

**IDAHO SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

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

DISTRICT:

Minidoka

FOR FISCAL YEAR:

2025

DUE :

March 31,

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.

Dusty Wilkins

Board Supervisor Signature

Dusty Wilkins

Printed Name

3-12-25

Date

208 436 4202

District Telephone

minidoka.swcd@gmail.com

District Email Address

FOR SWC USE ONLY:

DATE OF CONFIRMATION:

Conservation District
85 East Baseline Road
Rupert Idaho 83350

208 436 4202

minidokaswcd@gmail.com

Annual Plan

1 July 2025- 30 June 2026

Five-Year Plan

1 July 2025 – 30 June 2030

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FORWARD

The Minidoka Soil and Water Conservation District is one of 50 conservation Districts in the State of 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 help to private landowners and land users in 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.

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

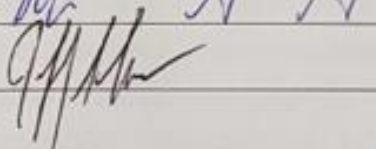
The Board of elected supervisors of the Minidoka Soil and Water Conservation District this 12th day of March 2025, do hereby approve the following document known as the Annual and Five-year Resource Conservation Business Plan. This Plan will be in effect for a five-year period ending June 30, 2030, during 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 

Lance Lovell, Treasurer 

Luke Stevenson, Supervisor 

Jeff Schow, Supervisor 

Supporting Idaho Conservation Partners. (as applicable)
Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission (ISWCC)
Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts (IASCD)
Minidoka County Extension

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Conservation District Structure and Governing Policies

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 1940's the Bureau of Reclamation found adequate underground water in the Snake River Plain aquifer and opened the Northside Pumping Division of the Minidoka Project to homesteading.

Public drawings for 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 build barns and homes.

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 referendum passed, and the Minidoka Soil and Water Conservation District was officially organized July 1, 1955.

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

The first five years were spent 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 plane and carryall, which it leased to cooperators.

The Minidoka SWCD has assisted farmers and growers in converting to sprinkler irrigation, which lessens soil erosion on sandy or steep ground, while helping to 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, gated pipe, and pump backed systems make efficient use of water while reducing energy cost. With current information and standards of practice many of the old original concrete ditches and gated pipe have been replaced with wheel lines and pivots. The District also participates in an annual tree sale that is targeted to help with planting of wind breaks.

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.

In 1990, the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act (FACTA) expanded the government mandates and included water quality. Today the District is engaged in water quality, soil health and educational activities.

The District purchased a Direct-seed or No-Till Drill in 2015 to rent to growers while also providing workshops on soil sustainability, and soil health. This Drill is well maintained and still in use.

Soil and Water Conservation District 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 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 residing within the District. 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 an associate supervisor to assist them. A regular meeting is held the second Wednesday of the month with special meetings called as needed.

Soil and Water Conservation District 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 Minidoka Soil and Water Conservation District through its powers and responsibilities. The Minidoka SWCD 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.

Meetings are held to address local, state, and federal issues that directly affect the conservation resources of this community.

The Minidoka SWCD 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 Minidoka SWCD accepts this responsibility in order to preserve a locally administered voluntary approach for control and abatement of agricultural non-point source pollution to projects and enhance the quality and value of water resources of the State of Idaho.

Physical Characteristics

Land:

Minidoka County is located in Southern 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, and land use has remained relatively constant.

• Water	0.4%
• State	1.6%
• National Park Service	15.8%
• Bureau of Land Management	33.0%
• Bureau of Reclamation	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 undulation, 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 Kamama Butte.

The soil associations in 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.

