

# WEST CASSIA SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## FIVE-YEAR RESOURCE CONSERVATION BUSINESS PLAN



JULY 1, 2026 – JUNE 30, 2031

and

## FY27 ANNUAL WORK PLAN

*(Revised February 2026)*



 <p>WEST CASSIA 1958 SOIL &amp; WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT</p>	<p><b>West Cassia</b> Soil &amp; Water Conservation District</p> <p>1361 East 16<sup>th</sup> St. Burley, ID 83318 <a href="mailto:ewcsacd@gmail.com">ewcsacd@gmail.com</a> <a href="http://mnicassiasacd.com">mnicassiasacd.com</a> 208-572-3375</p> 
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## Executive Summary

The **West Cassia Soil and Water Conservation District** is one of 50 Conservation Districts in Idaho. As a political subdivision of state government, they operate independently of state agencies. The District is mandated to lead programs focused on the conservation, development, and sustainable use of soil, water, and related 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 catalysts for coordinating and implementing conservation programs, channeling expertise from all levels of government into action at the local level. Programs are non-regulatory; science-based technical assistance, incentive-based financial programs, and informational and educational programs at the local level.**

~~Both~~ By legislation, both the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission provide 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 West Cassia Soil and Water Conservation District.

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**Certificate of Adoption**

The Board of elected supervisors of the West Cassia Soil and Water Conservation District this 10th day of February, 2026, does 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, 2031 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.

 Richard Kunau, Chairman

 Jordan Searle, Vice Chairman

 Ken Black, Secretary/Treasurer

 Chad Searle, Member

 Scott Yost, Member

**Supporting Idaho Conservation Partners:**

- \*Natural Resources Conservation Service
- \*Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission
- \*Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts

# Five-Year Resource Conservation Plan Business Plan FY27 (7/1/2026 to 6/30/2031) West Cassia Soil & Water Conservation District

For More Information Contact: Richard Kunau, Chairman

## Organization and function of the West Cassia SWCD

A **political subdivision of the State of Idaho**. Its authorities, powers and organizational structure are governed by the **Soil Conservation District Law**, as outlined in **Title 22, Chapter 27, Idaho Code**.

- **Established:** Officially organized on September 22, 1958
- **Purpose:** To provide voluntary technical and financial assistance for land and water conservation to landowners and land managers within the West Cassia SWCD boundary.
- **Core Objective:** To make available technical, financial and educational resources; to meet the needs of the local land manager in the areas of soil conservation, water conservation, and related natural resources.

*Idaho State FFA & 4-H  
Land & Soil Evaluation Event*



## Who We Serve

We empower residents of West Cassia SWCD through education and technical assistance. Our mission is to encourage and champion the conservation of natural resources, ensuring they remain productive, beneficial, and sustainable for our entire community—today and for generations to come.

## Mission of the West Cassia Soil & Water Conservation District

- **Lead:** Establish high standards for resource stewardship and conservation excellence.
- **Educate:** Empower youth and adults with the knowledge to implement sustainable practices.
- **Collaborate:** Bridge the gap between landowners, agencies, and officials to achieve shared environmental goals.
- **Implement:** Execute integrated programs focused on soil health, water efficiency, and the adoption of Best Management Practices (BMPs).

## Core Values

- **Sustainable Stewardship:** Promoting the responsible use of natural resources to ensure long-term viability.
- **Agricultural Vitality:** Supporting producers with economically feasible and sustainable conservation practices.
- **Strategic Partnership:** Honoring our role within the Idaho Conservation Partnership to maximize local impact.
- **Lifelong Learning:** Fostering environmental awareness through educational programs for all ages.

