

IDAHO SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION COMMISSION

FIVE-YEAR (5) PLAN and
ANNUAL WORK PLAN
CERTIFICATION

DISTRICT:

FOR FISCAL YEAR:

2023

DUE :

March 31, 2023

CERTIFICATION

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

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



Board Supervisor Signature

Dusty Wilkins

Printed Name

3-8-23

Date

208 436 4202

District Telephone

minidoka swed@gmail.com

District Email Address

FOR SWC USE ONLY:

DATE OF CONFIRMATION:

*Minidoka Soil and Water Conservation
District*

84 East Baseline Road

Rupert Idaho 83350

208 436 4202

[*minidokaswed@gmail.com*](mailto:minidokaswed@gmail.com)

Annual Plan

1 July 2023 - 30 June 2024

Five-Year Plan

1 July 2023 - 30 June 2028

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Forward

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

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

Both by legislation and by agreement, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission (ISWCC) provides technical assistance to landowners and land users through Conservation Districts. Each Conservation District in Idaho has a signed Mutual Agreement with the Secretary of Agricultural and the Governor of Idaho that establishes a framework for cooperation.

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

This document identifies the resource needs in the Conservation District and presents a resource conservation action plan for meeting these needs.

Certificate of Adoption

The Board of elected supervisors of the Minidoka Soil and Water Conservation District this 12th day of March 2020, do hereby approve the following document known as the Resource Conservation Business Plan. This Plan will be in effect for a five-year period ending June 30, 2025, during which time, it will be updated annually and/or amended as necessary.

As evidence of our adoption and final approval, we do hereby affix our signatures to this document.

Dusty Wilkins, Chairman _____

Reid Bowen, Vice Chairman _____

Lance Lovell, Treasurer _____

Aaron Firth, Supervisor _____

Luke Stevenson, Supervisor _____

Supporting Idaho Conservation Partners: (as applicable)

Natural Resources Conservation Service
Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission

CONSERVATION DISTRICT STRUCTURE AND GOVERNING POLICIES

Conservation District History

Homesteaders began moving to southern Idaho's Minidoka County in 1904 with government assurance that there would soon be water for irrigated farming. Southern Minidoka County was opened for homesteading after the Minidoka Dam on the Snake River was completed and Lake Walcott was formed east of Rupert in 1907. The Minidoka Irrigation District now administers water in this area.

In the late 1940s, well driller Julion Clausen tapped into the Snake River Plain aquifer in central Minidoka County. The Bureau of Reclamation then drilled wells there, and finding adequate underground water, opened the Northside Pumping Division of the Minidoka Project to homesteading.

Homesteads were mostly limited to veterans; thousands applied. Public drawings for the homesteads were held from 1953 to 1959, with 637 families taking up land in the project. They cleared sagebrush, leveled ground, laid out ditches, dug wells for drinking water, and built barns and homes. The only assistance homesteaders received came from two University of Idaho Extension county agents in Rupert.

Many of the settlers had lived in a soil conservation district elsewhere, and in 1954, some of them formed The Homestead Committee. Their goals were to address local public concerns such as roads, telephones, fire protection, weed and pest control, and to establish a soil conservation district in Minidoka County. A public hearing was held March 8, 1955. Supporters of the district decided to limit the district boundaries to land in the Northside Project, known today as the A&B Irrigation District. A public referendum passed, and the Minidoka Soil and Water Conservation District was officially organized July 1, 1955.

The first supervisors of the Minidoka SWCD were Edward Smith, George Hedlind, Willard Warren, and Roger Dean (all of Rupert), and George Falkner from Paul.

The Walcott Soil and Water Conservation District was organized for the original Minidoka Project area in 1961. Since their area had been settled nearly fifty years earlier, the primary concerns did not include roads and basic public facilities, but rather to educate, inform, and assist farmers in improving their farming practices to prevent soil and water erosion.

The first supervisors of the Walcott SWCD were Thomas Maberly, Sherman Saylor, Pat O'Donnell, and Albert Fredrick (all of Rupert), and Harvey Hollinger of Paul. The two districts shared office space and staff. In 1969 they merged as the Minidoka Soil and Water Conservation District.

