

AREA PLAN  
2010 - 2014

High Country Resource Conservation and Development Council  
Idaho

Prepared by

HIGH COUNTRY RC&D COUNCIL



August 2010

Assisted by:

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
and  
Local, State, and Federal agencies and organizations

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AREA PLAN

High Country Resource Conservation and Development Council  
Acting for the following Sponsors:

<b>Counties</b>	<b>Conservation Districts</b>	<b>Cities</b>
Bonneville County	Eastside SWCD	City of Iona
Butte County	Westside SWCD	City of Idaho Falls
Clark County	Butte SWCD	City of Ucon
Custer County	Clark SCD	City of Ammon
Fremont County	Custer SWCD	City of Dubois
Jefferson County	Yellowstone SCD	City of Challis
Lemhi County	Jefferson SWCD	City of Ashton
Madison County	Mud Lake SWCD	City of St. Anthony
Teton County , Idaho	Lemhi SWCD	City of Mud Lake
Teton County, Wyoming	Madison SWCD	City of Rexburg
	Teton, Id. SCD	City of Sugar City
	Teton,Wy. SCD	City of Driggs
		City of Victor

Table 1 – High Country Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc. Sponsors, 2009

Prepared Under Authority of the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981  
Public Law 97-98

## **Introduction**

Congress passed the Food and Agricultural Act of 1962, which authorized the creation of RC&D Areas. The purpose of the Act was to expand opportunities for conservation districts, local units of governments, and individuals to improve their communities in multi-county areas. This included assistance in enhancing the economic, environmental and social well being of the RC&D Area. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) administers the federal RC&D Program.

This document is the long-range Area Plan of Action for High Country Resource Conservation and Development (HCRC&D) Council. This Plan provides the strategic direction for the Council during the years 2010 – 2014 while remaining flexible to evolve to meet new challenges. It describes the Objectives, Goals, and Actions the Council plans to undertake. The Plan serves as an agreement between NRCS and the Council.

Significant changes and trends have occurred in the HCRC&D Area since the original Plan was developed. Some of these changes include:

- The population is increasing and diversifying. New demands are being placed on the area's natural resources, infrastructure, and social and economic resources.
- The demographics, character, and economic base of some communities is rapidly changing.
- In some locations private land ownership and land use are rapidly changing creating new resource challenges. Traditional agricultural uses are being displaced with small acreage ranches, second homes, and subdivisions.
- New organizations and partnerships have formed that can assist the Council to address issues. Economic development organizations, land trusts, watershed councils, and volunteer groups offer additional expertise for a Council to implement an Area Plan.
- New federal initiatives and state programs offer new opportunities for the Council and its sponsors.
- The current downturn in the economy is placing additional stress on local, state and federal services.

## **Organizational Overview**

Program development and priorities are guided by an Area-wide Council of elected and appointed officials representing our sponsors. One member from each county serves on our Board of Directors, which is the action arm of the Council. The Council consists of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary/Treasurer. Actions taken at meetings include adopting the annual plan of work, reviewing by-laws, adopting a budget, and reviewing project action. RC&D projects are adopted by the Council as a means of accomplishing Council objectives.

## **Background and Structure of the Council**

The original sponsors of the RC&D were the County Commissioners, Cities, and Soil and Water Conservation Districts in the Area. The founding sponsors formed a RC&D Council and in October 1978 petitioned the U.S. Department of Agriculture to

improve the economy, quality of life, and the proper use of natural resources in Eastern Idaho through the RC&D Program. After USDA approved this request in August 1979, the High Country RC&D Area was established. In May of 1988, the Council incorporated within the State of Idaho pursuant to the Idaho Nonprofit Corporation Act. The Council was established to represent the sponsors and carry out an Area Plan.

The HCRC&D, Inc. assists its sponsors by providing specialized technical assistance and support for projects that are consistent with a balanced and sustainable environment, community, and economy.

In August 1988, IRS issued a letter of determination recognizing HCRC&D, Inc. as a 501(c) 3 organization.

The Council's mission and vision are:

**Mission:** *Promote, assist, and deliver local RC&D efforts, projects, and programs within our ten-county area.*

**Vision:** *To be recognized as a leader within the RC&D area in rural development and natural resource conservation.*

A Board of Directors, consisting of one representative selected from the sponsors in each county, manages the day to day operation for the Council. The Board meets bi-monthly. Officers include a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary/Treasurer elected from the Board of Directors. Sponsors pay annual dues based on a flat rate.

### Overview of the Area

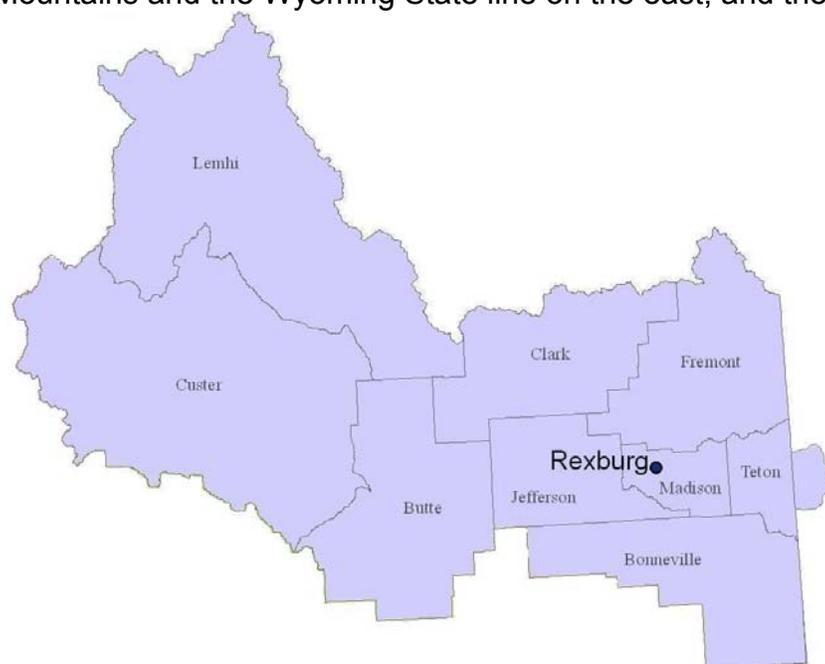
The High Country RC&D Area covers over 12.5 million acres. The Area encompasses nine counties in East-Central Idaho including Bonneville, Butte, Clark, Custer, Fremont, Jefferson, Lemhi, Madison, Teton) and a portion of Teton County, Wyoming. The headquarters are located in Rexburg, Idaho

The Area is bordered by the Sawtooth Mountain Range on the west; the Bitterroot Mountains and the Montana State line on the north; the Tetons Mountains and the Wyoming State line on the east; and the Upper Snake River

Valley on the south. Mount Borah, Idaho's highest peak is located in area. Seventy-six percent of the land federally owned.



is



## Demographics

The population of the Area has been steadily increasing since 1990. The population increased by 15.2% during 1990 – 2000. It continued to increase during the period 2000 – 2006 by 8.2%. The total population of the Area in 2006 was 184,391. Although growth has been steady in the total Area, the rate of growth has not been evenly distributed among the nine counties. Some counties have experienced tremendous growth recently due to migration into the county. Bonneville County's population accounts for 51% of the total Area population.

The population in Butte, Clark, and Custer counties declined during 2000 – 2006. High growth rates continued in Bonneville, Teton, Jefferson and Madison Counties during the same period. Growth in Madison County is directly related to the expansion of BYU-Idaho University. Growth in Teton County is directly related to a rapid building boom and land speculation. Fluctuations in the population of any county generally reflect the economic forces at play. This may result from changing availability and access to local natural resources such as mining, timber, or grazing. It may also result from changing market forces and job opportunities.



## Natural Resources

The HCRC&D is located in the Heart of the Northern Rockies. The Area is blessed with abundance of natural resources and out door recreational opportunities. World class natural amenities abound. In the mountains, desert, valleys, and rivers that make up the region. Water sustains the economy and ecology of the region. Competition for the proper use of water resources creates opportunities for new water efficiency projects. Public and private forest lands are severely affected by beetle killed timber. Terrestrial and aquatic invasive species are a serious risk to the regions ecology and economy. New emerging opportunities exist for alternative energy development, bio-fuels, and energy audits.