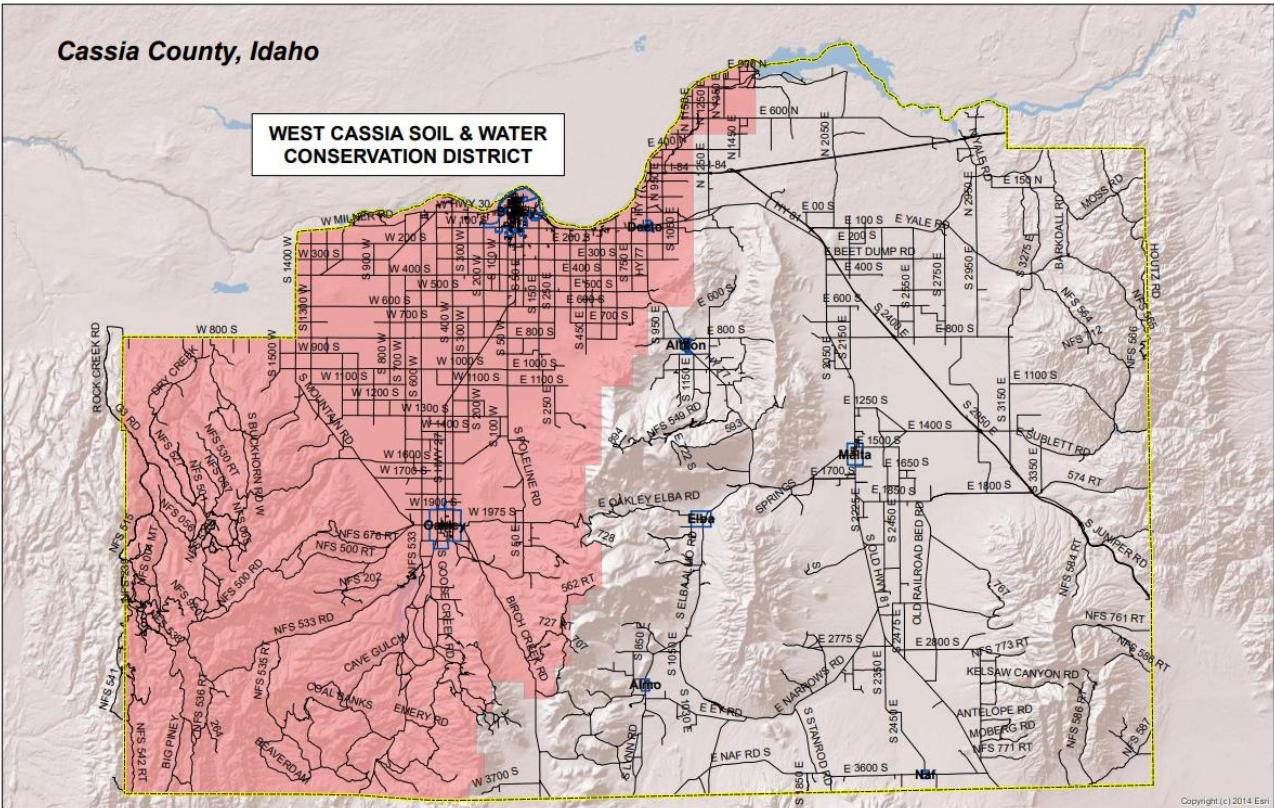
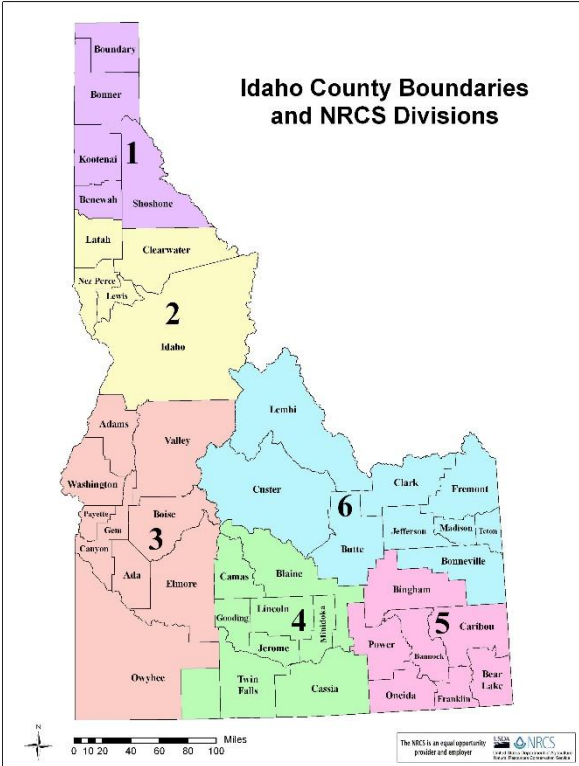
## Natural Resource Priorities Areas

- Water Resources: Water Quality and Water Quantity (including animal waste management)
- Soil Health
- Pasture & Hay
- Information/ Education and Public Outreach
- District Operations
- Aquatic Invasive Species Management

West Cassia Soil & Water Conservation District is located in southcentral Idaho in Division IV, in the Western part of Cassia County.



Cassia County



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## **Land Ownership within West Cassia SWCD**

- Water 5,713 acres 0.8%
- State Land 19,650 acres 2.8%
- BLM 130,420 acres 19.3%
- National Forest 227,430 acres 33.6%
- Private Land 294,423 acres 43.5%

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## **Physical Characteristics**

The West Cassia Soil and Water Conservation District is located in the south-central part of Idaho, encompassing the western part of Cassia County, covering approximately 676,636 acres. The district's topography is notably diverse, with elevations ranging from 4,156 feet above sea level in Burley to about 10,000 feet above sea level in the higher mountain areas. The valley floor and lands along the Snake River Plain and the Goose Creek drainage gently increase in elevation, sloping to the mountainous areas ranging from sloping to very steep. For a comprehensive analysis of the district's physical characteristics and geological makeup, please refer to the published Soil Survey of Cassia County, Idaho, Western Part.

