

## TCD Long Range Plan – 2010 – 2015

### Forward

The purpose of this document is to set forth the Long Range policies and objectives of the Teton Conservation District. Obtaining and compiling public comment and opinion is an integral part of the Long Range Planning process. Not only does it provide the tools necessary to establish natural resource priorities and goals that the citizens in Teton County want, but it also provides an opportunity to reflect and determine if the District has been on the right track.

Much has changed in Teton County over the years, and the Board of Supervisors has had to meet the challenge of adapting with that change in order to remain effective steward of our natural resources. Initially, an agriculturally oriented District, our scope of activities has broadened dramatically to include water quality, natural resource education and land use planning, among others.

Within our District, there exists a broad group of agencies, organizations, agricultural operations and non-profit groups. All of these entities maintain special interest in one or more of our area's abundant and diverse natural resources. New resource management techniques, habitat conservation and restoration techniques and ecosystem management principles provide new information that affects the way decisions on natural resource management uses are made. These concepts have advanced tremendously since our last long range plan was written.

Today, natural resource issues are more complex than ever due to the fact that within the boundaries of our District exist numerous and varied interests. As the only locally governed public agency with a locally elected board, this District will be the local voice for the management and enhancement of our area's natural resources since these resources are our main charge.

This document will act as a benchmark document for more flexible short term planning and monitoring of our progress. With these goals and principles in place, we can live up to our management mission and change when change is called for, but change carefully with the long term goals firmly in sight. This document also provides an inventory of the basic natural resources in Teton County, each of which is an integral part of the economy.

The small amount of privately owned land in Teton County emphasizes the continuing need for proper land use for the preservation of the tax base. Important as well is the preservation of the aesthetic value of our county, which is very important because of its impact on tourism. The Board of Supervisors of the Teton Conservation District has taken the initiative to direct and contribute their time, effort and expertise toward the goals set forth in this document.

Resolution of Adoption

Whereas, the Teton Conservation District is empowered by Wyoming State Statute 11-16-122 (b) et seq. to adopt and implement water and soil conservation management policies;

Whereas, the Teton Conservation District has sought out and received public involvement and input regarding the role of the Teton Conservation District in the conservation and management of the District's natural resources and the plans and programs are carried out utilizing an open and collaborative planning process;

Therefore, be it hereby resolved by the Board of Supervisors of the Teton Conservation District this 16<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2009 that the Board of Supervisors adopts the Teton Conservation District's Long Range Plan for 2005 – 2010.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dave Adams, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bob Lucas, Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tom Segerstrom, Vice-Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Boyd Bowles, Assoc. Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tom Breen, Treasurer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kate Mead, Assoc. Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mike Taylor, Member

\_\_\_\_\_

## Teton Conservation District Board of Supervisors

**Dave Adams** – *Chairman* - Owner /Contractor of construction business, degrees in biology and geology. Dave has been a board member since 2003.

**Tom Segerstrom** – *Vice-Chair* – MS in Fish & Wildlife Management. Small Business owner 15+ years. Past employment with WY Game & Fish, and has been active in numerous boards over the years. Currently Staff Biologist/Land Steward for JH Land Trust.

**Tom Breen** – *Treasurer* – Long time Ranch Hand at the Walton Ranch (working cattle ranch west of Jackson). Born and raised in Jackson Hole and has been on the TCD Board since 2000.

**Bob Lucas** – *Member* - Owner/Manager of the U Lazy U Ranch in the southern end of Jackson Hole. Has been on the Teton Conservation District Board since 1997.

**Mike Taylor** – *Member* - Manages the Fish Creek Ranch south of Wilson. The longest serving supervisor of the District with 33 years as a Board Member, starting in 1976.

**Kate Mead** – *Assoc. Member* - Partner in the law firm Mead & Mead. Also helps out with their family operation, the Hanson Ranch in Spring Gulch. Began on TCD Board in 1997.

**Boyd Bowles** – *Associate Member* – Farms near Alta, WY. Active in the Hi-Country RC&D (Vice-Chairman / Board of Directors). Associate member of TCD for 20+ years.

## Teton Conservation District Staff

**Randy Williams** – *Executive Director* – Randy has over 30 years of natural resource experience working in positions including; environmental specialist, county resource recreation planner, planning and economic development director, and conservation district director. He started with TCD in September 2000.

**Emily Hagedorn** – *Administrative Manager* - AAS Agri-Business, BS Environmental Physical Science and Fine Art, MPA Master of Public Administration. A Montana native, she has previously worked for US Forest Service, NRCS (intern) and the State of South Dakota. Began working for the Teton Conservation District July 1, 1999.

**Rachel Markko**- *Natural Resources Specialist* - started with the TCD in the summer of 2004 as an SCA intern and was hired on full-time in October of 2005 as the Natural Resources Specialist. She has a BA in Geography and Environmental Studies from Concordia University, Chicago Illinois and is currently enrolled in the Masters of Project Engineering and Management program at Montana Tech of the University of Montana.

