution or gift is made for exclusively public purposes.”

Idaho uses the federal determination of taxable income to determine Idaho taxable income, so Idaho law recognizes contributions to districts as deductible. The relevant state statute is Idaho Code section 63-3011B which states, “The term ‘taxable income’ means federal taxable income as determined under the Internal Revenue Code.”

The opportunity to supplement funding of conservation districts through private contributors should not be overlooked by supervisors and districts looking to enhance local conservation activities.

Counties

Although there are currently fifty (50) conservation districts in Idaho and only forty-four (44) counties, many district boundaries coincide with county boundaries. It is essential for all conservation districts to establish a good working relationship with the county or counties included within their boundaries. County staff and commissioners can be an excellent source of technical and planning assistance related to natural resources and can also provide input on conservation district priorities. You may also consider working with your county weed district, planners, engineers, and other staff to help meet your objectives.

In addition, as indicated in soil conservation district law, counties are critical partners in the funding of conservation districts. Section 22-2726, Idaho Code, states, “In those counties of Idaho wherein all or a substantial part of the county has been created and is operating as a soil conservation district or districts...the board of county commissioners may, from time to time, at their discretion and upon request of the supervisors of such soil conservation districts provide in their budget a sufficient amount of money from the county general fund for allocation to the districts to be used by the districts for any purposes authorized by law, or in lieu of such allocation the county commissioners at their discretion may assign or hire an employee or employees of the county to assist the supervisors in the performance of the work of their office.”

This contribution from a county, whether monetary or in-kind support, can significantly enhance the abilities of a conservation district. Furthermore, the county contribution of funds and other services to a conservation district (among other funding sources) is the basis upon which the Commission determines the funding allocation to each district from the general fund appropriation.

To clarify, section 22-2727 (3), Idaho Code, provides: “Funds appropriated to the soil and water conservation commission for distribution to soil conservation districts shall be allocated by the commission equally to the various soil conservation districts in a sum not to exceed eight thousand five hundred dollars (\$8,500) per district. All funds appropriated to the state soil and water conservation commission for distribution to soil conservation districts in excess of eight thousand five hundred dollars (\$8,500) per district shall be allocated by the commission to the various soil conservation districts in a sum not to exceed twice the amount of funds or services allocated to each district by the county

commissioners in the previous fiscal year... provided that any such allocation by the commission shall not exceed fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) to any one (1) district in a fiscal year.”

It is simply good common sense for a conservation district to develop a strong partnership with the county or counties they serve and good business practice for a partnership to develop for fund local conservation projects.

Cities

Throughout Idaho, there are increasing opportunities to tap into the valuable resources provided by municipalities and city governments within conservation districts. Services including technical, planning, and financial assistance may be available for district project planning, funding, and implementation. Whether a partnership is initiated with the mayor, city council, city engineer, planning commission, parks board, or other authorities within city government, the municipalities within your district can often contribute their expertise and provide financial assistance to district programs and projects.

Also important is the fact that, in addition to funding from counties, funds allocated by cities to conservation districts can also be included as the basis upon which the SWC determines the funding allocation to districts from the state appropriation. Section 22-2727 (3) includes directive for the SWC to include “...funds or services allocated to each district by authorized officials or other local units of government or organizations...” as additional base funding to determine the allocation to districts.

Working closely with city governments is particularly important for conservation districts that have experienced population growth and land use changes within their district. Often times as population within a district increases, the “footprint” of the city or cities expands and encroaches into the rural and agricultural areas. This expansion can create a shift in the priority conservation concerns of the district and offers the potential to develop a new customer base interested in conservation projects and opportunities.

Regional

Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Councils

The RC&D program is a nation-wide program administered by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The purpose of the RC&D program is to accelerate the conservation, development and utilization of natural resources, improve the general level of economic activity, and to enhance the environment and standard of living in designated RC&D areas. RC&D areas are locally sponsored areas designated by the Secretary of Agriculture for technical and financial assistance program funds. RC&D Councils can improve the capability of state, tribal and local units of government and local nonprofit organizations in rural areas to plan, develop, and carry out programs for resource conservation and development. These programs often include land management, land conservation, and water management.

Although nationally administered, the RC&D includes a state association and board of officers in Idaho along with nine (9) regionally organized RC&D Areas and affiliated councils covering the entire state. The councils typically operate as non-profit organizations with tax exempt status and are an excellent partnership resource for conservation districts looking to expand financial grant capabilities and project sponsorship opportunities.