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## **Economic Conditions and Outlook**

Population within the district remains heavily concentrated in Burley, which serves as the primary hub for goods and services. Urban centers include Burley, Declo, and Oakley. The main economic base of the West Cassia SWCD is agriculture. Farmers in the region produce a diverse range of crops, including wheat, barley, alfalfa, corn (sweet and field), sugar beets, potatoes, dry beans and peas and other specialty seed crops. A significant portion of these crops are within the local economy. Notably, McCains in Burley processes potatoes, and sugar beets are processed in nearby Paul, Idaho by the grower owned Amalgamated Sugar Company.

The county is diversifying beyond agriculture. Through combined community partnerships and marketing, Cassia and Minidoka counties have successfully attracted new businesses and industries. The area offers an abundance of natural resources and recreational opportunities with Burley located on the banks of the scenic Snake River, making it an attractive destination for both commerce and tourism.

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## **Flooding**

Flooding remains a recurring challenge above the Oakley Reservoir, as a result of high spring flows. Major flooding events typically cycle every 5 to 10 years, creating substantial drainage issues during high water-yield seasons. This excess moisture impacts the land along Goose Creek, which is largely pastureland, hayland, and rangeland for livestock grazing. Flash flooding from summer storms can occur if and when the Oakley Reservoir fills to overflowing. However, such overflows remain historically rare, occurring only twice since the reservoir was constructed in 1911.

To protect the area from flooding, systems were developed to manage the excess run-off from the Cottonwood Creek and the Oakley Reservoir. This includes the **Oakley Fan Aquifer Recharge Site**, which uses trenches to soak extra water into the ground, and **Deep Wells** where heavy spring runoff is fed into the aquifer. Flooding can also occur in the winter when rain falls on frozen, snow-covered ground as in the serious flooding of February 2017.

## **Stream Segments of Concern:** *(followed by pollutants addressed)*

### **Goose Creek Area**

- **Goose Creek**– temperature, sediment
- **Trapper Creek**– nutrients, sediment
- **Birch Creek**– nutrients, bacteria
- **Cold Creek**– temperature
- **Beaverdam Creek**– nutrients, temperature, bacteria, sediment, dissolved oxygen
- **Little Cottonwood Creek**– bacteria
- **Left Hand Fork Beaverdam Creek**– nutrients, sediment, bacteria

### **Lake Walcott Watershed**

- **Snake River**– sediment, oil & grease, total phosphorus
- **Milner Reservoir**– sediment, oil & grease, total phosphorus

### **Lake Walcott**

- **Marsh Creek**- bacteria, temperature

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## **Trends Impacting Conservation in the West Cassia SWCD**

- Water and wind erosion concerns
- Outdated irrigation techniques
- Increasing CAFOs with waste management needs
- Limited availability of State funds for conservation
- Focus on water quality compared to other conservation and environmental issues.
- Invasive species entering Idaho on watercraft.
- Urbanization and future growth in Cassia County

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## **Strategies to Address Trends**

- Maintain a community presence through, Local Work Group meetings, tours, workshops, or community classes, county fair display, youth and adult education opportunities, newsletters and press releases.
- Utilize digital platforms, including social media and a district website ([www.minicassiaswcd.com](http://www.minicassiaswcd.com)).
- Provide education to both urban and rural landowners and growers through workshops, classes, or projects that encourage conservation.
- Reducing water and wind erosion through
  - Conversion to high-efficiency sprinkler systems.
  - Conservation tillage and Crop residue management.
  - Encouraging the implantation of soil health principles that reduce erosion, improve soil health, and increase the water holding capacity of the soil.
  - Cross slope farming practices.
  - Windbreak education and providing seedling trees & shrubs through the annual seedling tree sale.
  - Promote advanced Moisture Monitoring which helps to optimize water use.
- Improve animal waste management practices and composting efforts, focusing on odor/pest control and the reduction of nitrate and phosphate levels.
- Encourage use of BMPs, a primary focus on the Burley/Marsh Creek Groundwater Improvement Project area.
- Manage the Aquatic Invasive Species Inspection Station (AIS) which helps to protect local waterways.
- Raise awareness of conservation values with state legislature and elected officials.
- Strengthen working partnerships with County and City.

