

Section Four

Productive landscapes



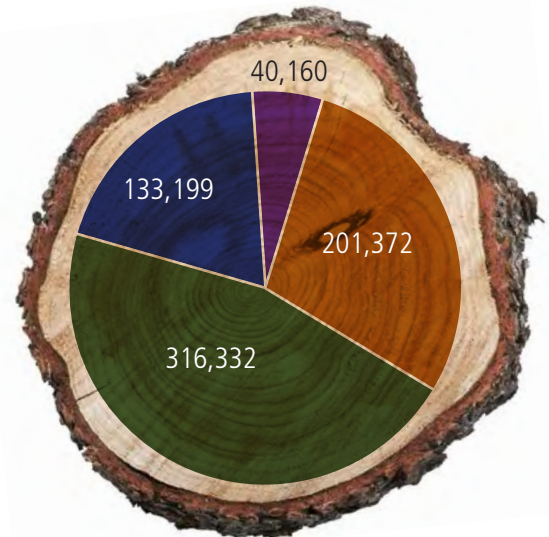
Chapter 4. Our Agricultural Heritage

Regional Context

The history of human settlement in the Teton View Region is similar to that of many western communities. It originated with Native American populations and gradually shifted to homesteading farmers and ranchers encouraged by federal incentives in the mid-late 1800s. Following settlement, most private lands were dedicated to agricultural production despite short growing seasons and distant markets. The largely agricultural economy lasted throughout the region for much of the 1900s, but today 75% of cultivated acreage lies in Fremont and Madison counties. The loss of the freight railroad in 1981 made it more difficult for farmers to send crops to market from Teton Valley, and, in the late 1990s, the economy in the two Teton counties began to shift towards a recreation and real estate-based economy.

Agriculture will continue to play an important role in the larger area's economy both in its own right and for its contribution to the region's expansive beauty and rural character. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the Teton Valley experienced a tremendous residential housing boom. When the recession began in 2008, land values decreased dramatically, especially in Teton County, Idaho, and to a lesser extent in adjacent counties. Low land values and high commodity prices have stabilized agriculture in the short term, but residential development pressures can be expected to increase as tourism and land values recover.

This Regional Plan places a priority on maintaining the region's agricultural heritage despite the fact that many farms are considered small by modern standards. This makes it more difficult to realize a return on the very high capital costs for land and



- Teton County, ID
- Teton County, WY
- Fremont County
- Madison County

FIGURE 10
Land in Farms (acres), 2012.

equipment. The shift to lifestyle and tourism is intimately linked to retaining a rural and unique community character. (RPI Consulting, 2013)

This Regional Plan includes an Assessment of Teton View Agriculture for Local and Regional Markets (see Appendix E). The agriculture project assessed the potential for developing local and regional agricultural production, processing, and marketing in Teton, Fremont, and Madison counties in Idaho and Teton County in Wyoming. The assessment found that in sparsely populated areas, small amounts of income or a few jobs can be significant for a family and community. Assessment data identify great interest among many stakeholders, including producers and food buyers, in developing local and regional food chains.

Other findings include the following:

- The total number of farms in the four-county region increased 4% from 2007-2012. Most of this growth was in Fremont and Madison counties. Most of the increase was among the region's smallest farms: the region gained 57 farms under 10 acres in size.
- Only 20% of all farms in the region are larger than 500 acres, and about 40% are smaller operations with fewer than 50 acres.
- The number of producers engaged in direct sales and the number of producers selling locally is increasing.

- Local supply chains already exist, and a high percentage of producers surveyed already participate in them. The area is not starting from scratch, but building on existing economic activity. Many producers already sell some portion of their agricultural or food products locally, and roughly half of producer survey respondents estimated that 76-100% of their products are consumed locally.
- The majority of producers said they are interested in increasing the amount of products they sell locally, and the majority of buyers said they are interested in increasing the quantity and variety of products they source from local producers.
- The region is socioeconomically, culturally, and agriculturally diverse. A wider diversity of products is grown in the study region than reflected by USDA Agricultural Census data or than many potential buyers, producers and other stakeholders are aware of.
- While the cold climate and short growing season present barriers for most producers, some sell animal and produce goods year-round.
- For producers, the most significant challenges for selling locally include inadequate time and ability to supply products year-round. For buyers, the most significant challenges for purchasing locally include availability of specific products and ability to access a large enough quantity.³⁹

³⁹ University of Idaho College of Agricultural and Life Sciences and Office of Grant and Project Development. (December 22, 2014). Assessment of Teton view Agriculture for Local and Regional Markets. Retrieved from <http://sustainablyellowstone.org/library/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Teton-View-Agriculture-Assessment-Final-12-22-14.pdf>.