## Agriculture

Although agriculture has remained the number one industry in the HCRC&D Area the total number of farms, , total farm acreage, and average farm size. Over the 20 year period,(1987-2007) the number of farms in the area has decreased by 2%. HC RC&D farm acreage decreased in the majority of its counties during 2002-2007. As

acreage and number of farms decrease the average size of farms is also decreasing. Area farm size has decreased 9% from 5,993 acres in 2002 to 5,501 acres in 2007. Not all counties are experiencing a decrease in farm size; Custer, Jefferson and Madison counties are increasing in average farm size.

A vast majority of privately owned land is used for agriculture production. Barley, wheat, potatoes, and hay are the major crops. Many livestock producers depend on public land (BLM, Forest Service, and State land) grazing allotments to produce beef cattle and sheep. Additional land is used in agriculture related business, farmsteads, roads, and small water areas.

#### 2007 Agricultural Statistics – HCRC&D Area

County Name	Number of Farms 2007	Land in Farms (Ac) during 2007	Average Farm Size (Ac) during 2007	Market Value of Crop and Livestock Sales (2007)	Market Value of Crop Sales 2007	Market Value of Livestock Sales 2007
Bonneville	926	453,068	489	\$189,277,000	\$110,833,000	\$78,444,000
Butte	222	121,176	222	\$24,977,000	\$16,135,000	\$8,841,000
Clark	81	157,872	1,949	\$30,338,000	\$22,936,000	\$7,402,000
Custer	261	124,191	476	\$17,849,000	\$4,520,000	\$13,328,000
Fremont	536	288,144	538	\$86,176,000	\$75,739,000	\$10,437,000
Jefferson	826	325,380	394	\$233,052,000	\$124,434,000	\$108,619,000
Lemhi	342	189,644	555	\$21,298,000	\$1,401,000	\$19,896,000
Madison	450	210,630	468	\$107,772,000	\$101,761,000	\$6,012,000
Teton	299	122,478	410	\$32,959,000	\$28,699,000	\$4,260,000
Area Total	<b>3,943</b>	<b>1,992,583</b>		<b>\$743,698,000</b>	<b>\$486,458,000</b>	<b>\$257,239,000</b>

Source: 2007 Census of Agriculture and 2002 NASS County Profiles

#### Major Crop Production in the HCRC&D Area during 2007

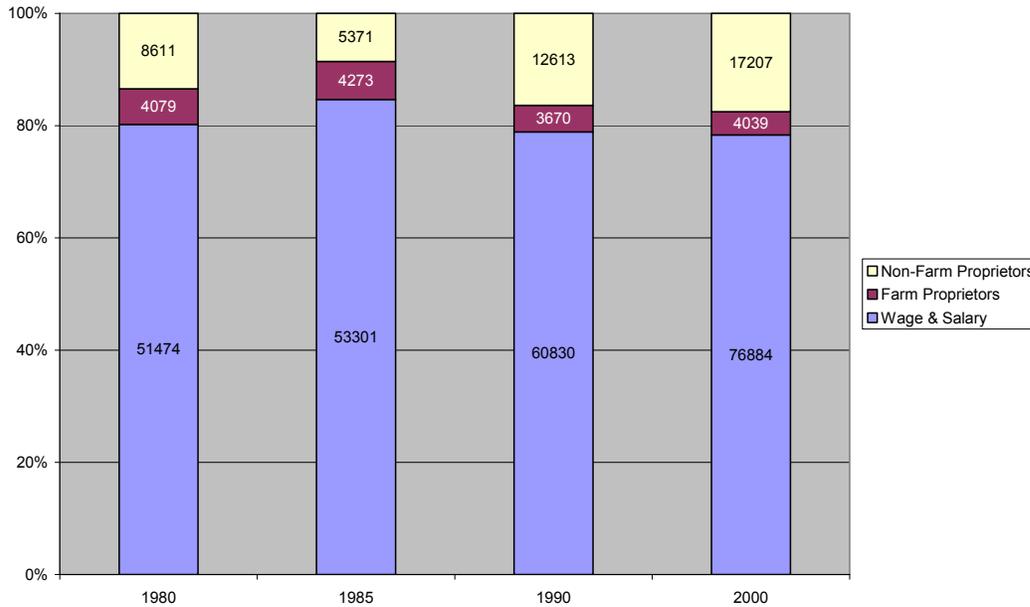
Commodity	Planted /Acres	Harvested/Acres	Average Yield
Hay Alfalfa (Dry)		314000	3.41 tons
Wheat All	183200	174500	70.38 bushels
Barley All	253300	244600	79.58 bushels
Potatoes All	119500	119100	324.8 hundredweight
Oats	8400	2200	62.78 bushel

Source: 2007 Census of Agriculture

#### Socioeconomic Information

Although mostly an agricultural area, with agriculture as a primary industry, the vast majority of employees are wage and salary employed. Non-farm proprietors make up the next largest portion and farm proprietors are the smallest portion of employment type in the Area

**HC RC&D Area: Employment by Type**  
 Source: Idaho Department of Commerce, County Profiles



The racial diversity of the area is growing. In 1980, the non-white population represented 1.4% of the total population. By 2007, the nonwhite population of HC RC&D Area represented 11.7% of the total population. Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin are the second largest racial sector in the area, and comprise 8.5% of the Area population.

*2007 HCRC&D Area Population by Race*

Area Population	Numbers	Percent
Black persons	1,078	0.56%
American Indian and Alaska Native persons	1,253	0.65%
Asian persons	1,239	0.64%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	268	0.14%
Persons reporting two or more races	2,287	1.18%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin	16,443	8.51%
White persons not Hispanic	170,601	88.32%
<b>AREA TOTALS</b>	<b>193,169</b>	<b>100%</b>

According to 2007 Census 13.28% Area's population was below the poverty level.

*Percent of County and Area Population below the poverty level in 2007.*

Bonneville	Butte	Clark	Custer	Fremont	Jefferson	Lemhi	Madison	Teton	AREA
10.8%	16.0%	15.0%	12.4%	13.2%	12.0%	13.5%	21.5%	8.7%	<b>13.28%</b>

## **Plan Process**

The process to revise the Area Plan began in 2004 with the appointment of an Area Plan Revision Committee made up of members of the Board of Directors. The committee included Gerald Jeppesen, HCRC&D Chairman; Boyd Bowles, HCRC&D Vice Chairman; Dave Radford, Bonneville County Commissioner; Richard Ball, Jefferson SWCD; and Lou Christensen, Mayor City of Driggs. The committee started the revision process by evaluating and prioritizing the goals and objectives from the old plan. Those that were no longer valid, were met, or represented duplicative services provided by others were culled. A power-point presentation was developed to educate sponsors and partners on the Area Plan revision process. The Soil and Water Conservation District Five Year Plans were reviewed and evaluated for common resource concerns and opportunities for RC&D assistance. The committee developed a questionnaire that was mailed to all sponsors soliciting input on what the revised Plan should contain. Only nine questionnaires were returned. To gain more local input Chairman Jeppesen traveled and met with local sponsors in Lemhi, Custer, Butte, Jefferson, and Madison counties. Sponsors provided input again during the 2005 annual meeting in Rexburg. During the 2006 Annual Sponsor's meeting the Area Plan conceptual "draft" was presented and additional input was gathered and priorities established. Input was sought from the Idaho RC&D Program Manager as well as the Area Conservationist. The draft has been posted on the Council website for public input and comment since March 27, 2006. No comments were received.

The Plan includes the following three sections:

### **1) Needs and Opportunities Section**

This section briefly describes **some** current needs and opportunities related to land conservation, water management, land management, community development, and Council development. This section is not intended to be a comprehensive discussion of **all** the region's issues but rather a focused discussion on issues that the Council will target during 2010-2014.

### **2) Work Plan Section**

This section identifies the goals, objectives, and strategies the HCRC&D will utilize during 2010 – 2014 to address some of the issues identified in the **Needs and Opportunities** section. The work plan further describes outcomes and timelines for each strategy.