- Collaborate with County Planning and Zoning department regarding issues impacting natural resources.
  - Coordinate with the Weed Supervisor to expand education on noxious and invasive weeds.
  - Foster area cooperation with East Cassia and Minidoka SWCDs.
  - Maintain an active role with the Mid-Snake RC&D Council.
  - Post information regarding Board Meetings and invite public participation when district goals are discussed to help increase public awareness.
  - Provide Supervisors and staff with ongoing training.
  - Proactively seek new revenue through grants, innovative projects, etc.
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### **Staffing Needs**

- **Administrative Assistant (Part-Time):** Manages district records, financial reporting, and daily office operations.
  - **Information & Education Specialist (Contract, Part-Time):** Executes community outreach, educational programming, and public relations on a contractual basis.
  - **AIS Station Manager (Cotterell Station, Seasonal):** Leads the Aquatic Invasive Species program, ensuring compliance with inspection protocols and supervising field staff.
  - **AIS Watercraft Inspectors (Cotterell Station, Seasonal):** Performs inspections and decontaminations to prevent the spread of invasive species.
  - **Project-Specific Personnel:** Temporary or seasonal employees hired as needed to implement technical conservation projects and district initiatives.
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### **Annual Budget Needs**

- The West Cassia Soil & Water Conservation District maintains a regularly reviewed annual budget, submitted yearly to ensure the successful execution of all district plans and projects. District operations are primarily sustained through County and State funding, which is further supplemented by revenue generated from the annual seedling tree sale, the management of the Aquatic Invasive Species station, and the rental of direct seed drills.
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### **Key Decision Makers**

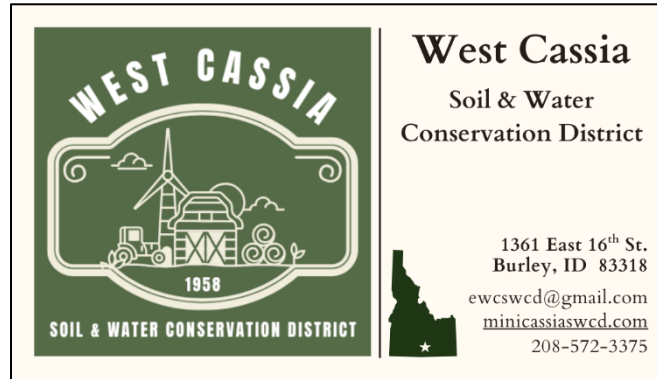
- **West Cassia Soil & Water Conservation District Supervisors**
  - **Cassia County Commissioners**
  - **Cassia County Planning and Zoning Board Members & Administrator**
  - **City Executive Leadership:** Includes Mayors/ City Councils and Administrators for: Burley, Declo, and Oakley.
  - **City planning and Zoning Boards**
  - **District 27 State Legislators:** Senator Kelly A. Anthon, Representative Douglas Pickett, and Representative Clay Handy.
  - **Mini-Cassia Chamber of Commerce**
  - **Idaho's Congressional Delegation**
  - **Citizens in West Cassia SWCD**
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**Priority Actions**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Begin Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek public comments on Five-Year Resource Conservation Business Plan and Annual Work Plan.</li> </ul>	February	March
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board of Supervisors will review the Five-Year Resource Conservation Business Plan and the Annual work Plan and discuss details in a board meeting.</li> </ul>	Monthly	March
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete the written update of the Five-Year Resource Conservation Plan and Annual Work Plan.</li> </ul>		March
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt and submit Five-Year Resource Conservation Business Plan and Annual Work Plan</li> </ul>		March
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify budget and staff needs</li> </ul>	On-going	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop Budget (on-going), review (December and May), and adopt annual budget (June)</li> </ul>	On-going	June

**Annual Work Plan**  
FY2027 (7/1/26 – 6/30/27)

**West Cassia Soil & Water Conservation District**



**West Cassia SWCD Supervisors**

Richard Kunau – Chairman  
Jordan Searle – Vice-Chairman  
Ken Black – Treasurer  
Chad Searle – Member  
Scott Yost - Member



**West Cassia SWCD Employees**

Rachelle Osterhout – Administrative Assistant  
Doreen McMurray – Information & Education Specialist  
Betty Carlson – Aquatic Invasive Species Station Manager  
Aquatic Invasive Species Inspectors - Seasonal



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# FY2027 (7/1/2026 – 6/30/2027) Annual Plan of Work West Cassia Soil & Water Conservation District

## **Priority Area Number 1: WATER RESOURCES**

**Objective: To improve water quality and water quantity throughout West Cassia SWCD including improvement of animal waste management practices**

**Goals:**

- Promote high-impact conservation practices which reduce water erosion, encourage conversion to sprinkler systems, and promote the benefits of cover crops, crop residue, and conservation tillage.
- To promote animal waste management improvements including odor and pest controls and nitrate and phosphate levels.
- Encourage animal wastes composting practices through integrated conservation plans and BMP's.
- Expand producer education on technical and financial resources available through conservation programs.
- Encourage participation in EQIP, WQPA, and other conservation improvement programs.

