

# Mini-Cassia Conservation Update

Volume No. 2021.1



## East Cassia, West Cassia, & Minidoka Soil and Water Conservation Districts

### SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

District activities continue despite NRCS office restrictions due to Covid-19.

You can reach us at:

#### Burley Temporary Office

Room # 201  
in the Cassia County Courthouse  
Monday-Thursday 9:00-2:00  
208-572-3375

#### Rupert New Office Location

85 East Baseline,  
(In the McGregor Building)  
Minidoka County Fairgrounds  
Tuesday-Friday 9:00-2:00  
208-436-4202

### Soil Health Resources

There are many online trainings and presentations to help with your continued soil health education.

You can find several links on our website at

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

or do an online search or a YouTube search for soil health.

### SEEDLING TREE SALE



The 2021 Seedling Tree Sale is complete. Thank you to the volunteers and workers who helped to bag the seedlings and prepare them for pick-up. We appreciate the landowners who supported the tree sale and we wish you good luck with your new baby seedlings. Remember that your seedlings need extra care and regular irrigation to get them established.

Planting and windbreak helps can be found on our website at [minicassiaswcd.com](http://minicassiaswcd.com). Information can also be found through an online search.



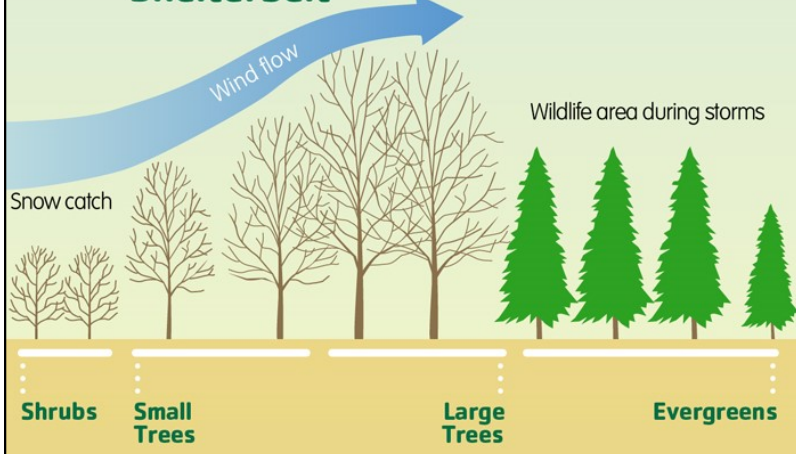
Our website homepage:

The 2021 Soil Health Workshop was canceled due to Covid-19 restrictions. **We are now planning for our 7th Soil Health Workshop 2022.** Watch upcoming newsletters and our website for date and information.

If you want to be added to our workshop email notification list for future events, send an email to [dmmurray6@gmail.com](mailto:dmmurray6@gmail.com).



### Cross-Section Of a 10-Row Shelterbelt



### How Can I Stop The Blowing Dust?

By Doreen McMurray  
East Cassia & West Cassia Soil & Water Conservation Districts  
I & E Specialist

“Will the wind ever stop blowing?” That’s a question you hear all the time when you live in Southern Idaho. On any windy day, you can look across the valley and the sky looks brown! The air is full of soil that has been lifted by the wind and carried aloft. One danger created by airborne soil is the reduced visibility for drivers on roadways.

You can do something about it. Plan NOW. Observe the locations on your property where a windbreak or living snow fence would be a benefit. Study options. Consider spacing, number of rows you have room for, and the varieties of trees that would be best *Continued on page 5*

# District Board of Supervisors

	<u>East Cassia SWCD</u>	<u>West Cassia SWCD</u>	<u>Minidoka SWCD</u>
Chairman.....	Mark Webb.....	Richard Kunau.....	Brian Kossman
Vice-Chair.....	Steve Ward.....	Jordan Searle.....	Dusty Wilkins
Treasurer.....	Ken Woodworth.....	Kathy Poulton.....	Aaron Firth
Member.....	Hannah Sanders.....	Brent Stoker.....	Reid Bowen
Member.....	Rob Cottle.....	Ken Black.....	
Associate Member.....			Justin Hunter
Associate Member.....			Russ Suchan