**Dan Leemon** – *Water Resources Specialist* - Dan is a Wisconsin native and has a degree from the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point in Watershed Management and Land Use Planning. His background includes working for Frontier Geosciences as a part of the Mercury Deposition Network by sampling urban rainwater for mercury in Alturas, CA and has worked BLM as a hydrological technician in Buffalo, WY sampling monitoring wells. He began working for TCD in April 2006.

**Robb Sgroi** – *Conservation Programs Coordinator* - Robb Sgroi joined TCD in 2007 and serves as the Conservation Programs Coordinator. Robb's background includes a biology degree from University of Richmond, leading trail crews for the Appalachian Mountain Club and U.S. Forest Service, working as an ecologist for a local environmental consultant, and working in Public Affairs and Planning for the Forest Service.

**Ronda Cauffman** – *Natural Resources and Invasive Species* – Graduated with a BS from the University of Wyoming in 2007. She started out as a seasonal Mapping Specialist for the Noxious Weed Cost-Share program and was then hired on full-time (in a shared position) for the Teton Conservation District and the Teton County Weed & Pest District. She has had 7 years of experience in the world of Invasive Species control.

## State Statute Authority & Primary Elements

**Authority:** Teton Conservation District is a legally organized Wyoming Conservation District by Wyoming State Statutes (W.S. 11-16-101 through 11-16-134) as a legal subdivision of the State of Wyoming, Department of Agriculture. Teton Conservation District was originally formed in 1946 and is the only locally elected government board charged with natural resource conservation.

**Statue Excerpt & Primary Elements:** *W.S. 11-16-103. Legislative Declarations and Policy:*

(a) It is hereby declared that the farm and grazing lands of Wyoming are among the basic assets of the state; that improper land use practices cause and contribute to serious erosion of these lands by wind and water; that among the consequences which would result from such conditions are the deterioration of soil and its fertility and the silting and sedimentation of stream channels, reservoirs, dams and ditches; that to conserve soil, and soil and water resources, and prevent and control soil erosion, it is necessary that land use practices contributing to soil erosion be discouraged and that appropriate soil conserving land use practices be adopted.

*(b) It is hereby declared to be the policy of the legislature to provide for the conservation of the soil, and soil and water resources of this state, and for the control and prevention of soil erosion and for flood prevention or the conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water, and thereby to stabilize ranching and farming operations, to preserve natural resources, protect the tax base, control floods, prevent impairment of dams and reservoirs, preserve wildlife, protect public lands, and protect and promote the health, safety and general welfare of the people of this state.*

Primary Elements:

1. ...conservation of the soil and control and ...prevention of soil erosion
2. ... conservation of the ...water resources and the ...conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water
3. ...flood prevention and to ... control floods, prevent impairment of dams and reservoirs
4. ... stabilize ranching and farming operations
5. ... preserve wildlife
6. ... protect public lands
7. ... preserve natural resources, protect the tax base
8. ... protect and promote the health, safety and general welfare of the people

## **Mission Statement, Function and Principals**

**Mission:** The mission of the Teton Conservation District is to promote conservation and management of natural resources -- air, land, water, vegetation, and wildlife -- through watershed-based research, education, conservation practices, cooperative projects, and on-the-ground actions to ensure the health, safety and general welfare of the people and resources of this area.

It is the **function** of the Teton Conservation District to provide locally led leadership, to encourage, promote and inform through education, the conservation of natural resources. The Teton Conservation District is also charged with assisting landowners and land managers in practicing good natural resources stewardship and conservation for the long term benefit of the people by using monitoring, partnerships, staffing resources and the taxpayer's money as efficiently and effectively as possible.

The **principles** guiding the Teton Conservation District are to; hold the sacred trust of the public, respect conflict civilly pursued and is non-politically based. Project are pursued and completed in an accountable manner, using the most economical methods. Partnerships between the Teton Conservation District and individuals and organizations are formed. Technical support is provided using the best methods available. The Teton Conservation District stays current with development that assists in its ongoing commitment to its mission.

Within the Teton Conservation District's mission, the importance community education and information is emphasized. The District believes that information about conservation issues is vital to the well-being of the community and its resources. It is implicitly recognized that information and education are support activities that are elemental to the successful attainment of our goals.

The role of the Board of Supervisors of the Teton Conservation District is to manage the fiscal and legal aspects of the District, to be responsible for the staffing and personnel employed at the Teton Conservation District, to facilitate the development of the policies governing the District and to determine the goals and mission of the Teton Conservation District. The Board of Supervisors is also responsible for the public relations within the District, the facilities and equipment used and gives direction to the Director and staff. Locally elected District Supervisors address local needs through a responsible conservation ethic and are supported by the State of Wyoming. Conservation Districts are charged with these responsibilities under several Wyoming state laws.