**Action(s):**

<b>Actions for FY27</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>
1. Provide education to the public on reducing water erosion through conversion to sprinkler systems, promoting crop residue and conservation tillage, implementing cover crops, and implementing other Best Management Practices. Inform landowners of irrigation practices available to them. (Through newsletters, website, social media, press releases, forums, and workshops.)	On-going	All Board Members I&E Specialist
2. Encourage good conservation practices which reduce water erosion including emphasis on converting flood irrigation systems to sprinkler systems, planting cover crops, and other water resource information. (Through tours, newsletters, website, workshops, social media and press releases.)	Yearly	All Board Members I&E Specialist
3. Request NRCS assistance to help with design, layout, and approval of plans.	On-going	Chairman, NRCS Staff
4. Keep current on animal waste management practices, pest controls, and nitrate and phosphate levels. Support Animal Waste Composting efforts and concerns. (Including helps for odor and pest control, and addressing nitrate and phosphate levels through conservation plans).	On-going	Board Members Employees
5. Seek to improve the water holding capacity in the soil by managing a 3-year Cost-Share program with landowners using Soil Moisture Monitors. Encourage project cooperators to use Soil Moisture Monitors to collect data regarding moisture levels in the soil. Hold grower forums each year during the 3-year project to increase grower knowledge about the monitoring equipment and use of the data. Help growers trouble-shoot project issues. Collect grower surveys and evaluate participation in the project.	2024 through 2027	Board Members Employees

<p>7. Satisfy TMDL goals and work to reduce nitrate levels in groundwater. Continue to work with landowners on restoration work through programs such as EQIP, WQPA, 319 grants, Conservation Improvement Grants and other programs. Support the Mini-Cassia Ground Water Improvement committees by attending meetings and offering potential solutions which address the problem of elevated nitrate levels in ground water within the Marsh Creek NPA.</p>	<p>Year round</p>	<p>Entire Board, Tri-District Project Committee, I&amp;E Specialist, Admin Assistant, Landowners</p>
<p>8. Attend Local Work Group (LWG) yearly meetings voicing the need for water quality and water quantity as top priorities for the use of federal funds. Assist with planning, invitations, taking minutes, and all arrangements for the meeting.</p>		<p>Chad Searle Richard Kunau Employees</p>



**Moisture Monitoring Project  
Grower Forum**

Thursday, February 27, 2025  
11:00 - 1:00

Location: McGregor Building / Minidoka Fairgrounds  
Lunch included  
Please RSVP  
to one of the phone numbers or emails below

**Topics:**

- Moisture Monitor EQUIPMENT CARE
- GROWER EXPERIENCES  
\*Each grower shares 2-3 minutes on their experiences so far...
- How to USE YOUR DATA

*KNOW YOUR SOIL BETTER*

Sponsored by the East Cassia, Minidoka, & West Cassia  
**Soil & Water Conservation Districts**

East Cassia & West Cassia SWCD 208-572-3375 ewcswcd@gmail.com  
Minidoka SWCD 208-438-4202 minidokaswcd@gmail.com



# FY2027 (7/1/2026 – 6/30/2027) Annual Plan of Work West Cassia Soil & Water Conservation District


## **Priority Area Number 2: SOIL HEALTH**

**Objective: To improve conservation practices throughout West Cassia SWCD**

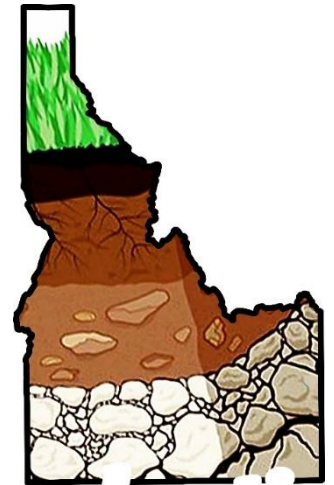
**Goals:**

- To empower landowners with knowledge to improve productivity and protect their soil through practices such as the use of cover crops, reduced tillage and diverse crop rotations.
- Focus on practical solutions to mitigate wind erosion and preserve topsoil.
- Maintain a direct seed drill for district-wide rental to encourage no-till/low-till practices.
- To educate producers on available conservation programs.
- To encourage windbreak plantings to reduce erosion.
- To provide hands-on education for local youth regarding soil resource management and conservation.