Table 8. Land in farms, by type (acres) and county

	Fremont	Madison	Teton, ID	Teton, WY	STUDY REGION
Total land area	1,192,658	300,298	287,651	2,557,044	4,337,651
Total land area in farms	316,332	201,372	133,199	40,160	691,063
% of county's/region's land area in farms	26.5	67.1	46.3	1.6	15.9
Total cropland	207,777	167,384	87,600	10,545	473,306
Harvested cropland	172,151	139,021	60,946	8,015	380,133
Other pasture and grazing land that could have been used for crops without additional improvements	1,876	1,521	9,912	NA	NA
Other cropland	33,750	26,842	16,742	NA	NA
Cropland idle or used for cover crops or soil improvement, but not harvested and not pastured or grazed	32,252	23,571	13,020	NA	NA
Cropland on which all crops failed	509	280	1,038	230	2,057
Cropland in cultivated summer fallow	989	2,991	2,684	NA	NA
Total woodland	8,166	4,266	12,151	NA	NA
Woodland pastured	3,611	1,196	2,947	NA	NA
Woodland not pastured	4,555	3,070	9,204	NA	NA
Permanent pasture and rangeland, other than cropland and woodland pastured	88,090	22,015	28,802	25,613	164,520
Land in farmsteads, homes, buildings, livestock facilities, ponds, roads, wasteland, etc	12,299	7,707	4,646	NA	NA
Pastureland, all types	93,577	24,732	41,661	28,180	188,150

SOURCE: 2014 Agriculture Report Addendum

Table 9. Public land in grazing (acres), by county

Fremont	Madison	Teton, ID	Teton, WY	STUDY REGION
147,544	28,882	4,352	2,196	182,974

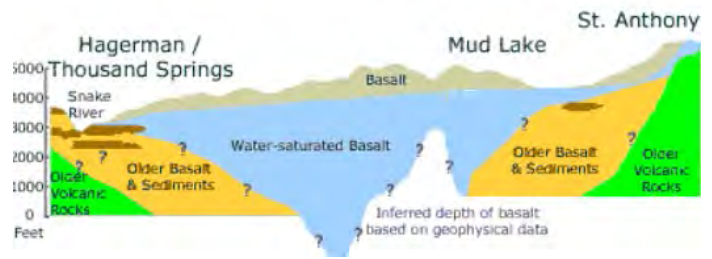
SOURCE: 2014 Agriculture Report Addendum



WATER RESOURCES

Effective management of the region's important water resources enables successful agriculture. The Teton View Region lies within the Upper Snake River Basin, which extends from the headwaters of the Snake River downstream to the Milner Dam in Twin Falls. The basin overlies the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer (ESPA), the largest aquifer in Idaho and one of the most productive aquifers in the world. The Henry's Fork is a major tributary of the Snake River draining about 2,700 square miles in Idaho plus 500 square miles of Wyoming. The Henry's Fork Basin Study (Basin Study), sponsored and led by the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) in cooperation with State of Idaho Water Resource Board (IWRB), explores potential action alternatives for both (1) meeting the complex water supply and management challenges in the basin and (2) implementing the ESPA Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan (CAMP) and Idaho State Water Plan. The Basin Study presents opportunities for developing water supplies, improving water management, and sustaining environmental quality within the basin and for managing groundwater recharge to the ESPA.

Simplified Geologic Cross Section of the eastern Snake River Plain



The Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer is a unique asset to the region.

SOURCE: imnh.isu.edu

These opportunities are an essential part of maintaining the region's high quality of life, which depends on a successful agricultural economy and the preservation of the heritage related to historical agriculture and ranching/grazing.

The Henry's Fork Basin provides irrigation water for over 280,000 acres and sustains a world-class trout fishery. Agricultural changes; population growth and its consequent urban development; drought conditions; and climate changes are impacting water resources. These factors are increasing the need to identify adaptation and mitigation strategies to resolve water supply imbalances and preserve ecological resiliency in the basin.



A group of 12 alternatives was formulated by Reclamation, IWRB, and a workgroup during the Basin Study in response to the region's needs. These included seven surface storage alternatives, a groundwater storage alternative, a water marketing alternative, and three conservation alternatives. Five of the seven surface storage alternatives proposed building new dams and reservoirs of various configurations. Of these 12 alternatives, the three storage alternatives of Lane Lake Dam, Island Park storage increase, and Ashton Dam raise appeared to have broad support by all interested stakeholders. That broad support also extended to the alternatives of canal automation, Egin Lake recharge site expansion, water markets, irrigation canal piping, and demand reduction.

The four storage alternatives that involve dams located on a river or creek (Spring Creek Dam, Moody Creek Dam, Upper Badger Creek Dam, and Teton Dam) do not have broad stakeholder support. Conservation groups have clearly articulated their objection to these alternatives because of potential impacts to Yellowstone cutthroat trout, scenic beauty, and free-flowing rivers. While considerable storage potential exists with these alternatives, the current social, cultural, and environmental issues would be significant.

The findings of this study make it clear that a meaningful contribution to meeting the existing and future water supply needs of the Henry's Fork Basin, as well as such high state priorities as the ESPA, cannot be made by any single action. Rather, it is clear that success in meeting these needs must be built through an integrated program of actions. Grouping of alternatives into one or more integrated packages is likely to be necessary in order to meet the broadest set of needs.⁴⁰

In response to a quality of life survey distributed as part of the regional plan process, residents in agricultural character districts most commonly chose clean air and fresh water as the reason they choose to live in the region. The natural environment, wildlife and scenery and safe, small town feel were highlighted as important to the community as well as outdoor recreation opportunities.