## Services Overview

### **Overview of Teton Conservation District Services and Programs:**

- Reviews *land subdivisions* and provides comments pertaining to natural resource conservation for Teton County and the Town of Jackson.
- Promotes and provides *natural resource education and information outreach* to students and adults
- Conducts *watershed planning and management facilitation* according to WDA and DEQ Watershed Planning Guidelines and conducts *water quality monitoring* programs according to Wyoming Credible Data Legislation for chemical, biological, and physical parameters
- Provides *technical assistance and cost-share programs* to assist landowners with pasture management, irrigation, soil productivity, stock watering, buffer strip, and water quality protection needs
- Sponsors and facilitates *on-the-ground programs* to protect, enhance, and/or restore natural resources.
- Provides *assistance to noxious weed control* and prevention including technical and financial support to the JH Weed Management Association
- Provides *technical assistance to individual members of the public, non-profit organizations, and agencies*-normally at no cost, and provide project and research specific cost-share as approved by the Board of Supervisors
- Supports *recycling and waste management* pro-active programs that help maximize the use of our natural resources and protect the natural environment
- Provides technical assistance to landowners and land developers through workshops and trainings for **Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans and construction site Best Management Practices.**
- Encourages and educates landowners on how to practice **native plant species landscaping** through educational workshops and publications.
- Encourages and promotes **alternative and energy conservation programs** and measures that are in harmony with natural resources conservation.

## History of the Teton Conservation District

During the Dust Bowl days, it became very apparent that there was a need to conserve our soil and water resources in rural America. The President requested that all states pass legislation authorizing local conservation districts to be formed. Congress passed the Soil Conservation Act in 1935. As local units of state government, the Districts were designed to direct programs aimed at protecting local resources. The first district was formed in 1937. Today, there are about 3,000 districts working across America.

Wyoming passed the Soil Conservation Act in 1941. Districts started forming later that year. There are now 34 Districts throughout Wyoming. Each of these districts has specific boundaries and is governed by elected people who live within those boundaries, as the Legislature felt conservation should be led by local citizens. Their responsibility is to conserve our soil, water and other natural resources.

The Teton Conservation District was legally organized on March 15, 1946 at the request of Teton County citizens, under Sections 11-234 to 11-250 of the Wyoming Statutes known as the “Wyoming Soil and Water Conservation Districts Law.” The District was organized to provide for the conservation of soil and water resources, assist in watershed protection, protect public lands, preserve tax base and to protect and promote the health, safety and general welfare of the people. The District was originally divided into two Districts – the Teton Soil Conservation District and the Jackson Hole Soil Conservation District. The latter included lands in Lincoln and Sublette Counties. The Jackson Hole District was dissolved in 1967, leaving what is now called the Teton Conservation District. In 1974, our District boundaries were expanded to include Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks as well as all lands lying within Teton County. This decision was approved by Wyoming Secretary of State Thyra Thompson. Conservation District Boards are the only locally elected Boards that are charged with the proper management of Wyoming’s natural resources.

As a legal subdivision of Wyoming State government, the District Board of Supervisors constitutes a policy-making group elected by the people on the general election ballot. Five Supervisors, each serving a four-year term, perform their duties without monetary compensation. The Supervisors work with all individuals, groups and agencies interested in soil and water conservation, land use planning, watershed protection, flood prevention and other related interests and endeavors.

Conservation Districts develop and implement programs to protect and conserve soil, water, prime & unique farmland, rangeland, woodland, wildlife and other renewable resources. Districts also stabilize local economies and resolve conflicts in land use.

## General District Information

Teton County is located in the northwest corner of Wyoming, bounded by Yellowstone National Park on the north, the State of Idaho on the west, Park and Fremont Counties on the east and Lincoln and Sublette Counties on the south. The Teton Conservation District encompasses all of Teton County, Grand Teton National Park and Yellowstone National Park.

The most widely known feature of Teton County is the magnificent Tetons. Named “les Trois Tetons” (the three breasts) by early French trappers, this towering cluster of peaks has provided millions of people with the most breath-taking view of alpine grandeur of any other mountain range in North America.

The Teton Mountains form the western edge of the world-famous Jackson Hole, a broad valley floor rimmed by the Washakie Range to the north and east and the Gros Ventre, Hoback and Wyoming ranges to the south and east.

It is generally believed that no white man set foot in Teton County prior to 1800. In 1807, however, John Colter passed through on his way to the area now known as Jackson’s Hole after his good friend and trapping companion, David Jackson. The valley we know today as Jackson Hole was once the summer hunting ground of the Blackfoot, Bannock, Crow, Snake and Arapahoe Indians and a hideaway for men escaping from the law.

Today, Jackson Hole is a “hideaway” for millions of tourists who come to the area to share in the natural beauty of the landscape and to escape from the hectic pace of city life with its polluted environment. Recreation and tourism is now the number one, year-round industry in Teton County.

