

# West Cassia

## Soil and Water Conservation District



### Performance Report FY2025

(July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025)



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[www.minicassiaswcd.com](http://www.minicassiaswcd.com)

Board Meetings are held the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 11:00am

### Mission Statement

*To encourage responsible natural resource management and to implement conservation goals which improve air, soil, and water quality while improving wildlife habitat.*

*To educate both youth and adults about our local conservation needs and best management practices.*

## Top Priorities and Resource Concerns

### 1. Water Resource

Encourage best management practices which conserve water and reduce soil erosion such as conversion from flood irrigation to sprinkler systems, and promote the benefits of crop residue, conservation tillage, and cross slope farming practices. Make efforts to improve the groundwater within the Marsh Creek Nitrate Priority Area and the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer. Manage the Aquatic Invasive Species Cotterell Inspection Station.

### 2. Rangeland

Provide education for, and encourage landowners to implement brush control, range seeding, pest and noxious weed control, and fire control practices. Address drought concerns through stock water improvements and planned grazing systems.

### 3. Direct Seed and Cover Crops

Encouraging farmers and landowners to implement new and innovative conservation farm practices such as the use of cover crops to improve soil health. Encourage direct seeding and cover crop plantings by renting a Direct Seed drill to landowners. Organize and provide a Soil Health or Water Conservation workshop.

### 4. Education

Education is a main focus for the districts. By educating students, while young, it helps them to understand the importance of being good stewards of the land. West Cassia SWCD promotes conservation education by providing scholarships, poster and speech contests, hosting the Idaho State Land & Soil Evaluation Event, and more. Education to the general public includes press releases, newsletters, an active website & social media postings, classes and workshops, and the Local Work Group Input Meeting.

## District Operations / Accomplishments

### Board/Business Meetings

West Cassia SWCD holds monthly board meetings with agendas posted at the office and on the website. Supervisors and district employees attended the Fall 2024 Division IV meeting hosted by East Cassia SWCD and the Spring 2025 Division IV meeting hosted by North Side SWCD. Supervisors and employees attended the 80<sup>th</sup> annual IASCD conference in November 2024, in Idaho Falls, Idaho. Richard Kunau, chairman of West Cassia SWCD, also serves as Division IV Director, was nominated to serve as President of the IASCD Board.

### Operations

In February, board supervisors met with elected Cassia County Commissioners to review the proposed budget and activities as a basis for requesting county funding. The district requested a \$1,000.00 increase for the upcoming fiscal year. The districts completed yearly reports including an Annual Plan and a 5-Year Plan and completed a proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2026. West Cassia SWCD has an official financial audit conducted each year. Financial information and audit review and findings are available for public review.

### Awards Picnic

In the summer of 2025 West Cassia Soil and Water Conservation District along with East Cassia and Minidoka Districts held their annual Awards Picnic. West Cassia honored Richard Kunau for 20 years of service for the West Cassia Soil District and welcomed new supervisor Scott Yost. Blake Matthews was honored as West Cassia's Innovative Farmer of the Year for his proactive soil health improvements (pictured right), and college scholarships were presented to Zettalie Beck, Tregan Darrington, Marcelio Leon, and Avery Lindquist. These students plan to pursue careers in an agricultural field.



### **FY2025 Revenue 7/1/24 - 6/30/25**

\$ 27,520.66	State Funding
\$ 9,000.00	County Appropriations
\$ 1,700.41	Tree Sale Profits
\$ 18,045.36	Administrative Funds from AIS Station (as of 10/20/25)
\$ 3,878.00	Tri-District Project Committee Admin Fees
\$ 450.00	Admin Fees for LSEE
\$ 3,925.00	WQPA Admin Fees
<b>\$ 64,519.43</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>

## West Cassia Soil and Water Conservation District

### Cotterell Inspection Station

West Cassia partnered with the Idaho State Department of Agriculture for the 8th year to run The Aquatic Invasive Species Cotterell Inspection Station. The Inspection station runs on a calendar year and opened on March 17, 2025. It is anticipated it will close the end of November 2025. According to Invasive Species of Idaho dashboard, our employees have inspected a total of 8,164



watercraft, of which 542 came from infested waters. They hot washed 337 watercraft. Law enforcement officers returned 287 drive-by vehicles and assist in keeping our employees safe. Invasivespecies.idaho.gov

The district is responsible for day-to-day operations at the station, managing

employees, finances and payroll. The district has received \$18,045.36 in administrative funds so far from the 2025 season.