State

Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission (SWC)

The SWC is the primary state partner for conservation districts and is statutorily linked to districts through chapter 27, title 22, Idaho Code (Soil Conservation District Law). The SWC is a non-regulatory natural resource agency consisting of five (5) commission members appointed by the governor. The SWC and 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.” Idaho Code section 22-2716(3)(c). The SWC is the designated state agency for agricultural and grazing activities as they pertain to the TMDL process for achieving statewide water quality standards. The Commission, through administrative and technical staff, provides technical assistance and support services to districts for the implementation of conservation programs and projects.

While the nature of the partnership between conservation districts and the SWC is expansive, much of the cooperative portion of this unique partnership is set forth in sections 22-2718(4) and 22-2718(5), Idaho Code. Among other directives, the SWC has the following responsibilities:

- To offer such assistance as may be appropriate to the supervisors of soil conservation districts in the carrying out of any of their powers and programs
- To keep the supervisors of each of the several soil conservation districts informed of the activities and experience of all other soil conservation districts and to facilitate an interchange of advice and experience between such districts and cooperation between them
- To coordinate the progress of the several soil conservation districts so far as this may be done by advice and consultation
- To secure the cooperation and assistance of the United States and any of its agencies, and of agencies of this state, in the work of such districts
- To disseminate information throughout the state concerning the activities and programs of the soil conservation districts in areas where their organization is desirable

The SWC has the following additional powers, functions and duties:

- The commission shall assist and advise soil conservation districts and other entities in implementing the conservation improvements, projects and the water quality program for agriculture
- The commission shall be the agency responsible for the administration of funds accruing to the resource conservation and rangeland development fund (loan program) and for all general funds appropriated as a separate and distinct action of the legislature to implement the powers, functions and duties of soil conservation districts and the commission

Additionally, the partnership link between conservation districts and the SWC is reinforced by the

requirements in Idaho Code section 22-2727 governing allocation of general funds to districts. Specifically, section 22-2727(1) Idaho Code, states "...the soil and water conservation commission shall consider the needs of each soil conservation district and shall base its request for state funds... upon the budgets, budget requests, district programs and works plans, and work load analysis of the various soil conservation districts." Section 22-2727 (2) states, "All funds appropriated by the state for the various soil conservation districts shall be appropriated to the Idaho state soil and water conservation commission and shall be allocated by the commission equally to the various soil conservation districts..."

These references to statute do not convey the entirety of the core partnership between conservation districts and the SWC, but attempt to focus on fundamental aspects of this unique partnership.

Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts (IASCD)

The IASCD was established to represent Idaho's conservation districts collectively at a statewide level and to help coordinate and strengthen the activities of Idaho conservation districts. The intent of this coordination is to help conservation districts fully exercise their responsibilities for locally led, non-regulatory conservation efforts throughout Idaho.

The IASCD is organized jurisdictionally by six (6) Divisions, each constituting the combined geographic area of several conservation districts. The conservation districts within each Division elect a director to represent their Division on the IASCD Board of Directors. The six (6) elected directors serve voluntarily, without pay, and comprise the governing body of IASCD. Annual dues paid by conservation districts throughout Idaho help support the administrative duties of the IASCD carried out by an executive director and staff.

IASCD works closely with the SWC on issues of policy, finance, and natural resource concerns and works to keep members of the Idaho Legislature and Idaho Congressional Representatives informed of the districts' views regarding natural resource policy and legislation. IASCD also provides a forum for discussion of issues common to conservation districts such as erosion and sediment control, water quality, forestry, research, conservation and environmental education, resource planning, wildlife, pasture, and rangeland. The IASCD also supports conservation district activities by planning and coordinating Division meetings, annual conferences, and standing committee meetings to ensure that districts are informed of critical conservation issues at the state and national level. The IASCD also conducts education programs for Idaho's youth, such as Envirothon.

Idaho District Employees Association (IDEA)

The mission of IDEA is to enhance communications, promote professional improvement, and increase the effectiveness of conservation districts and their employees; and to foster a mutual partnership with conservation agencies, organizations and associations. Key objectives for IDEA in the pursuit of this mission are enhancing the network of professional support for better communication between employees from different districts, and providing access to professional and educational development opportunities for conservation district employees. IDEA is governed by a seven (7) member board with representation from each of the IASCD Divisions and, among other activities, conducts regular and annual meetings, honors a district employee of the year, and holds various workshops for conservation district employees.