### Elevation (feet above sea level)

|               |       |                  |        |
|---------------|-------|------------------|--------|
| Teton Pass    | 8,431 | Hoback Junction  | 5,940  |
| Togwotee Pass | 9,658 | Kelly            | 6,600  |
| Jackson       | 6,234 | Moran Junction   | 6,813  |
| Wilson        | 6,140 | Grand Teton Peak | 13,770 |

Annual Rainfall      average      16 inches      range 12 to 30 inches

Population      18,251 residents in Teton County (2000 census)

Growing Season      (subject to frost at any time)      70 to 80 days

Highest Recorded Temperature      98 degrees (in Town of Jackson)

Lowest Recorded Temperature      -63 degrees (in Town of Jackson)

## Resources within the Teton Conservation District

The Teton Conservation District is extremely fortunate to have a great abundance of natural resources within the confines of its borders. Along with this quantity and quality of resources comes the responsibility to maintain the health and integrity of those resources for the future. Listed here are some of those resources.

**Cultural/Agricultural Resources** - Our District's "agriculturally based community" has been as important to our tax base and economic well being as our scenic and recreational resources. Much of what can be described as community character is directly reflective of Teton County's history. The importance of the County's ranching and agricultural heritage is apparent in the District. Ranches and farms are still a major part of Teton County's landscape and are appreciated by residents and tourists alike.

**Wildlife Resources** - Wildlife resources in the Teton Conservation District have been extensively studied by State and Federal agencies, as well as by local organizations and independent research biologists. This research supports the finding that wildlife resources are not only a basis for local economic viability but of national importance also. Elk, moose, deer, buffalo, bighorn sheep, black bear, grizzly bear, bald eagles, and other species are represented in our District. Evidence in these studies suggests that some damage to important habitat has already occurred. One example is the loss of wetlands and riparian lands along the Snake River due to residential development and construction of the flood control levee system.

### Habitat Resources –

**Wetlands:** We are fortunate to live in an area that has a significant amount of Wetlands. They are important for upland wildlife that come to feed, drink, or to hunt as well as to the nurseries for commercially or recreationally valuable fish. Wetlands form a part of a natural flood control system, allowing for retention and act as a filter protecting downstream water quality by trapping and assimilating contaminants and nutrients.

**Winter Range:** This is defined as that portion of an animals normal range which is crucial to survival because it is where big game locate food and/or cover during winter. Due to the topography of the District, a great number of ungulates use areas in the valley for their winter range. Most notably the 12,000 to 14,000 head of elk that spend each winter on the National Elk Refuge near Jackson and state feed grounds..

**Water:** Large bodies of water located within the Snake River watershed include Jackson Lake, Yellowstone Lake, Jenny Lake, Slide lake, Shoshone Lake, Lewis Lake, Leigh Lake and numerous other small lakes. These provide excellent fishing opportunities and fish habitat. Aquatic birds such as the trumpeter swan also benefit greatly from these waters. The Snake River's value to the ecosystem is immeasurable. Perennial and intermittent streams provide critical habitat and spawning areas for fish and other aquatic species. Perennial streams provide prime cutthroat trout spawning areas, while intermittent streams play a critical role in maintaining water quality in perennial streams.

Riparian Communities: The great value of this habitat type has recently been recognized as the transition between water and land based habitats. They support a wide variety of wildlife species which are attracted by the vegetation and plant diversity found at the water's edge. River bottom forests are a good example of a riparian community. This zone includes winter habitat for moose, trumpeter swan and mule deer. Raptor species and bald eagles use this area year round for forage. The River bottom forest contributes to water quality by filtering water and stabilizing streambank during floods.

Upland Forests & Shrub-Scrub Grassland: Upland Forest habitat provides food and shelter for large mammals including elk, deer, moose and bighorn sheep. Most of this forest occurs on public lands, but it is also found in isolated pockets within private upland shrub and grassland environments. The upland Shrub-Scrub Grassland feeds elk, bison, big horn sheep for a portion, if not all of the year. Coyotes and raptors also find most of their prey here. Due to our climate, disturbed lands are difficult to restore and subject to erosion. Such lands are often steep and maintaining cover here is critical to preventing erosion.

## Land Ownership within the Teton Conservation District

Real property ownership within the District is divided among many different private ownership's, organizations and/or controlling agencies. This table indicated percentages of total acreage for the classifications of ownership.

| <u>Controlling Agency</u>                |                 | <u>% of Federal Lands</u> |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| United States Department of the Interior |                 |                           |
| Yellowstone National Park                | 2,020,039 acres | 53.1%                     |
| Grand Teton National Park                | 309,221 acres   | 8.1%                      |
| National Elk Refuge                      | 24,700 acres    | .6%                       |
| Bureau of Reclamation                    | 25,600 acres    | .6%                       |
| Rockefeller Memorial Parkway             | 23,700 acres    | .6%                       |
| Bureau of Land Management                | 2,758 acres     | .1%                       |
| Total                                    | 2,406,018 acres | 63.3%                     |
| United States Department of Agriculture  |                 |                           |
| Forest Service Administered Lands        | 1,398,559 acres | 36.7%                     |
| Total                                    | 3,804,577 acres | 100.0%                    |
| State of Wyoming                         |                 |                           |
|                                          |                 | <u>% of State Lands</u>   |
| State Administered Lands                 | 6,069 acres     | 100.0%                    |
| Private Lands                            |                 |                           |
|                                          |                 | <u>% of Private Lands</u> |
| Land Trust                               | 6,069 acres     | 8.0%                      |
| Rangeland                                | 22,517 acres    | 28.6%                     |
| Irrigated/Pasture                        | 16,758 acres    | 22.6%                     |
| Rural                                    | 26,681 acres    | 33.9%                     |
| Urban                                    | 1,514 acres     | 1.9%                      |
| Cropland                                 | 3,471 acres     | 4.4%                      |
| Woodland                                 | 1,238 acres     | 1.5%                      |
| Total                                    | 78,528 acres    | 100.0%                    |
| Total Share of District Lands            |                 |                           |
| Federal                                  | 3,804,577 acres | 97.8%                     |
| State                                    | 6,069 acres     | .1%                       |
| Private                                  | 78,528 acres    | 2.1%                      |
| Total                                    | 3,889,174 acres | 100.0%                    |