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 and Outlook

Population and Employment:

The population and demographics of Minidoka County have made significant changes in the past years. The population is slowly increasing after slipping in 2005 where it dropped to 18,756 due to various industry issues and economic struggles. Since then, there has been steady growth, different farming practices are being implemented such as Direct Seed/minimum tillage, moisture monitoring, and several industries have established in the area. The latest count in 2024 is 22,752 with projections of 23,024 in the year 2025 showing that average wages are between \$16.00 to \$28.00 per hour. While still heavily dependent upon 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 Minidoka County. The major crops grown in are: dry beans, hay, malt barley, potatoes, sugar beets and wheat among other crops. Dairy cattle, feeder cattle, swine, sheep and chickens are the primary animals raised in the county.

Manufacturing is making a large presence in the area, with cheese, powdered milk, butter, protein whey, potato and fruit packing, commodity shipping and warehousing of all variety are based in the area as well.

Map of Minidoka County -District Boundary and Historical Facts:

The name Minidoka is said to be from Dakota Sioux origin which means ‘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 that was completed in 1904. The Minidoka National Historic site (in Jerome County) was part of the original reclamation project, hence shares in the name. Minidoka County was created by the Idaho Legislature on January 28, 1913 by partition of Lincoln County.



Proposed Budget and actual expenditures for FY 2024 – 2025 (as of February 2025)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Minidoka SWCD 2024 2025	actual 2024-2025	purposed 2024- 2025				
2	INCOME				PUBLIC EVENTS/MEETINGS		
3	County Appropriations		\$ 12,000.00		Board Mtg. Lunch	\$ 280.56	\$ 94.46
4	State Allocations				Division IV Meetings		\$ 45.00
5	District Base	\$ 8,500.00	\$ 8,500.00		Picnic/banquet		
6	State Match	\$ 14,500.00	\$ 17,000.00		Legislative luncheon	\$ 333.94	\$ 1,000.00
7	District Bldg. Capacity				Local work group		\$ 100.00
8	District Operation F	\$ 6,000.00			TOTAL	\$ 280.56	\$ 1,239.46
9	Grants				UTILITIES		
10	Administrative Fees- Direct	\$ 6,700.99	\$ 5,000.00		PMT	\$ 518.12	\$ 675.00
11	banquet share. Ins share, district acct.		\$ 5,000.00		TOTAL	\$ 518.12	\$ 675.00
12	Tree Sales		\$ 1,600.00		INSURANCE		
13	Other Income- Int. CD's	\$ 830.38			ICRMP and State	\$ 3,213.00	\$ 3,000.00
14	TOTAL	\$ 36,530.38	\$ 47,100.00		work comp ins		\$ 325.00
15	EXPENSES - dues				DISTRICT EMPLOYEE TRAVEL		
16	Division IV	\$ 165.00	\$ 80.00		Meals & Lodging,	\$ 276.01	\$ 500.00
17	IASCD	\$ 1,800.00	\$ 1,800.00		mileage		
18	IDEA membership	\$ 60.00	\$ 60.00		Registration	\$ 250.00	\$ 400.00
19	NACD	\$ 190.00	\$ 190.00		TOTAL	\$ 3,739.01	\$ 4,225.00
20	Other Dues				SUPERVISOR TRAVEL		
21	High Country RC&D	\$ 56.35	\$ 57.00		Meals & Lodging		\$ 600.00
22	RC&D membership		\$ 50.00		Mileage		\$ 200.00
23	Memorials/funerals		\$ 300.00		Registration	\$ 250.00	\$ 400.00
24	Idea raffle				TOTAL	\$ 250.00	\$ 1,200.00
25	FAIR EXPENSE/ tre	\$ 89.67	\$ 150.00		OFFICE SUPPLIES/EQUIPMENT		
26	TOTAL	\$ 2,361.02	\$ 2,687.00		Equipment (comp	\$ 1,694.94	\$ 800.00
27	PUBLIC OUTREACH Awards & contests				Postage	\$ 69.00	\$ 150.00
28	Ag in the Classroom		\$ 150.00		Visa (includes all kinds of expenses)		
29	Banquet and Awards		\$ 525.00		Office Supplies, other		\$ 377.94
30	Envirothon	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00		deposits to CD's		
31	Forestry Contest	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00		deposit books & ck order		
32	IASCD Door Prizes		\$ 50.00		TOTAL	\$ 1,763.94	\$ 1,327.94
33	KYG	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00		PAYROLL EXPENSES		
34	LSEE (land judgln)	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00		Payroll	\$ 13,317.58	\$ 16,000.00
35	Water quality project/monitors		\$ 1,000.00		NRCS employee		
36	Poster Contest	\$ 468.75	\$ 300.00		Quarterly Taxes	\$ 1,822.28	\$ 6,700.00
37	Scholarships		\$ 3,000.00		CPA	\$ 216.00	\$ 180.00
38	Natural Resouces Camp		\$ 560.00		PERSI	\$ 3,177.32	\$ 3,450.00
39	Idaho Community foundation		\$ 50.00		TOTAL	\$ 18,533.18	\$ 26,330.00
40	Stewardship awards		\$ 300.00				
41	Special District projects		\$ 2,000.00		TOTAL INCOME	\$ 36,530.38	\$ 47,100.00