### **3) Reference Section**

This section contains the data that was researched and assembled during the revision of the Area Plan. The reference section contains backup data, maps, charts, graphs, etc. The reference section is viewable at the HCRC&D website at <http://www.hcountryrcd.org>

## **SECTION 1: Resource Needs and Opportunities**

**A) Land Conservation** - Land conservation is defined in statute as the control of erosion and sedimentation.

“Background” or natural erosion is occurring on all undisturbed lands within the HCRC&D area. With the exception of an occasional land slide or overland flooding, background erosion generally goes unnoticed. “Accelerated erosion” occurs when the land has been disturbed in some manner and adequate management has not been applied.

Generally, soil erosion on pasturelands, hay lands, rangelands, and woodlands is slight or near background levels. Exceptions may occur on rangeland and woodland following a wildfire, prolonged drought, overland flooding, over-grazing, timber harvest, road construction, or other land disturbance.

In general, soil erosion on cropland is not a major concern in Lemhi County, Custer County, or Butte County because of low wind velocities, low precipitation, and a predominance of permanent vegetative cover. Soil erosion is a significant concern on cropland located in the southern portion of the Area.

Wind erosion is primarily a concern on irrigated cropland on the valley floors in Bonneville, Jefferson, Madison, Fremont, and Clark Counties. Blowing dust from unprotected fields is a common sight in the spring. Interstate 15 near Osgood may close during severe dust storms. Blowing and drifting sands occur along Highway 33 in the Mud Lake area of Jefferson County and near Dubois in Clark County. On sandy soils ‘blow outs’ occur that result in crops needing to be replanted. Actively moving sand dunes are located in Fremont County. Wind erosion may also occur in the uplands of Bonneville, Madison, Teton, and Fremont Counties following spring tillage on silt loam soils. These storms are not common but may result in significant soil loss when they occur.

Water induced soil erosion is primarily a threat in the sloping foothills and benches of Bonneville, Madison, Teton, and Fremont Counties where silt loam soils are used for irrigated and non-irrigated cropland. Slopes are moderate to steep and the landscape is dissected by intermittent or perennial stream channels. In some locations the soils are shallow to bed rock or to a less productive calcareous horizon. Water based erosion is a threat during spring runoff and also during intense summer rains. Ephemeral gully erosion in draws and water courses is not uncommon. Irrigation induced erosion is primarily a concern on steep slopes being used to grow potatoes. Excess tail water from irrigated cropland may also result in gully erosion and local sedimentation.

Background and accelerated stream bank erosion occurs throughout the RC&D area during spring runoff. Sediment and debris that enters streams degrades spawning habitat, reduces channel and reservoir capacity, clogs culverts and head gates, re-routes flows, and may result in localized overland flooding.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts within the area have implemented numerous watershed scale planning projects and land treatment projects since the 1980’s. The primary focus has been and continues to be working farms and ranches. Landowners have increasingly adopted soil conservation techniques including improved crop rotations, reduced tillage systems, permanent cover, and structural treatments,

and windbreaks.

The encroachment of sub-divisions onto sloping uplands in the Agriculture/Urban Interface presents an emerging land conservation challenge within the Area. Urban sprawl is encroaching onto areas that were considered highly erodible when they were in agricultural uses. The permanent conversion of some agricultural land to urban uses requires that new land conservation strategies are developed and implemented to protect soil resources and minimize the impacts of erosion and sedimentation.

### **HCRC&D Land Conservation Opportunities**

The planning and application of erosion and sedimentation control on private agricultural lands is primarily the responsibility and jurisdiction of the private landowner, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and supporting state and federal agencies. HCRC&D will provide support when requested by our sponsors through RC&D Council approved projects. RC&D support may include, but not be limited to:

- Assisting USDA agencies to educate the public regarding programs and opportunities.
- Assist cities and counties to address specific soil erosion and sedimentation issues and impacts.
- Assist sponsors to evaluate, plan, and implement new land conservation strategies in the Agriculture/Urban Interface area to reduce the impacts of erosion and sedimentation.
- Support sponsor's efforts to reduce the effects of soil erosion and sedimentation from agricultural lands.

**B) Water Management** - Water management is defined in statute as the conservation, use and quality of water, including irrigation and rural water supplies; the mitigation of floods and high water tables; the repair and improvement of reservoirs; the improvement of agricultural water management; and the improvement of water quality.

The management of the Area's water resources is critical to the economy and ecology of the region and has implications across all of southern Idaho. Prolonged drought conditions have severely tested surface and ground water supplies in previous years.

The High Country RC&D Area is divided into three major river systems including the Upper Snake River Watershed ; the Lost River – Mud Lake Watershed: and the Salmon River Watershed.

#### **Upper Snake River**

The headwaters for the main stem of the Snake River are in Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming. The river passes through Jackson Lake in Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming, and is joined by the Buffalo Fork, Gros Ventre, Hoback, Greys, and Salt Rivers before entering Idaho at Palisades Reservoir in Bonneville County. The Henry's Fork of the Snake River originates at Henry's Lake, passes through Island Park Reservoir, and is joined by the Buffalo, Warm, Fall, and Teton Rivers before it merges with the Main Fork of the Snake River in Jefferson County. The Snake River leaves the

Area southwest of Idaho Falls.

The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) maintains a system of reservoirs which provide irrigation water, flood control, and water based recreation benefits to the HCRC&D area. The reservoirs are located in Fremont and Bonneville County as well as Teton County, Wyoming. Irrigators in Bonneville, Jefferson, Madison, and Fremont counties benefit directly from water stored in this system. There are also privately owned irrigation reservoirs in the watershed. There are no water storage facilities physically located in Teton County making those irrigators dependent on surface and ground water. Irrigation water quality is generally good. Substantial quantities return to the Snake River from irrigation return flow and canals.

#### Lost Rivers – Mud Lake

The Big Lost River, Little Lost River, Birch Creek, and Medicine Lodge Creek all disappear into lava flows on the Snake River Plain. Most of this sinking water, which is not diverted by irrigation wells, will eventually re-enter the Snake River from numerous springs flowing into American Falls Reservoir and at the Thousand Springs area in south central Idaho. Mackay Reservoir is the only significant storage facility located on the Big Lost River. It provides irrigation storage, and some flood control, and recreation. There are no storage facilities on the Little Lost River, which presents serious water shortage problems during the dry years. Beaver Creek and Camas Creek, during high flows, replenish Mud Lake, which has no natural outlet.

#### Salmon River

The Salmon River is known world wide as the River of No Return. It is a white water river for most of its length and provides a tremendous challenge for those who use it for recreation. The main tributaries of the Salmon River are the East Fork, North Fork, and Middle Fork Salmon Rivers; Lemhi; and Pahsimeroi Rivers. The Middle Fork as well as a portion of the Main Fork of the Salmon River is classified as Wild and Scenic Rivers. There are only a few small reservoirs in the Salmon River drainage. They are insignificant in terms of total water supply or for flood control. Water supplies are limited in relation to demands. The Upper Salmon Basin (Stanley) and the East Fork have adequate water supply to meet irrigation demands during normal snow-pack years. Challis Creek and Pahsimeroi River water users have limited supplies of both ground water and surface water for meeting irrigation needs.

#### Irrigation

Since the first water right was recorded in 1874 on Willow Creek, a complex irrigation system based on the Colorado River Doctrine of Water Rights has evolved in the Area and State. A network of water districts, irrigation districts, canal companies, and water users associations developed constructing canals, ditches and / or pipelines to convey water to where it was needed. Individually or collectively, these organizations have developed water storage impoundments and reservoirs.

In 1987, the Snake River Basin Adjudication process began to clarify all water rights in the Snake River Basin. The process continues today. In 1992, the State issued a moratorium on all new water rights in the Snake River Basin. Up until the 1990's, surface and ground water were managed as separate resources by the State. Idaho

now manages groundwater, spring and surface water as a single linked resource under conjunctive management.