The natural systems so prominent in and important to our District do not conform to boundaries separating public from private land. Private lands provide crucial habitat for endangered or threatened species and are an integral part of a healthy and biologically diverse ecosystem. For this reason, TCD will continue to actively promote open lines of communication between Federal and State agencies, non-profit organizations, and private landowners/managers for the benefit of the variety of resources located within our District.

## Teton Conservation District Boundary Map

## Land Ownership within the Teton Conservation District

## Program Information

Administration – The Teton Conservation District coordinates available staff to accomplish natural resource priorities in Teton County through programs and the accountable administration of these programs. The TCD staff carries out these programs under the direction of the Teton Conservation District’s Board of Supervisors.

Funding - The Teton Conservation District is authorized to receive up to 1 mill levy from the taxpayers of Teton County. TCD has received mill levy funding since July of 1999. In addition, TCD receives grant money for specific projects when applicable. The District continues to be accountable for the funding provided by the Teton County taxpayers and ensures that all District programs are carried out in a fiscally responsible and professional manner.

Professional Development of Staff - The District promotes training through classes and workshops that enhance board and staff knowledge within a particular facet of natural resources or conservation. This includes attending meetings pertaining to these subjects.

Accounting – The District continues to preserve its fiscally responsible financial procedures and records to maintain accountability for the public funding it manages. It provides an accurate and legal district budget, monthly cash reconciliation, yearly audit, and quarterly reports. The Administrative Manager provides the Board of Supervisors and Program Managers with accurate financial information for decision making and prioritization.

Reporting – The District Staff & Board will produce an Annual Budget, Annual Plan of Work, Annual Report and Long Range Plan. These reports will be furnished to the proper organizations prior to the deadline established. Special reports will be produced as needed.

Water Resources – Water Resources within TCD boundaries are of significant importance for agriculture, fish and wildlife, recreation, aesthetic purposes and human domestic use. TCD shall technical support and education for all aspects of water resources within the District boundaries and with cooperating agencies and groups throughout Wyoming.

Water Quality – TCD shall continue water quality monitoring programs on Fish and Flat Creek as described in Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality’s 305(b) Report and Wyoming’s Credible Data Legislation. TCD will address all water quality exceedances with voluntary Best-Management-Practices.

Water Quantity – TCD shall provide technical support for irrigation management and residential water use, including ponds, as related to water quantity issues. Water development and water rights mediation shall be a priority.

Storm Water Management – TCD shall continue its effort to improve storm water quality in the Town of Jackson and in other parts of the District through the use Best Management Practices. TCD shall provide support for the proposed storm water wetland feature in Karn’s Meadow Park.

Flood Plain and Riparian Zone Protection – TCD shall provide support to the County and Town Planning Departments for determination of sufficient protection of flood plain and riparian zones. TCD shall provide technical support to private landowners in order to improve or maintain the integrity riparian zones and streambeds.

Fisheries – TCD shall provide support for fisheries improvements/enhancements and research as needed to improve and sustain the wild Snake River fine-spotted cutthroat populations. Ongoing programs include the Snake River Restoration Project and the Flat Creek Rehabilitation Project.

Irrigation Management – TCD shall provide technical and engineering support for irrigation management with support from the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Priorities for agricultural resources include water conservation and Animal Feeding Operations (AFOs).

Education – TCD shall provide education as related to water resources to government agencies, private landowners and through schools and youth programs.

Partners – Important water resource partners include government agencies, conservation organizations related to watersheds and fisheries, and the ranching community.

Alternative Energy and Energy Conservation – Alternative energy and energy conservation have an integrated effect upon and with natural resource systems. TCD will strive to provide education and outreach, workshops, demonstration project, and community level support for conservation measures, innovative technology, and use of alternative energy where appropriate.

Upper Snake River Restoration Project – The Upper Snake River Restoration Project has completed its feasibility phase and associated demonstration project construction of 6 habitat ponds and a series of eco-fences designed to retain sediment. The project is a planned fish and wildlife restoration effort covering 12 sites in the 22 mile levied corridor of the upper Snake River in Jackson Hole. The goal is to strive to enhance and/or recover habitat functions and values in this corridor for fish and wildlife species. Project efforts are contingent upon available congressional funds for the federal partner the USCOE and for available funds from the local partners constituting TCD and Teton County.