1 Year or Annual Plan

- 1) Minidoka SWCD will continue to seek the compilation of data related to the past 5 years of the soil testing project we were co-sponsors to along with Districts in Division IV
- 2) Minidoka SWCD and the 2 Cassia SWCD's will continue with the Direct Seed Drill, maintaining them and renting them to area growers, these are now 11 years old and are still of benefit to the original cover crop project.
- 3) Minidoka SWCD continues to work with NRCS by assisting with the Local Work Group (LWG) and setting guidelines for future projects.
- 4) Tree sales for habitat and wind breaks will continue to be a priority. Sales begin the first of February with deliver the end of April. This is done in partnership with East Cassia and West Cassia SWCD's
- 5) Minidoka SWCD will continue into the second year of the three project of moisture monitors which we also partnered with the 2 Cassia District to provide this program to 4 growers each. We are looking for data that will support the past 10 years of workshops and promoting of soil health protocols.
- 6) Youth programs such as FFA and 4-H are a continued priority for the District. Some of which are KYG (know your government), Land judging, Envirothon, Forestry Contest, NRC (Natural Resources Camp, Ag in the Classroom, Poster and Speech contest along with scholarships
- 7) Minidoka SWCD is active in the community by providing a booth at the county Fair with handouts and displays regarding cover crops, water conservation, pollinators, and habitat, also the purpose and benefits of wind breaks.
- 8) Minidoka SWCD has an ad "URBAN FARMER" on the overuse of fertilizer running on the website as a reminder the proper use of fertilizer – this is on the website... www.minicassiaswcd.com
- 9) Minidoka SWCD in partnership with East Cassia, West Cassia and the University of Idaho, and many local businesses in the area are providing community conservation classes 3 times a year to cover topics such as pollinators, fertilizers, tree care, companion planting, fire wise planting to name a few of the topics that planned to be covered. These are free to the public and are targeted to the Urban or hobby farms or landowners or those occupying the land who are seeking help with growing in our area.
- 10) Minidoka SWCD is providing a one-year cover crop rebate to encourage growers to keep cover on the ground during spring run-off time.



5-Year Plan

Water quality and quantity always seem to be a concern and part of any discussion among growers here in the Minidoka SWCD area. Minidoka county is a high desert region, with an annual rain fall of 8- 10 inches in a good year. The region- all the western states have been in extreme drought conditions for several years in a row. This raises many concerns for water usage and is usually a hot topic in the Local Work Group meetings. Currently there is concerns due to litigation in Eastern Idaho for ground water and sub surface water usage, that could affect growers in the Minidoka project.

Minidoka County is seeing a growth spurt in housing and businesses, that are encroaching into agricultural areas, which is impacting farming practices, and access to farmland and farm to processing of commodities. One problem being encountered is due to housing and annexed areas they are no longer allowing farm trucks on the roadways, also homeowners who do not understand that when planting or harvesting there will be noise and often blowing dust, along with the normal smells of animals and equipment. These are issues that are continually being addressed and mitigated.

