

Springing Forward

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IASCD selects new executive director who's comfortable in the barn and in the board room.

The Idaho Legislature is (almost) ready to go home.

Remember to file your updated annual and 5-year plan with the Commission by March 31st.

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

What's happening @ the Capitol?

Mar. 16: H503 passed the Senate with no opposition. The governor signed the bill into law on March 20th. H503 establishes the ISWCC within IDWR.

Mar. 17: S1269 passed the House with a vote of 40-28-2. The governor signed the bill on March 20th. This legislation updates Idaho's cloud-seeding statutes to provide for public meetings and reporting to improve transparency and accountability.

Mar. 20: H873 passed the House by a vote of 69-0-1 and was referred to Senate State Affairs. It passed out of the Senate State Affairs meeting on March 25th with no opposition. This legislation moves the election of conservation district supervisors from November of even-numbered years to November of odd-numbered years. If approved by the Senate and signed by the governor, the legislation would move the 2026 election of supervisors to November 2027 and move the 2028 election of supervisors to 2029. Conservation district elections would be held in odd-

numbered years going forward.

Mar. 23: S1405, the supplemental appropriation for ISWCC, passed the Senate, 30-4-1; the House passed the bill the next day by a vote of 64-6-0. As part of the enhanced appropriation for the Commission, and thereby state funding for districts, this bill approves onetime use of unspent grant money under CREP and WQPA.

The IASCD Board appreciates the excellent work of our government affairs director, Patxi Larrocea-Phillips, in monitoring legislation, updating the board, and helping us represent districts in legislative committee hearings.

IASCD names Mary Huff Executive Director

After an extensive search that yielded several excellent candidates, the IASCD board has selected Mary Huff to be the association's executive director, effective April 1st.

"Mary clearly has a passion for conservation and a passion for attracting and educating the next generation of ag producers and conservationists," said IASCD President Tori O'Neal. "We're excited to bring her unique experience and skill set on board to better serve Idaho's conservation districts."



New IASCD Executive Director Mary Huff brings ranching and local government experience to her new role.

Huff, a rancher whose family runs a cow/calf operation in Owyhee County, brings 30 years of experience in local government, private business and leadership in addition to her background in agriculture.

"I'm honored to support IASCD and the work of conservation districts across Idaho," Huff said. "Districts play a critical role in keeping conservation locally led and grounded in the realities of working lands and agricultural communities."

Tools & Training

What can you do to make a difference on your board?

Submitted by Doreen McMurray, Division IV

It takes time to learn how things work within conservation districts, both for supervisors and employees. Because board meetings, educational contests, updating annual plans, filing performance reports, and coordinating grants and special projects only come around monthly, quarterly, or annually, it takes about two years to really feel like you know what you're doing.

But whether you are an experienced supervisor, brand new on your board, or somewhere in between, supervisors should always be looking for ways to improve conservation in their local communities.

Here are some things to consider to help you be more effective:

- 1) Evaluate your board: Do you currently have a full, active board?
- 2) When you need to recruit new board members, how can you find and attract qualified local folks who want to serve and be engaged?
- 3) Do you have enough employee help? Do you employ staff for enough hours to advance the projects and interests of the District?
- 4) What can you do to make your board meetings more productive?

You'll find ideas for addressing these topics and much more in **"The Idaho Soil Conservation District Supervisor Handbook."**



This handbook was created by Ada District, and you can find it online on the Commission's website at swc.idaho.gov.

The Handbook sections include:

- The history of the conservation movement both nationally and in Idaho.
- District Supervisor Roles and Responsibilities
- Information on the election process
- Who can serve as a supervisor
- Board Meetings & Parliamentary Procedure
- Examples of Public Service Announcements
- Ideas for Recruitment and Board Leadership

It's a great resource! Check it out and use it to make your board more productive.

What's Coming Up?

Mar. 31: District Annual/5-year Plans due to the Commission. Have you updated your District's plan, signed the certification and submitted it to ISWCC?

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.

Nov. 17-19: IASCD Annual Conference, University Inn, Moscow, hosted by Division II



Reach out to IASCD

Contact your IASCD division director at board@iascd.org.
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