Land Development - The reduction of large land parcels to smaller ones in the form of residential subdivisions, golf courses, and other commercial space is rapidly changing the limited private landscape in Teton County. The Teton Conservation District is charged with reviewing all development in Teton County from a natural resource perspective. Currently, we are not receiving all the development plans and reviewing them. TCD will

meet this goal by working with the TC Planners, Town Council and TC Commissioners and providing permit reviews as well as conducting a series of special education and outreach projects and research for improved natural resource databases. TCD will provide ongoing technical assistance for subdivision/development permit reviews in the following efforts:

- \*Attending Planning Department Plan Review Committee (PRC) meetings (initial issue scoping meetings) that pertain to natural resource issues with Planning Department, applicants and their consultants.

- \*Attend Planning Commission and County Commissioners hearings as appropriate and provide written and oral recommendations.

- \*Review development and subdivision permit applications with regard to natural resource issues, provide field reviews as necessary and correlate with applicants and Planning Department.

- \*Help provide technical assistance to the planning department for erosion control and other natural resource permit condition issues in the monitoring and follow up process for approved applications.

- \*Conduct research on soil erosion processes, unstable soil formations, and available technology and materials used for erosion prevention and provide this information to agency staff, developers, and consultants as needed.

- \*Conduct research on stream, floodplain, wetland, and buffer categories and respective functions and values as reference information for LDR amendments and for use by agency staff, developers, and consultants in development permit applications for environmental design criteria and considerations.

- \*Conduct research on available water quality baseline information, water quality issues pertinent to Teton County, and respective technical information on land use water quality protection measures and submit as a report to the County and others for use in the development of the County Water Quality LDR.

Small Acreage Management - Development of historic ranches and other large parcels into subdivisions and smaller acreage parcels has created a need for small acreage landowner education regarding subjects such as domestic stock management, pasture management, noxious weed control, pond design considerations, backyard wildlife, composting and recycling, native vegetation landscaping, xeriscaping, water rights and irrigation, riparian area considerations, and other land management concerns. TCD will conduct an aggressive education and outreach program and offer technical assistance and cost-share program for private landowners in order to enhance public benefits.

Agriculture & Public Lands - Management for agricultural producers has become increasingly difficult when faced with surrounding subdivision development, wildlife

impacts to ranching operations and other environmental concerns. TCD operates on a foundation of wise conservation and stewardship of natural resources and land uses. TCD will provide technical assistance and cost-share programs for private landowners in maintaining their producer operations. Public lands makeup the majority of the land within the Teton Conservation District's boundaries (97%), and thus it is important for the District to play a substantive role in assistance programs on public lands. These will include both education programs and on the ground improvements.

Wildlife Issues – The Wyoming Department of Game & Fish is charged with wildlife management in Wyoming. Federal agencies also have regulatory authority and in the case of the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are major land managers in TCD boundaries. TCD programs, for the most part, are significantly affected by both wildlife policies, such as the Bison & Elk Management Plan and Wolf Recovery proposals, as well as wildlife corridor and habitat issues. TCD has an opportunity, as the only local government entity with natural resource responsibilities, to help facilitate solutions by providing technical service as well as via funding support. Balancing protection of an agricultural operation's viability, open space protection, wildlife habitat quality and overall economic stability, all require an integrated approach to management and implementation. TCD has implemented a wildlife program that will provide technical assistance and cost-share funding toward education and outreach efforts, demonstration projects and on-the-ground habitat improvements and projects designed to reduce the wildlife impacts upon agricultural operations.

Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Protection - There is a need to encourage forest thinning activities to accomplish defensible space and meet habitat to leverage federal and state grant funds, and for education and outreach efforts with the public. TCD will partner with local, state, and federal agencies in assisting the general public, private landowners, and public lands in a fire protection program.

Soil Erosion Prevention - Conservation of soil resources is a priority for TCD. With the abundant streams and rivers in the District along with heavy snowmelt and summer convection storms, erosion of bare and exposed soil can occur quickly and in large volumes.

Agriculture – Technical support and cost-share shall be a priority in reducing soil erosion on agricultural lands. Soil conservation plays an important role in improving productivity on ranch lands.

Development – Development in Teton County threatens soil erosion on steep slopes with the construction of roads and grading of vegetated ground. TCD will provide the needed resources to assist with the planning and management practices to reduce the impacts of development on soil loss and erosion.

Trails – Mulit-use recreational trails receive considerable users on public and private lands within TCD boundaries. Steep mountains and stream banks along these trails

accelerate soil erosion and necessitate consistent maintenance. TCD will provide financial and technical assistance to private lands and priority areas in a near the Town of Jackson to reduce the risks of water resource degradation and soil erosion on trail systems.

Roads – Public and private roads in Jackson can contribute to considerable amounts of soil erosion in TCD boundaries. TCD will assist planners and landowners with proper soil loss prevention techniques with the help of NRCS technical support.