The Minidoka SWCD spent most of its first five years helping farmers level land, build irrigation structures, and develop proper crop rotations. Land-leveling equipment was in great demand, so the District obtained a government surplus TD-18 International track-tractor and purchased a land plan and carryall, which it leased to cooperators.

The Minidoka SWCD has assisted farmers in converting to sprinkler irrigation, which lessens soil erosion on sandy or steep ground and also helps curb high water table problems. The district also promotes conservation practices to reduce erosion of surface-irrigated land. In many areas of the county, concrete ditches, cabledation, gated pipe, and pump back systems make efficient use of water while reducing energy costs.

Over the years, there have been major changes in the duties and priorities of the District. Foremost was the 1985 Food Security Act bill that required farmers receiving any form of federal

funding to obtain a Conservation Plan of Action for all actively farmed property. The District board was given the responsibility of approving and monitoring these plans for effective implementation.

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In 1990, the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act (FACTA) expanded the government mandates and included water quality.

In addition to the FSA and FACTA, water quality has been a major concern of state and local special-interest groups. The district has attempted to address these concerns. Today the District is engaged in water quality, soil health, and educational activities.

SWCD Administration and Financing

The northern three-fourths of Minidoka County was issued a certificate of organization on July 1, 1955, as the Minidoka Soil Conservation District. The remaining southern part of the county was issued a certificate of organization as the Walcott Soil and Water Conservation District on April 18, 1961.

The two districts were consolidated into one, and a certificate of organization was issued by Pete Cenarusa, Idaho Secretary of State, on April 16, 1969, to the Minidoka Soil and Water Conservation District. The Minidoka County boundaries make up the district boundaries. Lands within the incorporated cities are not included in the District.

The District receives financing provided from the general fund of Minidoka County and the State of Idaho. The county is authorized by State law to provide the district with financial or other assistance. The State is authorized to match the county funds.

The District is administered by a five-person board of supervisors elected by the local residents. The board members serve four-year terms. They receive no salary but are entitled to reimbursement of expenses when carrying out responsibilities for the District. The five elected members select associate supervisors to assist them. A regular meeting is held the second Thursday of each month with special meetings called as needed.

SWCD Policies

The Minidoka SWCD is governed by Title 22, Chapter 27 of the Idaho Code. The Idaho Administrative Procedures Act (IDAPA) Rule 60.05.02 and IDAPA Rule 60.05.04 direct Soil Conservation Districts to establish a Five-Year Plan and an Annual Work Plan to identify natural resource concerns within their boundaries and formulate strategies to address these concerns.

The Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission (ISWC) oversees the MSWCD (Minidoka Soil and Water Conservation District) through its powers and responsibilities. The MSWCD is a grassroots organization that has accepted the responsibility of overseeing the wise use and conservation of our natural resources.

The Board of supervisors also enlists the support of local, county, state, and federal agencies to assist them with their goals.

A monthly meeting is held to address local, state, and federal issues that directly affect the conservation resources of this community.

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

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Land

Minidoka County is located in South Central Idaho. It is made up of the Snake River Plain section of the Columbia Plateau province. The district encompasses 487,794 acres. The land ownership is nearly split between private and public ownership.

Land use has remained relatively constant.

Land Ownership within Minidoka SWCD

- Water 0.4%
- State 1.6%
- National Park Service 15.8%
- BLM 33.0%
- BOR 1.6%
- Private Land 47.6%

Topography

The topography of Minidoka County ranges from nearly level, very low terraces adjacent to the Snake River to a very gently undulating, loess-covered basalt upland in the northern part of the county. The elevation ranges from about 4,125 feet at the Snake River to 5,000 feet on Kimama Butte.

The soil associations in the Minidoka Soil Survey of 1976 were grouped into five general kinds of landscape for broad interpretative purposes. The terms for texture used in the associations apply to the texture of the surface layer.

1. Level to Strongly Sloping, Well-Drained Silt Loams on Basalt Plains
2. Very Gently Sloping to Strongly Sloping, Well-Drained Silt Loams on Basalt Plains
3. Level to Strongly Sloping, Well-Drained Sands and fine Sandy Loams on Basalt Plains
4. Level to Sloping, Well-Drained Sands to Silty Clay Loams on Low Alluvial Terraces.