While a district chairman and board supervisors are elected public officials and may be the "face" of a conservation district, the capabilities of the district employee(s) can be a key factor in determining the

potential or capacity of a district to implement its conservation programs and objectives. Accordingly, IDEA provides an organization through which district employees and, in turn, conservation districts can enhance their professional abilities and increase their capacity for conservation.

Idaho Association of Soil Conservation District Auxiliary

Sometimes referred to as the Ladies Auxiliary Board or IASCD Auxiliary, this group promotes soil and water conservation and the activities of conservation districts through educational presentations and programs. Auxiliary activities are organized by board officers including a president, vice-president, and secretary-treasurer, as well as other members. In addition to providing sponsorship for the IASCD annual speech and poster contests in an effort to promote environmental stewardship for Idaho's youth, the auxiliary members also organize fundraisers and raffles for college scholarship funds awarded to students interested in conservation. The auxiliary is a good resource for conservation districts looking to initiate or expand their youth conservation and education activities.

National

Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS)

The role and scope of NRCS is extensive but can be summed up in the agency's mission statement: Helping people help the land. One of the main objectives of NRCS at the federal level is to strive for productive lands and a healthy environment. The agency seeks to accomplish this by operating as the primary federal agency providing on-the-ground technical, financial, and planning assistance to private landowners and land users for natural resource conservation.

Idaho law acknowledges the importance of the NRCS to the mission of local conservation districts. Section 22-2716 (3) (e) and 22-2716 (4) (d), Idaho Code, states that it is in the best interest of the state of Idaho that conservation districts and the state soil and water conservation commission, "...provide assistance to private landowners and land users to plan, develop and implement conservation plans addressing soil, water, air, plant and animal resources;" and furthermore, that it is the policy of the state of Idaho that "...conservation plan implementation shall include best management practices implemented according to the standards and specifications developed by the United States department of agriculture natural resources conservation service (NRCS)."

Like conservation districts, NRCS emphasizes voluntary, incentive-based approaches to achieving natural resource objectives on private land. The agency administers several financial conservation assistance programs and enters into agreements to distribute federal funding to help private landowners implement best management practices (BMPs) for protection of natural resources. NRCS works with landowners through conservation planning and assistance to benefit the soil, water, air, plants, and animals for productive lands and healthy ecosystems. The success of NRCS is dependent upon partnerships and working closely with individual farmers and ranchers, landowners, local conservation districts, government agencies, and many other people and groups that care about the quality of America's natural resources.

In Idaho, most of the work of the agency is done with the cooperation and assistance of local partners including conservation districts. In fact, many conservation districts and staff, as well as SWC field staff, are co-located in USDA Service Centers and NRCS Field Offices throughout the state. While conservation districts provide the local leadership, NRCS provides the federal support for grassroots conservation efforts. For districts, a strong local partnership and working relationship with NRCS staff can yield positive results for conservation.

National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD)

The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) is the nonprofit organization that represents America's 3,000 conservation districts and the 17,000 men and women who serve on their governing boards. NACD's mission is to serve conservation districts by providing national leadership and a unified voice for natural resource conservation. NACD supports the philosophy that conservation decisions should be made at the local level with technical and funding assistance from federal, state and local governments and the private sector. As the national voice for all conservation districts, NACD supports voluntary, incentive-driven natural resource conservation programs that benefit all citizens. NACD is primarily financed through voluntary contributions of its member districts and state associations.

Some of the objectives of NACD include:

- Representing districts as their national voice on conservation issues
- Providing information to conservation districts and their state associations
- Building partnerships with federal and state agencies and other organizations in order to carry out district priorities and programs
- Analyzing programs and policy issues that have an impact on local districts
- Offering cost-effective services to districts

NACD headquarters is in Washington, D.C. Organizationally, NACD consists of seven (7) regions and is comprised of leadership officers, an executive board, a board of directors, and various staff. NACD provides technical and educational resources to individual conservation districts, and annually hosts a national conference providing districts nationwide with opportunities to collaborate, share ideas, and network.