## District Employees

Sharon Hardy.....Minidoka Administrative Assistant  
 Rachelle Osterhout.....Cassia Administrative Assistant  
 Doreen McMurray.....Cassia Information & Education Specialist  
 Megan Heward.....Cassia Administrative Assistant  
 Melanie Nebeker.....Soil Conservation Technical Assistant

## Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Personnel

David Mabey.....District Conservationist  
 Carolyn Firth.....ISWCC Ag Program Specialist  
 Dinah Reaney.....Soil Conservationist  
 Samantha Lange.....Pheasants Forever



## CONTACT OUR OFFICES:

Rupert Field Office 208-436-4202      Burley Field Office 208-572-3375

**Minidoka e-mail:** [minidokaswcd@gmail.com](mailto:minidokaswcd@gmail.com)  
**Cassia e-mail:** [ewcswcd@gmail.com](mailto:ewcswcd@gmail.com)  
**Web page:** [www.minicassiaswcd.com](http://www.minicassiaswcd.com)

*Spanish translation is available upon request.*

## NEWSLETTERS

are available by  
e-mail!

To receive this and future newsletters electronically, send your e-mail address to:

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

Type "NEWSLETTER"  
in the subject box.

If you want your name removed from the newsletter mailing list, just let us know.

## SUPERVISOR BOARD MEETINGS

Supervisors for the Soil and Water Conservation Districts are landowners in Cassia and Minidoka Counties who volunteer their time. They are interested in farming issues and want to make a positive difference in their communities.

Serving as a Supervisor is a great opportunity to learn how to improve your own operation as well as helping to make a difference within your community.

If you are interested in serving on the Soil & Water Conservation District in your county, contact a current board member or call one of the NRCS offices for information.

## Monthly Board Meetings

(Public Welcome)

**East Cassia SWCD - 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of each month**  
**West Cassia SWCD - 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month**  
**Minidoka SWCD - 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month**

*Any changes to meeting schedules will be posted in our offices and on our website at [www.minicassiaswcd.com](http://www.minicassiaswcd.com).*



*The "Conservation Update" is published 3 times a year by the East Cassia, West Cassia, & Minidoka Soil and Water Conservation Districts and mailed to approximately 1,000 landowners, and sent by email to several hundred more. The distribution mailing list is maintained by the Information & Education Specialist in Burley, Idaho. Names may be added to or removed from the mailing list for the next publication by calling 208-572-3375.*

*East Cassia, West Cassia, & Minidoka Soil and Water Conservation Districts are non-profit organizations. All programs and services of the Soil and Water Conservation Districts are offered on a non-discriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, marital status, or handicap.*



## Check Out These Soil Health Web Sites:

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/soils/health/>

<https://www.farmers.gov/conserve/soil-health>

<https://soilhealthinstitute.org/soil-health-360/>

<https://www.sare.org/resources/what-is-soil-health/>

<https://rodaleinstitute.org/why-organic/organic-farming-practices/soil-health/>

<https://extension.psu.edu/managing-soil-health-concepts-and-practices>



## **NOXIOUS WEED WATCH - Perennial Pepperweed**

Perennial pepperweed, (or called Tall White Top) is an erect perennial broadleaf plant, is highly aggressive and frequently forms dense stands that outcompete and exclude native plants and wildlife.



There have been reports of horses becoming ill after feeding on hay contaminated with it.

Perennial pepperweed is found in crops such as alfalfa, vineyards, orchards,

and irrigated pastures; ornamental plantings; noncrop areas such as wetlands, meadows, salt marshes, vernal pools, sand dunes, flood plains, riparian areas, roadsides and irrigation ditches; typically found on moist or seasonally wet sites but can tolerate alkaline and saline conditions.



The mature plant grows rigidly erect to about 6-1/2 feet (2 m) tall with multiple branches. The leaves range from lance to football shaped to oblong and are hairless, green to gray green, and alternate along the stem. The stem leaves are reduced, stalkless, or nearly stalkless, with a tapered base, and a smooth to a weakly toothed edged. Basal leaves are larger and wider than the stem. Its lower stems and crown are somewhat woody and it has extensive creeping roots.