5. Level and Nearly Level, Poorly Drained Loamy Sands to Clay Loams on Low Alluvial Terraces

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Climate

The average annual temperature is 48 degrees F.; with a length of 125-130 days of frost-free weather. The average precipitation is 8-10 inches annually.

Economic Conditions & Outlook

Population and Employment

The population and demographics of the county have made significant changes in the past years. The population is slowly increasing after slipping in 2005. There has been a 2.5% increase in population from 2002 to 2012. Minidoka County saw a large plunge in population around 2005 down to 18,756 due to various industry issues, and economic struggles. Since 2005 there has been a steady growth, different farming practices are being implemented such as Direct Seed/minimum tillage, several industries have established in the area and in the latest count on 2017 the population is up to **20,729**.

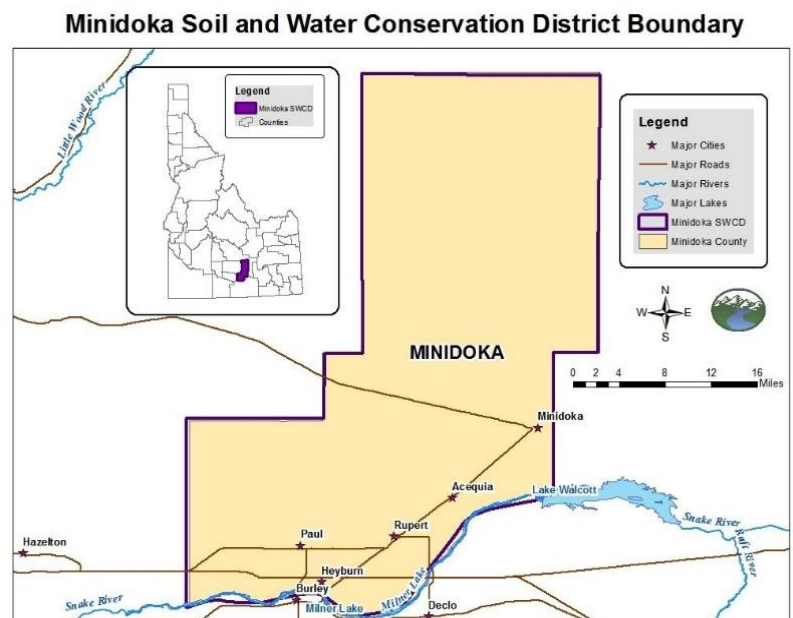
While still heavily dependent on agriculture and food processing, the county economy has diversified to include durable manufacturing and wholesale and retail trade tied to agriculture.

Agricultural Economy

Agriculture is the number one business in the county. The major crops grown in the county are wheat, malt barley, hay, sugar beets, beans and potatoes. Dairy cattle, feeder cattle, swine, and sheep are the primary animals raised in the county.

Manufacturing is making a large presence in the area, with cheese, powdered milk, potato packing and shipping, Commodity shipping of all variety are based in this area as well.

Map of County – District Boundary and Historical Facts



Minidoka County is part of the Burley, Idaho Micropolitan Statistical Area

The name Minidoka is of Dakota Sioux origin meaning "a fountain or spring of water." Minidoka was first used in 1883 as a name for the Union Pacific's Oregon Short Line, a railroad spur in the middle of the Snake River Plain. The spur later became the site of a watering station along the line. The village of Minidoka grew up next to the station. The Minidoka name was then given to a reclamation project under then President Theodore Roosevelt which included the construction of the Minidoka Dam, completed in 1904. Minidoka National Historic Site (in Jerome County) was part of the original reclamation project and hence shares the name. Minidoka County was created by the Idaho Legislature on January 28, 1913, by a partition of Lincoln County.