Summary of Agencies and Acronyms

Conservation districts in Idaho work collaboratively with other agencies, organizations, and entities to help achieve local natural resource conservation objectives. In addition to the typical partners highlighted in the “Conservation Partnerships” section of this handbook, many other agencies and organizations also have similar interests and responsibilities to those of conservation districts. In certain instances these entities may also have overlapping priorities, concerns, and responsibilities related to natural resources that complement your district’s activities.

It is important to involve your potential partners in planning and implementation activities at the local level. A partnership with your district can be formally established through a Cooperative Working Agreement or a Memorandum of Understanding that specifies the nature of the partnership and outlines key responsibilities.

The following summary is not intended to be a complete list of potential conservation district partners, but instead provides information about agencies and organizations your district may consider working with to achieve your local conservation objectives.

Federal Agencies

Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

The BPA is the sole federal power marketing agency in the Pacific Northwest and the region’s major wholesaler of electricity to public and private utilities, industries, and various public agencies in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, parts of Montana, and surrounding western states. The Northwest Power Act charges BPA with additional duties related to energy conservation, resource acquisition, and mitigation and conservation of fish and wildlife resources related to the Federal Columbia River Power System.

Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

The mission of the BIA is to enhance the quality of life, to promote economic opportunity, and to carry out the responsibility to protect and improve the trust assets of American Indians, Indian tribes, and Alaska Natives. Idaho is part of the Northwest Region of BIA with headquarters in Portland, Oregon and tribal offices in three locations in the state. Programs administered through BIA include social services, natural resources management on trust lands, economic development, law enforcement and detention services, administration of tribal courts, implementation of land and water claim settlements, housing improvement, disaster relief, replacement and repair of schools, repair and maintenance of roads and bridges, and the repair of structural deficiencies on high hazard dams.

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

The mission of the BLM is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The BLM is responsible for carrying out a variety of programs for the management and conservation of natural resources, including fisheries habitat, on public land. Resources on public lands in Idaho include recreation, rangelands, timber, minerals, water, fish and wildlife, wilderness, air and soils, and scenic, scientific, and cultural values. Additionally, the BLM administers grazing permits and leases on public rangeland and has an active program of soil and

watershed management that includes implementation of practices such as revegetation, protective fencing, and water development to conserve and enhance public land resources. The BLM is also responsible for fire protection and wildfire management on public lands. In Idaho, the BLM manages nearly 12 million acres of public lands (nearly one-fourth the state's total land area) through several district and field offices.

Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)

The mission of BOR is to manage, develop, and protect water and related resources in an environmentally and economically sound manner in the interest of the American public. The BOR is best known for the [dams, power plants, and canals](#) it constructed in the 17 western states. These water projects led to homesteading and promoted the economic [development of the West](#). The BOR has constructed more than 600 dams and reservoirs and is the largest wholesaler of water in the country, bringing water to more than 31 million people and providing one (1) out of five (5) Western farmers with irrigation water. Idaho is part of the Pacific Northwest Region of BOR which is headquartered in Boise.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

NOAA is a science-based agency within the Department of Commerce with regulatory, operational, and information service responsibilities. NOAA has weather forecasting, climatic, and research offices located in various parts of Idaho. Additionally, NOAA includes the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the agency with significant responsibilities for anadromous fish species listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act of 1973. NMFS is often involved with reviewing land and water management activities to ensure compliance with the ESA, and is responsible for developing recovery plans for listed species. NMFS also advises other federal agencies on the effects of actions they fund, authorize, or propose that may affect listed anadromous fish species. Activities on non-federal land are addressed through model watersheds and conservation agreements with the state. Staff from the NMFS Idaho State Habitat Offices are located in Boise, Grangeville, and Salmon.

Northwest Power and Conservation Council (NPCC)

The NPCC was created by Congress to give the citizens of Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington a stronger voice in determining the future of key resources common to all four states — namely, the electricity generated and fish and wildlife affected by the Federal Columbia River Power System. The NPCC is funded by wholesale power revenues from the BPA. In addition to the development of a power plan, the NPCC is required to implement a program to protect, mitigate, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat (including related spawning grounds and habitat) that have been affected by the construction and operation of hydroelectric projects on the Columbia River or its tributaries. State, tribal, and local governments often work closely with the NPCC in the development of its program and are also involved in the implementation of the program's conservation measures. The power plan and fish and wildlife program are updated at least every five years.

USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS)

The ARS is the chief scientific research agency for the USDA. The primary objective of ARS is to find solutions to agricultural problems that affect Americans. ARS conducts research to develop and transfer

solutions to agricultural problems of high national priority and to provide access to its research and information for the public benefit. Idaho is part of the ARS Pacific West Area and there are several research units and work sites located throughout the State.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps)

The mission of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is to provide vital public engineering services, energize the economy, and reduce risks from disasters. The Corps operates dams, plans water resource projects, and coordinates emergency management efforts. In Idaho, the Corps is represented by the Walla Walla District and has an office in Boise to assist local and state governments with using these services. The Corps also has regulatory functions including the administration of permits to work in wetlands and waters of the United States. This regulatory permitting function in Idaho is handled through field offices in Coeur d'Alene, Boise and Idaho Falls. Additionally, the Corps has other responsibilities related to recreation, wildlife habitat management, and fish passage.

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA)

The mission of FSA is to equitably serve all farmers, ranchers, and agricultural partners through the delivery of effective, efficient agricultural programs for all Americans. FSA's national administrative functions are managed in Washington, D.C., while implementation of farm policy through FSA programs is the responsibility of state and county field offices. Idaho FSA has staff located in USDA Service Centers throughout the state acting as the primary distributors of FSA programs at the local level.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

The mission of EPA is to protect human health and the environment. To accomplish this mission the EPA sets environmental standards, develops and enforces environmental regulations, funds grants for environmental programs, conducts studies, and provides educational programs and materials for the general public. One of EPA's objectives is to ensure that federal laws protecting human health and the environment are enforced fairly and effectively. The Pacific Northwest (Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and 271 Native Tribes) is included in EPA Region 10 with headquarters in Seattle, Washington.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

The mission of USFWS is to work with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, and plants and their habitat for the continuing benefit of the American people. The USFWS enforces federal wildlife laws, manages migratory bird populations, restores and manages nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat and helps other governments with conservation efforts. The USFWS has significant responsibilities for resident fish, wildlife, and plants listed as endangered or threatened under the ESA. The USFWS is involved with reviewing land and water management activities to ensure compliance with the ESA, and develops recovery plans for listed species. The USFWS also administers a federal assistance program that distributes funding to states for fish and wildlife restoration, boating access, and hunter education. These funds originate from federal excise taxes on fishing, hunting, and boating equipment. The USFWS has several Pacific Region field offices, fish hatcheries, and National Wildlife Refuges located throughout Idaho.

U.S. Forest Service (USFS)

The mission of the USFS is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The primary objective of the USFS is to provide responsible management of public lands in national forests and grasslands. The USFS is also the largest forestry research organization in the world and provides technical and financial assistance in cooperation with state and local governments, forest industries, and private landowners to help protect and manage non-federal forest and rangelands to improve conditions in rural areas. Idaho includes portions of the Northern Region and the Intermountain Region of the USFS and there are several field offices located throughout the State.

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)

The mission of USGS is to provide geologic, topographic, and hydrologic information that contributes to the wise management of natural resources and that promotes the health, safety, and well-being of the people. This information consists of maps, databases, and analysis of the water, energy and mineral resources, land surface, underlying geologic structure, and dynamic processes of the earth. The USGS conducts several water quality monitoring projects throughout Idaho and is the largest water, earth, and biological science mapping agency in the country. One of their primary objectives is to carry out large-scale, multi-disciplinary investigations and provide impartial scientific information to resource managers, planners, and other customers.

State Agencies

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ)

The mission of IDEQ is to protect human health and preserve the quality of Idaho's air, land, and water for use and enjoyment today and in the future. As a regulatory agency IDEQ enforces various state environmental regulations and administers a number of federal environmental protection laws including the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. IDEQ is responsible for environmental assessments, oversight of facilities that generate air, water, and hazardous waste pollution, air and water quality monitoring, cleanup of contaminated sites, and education, outreach, and technical assistance programs. The Section 319 Grant program in Idaho is administered by IDEQ and is an effective tool for assisting conservation districts in implementing water quality projects to help meet Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) targets. IDEQ is headquartered in Boise with regional offices throughout the State.