Flowers bloom from May through September. Small, white flowers form dense clusters (inflorescence) arranged in branches at the tip of each



*Continued on page 6.*



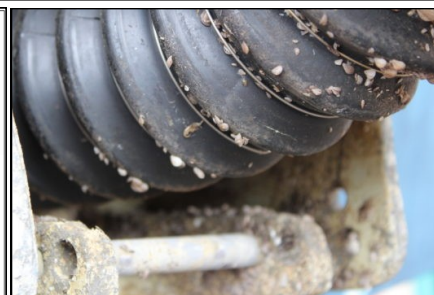
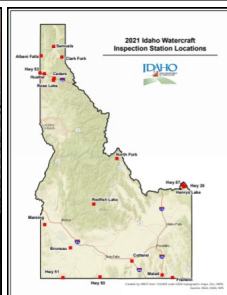
## **INSPECTING WATERCRAFT for INVASIVE SPECIES**

The Invasive species watercraft inspection station at Cotterel Port of Entry provides inspections on all watercraft. These inspections help safeguard Idaho waters from invasive species. Watercraft leaving infested waters can easily spread the invasive species into other water bodies which can cause major problems for healthy aquatic habitat, as well as for farmers and irrigation systems.

Watercraft inspection stations are Idaho's first line of defense against the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species. The 24 hour Cotterel inspection station is set up to inspect all watercraft traveling North into Idaho on the I-84 interstate. There is no charge or penalty to watercraft travelers who comply with the inspection. Workers will hotwash watercraft if needed.

The West Cassia Soil & Water Conservation District oversees the inspection station and provides grant reporting, project oversight, employee personnel, and administrative duties. Employees began the 2021 season with the inspection station opening on March 5<sup>th</sup>. Boat station manager Betty Carlson said, "We look forward to opening the station every year. We get to meet new people and get to hear the stories from past visitors – about how they have enjoyed our beautiful Idaho scenery and waterways."

*Photo: Employees setting up the Invasive Species Watercraft Inspection Station at Cotterel Port of Entry. March 5, 2021.*





Continued from page 1:

## **How Can I Stop The Blowing Dust?**

for your project. Plan for planting procedures, irrigation, and protection after planting. You can submit a large order to the soil districts anytime. The 2022 order form and general Seedling Tree Sale will officially begin February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022. But, start planning now.

### **ADDRESSING PRIORITY AREA CONCERNS**

Our Soil & Water Conservation Districts consider wind erosion one of their highest priority areas of concern. East Cassia, West Cassia, and Minidoka Soil & Water Conservation Districts, are focusing on 2 possible solutions to the wind erosion problem: Cover Crops & Windbreaks.

**COVER CROPS:** Planting cover crops is the best way to eliminate soil erosion caused by the wind. Cover Crops do just what their name suggests. They keep the soil covered which in turn keeps the soil on the ground when the wind blows.

When you plant cover crops, you keep a living root in the soil as much of the year as possible. Besides reducing wind erosion, cover crops provides **many** other benefits including improved soil health, reduction of pesticide & herbicide use, reduction of fuel/tractor costs, increased water holding capacity in the soil, and livestock grazing possibilities.



**Improve your property value and productivity...  
Plant A Windbreak.**

Seedling Tree Sale information is available online at  
[www.minicassiaswcd.com](http://www.minicassiaswcd.com).



The Soil & Water Conservation Districts which are made up of volunteers from our community, have held 6 Soil Health Workshops to help train and educate landowners on the benefits of improved soil health. Topics have included: Regenerative Agriculture, Carbonomics - The Wonderful Economy of the Soil, Implementing the Principles of Soil Health, Dairy Feed for Optimum Nutrition from Cover Crops, What Cover Crops Does My Farm Need? How to get started in Soil Health Improvements, Pesticide & Pest Control, and more.

We are currently planning for the 7th Soil Health Workshop to be held in February 2022.