Proposed budget and actual expenditures to date (as of January 2022) for FY 2022-2023

	Actual 2022-2023	Proposed for 2022-2023
INCOME		
County Appropriations		\$ 12,000.00
State Allocations		
District Base	\$ 8,500.00	\$ 8,500.00
State Match	\$ 19,238.15	\$ 16,000.00
District Bldg. Capacity		
District Operation Funding	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 2,000.00
Grants	\$ 20,584.00	\$ 5,671.00
Administrative Fees- Direct Seed project	\$ 1,251.25	\$ 3,000.00
other possible income	\$ 38.02	
Tree Sales		\$ 1,200.00
Other Income- Int. CD's rebate/refunds	\$ 28.60	\$ 150.00
TOTAL	\$ 55,640.02	\$ 48,521.00
EXPENSES		
Dues		
Division IV	\$ 80.00	\$ 80.00
IASCD	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 1,800.00
IDEA membership	\$ 60.00	\$ 60.00
NACD	\$ 190.00	\$ 190.00
Other Dues		
High Country RC&D	\$ 56.35	\$ 60.00
RC&D membership		\$ 50.00
Memorials/funerals	\$ 663.19	\$ 150.00
Idea raffle	\$ 25.00	\$ 100.00
FAIR EXPENSE/ trees give away(Heward bonus)		\$ 190.00
TOTAL	\$ 2,874.54	\$ 2,680.00
PUBLIC OUTREACH Awards & contests		
Ag in the Classroom		\$ 150.00
Banquet Awards	\$ 516.00	\$ 150.00
Envirothon		\$ 50.00
Forestry Contest		\$ 50.00
IASCD Door Prizes	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
KYG	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00
LSEE (land judging)	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
Water quality project		\$ 2,000.00
Poster Contest	\$ 414.46	\$ 500.00
Scholarships		\$ 3,000.00
Natural Resources Camp		\$ 280.00
Idaho Community foundation	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00
Stewardship awards	\$ 145.49	\$ 150.00
Special projects (cap wells) WQPA project	\$ 20,713.00	\$ 750.00
FFA		\$ 500.00
Soil testing through U of I		\$ 475.00
Speech Contest	\$ 175.00	\$ 175.00
TOTAL	\$ 22,463.95	\$ 8,730.00

PUBLIC EVENTS/MEETINGS		
Banquet		
Board Mtg. Lunch	\$ 66.02	\$ 550.00
Division IV Meetings	\$ 60.00	\$ 160.00
Picnic/banquet		\$ 750.00
Tours/Workshops/Demonstrations		\$ 750.00
Local work group	\$ 467.46	\$ 50.00
TOTAL	\$ 593.48	\$ 2,260.00
UTILITIES		
PMT	\$ 433.63	\$ 757.00
TOTAL	\$ 433.63	\$ 757.00
INSURANCE		
ICRMP and State Insur.	\$ 1,972.00	\$ 1,972.00
work comp ins	\$ 332.00	
DISTRICT EMPLOYEE TRAVEL		
Meals & Lodging		
Mileage		
Registration	\$ 316.00	\$ 400.00
TOTAL	\$ 2,620.00	\$ 2,372.00
SUPERVISOR TRAVEL		
Meals & Lodging		
Mileage		
Registration	\$ 632.00	\$ 650.00
TOTAL	\$ 632.00	\$ 650.00
OFFICE SUPPLIES/EQUIPMENT		
Equipment (computer/software)	\$ 176.28	
Postage		\$ 65.00
Visa (includes all kinds of expenses)		
Office Supplies, other	\$ 84.06	\$ 100.00
deposits to CD's		
Quick Books Reg./ ck order		
Employee training		
Total office and employee training	\$ 260.34	\$ 165.00
PAYROLL EXPENSES		
Payroll	\$ 12,861.04	\$ 19,000.00
NRCS employee		
Quarterly Taxes	\$ 5,871.87	\$ 4,750.00
CPA	\$ 342.00	\$ 200.00
PERSI	\$ 2,618.79	\$ 3,500.00
TOTAL	\$ 21,693.70	\$ 27,450.00
INCOME	\$ 55,640.02	\$ 48,521.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 52,165.12	\$ 45,064.00
NET INCOME	\$ 3,474.90	\$ 3,457.00