**Action(s):**

<b>Actions for FY27</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>
1. Encourage good conservation practices which reduce wind erosion through education including emphasis on cover crops, and no-till or low till farming. (Through newsletters, website, social media and press releases, community conservation classes and workshops.)	On-going	All Board Members, All Employees
2. Provide education to landowners about the importance of soil health and the role cover crops can play in the improvement of soil health. Provide information on cover crops, reduced tillage, conservation tillage, cross slope farming practices, and other BMPs through newsletters, website, and social media.	On-going	All Board Members, Admin Assistant, I&E Specialist
3. Request NRCS assistance to help with design of potential projects.		Chairman, NRCS staff
4. Promote no till/low till practices and the use of cover crops. Rent the Direct Seed Drill to landowners for no-till and reduced tilling practices to improve soil health. Maintain and repair the drills, manage billing and records. Advertise the beneficial use of the direct seed drills and the use of cover crops.	Year round	Direct Seed Committee, I&E Specialist, Admin Assistant
		
5. Encourage the use of windbreaks to control soil erosion and to keep valuable top soil on the ground. Provide education and resources through the seedling tree sale, newsletter, and other media venues.	Year round	All Employees
6. Manage the annual tree sale providing seedling trees for windbreaks and other conservation purposes. Reduce soil erosion by encouraging windbreak and habitat plantings. Encourage seedling plantings through education (press releases, website, radio interviews, newsletter, social media posts and community conservation classes.)	December through May	All Board Members, Admin Assistant, I&E Specialist

<p>7. Manage the Idaho State FFA &amp; 4-H Land &amp; Soil Evaluation Career Development Event. Raise donation funds to support the state event and funds to assist the top 2 winning teams to attend the National Event in Oklahoma City. Maintain accounting of all receipts and debits associated with the contest. Raise funds to support the contest including submitting documents and application for an NRCS Umbrella Grant and working to increase funding as needed. Participate with the state planning meeting. Plan, organize, carryout all arrangements, organize volunteers, meals, land-owner and contest location and facilities. Arrange for an Ag career fair, guest speaker, or other educational presentation. Secure all supplies and materials needed to carry out the event.</p>	<p>Year Round</p> <p>Contest held in October</p>	<p>Supervisors I&amp;E Specialist Admin Assistant</p>



# FY2027 (7/1/2026 – 6/30/2027) Annual Plan of Work West Cassia Soil and Water Conservation District

### **Priority Area Number 3: PASTURE & HAY**

**Objective: To improve irrigation and pasture management which will aid in reduction of erosion and improved yields.**

**Goal(s):**

- Educate landowners about rotation techniques to maximize season yields.
- Promote conservation habits that build resilient soil health in pastures and hayfields.
- Provide up-to-date strategies for identifying and controlling noxious weeds.

**Actions(s):**

<b>Actions for FY27</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>
1. Provide information on rotation techniques to improve yields through website, social media, newsletters, and presentations at board meetings.	Year Round	Entire Board, I&E Specialist
2. Provide soil health information through the website, social media postings, newsletters, classes, and workshops. Provide project ideas and support information from cooperating agencies at scheduled meetings, county fair displays, etc.	As appropriate	Entire Board, I&E Specialist
3. Educate landowners concerning Best Management Practices for watering and irrigating methods which reduce erosion and provide optimum moisture for crops, hay, and pastures.	Annually	Entire Board, I&E Specialist
4. Encourage the use of windbreaks to provide protection to CAFOs and animals, habitat for wildlife, and that provide protection to property and motorists. Work with East Cassia and Minidoka Soil Districts in managing the seedling tree sale and the delivery of seedlings to the public. Submit windbreak information in newsletters, on the website, on social media, TV news, radio interviews-	Winter through Spring	Entire Board, District Employees
5. Cooperate with the County Weed Supervisor to provide noxious weed information in district newsletters. Stress weed control practices and prevention techniques to reduce the spread of noxious weeds.	Annually	I&E Specialist



# FY2027 (7/1/2026 – 6/30/2027) Annual Plan of Work West Cassia Soil and Water Conservation District

## **Priority Area Number 4: Information & Education / Public Outreach**

**Objective: To Promote Environmental Awareness and Provide Information to cooperators, the general public, and to youth about agricultural information, activities, and opportunities.**

**Goal(s):**

- Provide conservation-based information to the community.
- Sponsor and host events that will educate, encourage participation in, and highlight conservation programs and conservation awareness.
- Facilitate hands-on conservation activities and educational programs for local students.
- Represent the district’s interests through active participation in the Mid-Snake RC&D Council.