Improvements to the irrigation infrastructure including diversion structures, pipelines, canals and delivery ditches are needed to reduce water losses, improve water management, increase efficiencies, reduce costs, and conserve energy. Conversion of flood irrigation to sprinklers is needed in portions of the Area to reduce water loss.

### Surface Water Quality

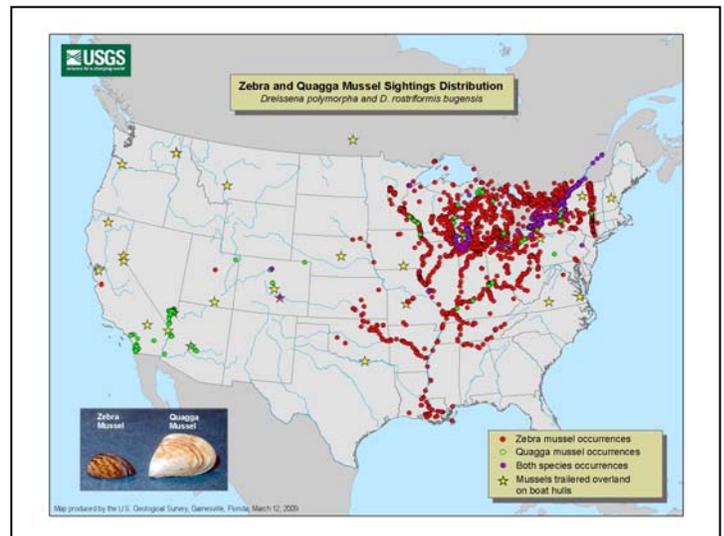
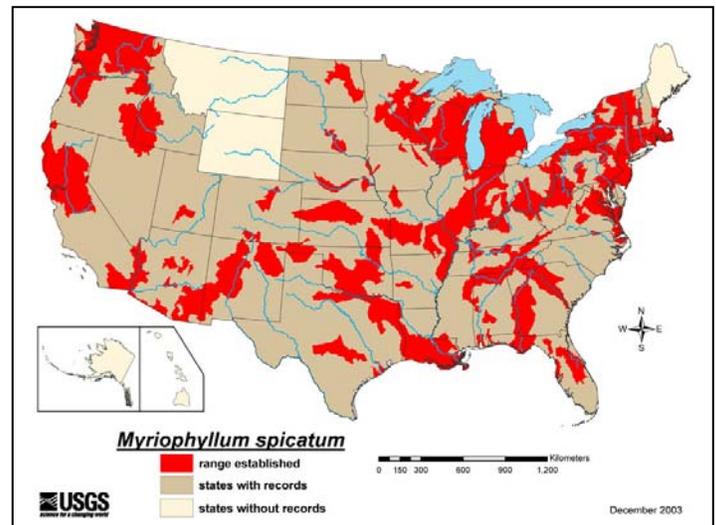
Non-point source pollutants pose the biggest threat to surface water quality in the area. Fifteen watersheds within the area are required to develop a Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) to meet the requirements of the federal Clean Water Act. A TMDL is essentially a pollutant budget. Fourteen TMDLs have been developed and approved by EPA. Following EPA's approval of a TMDL, an implementation plan is written which details the actions needed to achieve load reduction and a schedule of those actions. Five implementation plans have been completed. Nine are under development.

### Aquatic Nuisance Species

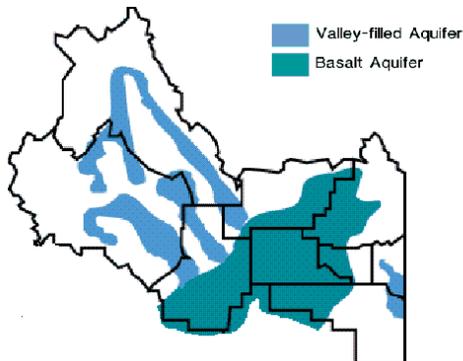
The Area's rivers and lakes offer some of the best recreational assets in the West. Recreational boating and fishing in the Salmon River and Snake River is very significant to the local economies creating jobs and sustaining local businesses. In the Snake River watershed in Eastern Idaho and Western Wyoming the annual economic value of recreational fishing and boating totals \$57.2 million. Recreation is a critical component to sustaining the regions economy. Expanding recreational opportunities is an active economic development strategy in most eastern Idaho counties. Maintaining the pristine quality of surface waters is vital to that strategy

Idaho's "Strategic Action Plan for Invasive Species", is a statewide effort to limit the introduction and spread of invasive species. Special classes of invasive species that deserve particular attention are the "aquatic nuisance species" (ANS). ANS are those plants and animals that are dependent upon aquatic and riparian ecosystems. The fishing and boating opportunities on the areas lakes, rivers and streams attracts enthusiasts from all parts of the United States. ANS are commonly moved between all states on boats or fishing gear.

The irrigation infrastructure, aquatic



ecology and water based economy in the RC&D Area is immediately threatened by the introduction of an ANS such as Eurasian watermilfoil, zebra mussels and/or quagga mussels. Currently, Eurasian watermilfoil occurs only in western and Northern Idaho and Zebra or Quagga mussels are not found in the state. Once established the likelihood of eradication becomes questionable while the opportunity for further distribution throughout the region increases. Control or eradication of ANS is very expensive and potentially controversial and opposed by the public. The risk posed by these species requires an aggressive pro-active prevention strategy on multiple fronts.



### Aquifers

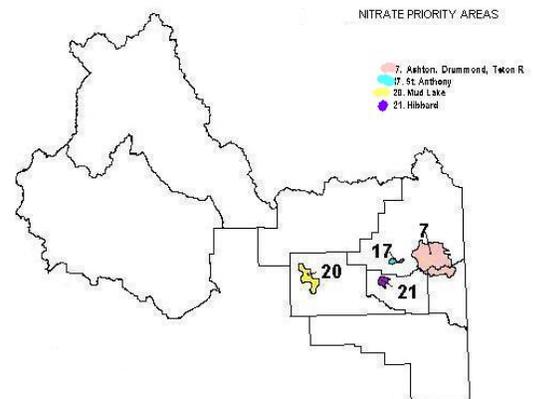
The HCRC&D contains several aquifers that are essential to the area's water supply. Valley-filled aquifers hold water in unconsolidated sedimentary material, usually in intermountain valleys. Basalt aquifers hold water in the cracks of underground rock and in thin sedimentary layers that are interbedded with the basalt.

The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare (IDHW), the Idaho Division of Environmental Quality (IDEQ), and the Idaho

Department of Water Resources (IDWR) have prioritized major Idaho aquifers based on their vulnerability to pollution. The Snake River aquifer is considered the second most vulnerable in Idaho. Vulnerable areas exist where groundwater is shallow or where soils are thin or very permeable. Also, the potential for contamination is greater where considerable water is applied during irrigation, which can leach contaminants below the root zone. Four nitrate priority areas have been identified in the area.

An emerging concern is the potential risk to surface and ground water resources from urban runoff. Additionally, the risk of contaminants entering water from illegal dumping of debris into canals is a concern in some areas.

In some portions of the area there is concern regarding surface water supplies and aquifer depletion. Increased ground water pumping for irrigation is suspected of lowering the water tables and adversely affecting down stream surface water rights. Two Ground Water Districts, the Madison and Bonneville-Jefferson have formed to manage ground water resources. In response to declining aquifer and Snake River levels that resulted in insufficient water supplies to satisfy existing beneficial uses, the Idaho Legislature requested that the Water Board prepare and submit a Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan (CAMP) for the Eastern Snake River Plain Aquifer (ESPA). From the beginning, CAMP development took place in a public forum. After a series of public meetings with stakeholders, the Board presented the ESPA CAMP Framework to the Legislature. The Framework recognizes that supply of and demands for water are out of balance in the Eastern



Snake River Plain, (ESAP), and the connected Snake River, making more deliberate and coordinated management of surface waters of the Snake River and the underground waters of the ESPA a necessity. The Framework sets forth the overarching goal and objectives adopted by the Board for the management of the ESPA.