**WINDBREAKS:** Planting a windbreak is another way to reduce soil erosion caused by wind. You can plant windbreaks around your home, along roadways, or near livestock feeding areas. Windbreaks can make a big difference in reducing wind velocity, and blowing snow and dirt. Windbreaks can reduce wind chill in the winter or provide shade in the summer. A windbreak properly placed near a roadway reduces the need for plowing snow and increases visibility. Planting trees increases property value, works well as a sound barrier, and will provide wildlife habitat.

A **Seedling Tree Sale** is provided each year by our Soil & Water Conservation Districts. Tree orders are taken between February and April. The bare root seedling trees arrive mid-late April. Place your order early as supplies are limited each year. Consider location, irrigation, and protection for your seedlings. Bare root seedlings have an excellent survival rate. Special orders can also be considered.

Information on the Seedling Tree Sale, Cover Crops, and other conservation efforts can be found online at [www.minicassiaswcd.com](http://www.minicassiaswcd.com) or in both the Burley (208-572-3375) and Rupert (208-436-4202) Soil District Offices.





## NO-TILL DRILLS

There are 2 drills in the Mini-Cassia area for rent from the Soil & Water Conservation Districts. The drills are perfect for direct seeding into grain stubble as well as no-till plantings of oats, barley, pasture mix, alfalfa, forage mix, orchard grass, crested wheat, or any blend of cover crops. Contact the Soil & Water Conservation Districts to reserve a drill.

Minidoka office: 208-436-4202  
Cassia office: 208-572-3375

Information is on our website at  
[www.minicassiaswcd.com](http://www.minicassiaswcd.com).

## 5 Principles of Soil Health

1. **Soil Armor** - Keep soil covered to control weeds, reduce evaporation, maintain soil temperatures, reduce compaction, and more.
2. **Minimize Soil Disturbance** - This allows soil aggregates to rebuild, increases pore spaces, and improves soil productivity.
3. **Plant Diversity** - use crop rotation and cover crops to provide biodiversity and nutrient cycling, improves water infiltration, and reduces disease and pests.
4. **Continual Live Plant/Root** - Plant cover crops during dormant periods and after harvest. Benefits include building soil aggregates, controlling erosion, increasing moisture holding capacity, nutrient management, livestock integration, and more.....
5. **Livestock Integration** - recycles nutrients, minerals, vitamins, and carbon, provides higher nutritional diet for livestock, reduces livestock waste, and controls crop residues.

## NOXIOUS WEED WATCH *(Continued from page 3)*

stem. The top of the inflorescence is pyramid shaped to round. The individual flowers are small. Seeds are egg shaped, reddish brown, somewhat flattened, with a weak groove on each side.

Seeds drop from the pods throughout the winter and some remain in the pods until the next season. There is one seed per fruit pod chamber.

Perennial pepperweed reproduces from seeds and from root fragments and rootstock and creeping roots. Seeds and root fragments disperse in water, with soil, and agricultural and other human activities.

Seeds can cling to animals, tires, shoes, and can contaminate crops, hay, or pasture seed.



If there is any question on this or any weed issue you have, please call Cassia County Noxious Weed Control at (208) 878-4043.



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**Soil District Board Meetings:** Public is welcome.

*East Cassia - 1st Tuesday of each month.*

*West Cassia - 2nd Tuesday of each month.*

*Call 208-572-3375 for details.*

*Minidoka - 2nd Thursday of each month.*

*Call 208-436-4202 for details.*

**Minidoka SWCD**  
Phone: 208-436-4202  
minidokaswcd@gmail.com

**East & West Cassia**  
Phone: 208-572-3375  
ewcswcd@gmail.com

## Do You Know What's On Our WEBSITE?

*District Supervisor Boards & Meeting information*

***Direct Seed & Cover Crop Information***

*Soil Health Workshops*

*Drill Rental information*

*Seedling **TREE SALE** photos & info*

*Cotterel Invasive Species Boat Inspection Station*

***Educational Programs***

*Envirothon*

*Know Your Government*

***Land & Soil Evaluation Event***

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Check us out at

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