1- Year or Annual Plan

- a) The Minidoka SWCD will follow through with the WQPA grants that were made available this year. The projects that were picked up was a soft conversion with a local rancher, on some irrigated pasture lands. And a big project with moisture sensors in partnership with Amalgamated Sugar Company.
- b) The deep soil testing project will be finishing up this year as this is the 5th year of that project. Then we should start seeing a compilation of data related to the testing.
- c) Minidoka and the 2 Cassia Districts still have the Direct Seed Drills, we have kept them maintained, and will run them one more year, and then determine the benefit of keeping the drills which are now going on 9 years. Due to costs of maintaining and has the project run its limits of usefulness or benefit to the area growers.
- d) Minidoka and the 2 Cassia Districts have completed the TA program that was in conjunction with NRCS.
- e) Soil your undies will continue again for this year, this has been interesting to the growers to see first hand the microbial activity in their soils, this is the sunset of 'plant' undies in the fields for the "Soil Your Undies" project, which is a quick way (one or less growing season) to show results of the microbial activity in the soil. Our area farmers like the see it now/hands on approach. This is underwear recovered from a field in 2021 after being buried for 10 weeks. Notice that the cotton is almost completely gone. All that remains is the nylon waist band and the elastic around the leg openings. This producer routinely uses cover crops and when possible, he practices no-till or reduced tillage. This underwear was some of the most degraded underwear in all of the counties participating in this project. That would indicate high biological activity of this soil, and a healthy soil as well.
- f) Minidoka SWCD continues to work with NRCS by assisting with the Local Work Group and setting guidelines for future projects. Possible projects in the 5 year plan outline.
- g) Tree sales for habitat, and wind breaks will continue, this year the sales have been brisk, and some of the species of trees have been difficult to get or are limited in numbers.
- h) We jointly with Cassia East and Cassia West held a soil health conference. We changed the focus to Managing Water for Tomorrow's Agriculture. This was well received and attended.
- i) FFA and 4-H programs continue to be a priority, with land judging, KYG (know your government) poster and speech contests,



5 – Year plan

Trends and Issues impacting Conservation in Minidoka Soil and Water Conservation District have not changed much over the years. Water quality and quantity always seem to be a concern and part of any discussion. We reside in a high desert region, with an annual rain fall of 9 inches at best. The region – all the of the western states – have been in extreme drought conditions for several years in a row. Which raises many concerns for water usage.

Residential areas are encroaching into agricultural areas, impacting soil, access, water, normal day to day farming practices, and land use. Many who are now building/living in farm land do not understand the needs and practices of agriculture which includes planting, harvesting, the sound and smell of animals and equipment to name a few. These are issues we are being called upon to help address, and possibly mitigate.

Priority and Plan of Action

As a Conservation District we have sought out information and assistance for possible capping of abandoned wells that may assist with possible diminishment of contaminates that seep into the aquifer. This has been a difficult project to get off the ground. We have not given up, but it is on the back burner. The nitrate issues are still problematic and will have to be addressed at some point.

Projects planned, coordinated, or managed by the Minidoka Soil and Water Conservation District.

The Ad that we prepared for the ‘Urban Farmer’ on overuse of fertilizer will continue to randomly go out on social media. Just as a reminder to not over fertilize.

There are several projects on the horizon, some that could materialize sooner and others further out.

The Raft River Area is working on a recharge project, our Local Work Group is watching this idea, and may implement some guidelines for assistance with finances. Minidoka SWCD would agree with this project.

Habitat is disappearing due to what we in the agricultural area call urban sprawl, - subdivisions now in farm land and in the middle or near animal operations. This is affecting the habitat for wild life and our natural pollinators. We have encouraged species of plantings through the trees sales that will assist with some of these issues. But we feel the need to find means for education of what to expect when living in rural and farm areas will need to be addressed.

There is more concern for costs of fuel and man hours in farming practices. The Minidoka SWCD is looking at different or more beneficial equipment that could become a teaching program like the Direct Seed Drill program we are currently providing.

We are looking at changing the idea and formalness of the big workshops we have held in the past – as information is available on line for anything of interest. The possibilities of a forum or panel type discussion where growers of all types can sit around a table and express their successes or failures, and seek ideas from others with experience is a format that looks like it could be very helpful to the area growers from multiple acres to the hobby farmer with 20 or less acres.

Minidoka will continue with the Direct seed Drill renting that equipment out as a tool to assist with cover crops and the benefit to the soil and wildlife.