### Flooding

River and stream flooding occurs in all of the Counties within the RC&D Area. Flooding in the Area occurs frequently along the North and South Forks of the Snake River, the Teton River, the Salmon and Lemhi Rivers, and occasionally along the Big and Little Lost Rivers. Ice jam flooding occurs along the Salmon River, especially below the City of Salmon and in Butte County along Antelope Creek.

Flooding is an annual occurrence along some streams impacting low lying grazing lands, croplands, and riparian areas. In Custer County, the East Fork of the Salmon River is prone to spring flooding. In Teton County, flooding occurs every spring in the wet bottomlands along the Teton River and its tributaries. Flooding will generally result from spring snow melt along the lower twenty-two miles of the Henry's Fork and along the Teton Rivers near Rexburg. Due to the location and land use the impact of this flooding to infrastructure is normally low.

Annual flooding also occurs frequently along intermittent streams due to spring melt and runoff from severe thunderstorms that damages culverts and roadbeds resulting in reduced access, replacement and maintenance costs, and erosion and sediment.

Ice jams have played a role in a number of floods in the area. Significant ice jams have occurred on the Teton, Snake, Little Lost (at Howe), Salmon, and Lemhi rivers. The most notable of the ice jam flood was on the Lemhi River near Salmon in 1984, an event that led to a Federal Disaster declaration.

Flooding on the Big Lost River is a frequent problem. Big floods occurred in 1965, 1967 and 1986. These floods took out several bridges and damaged highways and county roads. However, the more frequent damage is the increased erosion on stream banks and the flooding of cropland. Camas and Beaver Creeks are sources of surface inflow to Mud Lake, which has no effective outlet other than irrigation canals, evaporation, and seepage. Lands along Camas Creek near the lake and along the south side of the lake are susceptible to flooding. If the volume of inflow were to exceed the available storage capacity of the lake, locally constructed dikes around the lake might fail and permit flooding of farm areas south of the lake. The Mud Lake flood plain is principally in crops. Portions of residential and associated developments in the communities of Terreton and Mud Lake, on the fringe of the flood plain, may suffer minor damages under extreme flood conditions.

During the winter 1996-97, the snow pack in the Snake River Drainage exceeded 250% of normal in some higher elevations. By June 11, the flows coming out of Palisades Reservoir, coupled with the high tributary discharges, produced the highest flows on the Snake River since 1918. At its peak, the Snake River flooded as far as a mile from its banks, and many places were under five feet of water. River levels were close to overtopping existing flood control levees and flooding of agricultural lands began far from the main channel as irrigation canals overflowed their banks. There were

numerous closures of county roads and state highways from water and damage to bridges, especially in Jefferson County, which impacted transportation as well as response activities. There were flood fighting efforts in several small towns, including Menan, Labell, and Roberts where voluntary evacuations were in effect. The State estimated that approximately 500 people were displaced from their homes in Jefferson and Bingham counties. Bonneville, Fremont, Jefferson, Madison, Custer, and Butte counties were declared Federal disasters. In the South Fork of the Snake River large amounts of debris were dislodged and re-deposited during the 1997 flood. The impact of the at flood is still apparent 10 years later as flow patterns threaten irrigation diversions, bridges, roadways, and a community Park.

Other streams in the area have been dredged, straightened, and channelized resulting in de-stabilized channels that may accelerate local flooding, erosion, and sedimentation. In some areas localized overland flooding follows intense summer thunderstorms or during snowmelt on frozen soils.

**HCRC&D Water Resource Opportunities**

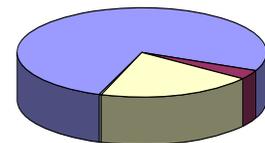
HCRC&D will support efforts to manage and conserve the regions water resources and protect surface and ground water quality. HCRC&D will work with SWCDs, NGOs, units of government, and agencies when requested by our sponsors through RC&D Council approved projects. HCRC&D will:

- Assist sponsors to plan and implement projects that address irrigated agricultures needs.
- Assist sponsors to evaluate flood risks and develop and implement mitigation strategies.
- Assist partners to plan and implement recommendations in the Eastern Snake River Plain Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan.
- Address surface and ground water quality issues related to urban areas and rural communities.
- Prevent aquatic invasive species from becoming established in the Area.

**C) LAND MANAGEMENT ELEMENT-** Land management defined in statute as energy conservation that includes the production of energy crops; the protection of agricultural land as appropriate from conversion to other uses; farmland protection; and the protection of fish and wildlife habitats.

There are approximately 12,320,320 acres in the HCRC&D Area. Graph 1: Land Ownership, demonstrates how land ownership is distributed. Seventy-six percent of land in the area is federally owned and administered by seven agencies. The Forest Service controls the biggest block of federally owned land, followed by the Bureau of Land Management. The rest of federal land is divided among the US Department of Energy INEEL, US Bureau of Reclamation, National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife

Graph 1: HC RC&D Land Ownership  
Source: Idaho Department of Commerce, County Profiles



■	76.19% Federal, 9381571 ac.
■	3.31% State, 406990 ac.
■	20.37% Private, 2507986 ac.
■	0.124% County, 15321 ac.
■	0.016% Municipal, 1974 ac.

Service and Agricultural Research Service.

The State of Idaho owns about 406,717 acres (3.3% of the Area). Land is managed by three state agencies: State Endowment Lands are managed by Idaho Department of Lands (86.56% , 352,067 acres), Idaho Fish and Game ( 10.52% of state owned land, 42,802 acres) and Idaho Parks and Recreation (2.91% of state owned land, 11,848 acres). Generally, these lands are leased to private individuals for field crop production, cattle and sheep grazing allotments, and logging. Some State lands are dedicated for wildlife habitat and public recreation.

A small amount of land is owned and used by municipalities and counties. 1,974 acres (.016 % of all land in the Area) is owned by municipalities. Counties own 15,321 acres (.124 % of all land in the Area).

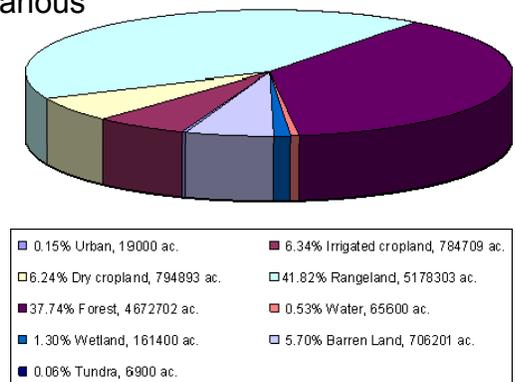
Private land represents 20.37% of the Area.

### Landuse

The land in the Area is put to many uses by its various owners. To a great extent land use is determined by the soil, water, topography, and climate. These factors have also influenced settlement and development.

Privately owned agricultural lands are primarily used for crop production and livestock grazing. Rangeland represents the largest sector (41.8%) followed by forest (37.74%). Irrigated and non-irrigated cropland combined make up the next largest sector with 6% each. Urban land in the area is 0.15%. The remaining land uses are: water (0.53%), wetland (1.3 %), and barren land (6%).

**HC RC&D Area: Land Use**  
Source: Idaho Department of Commerce, Land Use



Public lands are managed for multiple uses including wildlife, grazing, timber harvest, recreation, mining, watershed, and wilderness. Within the Area there are three designated wilderness areas encompassing 681,613 acres. A proposed Boulder White Cloud Wilderness Area in Custer Co. would add 500,000 acres to the total amount of wilderness. Management of Lands

173,203 acres were enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contracts in 2007. Nearly 55% of the acres are scheduled to expire between 2010 – 2013.