### Education and Outreach

West Cassia contributed to Envirothon, Idaho State Forestry Contest, and sponsored 2 youth at the Natural Resource Camp. West Cassia held a high school conservation speech contest and a conservation poster contest for 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grade students.

The districts published a Conservation Update Newsletter 3 times during the year which is sent to approximately 1,200 landowners. They had a display at the Cassia County Fair and offered a workshop for farmers and 3 community conservation classes to the public. An active website is maintained by district employees. The website www.minicassiaswcd provides information on district business, projects, and conservation activities.

### Workshop For Farmers

Over 100 local landowners attended the Soil Moisture & Pesticide Workshop held in January. Topics covered included Pesticide appli-



### Land Judging for High School Students

West Cassia District manages and hosts the annual Idaho State FFA & 4-H Land & Soil Evaluation Event. We provide contest planning, fundraising and volunteers. Over 75 students came to compete in the state event. Genesee FFA placed 1st and Cambridge FFA placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 2024 contest. Over 25 volunteers assisted, including SWCD District Supervisors, County Commissioners and soil scientists.



### Seedling Tree Sale

West Cassia Supervisors assisted with the annual Seedling Tree Sale. 3,300 seedlings trees and shrubs were sold to local landowners for windbreaks and beautification projects. Each of the three districts profited. Income from the tree sale is used to help encourage good conservation practices in the community and to help with student awards such as: scholarships, Know Your Government scholarships (KYG), Natural Resources Camp scholarships (NRC), as well as prizes for speech and poster contest winners.

### Direct Seed Drills

2024 was the 10th year to rent the seed drills to landowners. There have been 14,372 acres of cover crop seed mixes planted with the drill. Districts continue to promote good soil health practices which benefit landowners in many ways. Some of the benefits include increased water holding capacity of the soil and improved water infiltration, reducing the loss of top soil caused by blowing winds, and improving air quality, safety, and individual health.

### Community Conservation Classes

East Cassia, Minidoka & West Cassia districts organized 3 Community Conservation Classes which were offered free to the public. Class topics in FY25 included Preparing Your Yard for Winter, Trees for Yards & Windbreaks, and Designing Your Yard for All Seasons.

### Moisture Monitoring Project

Soil District Supervisors held a grower forum where landowners who have been participating in the project could share their successes and their challenges. They also learned more about how to work with the moisture monitors. Thirteen growers are participating in the project and all were represented at the forum.



### West Cassia SWCD Board of Supervisors

Richard Kunau	Chairman	137 N Hwy 77 Declo, ID 83323	richardkunau@gmail.com
Jordan Searle	Vice-Chairman	635 South 450 East Burley, ID 83318	jordansearle@gmail.com
Ken Black	Treasurer	352 S Hwy 27 Burley, ID 83318	ken.nina@msn.com
Chad Searle	Member	796 S 550 E Burley, ID 83318	farmer.campsino@gmail.com
Scott Yost	Member	327 E 300 S Burley, ID 83318	scottkennethyost@gmail.com

**IDAHO SOIL & WATER  
CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

**PERFORMANCE  
REPORT  
CERTIFICATION**

**DISTRICT:** West Cassia SWCD

**FOR YEAR:**

FY 2025 (7/1/24 - 6/30/25)

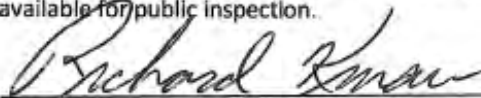
**DUE :**

December 20, 2025

**CERTIFICATION**

On behalf of my local Board of Supervisors, I hereby certify that the attached Performance Report is true and accurate, and further submit said Report for the above named District and fiscal year.

A copy of this Performance Report shall be kept at the District office and is available for public inspection.



Board Supervisor Signature

**Richard Kunau**

Printed Name

10-28-2025

Date

**208-572-3375**

District Telephone

**ewcswcd@gmail.com**

District Email Address

**FOR SWC USE ONLY:**

**DATE OF CONFIRMATION:**