Education – Soil erosion prevention and ways to reduce erosion shall be promoted through workshops and educational events.

Partners – The NRCS is an important partner and resource when it comes to soil conservation. TCD will continue its partnership with private landowners, land developers, architects, contractors, consultants and engineers in improving soil erosion and sedimentation on construction sites.

Noxious Weed Control - Teton County is being threatened by silent invaders called noxious weeds. These non-native plants are invading our native forage and wildlife habitat. TCD shall continue its efforts to work with other agencies and organizations to control and eradicate weeds within District boundaries. TCD will incorporate noxious weed control measures into all its projects and distribute noxious weed information to all its clients. Noxious weeds are a nuisance to pastures and in some cases necessitate special eradication methods. TCD will provide the expertise to assist the ranching community in identifying common and rare noxious weeds and eradicating them from productive ranching lands.

Water Features – The Snake River Project and Turn in the Tamarisk are two efforts TCD supports and offers assistance to in order reduce the severe threats of non-native weed species to our waterways. Tamarisk (salt cedar) has been identified as the biggest threat to our natural riparian zones. TCD will make this a priority when planning weed eradication programs.

Trails – Noxious weeds are commonly transported through trail users and at trailheads including boat ramps. TCD shall provide support for educational signage at public and private access points and will assist in trailhead eradication of weeds where possible.

Large Ungulate Range – Programs to improve large ungulate range shall be pursued in order to better disperse wintering wildlife and reduce the risks of disease transmission. In order to accomplish this, weed infestations in winter ranges need to be eradicated through on-the ground actions, with which TCD will assist.

Education – TCD shall continue to play a key role in JHWMA’s Education Committee by participating and co-sponsoring summer community activities to promote noxious weed awareness (i.e. weed pulls, “Adopt a Trail” programs, etc.)

Partners – The Jackson Hole Weed Management Association (JHWMA), formed in 1998, is a cooperative group of governmental agencies and organizations whose goal is to prevent, control and eventually stabilize the ecosystem from further spread of noxious weed invasion. Since its origination, the JHWMA has provided continuity of programs designed to educate and inform the community about our local weed invasion. TCD will continue its support and involvement in this organization.

Recycling – Promote awareness of the services that Jackson Community Recycling provides to the community. TCD works with Jackson Community Recycling to promote the recycling of products that can be utilized again or waste that needs to be disposed of properly (Household Hazardous Waste and E-Waste). On March 18, 2003, the Teton County Commissioners passed a resolution banning hazardous waste from the Teton County Trash Transfer Station. Banned items include, but are not limited to televisions, computer monitors, and fluorescent bulbs. Proper disposal and recycling of computers and electronics is important because they contain heavy metals, including lead and mercury, and other hazardous materials. TCD partners with JCR to promote education of the community on recycling issues.

Compost Operations - TCD in conjunction, with Teton County and other partnering interests, is helping to facilitate a composting program that would process green wood waste, yard and leaf waste, dimensional wood waste, stock manure, and topsoil for various types of products that could be utilized locally primarily. This may require funding support for business start-up loans, a land lease for the processing facility, as well as education/outreach technical assistance and town and/or county waste handling policy revision.

Native Plant Species – TCD has continued its effort to promote the importance of using native plant species for restoration and landscaping efforts. Native Plant Species adapt to our soils and climate better than non-native species. They offer food and shelter for many wildlife species all year long. Require less maintenance, less amendments, are non-aggressive, and use less resources. TCD will incorporate native species into all its projects, offer educational workshops, distribute relevant publications, and support research done to increase the awareness and availability of the plant species.

Landowners – Most landscaping efforts use non-native species because of the lack of education and resources. TCD will provide the expertise to assist landowners in using native plant species on private land.

Research – May reasons why people don't use native plant species is because of the lack of studies done in our area. TCD will team up with other agencies to conduct research studies on plants that do well in our area. Conducting tours of research plots will also be available to area citizens.

Education – TCD will continue to offer seminars and trainings to teach the community what and how to plant native species. The district will also publish a Teton County specific Native Plant manual that will include the Teton County Land Development

Regulations Native Plant List. It will also include species characteristics, helpful tips, soils information, and general planting needs. TCD strives to increase awareness of natural resource issues in Teton County and how residents can become involved in resource conservation on public and private lands by hosting workshops, visiting local schools and participating in forums. The District provides Teton County residents with technical assistance, information and funding to focus on resource needs that benefit the public.

Outreach – The District promotes natural resource conservation awareness through newsletters, workshops, publications, tours, displays, newspaper ads, articles and the TCD website.

Newsletters – The District publishes a quarterly newsletter that will include current information on projects, opportunities to participate in TCD programs and natural resource information. The newsletter will be inserted in the local paper annually to attract new subscribers and promote awareness of conservation issues.

Workshops - The District participates in workshops that involve natural resource conservation such as the annual spring workshop hosted by the University of Wyoming Teton County Extension Office. Workshops addressing landowner concerns, such as stormwater pollution prevention and native plant species, are also sponsored.