Existing CRP Contracts -2007		CRP contracts set to expire/ Year				2007 acres expiring between 2010-13	% of 2007 acres expiring between 2010-13
COUNTY	ACRES	2,010	2,011	2,012	2,013		
BONNEVILLE	85,771	4,111	5,009	16,183	20,383	45,686	53%
BUTTE	1,023	0	4	51	0	55	5%
CLARK	7,026	1,500	668	2,915	0	5,083	72%
CUSTER	770	279	0	0	0	279	36%
FREMONT	33,682	4,231	7,532	6,439	7,216	25,417	75%
JEFFERSON	6,058	361	681	4	26	1,072	18%
MADISON	23,678	488	1,141	7,894	2,233	11,755	50%
TETON	15,197	2,477	1,339	1,033	1,276	6,124	40%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>173,203</b>	<b>13,447</b>	<b>16,373</b>	<b>34,519</b>	<b>31,133</b>	<b>95,471</b>	<b>55%</b>

Over the past 20 years, acreage developed for new housing almost doubled in Eastern Idaho. This trend is expected to continue although the rate has dramatically slowed with the turndown in the economy. New housing growth across the Area is resulting in the permanent conversion of agriculture land to non-agriculture uses with direct impacts on the land base, related natural resources, and the economy.

As land use conversion occurs there are often direct impacts on traditional agriculture operations. Agricultural infrastructure such as canals, ditches, irrigation systems may be negatively impacted. Agricultural land use conversion decreases working farm and ranch unit size and reduces land available for producers to rent. Land values are rapidly increasing beyond a level where agriculture producers can compete effectively. Housing developments in the Wild land Urban Interface, (WUI), create adverse impacts on wildlife especially where traditional winter range or migration routes are impacted.

Forest health is a major concern throughout the Area. Multiple years of drought coupled with insect and disease attack have left many forested areas with a high number of dead and dying trees. The build up of hazardous fuels on both public and private lands creates extreme risks for catastrophic wildfires.

Invasive terrestrial noxious weeds represent a major threat to land and ecosystem integrity throughout the Area. Noxious weeds pollute native plant communities, degrade wildlife habitat, reduce land values, and require annual investments of capital, equipment, and staff to combat. Aggressive terrestrial noxious weeds have gained a strong foothold in every county.

### **HCRC&D Land Management Opportunities**

HCRC&D will support efforts to manage the regions land resources. HCRC&D will work with groups, units of government, and agencies when requested by our sponsors through RC&D Council approved projects. HCRC&D will:

- Reduce the impact of terrestrial invasive noxious weeds by coordinating landscape scale initiatives using Integrated Weed Management.
- Reduce wildfire risks and threats in the WUI.
- Address the impacts of land use conversion in the Ag/Urban interface.
- Assist agriculture to evaluate value added business opportunities.
- Enhance wildlife habitat.

**D) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT-** Community development is defined in statute as the development of resource-based industries; the protection of rural industries from natural resource hazards; the development of adequate rural water and waste disposal systems; the improvement of recreation facilities; the improvement of rural housing; the provision of adequate health and education facilities; the satisfaction of essential transportation and communication needs; and the promotion of food security, economic development and education.

In 2009 the Council assisted all counties to complete FEMA – All Hazard Mitigation Plans. These plans identify natural hazards and risks that threaten local community assets, natural resources, and economies. They propose solutions to reduce risk, mitigate hazards, and improve preparedness. The Council is in a unique position to assist communities to implement their All Hazard Mitigation Plans through planning and project development.

Rapid population growth in portions of the Area is placing increasing pressure on communities to deliver services, create livable wage jobs, develop infrastructure, and provide amenities. Increasing population places additional stress on the areas natural resources and their use.

Effective preparation and planning are needed to meet the future needs and demands of growth without depleting the environment. The HCRC&D can be instrumental in helping local leaders develop and carry out their plans.

#### **HCRC&D Community Development Opportunities**

HCRC&D will support community development initiatives and projects throughout the area. When requested by our sponsors, HCRC&D will work with local economic and community development groups, units of government, and agencies through RC&D Council approved projects to:

- Develop or enhance recreational, historical, and cultural assets.
- Develop and implement FEMA All Hazard Mitigation Plans
- Enhance local emergency response capacity and capabilities.
- Enhance, protect, and preserve natural areas, river corridors, and community parks.
- Assist sponsors to develop opportunities for minority and under served populations and address poverty issues.
- Assist natural resource based businesses to establish, expand and create employment opportunities.
- Develop a collaborative community conservation planning process.

#### **E) COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT**

Because of its structure the HCRC&D Council, Inc. is in a unique position to provide local leadership to address regional issues and initiatives. The association between County Commissioners, Cities, and Conservation Districts leverages a wide range of capabilities and resources to “Make Things Happen”. The Council targets its assistance towards sponsor supported projects that are consistent with a balanced and

sustainable environment, community, and economy. Priorities are implemented through an Area Plan and Annual Work Plan. The HCRC&D Council is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization. As such the Council actively seeks grants and awards to implement approved projects and manages funds from numerous sources. A Board of Directors (BOD) manages the day to day operation of the Council. The BOD has the principal responsibility for fulfillment of the organization's mission and the legal accountability and oversight for its operations.

HCRC&D. Inc. will continue to grow as a non-profit organization, (NPO), by offering services that support sponsors objectives but are **not duplicative** of other entities in the Area. HCRC&D will invest in developing its organizational capacity and operational expertise through BOD and employee training and development.

### **HCRC&D Council Development Opportunities**

HCRC&D will continue to provide support and leadership for Council approved initiatives and projects. HCRC&D services may include, but not be limited to:

- Researching issues, evaluating impacts, and developing new initiatives.
- Linking federal and state programs and assistance with local needs.
- Providing project scoping, planning, and design services.
- Providing project facilitation and coordination services.
- Providing educational opportunities and resources.
- Providing fundraising, grant research, and grant writing services.
- Providing project oversight and grant administrative services.
- Providing opportunities for employee development.
- Providing opportunities to expand the capacity of it's members
- Join the NARCDA Circle of Diamonds.

# HIGH COUNTRY RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL WORK PLAN FOR 2010 – 2014

## LAND CONSERVATION ELEMENT

**Goal :** By 2014 increase the acres planned for reducing wind and water induced soil erosion and sedimentation by 1,000 acres.

**Objective :** By 2014, provide direct support for sponsor's efforts to plan, fund, and implement at least one watershed or sub-watershed scale land conservation projects that reduce soil erosion and sedimentation on agricultural lands.

### **Strategies:**

1. By 2/2011 evaluate SWCD current 5 year plans for potential land conservation project opportunities. Prepare an action report with recommendations to the BOD and SWCDs.
2. By 2/2011 meet with all SWCD's to identify opportunities for collaboration on land conservation projects.
3. By 6/2012 develop an HCRC&D / SWCD collaboration plan for at least one identified project.
4. In cooperation with SWCDs and USDA agencies support at least two Farm Bill outreach initiatives by 12/2012 and Integrate USDA Farm Bill programs where applicable.
5. Assist SWCDs with at least one grant proposal development as requested throughout 2010-2014.
6. By 12/2013 assist collaborating SWCDs to develop at least one project scale land treatment plan that reduce soil erosion and sedimentation.
7. By 12/2013 assist sponsors to develop at least two conservation field trials related to land treatment conservation priorities identified during planning.

**Goal :** Achieve a 10% reduction of soil erosion and sedimentation occurring on 200 acres in urban areas by 2014.

**Objective :** In 2011 develop and launch an Urban Conservation Initiative targeting existing urban areas as well as the Ag / Urban interface and the Wildland /Urban Interface areas subject to soil erosion and sedimentation. Focus on the identification and inventory of problem area, education, partnerships, and the application of Best Management Practices.

### **Strategies:**

1. By 12/2010 research which Urban Conservation Initiatives are underway in neighboring regions to determine what's working / not working. Provide a report to the Council.
2. By December 2011 inform 100% of the sponsoring cities/counties about specific opportunities for land conservation projects that mitigate the effects of wind and water erosion and sedimentation in the Agricultural / Urban Interface.

3. By March 2012 form an HCRC&D Urban Conservation Initiative Steering Committee.
4. By August 2012 develop an HCRC&D Urban Conservation Information Campaign.
5. By December 2012 explore the possibility of implementing two Urban Conservation demonstration projects that reduce erosion and/or sedimentation on 200 acres.

## **WATER CONSERVATION**

**Goal :** By 2014 reduce the impact of water shortages and increase the application of water quality related conservation practices in two urban watershed areas.

**Objective :** By 2014 engage County Commissioners in the HCRC&D to specifically identify watershed issues, assess problems, and develop solutions. Improve or maintain water quality in the areas lakes, rivers, streams, or aquifers.