⁴⁰ U.S. Department of Interior. (2014, February). *Draft Henry's Fork Basin Study Final Report*. Retrieved from <http://www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/studies/idaho/henrysfork/>.

Agriculture

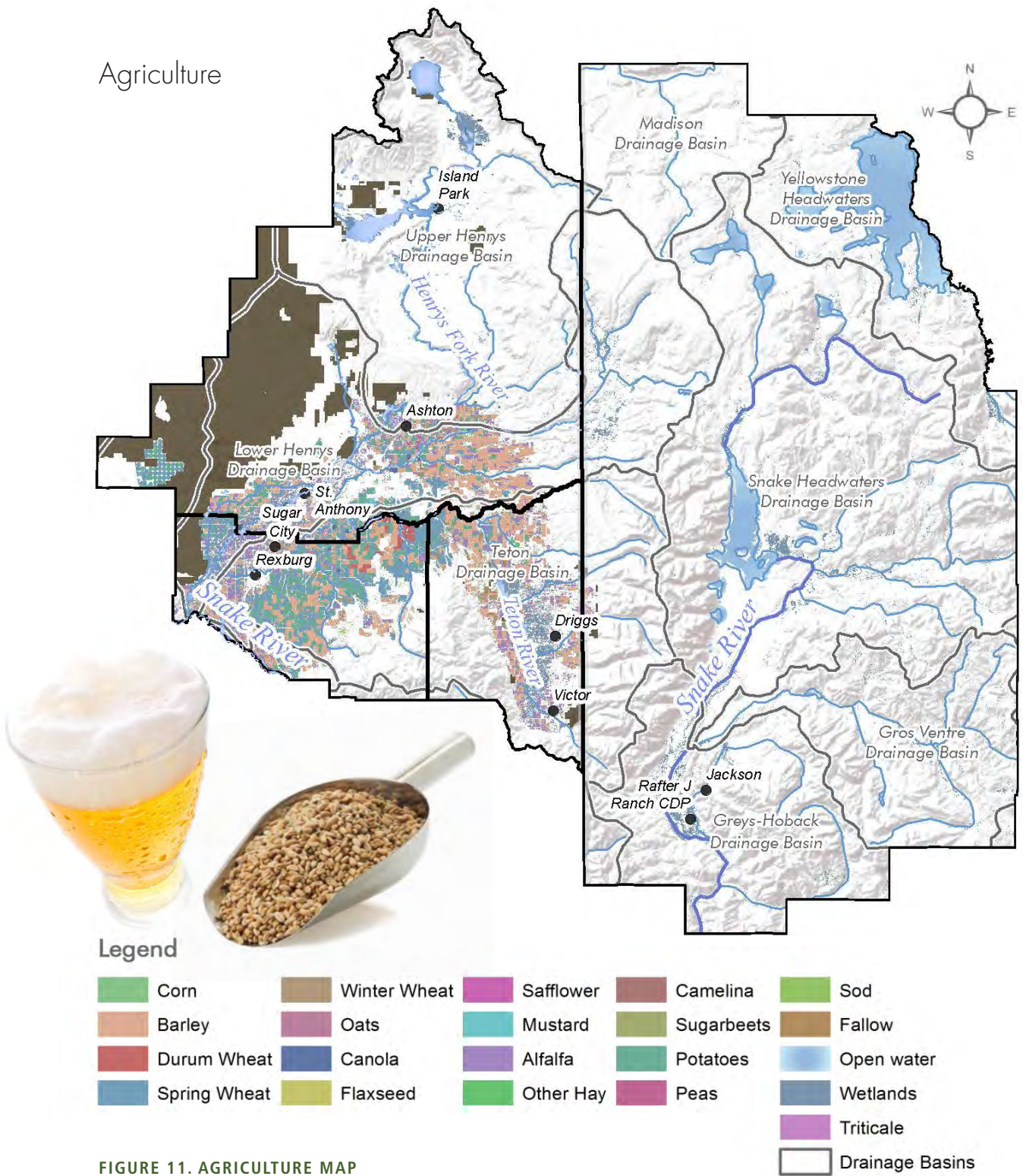


FIGURE 11. AGRICULTURE MAP

The national land cover dataset (2012) highlights the agricultural valley area where a variety of seasonal crops are grown. BLM datasets also highlight where grazing allotments are prevalent in the eastern part of the four county study area (shown as Grass/Pasture).

Themes and Strategies

Theme 4.1: Support and enhance local agriculture, including crops and ranching/grazing.

Although agriculture is an important part of the region's economy and heritage, the geography of the agricultural valley area poses many challenges for local producers. The region has low overall population density, is isolated from major population centers, and has a short growing season. Despite the region having a large land area, the amount of land available for crop and livestock production is limited. Across the four counties, 81% of all land is public and most is not available for grazing purposes.