Priority Area number 1: Education of urban landowners as to their responsibility to water quality.

Commercial is on social media with a target audience of 'urban farmers' in the Mini- Cassia area. This has been expanded into the Boise area also.	On going	MSWCD, U of I Educator
Posted on the websites of our tri-district MiniCassia.org, and ISWCC site, used as promo at meetings when electronic devices are available	On going	MSWCD, ISWCC
Start planning and working on commercials that will target, the abandoned wells, and water quality	On going	MSWCD, U of I Educator, ISWCC

Priority Area number 2: Soil Health preservation and education

Continue who is assisting with soil testing, collecting data and putting it into a format that is usable for local producers and the Soil Health forum, evaluate cover crop production and value as an aid to soil health and increased cash crop production. Along with working on the abandoned well project.	On going	MSWCD, East and West Cassia SWCD, NRCS, ISWCC
Continue with the no-till drill project with maintenance, renting it out, education of the benefits of cover crops.	On Going	MSWCD, Supervisors and staff

Priority Area number 3: Water quality capping of abandoned wells

Identify local wells that could be or are abandoned	1-5 years	Joint Soil Con, MSWCD, DEQ, IDWR, Local Irrigation companies
Acquire a grant to assist in capping wells	1-5 years	ISWCC-TA, MSWCD Admin
Prepare a script to use to visit with landowners about their abandoned wells and the potential for contamination, and what can be done to mitigate the issue,	1-5 years	Joint Soil Con, MSWCD Supervisors and Admin, Local Irrigation Companies, Ads on radio and T.V.
Assist with the cost of capping the wells through a grant process	1-5 years	CIG grant, NRCS, DEQ, IDWR, MSWCD, Local Irrigation Companies.
Cap 5 to 7 of the discovered or designated wells	3-4 years	MSWCD, IDWR, DEQ, NRCS Well Drillers, land owners.

Priority Area number 4: Outreach and Education

Sponsor poster contests, speech contests, KYG students, Land Judging students, booths at the County fair with information on conservation, Farmer Appreciation Days	annually	MSWCD Admin, and Supervisors
Jointly sponsor the Soil Health forum for producers	On going	MSWCD, East and West Cassia

throughout the state and northern Idaho		SWCD Admin, and Supervisors
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Priority Area number 5: Soil Testing in Division IV

Soil testing with Division IV Soil and Water Conservation Districts. Three places in each of the counties were selected for the diversification of farming practices and the location of the farms for testing for soil health. The tests were first implemented in 2019 for a base to determine with future testing the value of different farming practices on the soil health.	Every year	U of I researchers, Soil Conservationist and Supervisors as needed, ISWCC
Information will be gathered and tabulated for the benefit and use of the Districts involved in teaching soil health to the area producers.	1-5 years	U of I researchers, Soil Conservationist, MSWCD Admin, and Admins from other Districts, ISWCC

Minidoka Conservation District’s Elected Officials and Office Staff

Title	Name	Phone
Chair	Dusty Wilkins	208 670 1641
Vice Chair	Reid Bowen	208 431 3209
Treasurer	Lance Lovell	208 681 2346
Supervisor	Luke Stevenson	208 431 7335
Supervisor	Aaron Firth	208 650 6794
Admin. Assist.	Sharon Hardy	208 430 3259

Minidoka SWCD is a political subdivision of the State of Idaho – authorities, powers, and structure contained in Soil Conservation District Law, Title 22, Chapter 27, Idaho Code. Organized July 1st 1955 to provide voluntary land and water conservation technical and financial assistance to landowners and uses with the Minidoka SWCD boundary. Minidoka SWCD is in Idaho District 27 being represented by Senator Kelly Anthon, Representative Scott Bedke and Representative Fred Wood.

VISION: To better co-ordinate and unify with our partners and other districts to provide a higher level of assistance to the landowners and producers in each of our areas.

VALUES: Sustainable use of natural resources, support for agriculture activity that uses sustainable, economically feasible practices, value and respect for the Idaho Conservation Partnership, and Conservation education for adults and youth.

Minidoka Soil and Water Conservation District; assisting land managers with their conservation choices.