### **Strategies:**

1. By 12/2010 develop sustainable support and funding to implement the Upper Snake River Weather Modification Project through 2014. Develop a list of potential target funders and follow-up with individual contacts to secure commitments.
2. By 12/2013, evaluate the status of urban storm water pollution issues in the area's cities. Develop a report to sponsors. Link to the Urban Conservation Initiative.
3. By 12/2014 develop at least one urban storm water conservation demonstration project.
4. Provide assistance as requested by RC&D sponsors to plan and implement at least one TMDLs, but not more than four TMDL related projects.

**Objective :** By 2014 assist sponsors to develop appropriate strategies and implement projects in at least one flood prone area.

### **Strategies:**

1. By 6/2010 identify flood risks by completing FEMA approved All Hazards Mitigation Plan for nine counties. Plan will propose mitigation strategies.
2. By 6/2014 assist counties to plan and implement at least one recommended flood mitigation project identified in the AHMP, as requested.

**Goal :** As requested, assist sponsor counties develop and implement at least two projects that help maintain the biological integrity of targeted lakes, rivers, and streams by 2014.

**Objective:** Assist sponsor counties to develop and implement at least two projects that support the recommendations of the Idaho Aquatic Nuisance Species Plan by 2014.

**Strategies:**

1. During 2011 launch an area wide ANS information and education campaign. Support and fund the campaign through 2014.
2. In cooperation with the State of Idaho coordinate an Aquatic Nuisance Species workshop in the RC&D area during 2011 and 2014.
3. During 2010 -2014 continue to support efforts to implement the Henrys Lake Aquatic Nuisance Species Prevention Project in Fremont County. (Public education, boat inspections, boat wash stations, monitoring, volunteers)
4. By 3/2012 support at least one additional county to launch ANS initiatives through facilitation, risk analysis, project development and grant writing.

## **LAND MANAGEMENT**

**Goal:** Help land managers, County Commissioners, and county noxious weed managers reduce by 10,000 acres area affected by terrestrial invasive noxious weed species by 2014.

**Objective:** By 2014 achieve a 10% decrease in acres affected by targeted invader species through new initiatives, accelerated land treatment, public education, partnerships and training.

**Strategies:**

1. During 2010 -2014, plan and implement an expanded “Holding the Line” campaign aimed at preventing Rush skeleton weed from advancing into the Upper Snake River Basin. Treat 25 acres by 2014.
2. During 2010 -2014, plan and implement an expanded “Holding the Line” campaign to prevent Dyer’s Woad from advancing into the Upper Snake River Basin. Treat 100 acres by 2014.
3. During 2010 – 2014, lead the “Holding the Line” Leafy spurge bio-saturation project in Eastern Idaho resulting in the treatment of at least 4,500 acres annually. Provide leadership to coordinate this project with RC&D Councils and partners in Wyoming and Montana
4. During 2011, coordinate invasive species strategic planning with SCDs and NRCS programs within the High Country area.
5. During 2012, provide at least two noxious weed training opportunities for the Conservation Partnership. Develop workshops to provide classroom and field training opportunities.
6. By 2011, develop partnerships with local educational institutions, (BYU-Idaho, Idaho State University, and Montana State University) to assist with invasive species issues.
7. Support the Buffer Zone by coordinating at least two new invader projects in the Upper Snake and Henrys Fork CWMA by 2014.

8. During 2010-2014, update and maintain (yearly) regional data that tracks and documents progress of invasive weed control efforts within the region, as funding allows.

**Objective:** During 2010 -2014 apply invasive species treatment on at least 40,000 acres of grazing lands / forestlands / mined lands throughout the Upper Snake and Henrys Fork CWMAs.

**Strategies:**

1. During the years 2010-2011, provide annual planning, grant writing, and administrative services to the Henry's Fork and Upper Snake River CWMAs resulting in at least 40,000 acres treated, 2 watershed plans developed, 10 jobs created, and 5 businesses created or retained.
2. During 2010 – 2011, attend meetings with all six CWMAs in the HCRC&D to explain potential RC&D role and offer services; resulting in two watershed plans developed.
3. Annually monitor up to 50 established biological control insectaries within the RC&D area, through 2014, as funding is available.
4. During 2010-2014, facilitate the collection and redistribution of biological control agents from local insectaries to new locations. Establish up 100 new insectaries in the area resulting in 2,500 acres of invasive species treated on grazing and forest lands and 10 jobs created, as funding is available.
5. By 6/2011, explore the opportunities to form a Teton River Leafy Spurge Task Force comprised of technical advisors, elected officials, and citizen groups to develop coordinated noxious weed control initiatives throughout the watershed. If opportunity exists, replicate the model in the Henrys Fork and South Fork watersheds for the Teton River in 2012-2013.
6. In 2012 facilitate revisions of the strategic plans for the Upper Snake and Henrys Fork CWMA resulting in 2 watershed plans developed.

**Goal:** Enhance wild land fire preparedness in communities across the RC&D area by 2014 by treating at least 500 acres.

**Objective:** By 2014 assist nine counties to plan and implement high priority hazardous fuels treatment (HFT) projects identified in their County Wildfire Protection Plans (CWWP) as requested.

**Strategies:**

1. During 2010 -2014 provide ongoing technical assistance to the County Wildfire Working Groups (CWWG) to develop leadership capacity and CWWG functionality as requested.
2. By 12/ 2012 evaluate all county CWPPs. Prepare a matrix of common issues, needs, projects, etc. and present the results to the individual CWPPs and High Country Board.

3. By 12/2011, assist nine counties to coordinate County Wildfire Mitigation Plans with their County All Hazards Mitigation Plans as requested.
4. During 2012, meet with individual landowners, homeowner associations and other groups in the high priority HFT project areas, identified by local Fire Districts, to provide information, assess risks, develop consensus, and promote action.
5. During 2012, develop 10 HFT implementation project plans with groups of homeowners in the targeted counties. Plans will include specific HFT actions needed, costs, hazardous fuels risk assessments, and document the level of homeowner support.
6. By 2012, develop at least one HFT grant proposal, as requested.
7. During 2010 and 2011, host three regional wildfire workshops open to the general public.
8. During 2010 and 2011, host ten targeted hazardous fuels treatment workshops for residents in high risk subdivisions.
9. By 2011, present options for Wildfire Ordinances to the County Commissioners and Planning and Zoning Boards in target counties. Link to the Urban Conservation Initiative.
10. By 2014, implement three hazardous fuels reduction projects in a high risk subdivision within the RC&D area resulting 500 acres treated.

**Objective:** Support and expand the RC&D community forestry program by planning and supporting five projects by 2014, as requested.

**Strategies:**

1. During 2010-2014 develop a strategic plan for the HCRC&D community forestry program. Link to the Urban Conservation Initiative.
2. Provide technical assistance to plan and fund at least five community forestry projects by 2014.
3. By 2012 secure at least two additional funding sources for community forestry program and projects as requested.

**Objective:** During 2011, retain, protect and enhance the natural resource values in the wildland / urban interface (WUI) where development pressure is changing traditional land uses by developing at least two public education and planning workshops.

**Strategies:**

1. By December 2011, compile information regarding WUI issues by interviewing county P&Z administrators in nine counties. Link to the Urban Conservation Initiative.
2. By September 2012, develop and hold an area wide workshop that addresses resource conservation issues in the WUI. Link to the Urban Conservation Initiative.
3. By December 2012, develop links on the HCRC&D website that addresses WUI conservation issues. Link to the Urban Conservation Initiative.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

**Goal:** By 2014, improve the area's economic resources through at least 20 HCRC&D sponsored projects that create or expand local business while creating jobs.

**Objective:** Assist in providing opportunities for business growth in sustainable agriculture by sponsoring at least four value-added initiatives through 2014.