Soil and water conservation districts in Idaho have worked with state and federal agencies over the years to address soil erosion issues including sheet erosion, wind erosion and severe gulying. They work with producers to reduce soil erosion, improve soil and water quality and improve rangeland through the use of best management practices (BMP) with other soil and water conservation practices. The Teton View Region includes the Yellowstone, Teton, and Madison Soil Conservation Districts. Efforts by these soil and water conservation districts in 2014 focused on water conservation through converting irrigated to dry cropland, addressing water quality through sediment control, erosion control through cover

crops, funding for projects such as hoop houses, energy audits, and haystack fending, participating in the Idaho Soil Health Initiative, and community outreach efforts.

Strategies:

- Improve and maintain roads and other infrastructure important for agricultural production and transportation.
- Promote local agricultural industries and businesses and recruit agricultural entrepreneurs through local universities and education centers.
- Encourage land use policies and resources that enable farms to remain viable as circumstances and markets change.
- Return platted land to agricultural production where appropriate and viable.
- Provide a reasonable means for transfer of agricultural land to family members for the purpose of remaining in agricultural use.
- Sustain components of the agricultural system that support viability, including regional storage and distribution centers, supplies, and other infrastructure.
- Encourage the launch of a "buy local" program that connects producers and consumers.

Fall River Irrigation

Fall River Irrigation has placed large irrigation canals in the Fall River area (Marysville Canal Company) into huge, gravity-flow pipelines. This was done to improve irrigation management and delivery. In addition, it has reduced evaporation and in one case, allowed for hydroelectric generation.



Theme 4.2: Manage water resources in accordance with state water law and beneficial use doctrines, and in a manner that helps sustain our agricultural heritage.

The Henry's Fork Basin includes major portions of the counties of Fremont, Madison, and Teton (Idaho) and their county seats in St. Anthony, Rexburg, and Driggs. The main river systems are the Henry's Fork of the Snake River, which originates at Big Springs and is augmented by small streams that empty into Henry's Lake and are delivered to the main river via the Henry's Lake Outlet. Major tributaries include the Falls River, which originates in the southwest corner of Yellowstone National Park, and the Teton River, which is formed by the convergence of several creeks and springs on the western flank of the Teton Mountain Range. The Henry's Fork flows for 120 miles in the eastern part of Idaho, joining the South Fork of the Snake River near Rexburg, Idaho. The western portion of the Henry's Fork Basin overlies the ESPA so opportunities in the basin could support the objectives of the ESPA CAMP for stabilizing the ESPA. One-third of the upper Snake River flow in eastern Idaho comes from the Henry's Fork Basin, supplying groundwater recharge to local aquifers and the ESPA downstream.

Henry's Fork Watershed Council & Henry's Fork Foundation

A successful model for ongoing collaboration on water management

- More than 100 research projects to date have provided a scientific basis for management and decision-making in the Henry's Fork watershed.
- Working collaboratively with Island Park Drought Management Planning Committee, hydroelectric power companies, irrigators, and state and federal water managers to ensure that river flows benefit wild trout to the greatest extent possible while meeting state-allocated water rights of irrigators and providing hydroelectric power.
- Enhancing watershed education in local schools with the Trout in the Henry's Fork program, modeled after the Trout in the Classroom curriculum and tailored to the local watershed.

SOURCE: <http://henrysfork.org/watershed-council>

These aquifers are tapped for municipal, industrial, and agricultural water. The upper Snake River region, including the Henry's Fork Basin, produces approximately 21% of all goods and services in the State of Idaho, resulting in an estimated value of \$10 billion annually. Water is the critical element for this productivity.

The Henry's Fork is the largest tributary of the Snake River which in turn, is the largest tributary to the Columbia River.

Under natural, unregulated conditions, the total watershed discharge would be around 2.5 million acre-feet per year, with the largest tributaries, Fall River and Teton River, collectively contributing about 1.3 million acre-feet per year. The natural flow regime of the Henry's Fork has been altered by irrigation diversions, increased evapotranspiration of irrigation, water storage, and canal conveyances. The mean annual basin outflow over the past 30 years is about 1.6 million acre-feet. Much of the water lost to reservoir, stream, and conveyance system seepage and irrigation is recaptured as recharge to the aquifers.

Land use in the Henry's Fork Basin is comprised of forestland, rangeland, irrigated cropland, dryland agriculture, and other uses such as urban and housing development areas. The forest land and much of the rangeland are located mostly in the mountainous northern and eastern parts of the basin. Most of the forested lands are owned by the United States and managed by the USDA Forest Service or the National Park Service. The majority of the agricultural land is concentrated in the western, central, and southern areas of the basin, especially on both sides of the lower Henry's Fork and the lower Teton River.⁴¹

⁴¹ U.S. Department of Interior. (2014, February). *Draft Henry's Fork Basin Study Final Report*. Retrieved from <http://www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/studies/idaho/henrysfork/>.

Strategies:

- Build success in meeting the water supply needs of the Henry's Fork Basin through an integrated program of actions.
- Continue to work with stakeholders to determine whether recharge activities at designated sites would stabilize the ESPA and meet recovery goals and objectives set out in the ESPA Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan (CAMP) and State Water Plan.
- Explore water storage projects that capture increased spring flows for use during the longer dry season during the late summer and fall seasons.
- Encourage the efficient use of water resources through conservation and advanced demand reduction techniques.