Idaho Department of Fish & Game (IDFG)

The mission of the IDFG is to preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage all wildlife, including all wild animals, wild birds, and fish, within the state. One of the primary objectives of the IDFG is to ensure that all Idaho wildlife shall only be captured or taken at such times or places, under such conditions, or by such means, or in such manner, as will preserve, protect, and perpetuate such wildlife. IDFG seeks to ensure for citizens of Idaho and, as by law permitted to others, continued supplies of such wildlife for hunting, fishing and trapping. IDFG also has research, permitting, enforcement, and educational functions related to wildlife in Idaho. IDFG is headquartered in Boise with regional offices throughout

the State.

Idaho Department of Lands (IDL)

Under the direction of the Idaho State Board of Land Commissioners, the Idaho Department of Lands (IDL) manages over 2 million acres of state endowment trust lands under a constitutional mandate to produce maximum long-term financial return for public school and other state institutions. Leases and other contracts are used to authorize revenue generating activities such as timber harvest, grazing, farming, mining, commercial use, residential use and conservation in a prudent and sustainable manner. IDL manages more than 1,200 grazing leases on timberland (300,000 acres) and rangelands (1.5 million acres) located primarily in the southern two thirds of Idaho. IDL also protects public trust lands (navigable waterways) and ensures protection of water quality and other resources by regulating forest and mining practices across all ownerships in the State. One of IDL's most important resource protection responsibilities is wildland fire prevention and suppression. Assistance is also provided to landowners for managing private timberlands and to remediate abandoned mined lands. IDL is headquartered in Boise with area offices throughout the State.

Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR)

The mission of IDPR is to improve the quality of life in Idaho through outdoor recreation and resource stewardship. The IDPR manages 30 state parks and administers the state's registration program for snowmobiles, boats and off-highway vehicles. IDPR also manages a series of outdoor recreation grant programs (including the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Waterways Improvement Fund) that provide facilities and services to recreationists and the local governmental and non-governmental organizations that serve them. IDPR is headquartered in Boise and operates parks and regional offices throughout the State.

Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR)

The mission of IDWR is to serve the people of Idaho and protect their welfare by making sure water is conserved and available to sustain Idaho's economy, ecosystem and the resulting quality of life. The IDWR is the agency responsible for the allocation of surface and ground water within the state, enforcing the state's water laws, and assisting the courts in the adjudication of water rights. IDWR is also responsible for dam safety inspections and the regulation of all wells in Idaho. IDWR also provides technical and planning support through natural resource geographic information systems (GIS) mapping, hydrology planning programs (including the State Water Plan and Idaho Water Supply Bank), water project development and funding, minimum stream flow planning, natural and recreational river designations, comprehensive basin and aquifer planning, and is responsible for facilitating water transactions related to improving stream flows for fish. IDWR is headquartered in Boise with regional offices throughout the State.

Idaho Governor's Office of Species Conservation (OSC)

The mission of OSC is to coordinate policies and programs related to the conservation of threatened, endangered, and candidate species under the federal ESA in Idaho. These species include wolves, bull trout, sage grouse, slickspot peppergrass, salmon and steelhead, among others. The OSC works through

coordination with state natural resource agencies and with the input of the citizens of Idaho to coordinate actions concerning ESA-listed species. Activities of OSC include facilitation and development of protection plans for private landowners who have threatened or endangered species on their property or who have the potential to assist in the recovery of species. Additionally, the OSC solicits, provides, and delegates funding to these efforts and is committed to developing processes to de-list or re-categorize species which should be removed from the ESA or have changed in management status. OSC operates a state office in Boise and employs field staff in other strategic locations in Idaho.

Idaho Rural Partnership (IRP)

The mission of IRP is to join diverse public and private resources in innovative collaborations to strengthen communities and improve life in rural Idaho. One of the primary objectives of IRP is to assess the conditions of rural Idaho by conducting research in rural communities and facilitating communication between residents and public and private organizations that provide services to rural communities. IRP seeks to develop better intergovernmental and private/public coordination and to develop opportunities for new partnerships to achieve rural development goals. As part of the “Community Review” process, IRP can help rural communities bolster their action plans to locally execute and complete community development strategies. IRP operates a state office in Boise.

Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA)

The mission of ISDA is to serve consumers and agriculture by safeguarding the public, plants, animals, and environment through promotion, education, and regulation. Some of the objectives of ISDA include supporting the growth and sustainability of Idaho’s agriculture industry; conducting egg and dairy licensing, inspection, and certification; conducting monitoring activities related to agriculture, implementing educational programs; marketing and promoting Idaho agricultural commodities; addressing invasive species; and regulating pesticide use. ISDA operates a state headquarters office in Boise and has several field offices located throughout Idaho.

State Commissions and Councils

There are several commodity and producer commissions, as well as councils, that are recognized as self-governing state agencies in Idaho. It is important to determine those commissions and councils that are active within your conservation district and determine if there are potential partnership opportunities. Some of the commissions established in Idaho include: Alfalfa and Clover Seed, Apple, Aquaculture, Barley, Bean, Cherry, Dairy Products, Grape and Wine Producers, Hop, Mint, Oilseed, Potato, Rangeland Resources, Sheep, and Wheat. Some of the councils established in Idaho include: Beef, Invasive Species, and Pea & Lentil.

Private and Other Organizations, Entities, and Groups

Ducks Unlimited

Ducks Unlimited is a tax exempt organization that conserves, restores, and manages wetlands and associated habitats for North America's waterfowl. Ducks Unlimited administers conservation programs

that are focused on providing areas for waterfowl migration, wintering and reproduction. Ducks Unlimited has project areas all over the state that seek to rehabilitate degraded infrastructure on public lands, restore habitat on private lands, and help keep Idaho's waterfowl habitat plentiful and in high quality.

Flood Control Districts

Flood control districts work to minimize flood damage, to protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the public, and to conserve and develop the natural resources of Idaho. They also have the authority to operate and maintain structural works of improvement for the prevention of floodwater and sediment damages. Flood control districts can be effective partners for conservation districts undertaking projects within river and stream corridors. There are several flood control districts located throughout the State.

Idaho School Districts and Independent Local Education Agencies

Located throughout Idaho in all communities, school districts and local education agencies (charter schools, academies, etc.) are important outreach partners for conservation districts working to enhance natural resource education for youth.

Irrigation Districts and Canal Companies

Irrigation districts, canal companies and similar organizations are involved in the development and distribution of water. In areas of Idaho where irrigation is prevalent, conservation districts may consider developing partnerships or working agreements with these entities to determine common natural resource objectives and pursue project partnership opportunities.

Land Trusts

Several regional Land Trusts are located throughout Idaho and work with willing landowners and communities to protect and restore land, water, and wildlife habitat with special natural, scenic, recreational, and agricultural values. Land trusts achieve these objectives through land acquisitions and conservation easements, as well as through education and land stewardship.

The Nature Conservancy (The Conservancy)

The mission of The Conservancy is to preserve the plants, animals, and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. The Conservancy intends to accomplish this, in part, through voluntary private lands conservation. The Conservancy operates several Idaho offices and works with landowners, communities, cooperatives, and businesses to protect wildlife habitat, clean water, and working farms and ranches. Some of the primary tools used to achieve these goals include land trusts, conservation easements, private reserves, and incentives.

Soil & Water Conservation Society (SWCS)

SWCS is a nonprofit scientific and educational organization that serves as an advocate for conservation professionals and for science-based conservation practice, programs, and policy. The mission of SWCS is to foster the science and art of natural resource conservation. SWCS has over 5,000 members around the world including researchers, administrators, planners, policymakers, technical advisors, teachers, students, farmers, and ranchers. There are 75 SWCS chapters covering the U.S. and Canada including an Idaho chapter that elects its own officers, organizes conservation forums, and formulates local recommendations on land and water conservation issues. The SWCS works to discover, develop, implement, and constantly improve ways to use land that sustains its productive capacity and enhances the environment at the same time.

University of Idaho Extension (UI Extension)

The mission of the UI Extension is to improve people's lives by engaging the University and communities through research based education. UI Extension offices are located in almost every county and Indian Reservation in Idaho. Extension faculty and staff work with the people of Idaho to address agricultural, natural resource, youth, family, community and environmental issues and develop collaborative relationships with agencies, groups, and individuals to create innovative educational programs. Extension educators provide agricultural tours, research, and natural resource education for youth and adults and are a great resource for conservation districts and cooperators.

Trout Unlimited (TU)

Trout Unlimited works for conservation, protection, and the restoration of North America's cold water fisheries and their watersheds. TU helps initiate and implement voluntary conservation and education projects through eight active chapters in Idaho.