**Strategies:**

1. Implement the Upper Snake River Weather Modification Project through 2014 creating 40 seasonal jobs and sustaining 5 businesses.
2. By 2014, create 50 seasonal jobs and create or expand 5 businesses by supporting and expanding Cooperative Weed Management Area projects and Aquatic Invasive Species Projects.
3. By 2012, explore the opportunities to fund a full farm energy audit pilot program.
4. Develop at least one demonstration to utilize small diameter wood products, slash, and other by-products 2013.
5. During 2010 – 2014, evaluate and support appropriate alternative energy opportunities including wind, solar, bio- fuels, geo-thermal, etc. resulting in at least one business started or expanded.
6. During 2010 – 2012, research and explore the value added opportunities for agriculture including farm and ranch recreation, agro-tourism, alternative crops and markets.
7. By 2012, evaluate viable carbon sequestration and carbon marketing initiatives, and report results to the High Country Board. Support at least one related project as requested by 2014.

**Goal:** By 2014 improve the Areas quality of life through twenty RC&D sponsored projects that enhance community capacity, services, resources and assets.

**Objective:** Assist sponsors to plan and implement projects as requested throughout the life of the plan (2010-2014).

**Strategies:**

1. By 2011 assist counties to develop and implement "all hazard mitigation plans".
2. Provide at least one grant writing workshop during 2011 through 2012 as requested.
3. As requested, assist sponsors find funding for at least one project that addresses ADA accessibility issues by 2014.

4. From 2010-2014 support at least two historic and archeological preservation activities within the area as requested.
5. From 2010-2014 assist communities to plan and fund at least ten infrastructure, facilities, services, amenities, and projects that improve the quality of life for their residents.

## **COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT**

**Goal:** By 2014, enhance the leadership capacity of the RC&D Council through training, participation, regional training and expanding the Council partnerships.

**Objective:** By 12/31/2011, evaluate organizational strengths and weaknesses. Implement policies, procedures, and practices as needed.

### **Strategies:**

1. During 2010 conduct a NPO operational review of HCRC&D Council, Inc.
2. During 2011 evaluate supplemental funding strategies for the Council. Report results to the Board for consideration. Board adopts at least one strategy by 12/10/12.
3. From 2010-2014, annually in January review the Area Plan. Update as needed to reflect new opportunities.
4. By 12/1 of each year, complete the Annual Operating Plan for the upcoming year.
5. By 8/2013 begin Area plan revision process.
6. By 3/2011 revise and expand the policy handbook.
7. By 6/2011 join the Circle of Diamonds.
8. With assistance from an organization such as the Society of Non-Profit Center, complete a council self assessment and follow through with decisions and plans developed by the Board of Directors by 12/31/2011.

### **Current and Potential Partnerships with USDA and Others**

The High Country RC&D program is effective largely because of the cooperation and strong partnerships that have been formed with agencies, units of government, organizations, businesses, and private individuals. Various projects have been completed successfully because of those partnerships. Our Partners Include:

- Community Forestry
  - IDL
  - City Governments
- Wildland Urban Interface
  - BLM
  - County Governments

- Local Emergency response teams
- Holding the Line
  - USDA Forest Service
    - Caribou - Targhee National Forest Ranger Districts
    - Salmon – Challis National Forest Ranger Districts
    - Sawtooth National Forest
  - Yellowstone National Park
  - Greater Yellowstone Coalition
  - Chambers of Commerce
  - Bureau of Reclamation
  - USDA – Farm Services Agency
  - Soil and Water Conservation Districts
  - USDI – National Park Service
  - County Government
  - City Governments
  - County Weed Departments
- Cooperative Weed Management Areas
  - Idaho Department of Agriculture
  - Idaho State and Regional Noxious Weed Associations
  - County Weed Departments
  - Idaho Department of Fish and Game
  - Idaho Parks and Recreation
  - USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service
  - USDA Forest Service
    - Caribou - Targhee National Forest Ranger Districts
    - Salmon – Challis National Forest Ranger Districts
    - Sawtooth National Forest
  - University of Idaho Cooperative Extension
  - Bureau of Reclamation
  - Teton Regional Land Trust
  - Henrys Fork Foundation
  - Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Aquatic Nuisance species
  - Idaho Department of Agriculture
  - Idaho State and Regional Noxious Weed Associations
  - Henrys Lake Foundation
  - County Government
  - Idaho Department of Fish and Game
  - Idaho Parks and Recreation
- All Hazard Mitigation Plans
  - Salmon-Challis national Forest
  - Local Landowners
  - County Governments
  - City Governments
- Weather Modification
  - Soil and Water Conservation Districts

- County Government
- City Governments
- Irrigation Districts
- Local businesses
- Local landowners
- Power Companies
- Henrys Lake Foundation
- Urban Conservation
  - USDA Rural Development
  - Soil and Water Conservation Districts
  - County Government
  - City Governments

### **Public Input**

Area Plan was taken to sponsors and board members for suggestions and revisions. After a notice in public papers asking for comments, a hard copy of the Area Plan was placed on in all elected officials offices for review and posted electronically online at the High Country RC&D website. All comments and suggestions were taken to the board for inclusion.

### **Linkages to the USDA NRCS Strategic Plan**

The projects that are adopted and implemented by the High Country RC&D Council are varied in type and scope. HCRC&D is highly engaged in natural resource based projects that directly benefit the ecology and economy of Eastern Idaho and directly relate Vision and Mission of the Agency. Those projects often link to one or more of the specific *USDA NRCS Overarching Strategies, Mission Goals & Outcomes*. We strive to link products and services from a wide range of sources to enable people and communities to be good stewards of their soil, water, and related natural resources.

We believe in :

- **Public Service** – provide the highest quality service to all clientele equally.
- **Partnerships** – bring traditional and non-traditional partners together to achieve common objectives, and
- **Technical Excellence** – deliver science-based information and technology to enable effective conservation stewardship
- **Ensuring civil rights**, equal employment opportunity, and fair and equitable service delivery.
- **Fiscal credibility and accountability**

Primarily, the projects in the HCRC&D link directly to following *Overarching Strategies*:

- ◆ Cooperative Conservation
- ◆ Watershed Approach
- ◆ Market-based Approach

Linkages are primarily found to these *Mission Goals & Outcomes*:

- ◆ High Quality Productive Soils  
(All Hazards,
- ◆ Clean and Abundant Water  
(Weather Modification, Aquatic Nuisance Species)
- ◆ Healthy Plant and Animal Communities  
(CWMA's, Holding the Line, Urban Conservation, Aquatic Nuisance Species)
- ◆ Working Farm and Ranch Lands  
(CWMA's, Wildland Urban Interface, Community Forestry)

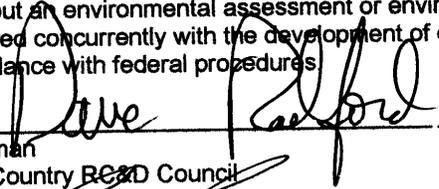
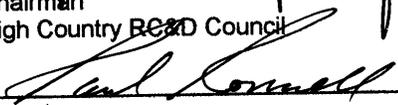
There are new emerging opportunities for additional project linkages to:

- ◆ Clean Air  
(Alternate fuels, etc.)
- ◆ Adequate Energy Supply  
(bio-mass energy, wind and water energy)

The High Country RC&D Council's program will be conducted in compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions as contained in Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (P. L. 100-259) and other nondiscrimination statutes; namely, Section 504, of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and in accordance with regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture (7CFR-15, Subparts A&B) which provide that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, marital status, or handicap/disability be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial (or technical) assistance from the Department of Agriculture or any agency thereof.

The High Country RC&D Council agrees that the signing of this document constitutes agreement to comply with federal laws concerning restrictions on lobbying, a drug-free workplace, and responsibilities for procurement, suspension, and disbarment.

The High Country RC&D Council has had this application reviewed by the state. Comments made through the state single point of contact have been considered prior to submission of the application and that all applicable procedures have been followed. An environmental impact statement will not be prepared during the development of the area plan, but an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement will be prepared concurrently with the development of each project, when applicable, in accordance with federal procedures.

	8-5-10
Chairman High Country RC&D Council	Date
	8-5-10
Secretary High Country RC&D Council	Date
	8/10/10
State Conservationist NRCS-Idaho	Date

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave. Avenue SW, Washington D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.