**Actions(s):**

<b>Actions for FY27</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>
1. Prepare a Conservation Update Newsletter three (3) times a year to include district activities and programs, and to address conservation issues. Arrange for printing and mailing of the newsletters to over 900 local landowners, send the newsletter out electronically to over 550 recipients, and post it on the website. Solicit and collect advertising money to assist with printing/postage costs (with Minidoka Admin). Update and maintain advertising logos to be included in each newsletter.	3 times per year	I&E Specialist, Admin Assistant
2. Publicize tours, activities, workshops, forums, tree sale, and special events through district newsletters, local radio interviews, TV interviews, newspaper articles, website, and social media postings.	As needed	I&E Specialist
3. Have 2 board members serve on the Project Committee (joint committee comprised of Supervisors from East Cassia, West Cassia, and Minidoka Soil & Water Conservation Districts). Evaluate drill rentals and project activities. Maintain upkeep on direct seed drills, their rental and use. Implement projects that provide conservation education to the public.	As needed	Richard Kunau Jordan Searle I&E Specialist, Admin Assistant
4. Organize meetings, agendas, minutes, and arrangements for the Tri-District Project Committee meetings.	On-going	I&E Specialist Admin Assistant
5. Co-sponsor, along with East Cassia, the Idaho State FFA and 4-H Land & Soil Evaluation Event. (To include contest arrangements, volunteers, site selection, awards, banquet, arrange for a career fair, speaker, or other presentation as needed, pay bills, and raise funds to support the contest). Participate in the state committee meeting in Spring offering suggestions and a financial update.	Contest held in October  State Meeting held in the Spring	I&E Specialist, Admin Assistant
6. Provide information to school age students within the district on the Natural Resources Workshop Camp, Know Your Government, 5th & 6th grade Poster Contest, High School Speech Contest, Envirothon, and annual Scholarship Awards. Have contest and scholarship information and applications available on the district website and sent to schools. Post information on social media where appropriate.	Year round	District Employees

7. Seek out worthy recipients for Conservation and Education Awards. Conduct an Annual Awards Banquet to honor a farmer using good conservation practices, present educational scholarships and other conservation awards.	Spring/Summer	All Board Members, I&E Specialist
8. Provide scholarships for students planning to attend college majoring in an Ag related field. Prepare, publicize, and promote the scholarship.	Spring	Board Members I&E Specialist
9. Hold Poster contest for 5 <sup>th</sup> and 6 <sup>th</sup> graders in local elementary schools throughout Cassia County. Give classroom presentations on the conservation theme where opportunities are allowed.	Fall	I&E Specialist
10. Hold Speech Contest for students in grades 9-12 focusing on the Stewardship theme.	Fall	I&E Specialist
11. Set up a display at the Cassia County Fair spotlighting district activities.	August	I&E Specialist
12. Plan with East Cassia, Minidoka & Oneida Districts a Legislative Luncheon for local legislators and Soil District Supervisors. Share with legislators district concerns and projects.	December	I&E Specialist, Admin Assistant, Board Members
13. Consider participating in the IASCD legislative social & display day in Boise. Set up display, have informational handouts available for Legislatures.	January	Board Members Employees
14. Actively participate on the Mid-Snake RC&D Council which holds quarterly council meetings.	Quarterly	Board Members, Employees
15. District Employee to serve in Council Leadership positions on Mid-Snake RC&D Council.	Year Round	Rachelle Osterhout
16. Plan a Community Conservation Class to be held in the spring / summer. Project is to be overseen by the Project Committee with members from East Cassia, Minidoka, and West Cassia Soil & Water Conservation Districts. Project is to be organized and carried out by district employees.	Spring/Summer	Richard Kunau Jordan Searle District Employees
19. Evaluate the need for a grower workshop covering topics facing farmers such as soil health, water issues, pests, etc. If needed, secure a venue, make arrangements, and line up speakers.	January	Board Members Employees

**Mini-Cassia**  
**Soil and Water Conservation Districts**

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

Home Education for Adults Education for Youth Equipment Rentals Newsletters Tree Sale AIS Inspection Station Awards & More...

Click here for our recent [NEWSLETTER](#)

Click here for [Tree Sale](#)

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



# FY2027 (7/1/2026– 6/30/2027) Annual Plan of Work West Cassia Soil and Water Conservation District

## **Priority Area Number 5: DISTRICT OPERATIONS**

**Objective: To ensure efficient oversight of District resources proactive leadership and fiscally responsible management.**

**Goal(s):**

- To manage and run the affairs of the district including the management of supervisors, employees, finances, monthly board meetings, and to evaluate and make new goals.
- Increase the technical expertise of staff and the governing knowledge of Supervisors through targeted training and continuous learning.
- Maintain a fully seated, active, and informed Board of Supervisors.