Theme 4.3: Maintain the essence of the region’s rural character while preserving fundamental property rights.

Preservation of rural character and heritage and the support of the local agricultural industry are of high importance to the region for both economic and quality of life reasons. Desired future character and land uses for rural areas include agriculture; ranching; low density residential, with provisions for clustering/conservation developments to protect natural resources or rural character; and conservation and wildlife habitat enhancement/protection.

Residents have shown a significant respect for individual property rights. Idaho’s Local Planning Act of 1976 requires all Idaho counties to state in their comprehensive plans that property rights will be protected. Therefore, comprehensive plans recognize the importance of protecting property rights while also achieving other goals of the communities. This balance of effective land planning and private property rights is a common thread among the communities in the region.

Strategies:

- Recognize and respect the Right to Farm Act.
- Encourage the purchase or donation of conservation easements to provide financial incentives to landowners for maintaining agricultural operations and other large parcels of open space.



Grand Teton Distillery

Grand Teton Vodka is an award winning potato vodka that is distilled in Driggs, Idaho. This vodka, which is processed from start to finish at the distillery, is an example of a value-added product that uses regionally produced potatoes to create a premium product with higher returns.

SOURCE: <http://www.tetondistillery.com/>

- Ensure that land uses adhere to high environmental preservation standards.
- Ensure that new development respects cultural and historic sites and preserves rural character.
- Encourage development inside and adjacent to existing cities where feasible.
- Protect private property from being taken for public use without just compensation and due process of law.

Theme 4.4: Enhance the local food movement.

There is growing public interest in expanding the local food system in the Teton View region. The University of Idaho assessment analyzed available data to characterize supply and demand for local agricultural products in the study area. Interviews, focus groups, and administer surveys of key stakeholders were

conducted to collect data about the potential for developing local production focused on serving local and regional markets for agricultural products in the study area.

Local supply chains already exist in the four-county region and a high percentage of producers surveyed for the agricultural assessment participate in them. The area is not starting from scratch, but building on existing economic activity. Furthermore, demand exists to grow the local supply chains and add new ones. Activities that link producers to buyers and consumers will help producers expand existing and new supply chains. Farmers' markets are an obvious avenue for selling local products. Many producers are already selling through farmers' markets in the area.

The tourism industry is a major driver of the regional economy. For example, accommodation and food service industries account for 15% of all jobs in the four-county region. One promising strategy for promoting local agriculture and food systems is to leverage the tourism infrastructure that already exists and expand tourism opportunities by building agricultural tourism or agritourism enterprises (e.g., fee hunting, horseback riding, farm stays, barn dances, U-pick). Some producers in the region already earn supplementary income by incorporating agritourism, nature tourism, or heritage tourism into their operations. Refer to the 'Resources' section for specific agritourism resources.

Strategies:

- Support local food production outlets such as farmer's markets
- Encourage local agriculture production and local consumption of agricultural products.
- Support infrastructure to enhance local value-added farm products.
- Explore opportunities to make and export value-added food products.
- Explore options for connecting local food producers with institutional buyers (like hospitals or correctional facilities) and national park vendors in the area.
- Promote networking and education among producers and between producers and potential buyers.

Greater Yellowstone Food Guide

Slow Food in the Tetons promotes and celebrates good, clean, and fair food in our community through educational programming, events, and initiatives. The Greater Yellowstone Food Guide helps to promote and connect local agriculture industries and products with residents and visitors.

Weekly Farmer's Markets

Weekly Farmer's Markets occur throughout the region and help connect local producers and consumers.

- Rexburg
- Ashton
- Teton Valley
- Victor
- Jackson Hole

SOURCE: <http://tetonslowfood.org/teton-regional-food-guide/>





Moving Ahead with Common Purpose:

Building Upon Our Agricultural Heritage

Five region-wide initiatives, five ongoing agricultural programs, and two community-scale projects emerged from the locally grown food market assessment and from the rural counties' economic development strategies. Both the public and the local governments expressed significant support for these agricultural initiatives as evidenced in the table below. While most local governments are willing to partner on these initiatives, coordinating leadership will need to be identified from the private and/or nonprofit sectors.