Priority and Plan of Action

This is year 2 of a project that began in 2024 the Minidoka SWCD in conjunction with East Cassia and West Cassia SWCD's launch a 3- year moisture monitoring project which meant the 3 districts purchased 52 monitors to be dispersed to 17 participating growers. The fields are being documented and data from the monitors will go to the individual growers and collectively to the Districts. Data collected over the 3 years in the same field with various crops using the moisture monitors will help determine if or do cover crops provide a benefit to soil health.

Minidoka SWCD is looking into other projects that would benefit our local growers and community.

Projects that we thought would pan out have had to be changed or delayed... one that was on the plan last year was a joint project with Amalgamated Sugar but due to an extensive fire that project was stopped.

Forums and work group meetings will be provided as the need for information arises.

The Direct seed drill will continue to be maintained and rented out to assist with cover crops and the benefit it is to the soils and wildlife.

The community conservation classes will continue for at least two more years as we have enough topics outlined to provide useful information.

Priority listed:

Area of focus	time frame	who is accountable
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Priority Area Number 1: Deep Soil testing to determine soil health and water quantity.

This is a contract with Twin Falls Research and Extension Center of the University of Idaho	Contract is complete we are awaiting results from data collected	Linda Schott Twin Falls Ext U of I MSWCD
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Priority Area Number 2: Soil Health Preservation and Education

Continue with the No-Till/direct seed Drill project with maintenance, renting it out, education of the benefits of cover crops.	On going	MSWCD, supervisors and area Growers.
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Priority Area Number 3: Partnership collaboration

Local Work Group (LWG) assessment and goal setting meetings to determine areas of need for possible funding	On going	MSWCD, NRCS, various Agency and Ag related Groups, area Growers.
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Priority Area Number 4: Trees and plants for habitat and Wind Breaks

Tree sales for habitat and wind breaks – seedling trees. Combined sale instead of two separate sales.	February through April	MSWCD, East Cassia SWCD and West Cassia SWCD, Supervisors and Admin.
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Priority Area Number 5: Moisture Monitor Project

This is year 2 of this 3 year project, with forums and support for placing moisture monitors and collecting data, on soil conditions.	2025-2026	MSWCD, Soiltech, East and West Cassia SWCD's Admin, and 12 area growers
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Priority Area Number 6: Youth Programs

Provide support, financially, and staff to various youth programs	On going	FFA, 4-H, KYG, Land Judging, Envirothon, Forestry, NRC, Ag in the Classroom, Poster and Speech Contest, Admin, local teachers, supervisors.
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Priority Area Number 7: County Fair

Set up a display booth at the county fair, providing information on the SWCD projects	Yearly	Admin, supervisors, the public
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Priority Area Number 8: Urban Farmer

Locally produced ad showing the overuse of fertilizer, this a continuous run ad on the joint website	On going	Website admin, and SWCD admin
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Priority area Number 9: Education of community on conservation, and Growers in Workshops

Topics being addressed- Pollinators what are they, fertilizers and herbicides, tree care, companion planting, fire wise planting, Vole eradication	3 to 4 times a year	Admin, urban dwellers, and hobby farmers
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Priority Area Number 10: Cover Crop rebate

To encourage growers to keep cover on the ground during fall and spring run-off and help control blowing snow and dust	One year	Supervisors, Admin, and local growers.
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Minidoka Conservation District 's Elected Officials and Office Staff

Title	Name	Phone
	Dusty Wilkins	208 670 1641
	Lance Lovell	208 431 3209
	Luke Stevenson	208 4317335
	Jeff Schow	208 219 9221
Admin	Sharon Hardy	208430 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 within the Minidoka SWCD boundary. Minidoka SWCD is in Idaho District 27 being represented by Senator Kelly Anthon, Representative Doug Pickett and Representative Clay Handy.

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.