<b>Actions for FY27</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>
1. Update the District's 5-Year Resource Conservation Plan and revise the Annual Plan of Work.	February-March	All Board Members, Admin Assistant, I&E Specialist
2. Conduct and attend monthly board meetings to be held the second Tuesday of each month. The meetings are open to the public and the media. Guests are invited when appropriate along with county officials and agency and state personnel. Meetings are announced and published as required by law.	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month	All Board Members, Admin Assistant, Other employees as requested
3. Maintain qualified Supervisors. Seek and retain active associate board members.	Ongoing	Board Members
5. Have representation to the Awards Banquet, Division IV Meetings (March and October), the IASCD Conference (November), Local Work Group meeting, Project Committee meetings, Legislative Luncheon (December), and other meetings as needed.	Throughout the year as scheduled	All Board Members, District Employees
7. Have 2 board members serve on the Project Committee. Following these meetings, Supervisors will report to the West Cassia Board about activities planned by the Project Committee. (Direct Seed Drill information, committee decisions, Community Conservation Classes, grower forums, workshops and any other planned activities).	2-3 meetings a year	Richard Kunau Jordan Searle
8. Represent West Cassia SWCD at the Local Work Group meeting. Provide support to the NRCS staff by assisting with arrangements, taking meeting minutes, invitations, and other planning as requested.		Chad Searle Employees
9. Manage Supervisor elections in the even numbered years.	Yearly, Elections in October	Admin Assistant
10. Organize an outreach program to recruit and educate new supervisors.	On-going	Chairman Admin Assistant
11. Develop a budget, prepare monthly financial statements, and have an audit annually or as needed. Provide payroll and financial information to	Budget set July,	Entire Board, Admin Assistant

the accountant to meet tax obligations. Arrange for accountant to attend a board meeting for an annual review.	reviewed quarterly	
12. Discuss potential or existing legislation that impacts the district. Draft appropriate communication to be sent to local officials or state legislators.	On-going	All Board Members Employees
13. Discuss potential or existing concerns regarding the IASCD By-laws that impact the district. Draft appropriate legislation for presentation at the Fall Division IV Meeting and the IASCD annual conference in November.	Year-Round	All Board Members Employees
14. Meet with County Commissioners to review District Activities and funding needs. Prepare an overview of activities accomplished. Present the proposed budget as a basis for requesting county funding.	February – March	All Board Members, Employees
15. Conduct Employee reviews annually, revise duties if necessary, and discuss any employee issues or needs.	January	All Board Members, All Employees
16. Develop and maintain an effective Supervisor and staff development program including identification of Board and staff training opportunities, attendance at IASCD Division Meetings, IASCD Annual Conference, NACD Annual Conference and other local, state and regional meetings.	Year-Round	All Board Members, All Employees

# FY2027 (7/1/2026– 6/30/2027) Annual Plan of Work West Cassia Soil & Water Conservation District

## **Priority Area Number 6: WATER RESOURCES / AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES**

**Objective: Safeguard Idaho’s natural resources from aquatic invasive species**

**Goals:**

- Manage Aquatic Invasive Species Watercraft Inspection Station on I-84 Cotterel Station.
- Rigorous inspections and execute a “Clean, Drain, Dry” protocol for all incoming vessels to prevent the introduction of invasive species.
- To educate landowners on the importance of keeping Idaho Waters Clean of Invasive Species.

**Action(s):**

Actions for FY27	Dates	Person Responsible
1. Manage Cotterel Invasive Species Watercraft Inspection Station serving as a critical frontline defense for Idaho’s waterways.	February through November	Entire Board, Admin Assistant, AIS station Manager, and Employees
2. Educate the public on the aquatic invasive species problem and the importance of keeping Idaho Waters Clean through press releases, newsletter articles, website, social media postings, and by sharing ISDA approved materials.	On-going	I&E Specialist, Admin Assistant
3. Manage all employees during AIS (Aquatic Invasive Species) inspection season to ensure the station is in continual operation, including hiring and firing of employees and scheduling work shifts. Turn in all time sheet records and bills to Admin Assistant.	February through November	Board Members as needed, Admin Assistant Watercraft Station Manager
4. Complete all required reports for Idaho Department of Agriculture. Manage the agreement, finances, payroll, reports, and records.	As needed	Admin Assistant Board Members
5. The watercraft station manager will attend monthly meetings as requested, to provide the board with new updates, policies or procedures as well as a final report at the end of the season to highlight station accomplishments. The board will conduct the employee review at the end of the season.	As needed	Watercraft Station Manager/ Board Members/ Admin Assistant
6. Keep watercraft station up to date with needed equipment and supplies.	As needed	Watercraft Station Manager
7. Cooperate with the Idaho State Department of Agriculture to provide information and training to the Watercraft inspectors regarding aquatic invasive species and noxious weeds. Help in the prevention of aquatic invasive species and the spread of weeds.	Annually	Watercraft Station, Manager, Inspectors



**IDAHO SOIL & WATER  
CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

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

**DISTRICT:**

West Cassia SWCD

**FOR FISCAL YEAR:**

FY 2021

**DUE :**

March 31, 2026

**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.

*Richard Kunau*

Board Supervisor Signature

Richard Kunau

Printed Name

2/10/2026

Date

208-572-3375

District Telephone

ewcswcd@gmail.com

District Email Address

**FOR SWC USE ONLY:**

**DATE OF CONFIRMATION:**