Table 10. Roots & Resilience (RR) Implementation Priorities

	Highly Important in the Near Term	Willing to Partner	Potential Leaders/New Partners
RR.1	A Local Foods System to Meet Regional Demand	Teton County, ID Teton County, WY Town of Jackson City of Driggs City of Victor Ashton Community Foundation	High Country RC&D Teton Regional Land Trust
RR.2	Infrastructure for Local Foods Processing	Teton County, ID Teton County, WY Town of Jackson City of Driggs City of Victor Ashton Community Foundation	High Country RC&D USDA-Rural Development
RR.3	Cooperative Marketing and Distribution of Local Foods	Teton County, ID Teton County, WY Town of Jackson City of Driggs City of Victor Ashton Community Foundation	High Country RC&D Full Circle Education
RR.5	New Avenues for Value-Added Agriculture	Teton County, ID	High Country RC&D USDA Research/Extension
RR.6	Maximizing Irrigation Water Supply: Policies/Practices	Fremont County Madison County Teton County, ID	Fremont-Madison Irrigation Dist. Henry's Fork Foundation US Bureau of Reclamation Friends of the Teton River High Country RC&D
RR.7	Collaborative Decision Making in Watershed Management	Fremont County Madison County Teton County, ID Ashton Community Foundation	Henry's Fork Watershed Council Teton Regional Land Trust High Country RC&D
RR.8	Soil Health Initiative	Madison County Teton County, ID	Natural Resources Conservation Service; High Country RC&D
RR.10	Cooperative Weed Management	Fremont County Madison County Teton County, ID	Weed Management Areas High Country RC&D
RR.12	Farmer's Market Coordination	Madison County Teton County, ID City of Rexburg City of Driggs City of Victor Ashton Community Foundation	High Country RC&D Full Circle Education Slow Food in the Tetons

	Longer-Term Initiatives	Willing to Partner	Potential Leaders/Partners
RR.4	Codes and Incentives to Protect Agricultural Uses/Lands	Teton County, ID Ashton Community Foundation	
RR.9	New Crop Assessments		US Department of Agriculture High Country RC&D
RR.11	Agricultural Tourism Opportunities	Teton County, ID City of Victor Ashton Community Foundation	High Country RC&D

Region-Wide Initiatives

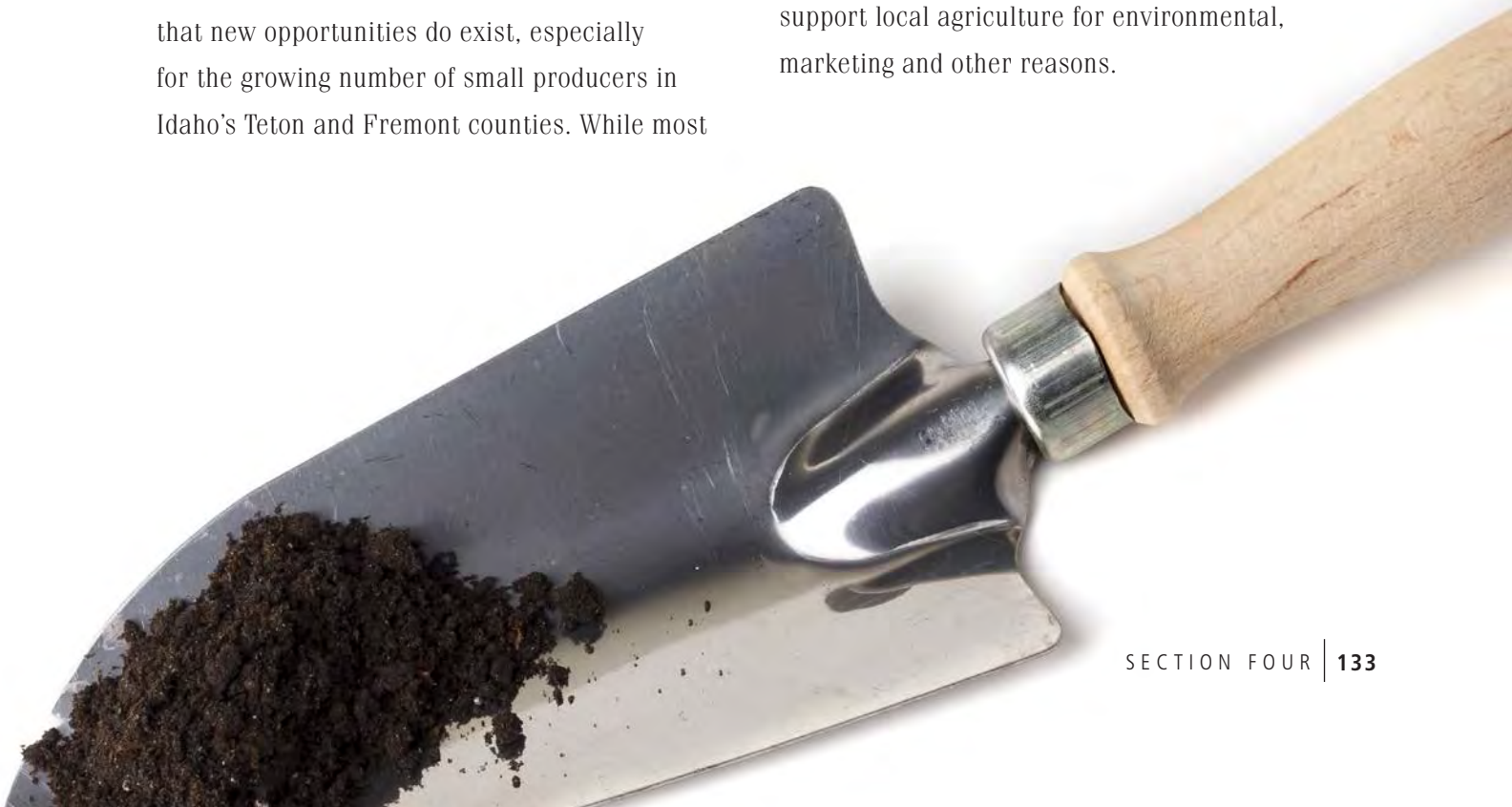
These initiatives are proposed to reconnect city residents to their surrounding productive landscapes and advance local food systems and policies that allow for healthy coexistence.