Publications - The District partners with other agencies to produce educational publications such as Noxious Weed brochures and a Rural Living Handbook.

Tours - The District sponsors tours focusing on local natural resource conservation issues. Past tours have included; the Snake River Restoration Project, Trumpeter swan pond habitat enhancement and spring creek enhancement sites.

Adult and Children Programs – The District partners with various agencies such as the Teton County Weed and Pest District, Jackson Hole Land Trust, Grand Teton National Park, Teton County Parks and Recreation Department, and the United States Forest service in offering educational programs. These programs include but are not limited to Noxious Weed and Native Plant Hikes, Snake River Ecology Floats, Native Seed Collections, Plant Salvage's, and Animal Track Snowshoe Hikes.

Displays at local events - The District participates in numerous local events throughout the year including the Home Building and Recreation Show, Eco Fair, Teton County Fair, and the Volunteer Fair by having an information booth and all staff present.

Newspaper articles & ads - The District grants interviews to the local newspaper regularly. Ads with Noxious Weed information are published weekly in the newspaper over the summer months. Activities such as Noxious and Native Plant Hikes are advertised as well.

Website - The District maintains a website at [www.tetonconservation.org](http://www.tetonconservation.org). The web page is a tool that provides internet users with District information. The site is updated

periodically with information on meetings and events, District reports and District program progress articles. Links to natural resource partners and Teton County information is provided.

#### TCD Partnership Information

NRCS Partnership - The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is a Federal agency that works in partnership with the Teton Conservation District to conserve and sustain our natural resources. NRCS services can include such items as direct assistance to urban landowners, technical assistance to local units of government, as well as technical and cost-sharing assistance to ranchers and agricultural producers in the country. The NRCS works extensively with the other Federal agencies located in the Teton County on a wide variety of natural resource issues. The bulk of the assistance requests deals with irrigation efficiency improvements, but NRCS has also assisted landowners with grazing management plans, fertilizer recommendations based on soil samples and analysis, and seeding recommendation in critically disturbed areas, (i.e. steep slopes, shallow soils, burned areas, heavy weed infestations).

Teton County Weed & Pest - Teton Conservation District works closely with the Teton County Weed & Pest to assist in educating the public about noxious weeds and providing funding to eradicate infestations in Teton County. TCD is one of the biggest supporters of the Jackson Hole Weed Management Association, through funding and other assistance. The JHWMA is dedicated to the prevention, control and stabilization of the spread of noxious weeds.

United States Geological Survey - Teton Conservation District's partnership with the United States Geological Survey (USGS) continues through project oriented and research based collaboration. Science can play a key role in managing natural resources. The USGS provides expertise in the geological and biological sciences. They facilitate effective management of water, biological, energy, and mineral resources. The USGS places a high value on the communication and dissemination of credible, timely, and relevant science so that most recent and available knowledge about water resources can be applied in management and policy decisions.

United States Forest Service - Teton Conservation District's partnership with the United States Forest Service (USFS) will continue at a local level within District boundaries. USFS lands and private property are intertwined within the Teton Conservation District. These federal lands are an important economic and natural resource for the area. Many of our natural, social and cultural resources from ranching to forestry to recreation are continuous throughout political boundaries. TCD strives to improve partnerships and management of our forest/urban interfaces and the growing demands put on these lands.

Teton County – Teton Conservation District's partnership with Teton County, Wyoming continues through work on land development reviews, comprehensive plan updates, and land development regulation modifications. Teton County's ecosystem is one of the last of its kind. Although significant development has and is continuing to occur in this area

natural resource protection is still important. The County and Conservation District will continue to develop plans to peacefully coexist with the environment.

Town of Jackson - Teton Conservation District's partnership with the Town of Jackson, Wyoming continues through cost-share projects and natural resource management. The urban environment in the Town of Jackson provides for special natural resource management challenges. Combining social and economic pressures with natural resource management has created a need for collaboration within the Town. Preserving the natural resource integrity of water features and riparian zones within town, while enhancing wildlife habitat has been a priority of this partnership. The Town and Conservation District will continue to address water resource concerns related to Flat Creek and storm water runoff while ensuring the integrity of our drinking water and fisheries resources.

National Elk Refuge - Teton Conservation District (TCD) has partnered with the National Elk Refuge (NER) for a number of years in conducting water quality monitoring on stations in Flat Creek and in Nowlin Creek. TCD has also assisted with NRCS in irrigation designs that are utilized on the Refuge. Additionally over the past two years TCD has contributed funding toward weed management control along the NER riparian area of the Gros Ventre River and has completed fencing and stock watering improvements at the corrals to protect Nowlin Creek water quality and also protect adjacent wetlands. TCD looks forward to continued cooperative projects with the NER that will benefit the public.

Grand Teton National Park - TCD works with Grand Teton National Park to assist in educating the public about native plant species and providing educational opportunities for community members. On the ground programs such as native plant seed collection and plant salvages help to increase the awareness and availability of native plant species within the district.