

In this issue:

- @ The Capitol
- Ag Protection Area
- Tools & Training
- What's Coming Up

Down the homestretch

The Idaho Legislature continues to set budgets for next fiscal year and work to wrap up business for this legislative session.

Meanwhile, your IASCD board is completing interviews of candidates for executive director.

Let us hear from you at board@iascd.org.

What's happening @ the Capitol?

Feb. 23: H503 passed the House on a vote of 67-0-3 and was referred to the Senate Resources & Environment Committee. H503 moves the ISWCC to IDWR. It has not been scheduled for a hearing yet, but that could occur soon.

Feb. 19: H726 drafted by the Idaho Association of County Recorders and Clerks would have moved elections of district supervisors to May. After being introduced in committee, that bill has been rewritten to keep conservation district elections in November but move them from even-numbered years to odd-numbered years. This keeps district elections with other local special district elections such as fire and cemetery districts.

Feb. 27: SCR115 supports moving ISWCC from Department of Ag to IDWR. It passed both bodies and is in effect.

Feb. 27: S1269 dealing with cloud seeding transparency passed out of committee and will be heard on the Senate floor this week.

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation and Idaho Eastern-Oregon Seed Association brought forth a bill that would create a transfer fee on residential real estate transactions that

would build a pool of funds for landowners who enroll their property in an Agricultural Protection Area or APA. It is facing opposition from realtors and may not advance this session.

The stage has now been set for the Primary Election in May. The filing period closed on Friday, February 27 after being open for one week. Over 250 candidates filed for the 105 legislative seats. All constitutional officers except Governor Little are running unopposed in the May Primary.

Additionally, JFAC will now solely move forward setting budgets. If budget approval moves smoothly, the Legislature may wrap up business by the end of March.



Valley SWCD Supervisor Bill Leaf

Valley County family is first to enroll land in new Agriculture Protection Area

Bill Leaf doesn't mind being a guinea pig, especially when it comes to protecting his family's Century Ranch in Valley County.

Leaf, a supervisor on the Valley SWCD board, was among the first landowners to enroll in Idaho's new Agriculture Protection Area or APA. "Our motivation was to protect productive ag land and preserve our rural ag lifestyle," Leaf explained. "With development encroaching around us, this APA designation gives us a little more protection from nuisance complaints, zoning changes or use of eminent domain."

Under the APA, the family agrees not to convert the land from ag production for at least 20 years.

Tools & Training

Has your county adopted an ordinance for Agriculture Protection Areas?

The Idaho Legislature passed the Agriculture Protection Act in 2024. It created a new section in Idaho Code, Chapter 97, Title 67, that requires each county to adopt an ordinance enabling landowners to enroll certain parcels in the APA. The county ordinance must set the standards and requirements, as well as the application and review process, for the local APA. Once that mechanism is in place, ag producers can voluntarily apply to enroll their land in the APA. By doing so, the landowner agrees not to convert the land from ag production for at least 20 years.

For more detail on the how and why of an APA, see this explanation from Representative Dustin Manwaring on the Idaho State Bar's website:

<https://isb.idaho.gov/blog/pioneering-preservation-idahos-new-agricultural-protection-act-by-dustin-w-manwaring/>

The Idaho Association of Counties drafted a model APA ordinance to help Boards of County Commissioners write their local ordinance:

<https://idcounties.org/resources/land-use-ordinances/>

If your county hasn't adopted an APA ordinance, your district may want to approach your BOCC about how you can assist in the process.



What's Coming Up?

Mar. 10: Division VI Spring Meeting, in Rigby in the morning.

Mar. 10: Division V Spring Meeting, Pocatello, hosted by Franklin SCD in the afternoon.

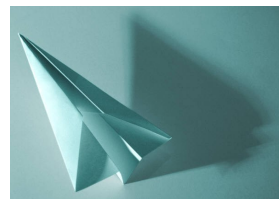
Apr. 15: 10:00-11:00 a.m. MDT via Zoom: Idaho District Employees Association (IDEA) Quarterly Training—"Your Role in Idaho's Open Meeting Law" with guest presenter Carl Ericson, ICRMP Risk Management Legal Counsel. Open to all IDEA members and district supervisors. If you haven't received the Zoom invitation, contact IDEA President Sarah Garcia at bonnerswcd@gmail.com.



Spread the e-news

District Employees, please forward this newsletter to your board members to make sure supervisors receive IASCD news in a timely manner.

Supervisors, to receive IASCD e-news directly to your inbox, please use this form <https://form.jotform.com/260276149122049> to provide your preferred email address for the IASCD data base.



Reach out to IASCD

Do you have feedback for the board or ideas for upcoming newsletters? Let us know what you need! Contact your IASCD division director at board@iascd.org.
 Jeff Connolly, Div. I
 Clint Zenner, Div. II
 Wendy Green, Div. III
 Richard Kunau, Div. IV
 Devin Fielding, Div. V
 Tori O'Neal, Div. VI