INITIATIVE RR.1 A LOCAL FOODS SYSTEM TO MEET REGIONAL DEMAND

Summary: The Regional Plan’s market assessment for locally-grown foods shows that demand is growing within a 100-mile radius of the Teton View Region. The study revealed that new opportunities do exist, especially for the growing number of small producers in Idaho’s Teton and Fremont counties. While most

producers are already participating in the local supply chains, it is difficult for individuals to fully explore the market potential of existing products on their own or determine how to align their production with the needs of buyers and consumers. This initiative would seek to more precisely quantify regional supply and demand as a first step towards designing a local foods system for the Teton View region:

- Explore opportunities with large-scale buyers such as lodge companies and national park vendors who may be motivated to support local agriculture for environmental, marketing and other reasons.





- Assess demand from all local institutional buyers such as hospitals, schools and prisons
- Determine market potential from surrounding population centers such as Idaho Falls and Pocatello, which may provide additional viable markets.
- Evaluate the impact of extending the growing season through hoop houses or other technologies or store products for year-round distribution.
- Analyze the financial gain achieved by those livestock producers who have altered their herd's birthing cycles. For example, one livestock producer reported having two cattle herds that each birth at different times—one in fall and the other in spring

Measure: Value of Agricultural Products Sold; Land in Farms

Plan Theme: 4.1 – Support and enhance local agriculture, including crops and ranching/ grazing, 4.4 – Enhance the local food movement

Source: E.1 – Assessment of Teton View Agriculture for Local and Regional Markets

INITIATIVE RR.2 INFRASTRUCTURE FOR LOCAL FOODS PROCESSING

Summary: This multi-year initiative would examine what already exists locally in terms of USDA-inspected meat processing and commercial kitchens, and consider expanding this infrastructure where feasible to better meet the needs of local producers. Because existing produce supply chains process small quantities for small markets, it is not clear that large infrastructure projects are needed in this region. Given existing volumes, having one commercial kitchen in the area would likely meet producer and value-added needs. The group leading this initiative would need to:

- Raise awareness of what already exists locally for USDA-inspected meat processing and commercial kitchens, and look into expanding this infrastructure to better meet the needs of local producers
- Explore ways for existing local processors to expand their services rather than trying to launch a new operation in the region. Because of the low population density in the area, livestock producers may still need to link local processing activities to a secondary regional market to make the system cost-effective
- Encourage livestock producers to sell quarters, halves, and whole animals through local meat processors who already have a retail component to their business.
- Prepare and distribute a list of available processing options in the two states with contact information



Measure: Value of Agricultural Products Sold

Plan Theme: 4.4 – Enhance the local food movement

Source: E.1 – Assessment of Teton View Agriculture for Local and Regional Markets

INITIATIVE RR.3 COOPERATIVE MARKETING AND DISTRIBUTION OF LOCAL FOODS

Summary: The USDA Agricultural Census data underreport the number of producers raising certain varieties of products, and even many in the business are unaware of the diversity of products grown in the region. A need exists for increasing consumers' and other stakeholders' awareness of available local products to help build demand for a greater amount and diversity of locally grown products. Under this initiative, a traditional producer's cooperative would be organized to perform this marketing function on behalf of its members, with management, sales and distribution services gradually made available as part of the co-op's mission.

- Develop an online venue to inventory local goods and connect buyers with local products.
- Host meetings or conferences to facilitate networking and to provide educational opportunities on relevant topics such as food safety
- Educate chefs and other consumers on how to incorporate seasonal produce into menus or prepare forage-fed beef to optimize flavor and texture.
- Advance cooperative aggregation, distribution, and marketing strategies that will maximize growers' time back on the farm
- Support the ability of members to participate as produce brokers, salespeople or logistics experts to benefit from the cooperative's net returns

Measure: Value of Agricultural Products Sold

Plan Theme: 4.4 – Enhance the local food movement

Source: E.1 – Assessment of Teton View Agriculture for Local and Regional Markets



INITIATIVE RR.4 CODES AND INCENTIVES TO PROTECT AGRICULTURAL USES/LANDS

Summary: Adoption of the proposed Model Development Code would put into effect agricultural land use provisions found under the Open Uses category (10.7.1.). Agriculture is generally described as production of crops, livestock or poultry and includes agricultural auction and processing, community garden, nursery, urban farm and winery. In addition, the category of Accessory Uses addresses Livestock Keeping (10.8.9.) that provides detailed use standards and prohibitions against dogs, cats or other domestic animals that conflict with raising of livestock. Other relevant Accessory Uses covered are gardens and greenhouses for personal or group use. Those local governments that also volunteer to certify under the Greater Yellowstone Framework for Sustainable Development would commit to protecting existing agricultural land uses if they fulfill the following credits:

LUC Credit 1 – Sensitive Resources

Intent: To preserve ecosystem processes, including the ability to produce local food, while minimize cultural and environment impacts from use and development

LUC Credit 7 – Land Conservation

Intent: To preserve in perpetuity undeveloped lands that have important natural or cultural resources

BD Credit 2 – Surface and Groundwater Conservation

Intent: To preserve or improve water quality and quantity throughout the jurisdiction

PSI Prerequisite 2 – Water Planning

Intent: To understand the larger watershed system of where jurisdiction’s water comes from and how it is used; to conserve scarce water resources over the long-term; and to raise owner and consumer awareness of this need

PSI Credit 5 – Water Use Efficiency

Intent: To reduce water quantity demand by promoting water use efficiency or water reuse

SCO Credit 2 – Sustainable Agriculture and Forestry

Intent: To support cultivation of productive farm, ranch and forest lands that are managed in concert with ecosystem processes and that contribute to the stability of rural families and communities

Measure: Land in Farms, Healthy Waters

Plan Theme: 4.1 – Support and enhance local agriculture, including crops and ranching/ grazing, 4.2 – Manage water resources in accordance with state water law and beneficial use doctrines, and in a manner that helps sustain our agricultural heritage, 4.3 – Maintain the essence of the region’s rural character while preserving fundamental property rights

Sources: A.1 – Greater Yellowstone Framework for Sustainable Development, B – Model Development Code for the Teton View Region

INITIATIVE RR.5 NEW AVENUES FOR VALUE – ADDED AGRICULTURE

Summary: This initiative encourages more cooperation with university extension services in each state and other ag-oriented groups in pursuing economic development strategies that work for both the farmers and their respective communities. While many farmers and ranchers in this region may be viewed as diversified land managers operating profit centers around commodity crops and livestock, others have been willing to experiment with organic production, renewable energy generation, or direct sales to local consumers. To be most effective under this initiative, community leaders would commit to on-going dialogue with local producers about the types of enterprises that may fit their situations and then stay alert for new joint opportunities. Paying attention to new value-added possibilities is important not only to benefit the local economy, but to preserve the rural lifestyle that residents value so highly. Current economic development plans cite the following action strategies this initiative would pursue:

- Support new infrastructure to enhance local value-added farm crops (e.g. culinary incubator facility)

- Assist those farmers seeking to raise organic potatoes and barley
- Facilitate dialogue with Eastern Idaho ranchers interested in joining Country Natural Beef cooperative
- Match interested farmers with representatives of local energy cooperatives and/or private energy companies in finding lands suitable for small wind energy development, geothermal applications or community solar farms

Measure: Value of Agricultural Products Sold; Regional Interconnectedness

Plan Theme: 4.1 – Support and enhance local agriculture, including crops and ranching/ grazing, 4.4 – Enhance the local food movement

Sources: E.2 – Teton County, Idaho, Economic Development Strategy, E.3 – Fremont County Economic Development Strategy



Agricultural Programs

The agricultural industry has traditionally been well-supported by federal, state and local programs that now face funding challenges. These programs would benefit by broader support of municipalities.

PROJECT RR.6 MAXIMIZING IRRIGATION WATER SUPPLY, POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Summary: Because groundwater and surface water systems are so interconnected in the Henry's Fork Watershed (most of Fremont, Madison and Teton counties, Idaho), any changes to water use and management patterns in the region will affect other uses, including natural resource needs, irrigation supply, and/or municipal water supplies. It is in the interest of cities and counties to become fully engaged in current discussions on irrigation water management and future storage projects to ensure that decisions are made only after considering the impacts to other water uses, including their own jurisdictions. By becoming involved in water supply discussions, city officials would better understand water rights appropriation in Idaho and how conjunctive management of surface and ground water sources downstream could affect municipal water rights in dry years. Each locality would employ practices and enact policies related to the following programs:

- Aquifer Recharge – Help identify and facilitate opportunities to augment groundwater supplies through managed recharge programs that use the watershed's 500-mile canal system or desert recharge areas
- Off-stream Storage – Implement water projects that could capture and store water in years of above-average precipitation or increased spring flows for use in late summer and fall seasons.
- Water Conservation – Encourage the efficient use of water resources through ongoing conservation and advanced demand reduction techniques.
- Cloud Seeding – Consider participating in the program managed by the High Country RC&D that recent studies have shown to have negligible impacts on precipitation in downwind areas

Measure: Land in Farms, Healthy Waters

Plan Theme: 4.2 Manage water resources in accordance with state water law and beneficial use doctrines, and in a manner that helps sustain our agricultural heritage

Source: USBR Henry's Fork Basin Study – Final Report. A Guide to Hydrology and Water Management Planning.

PROJECT RR.7 COLLABORATIVE DECISION MAKING IN WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

Summary: Regular participation in the Henry's Fork Watershed Council is recommended for all local officials within Fremont, Madison and Teton counties. This watershed collaborative tackles complex watershed issues while improving relations among angling, administrative and agricultural constituencies. Since 1993 the basin's recreational fishing and irrigation interests have worked together to find water management solutions through use of scientific data and trust-building dialogue. The Council operates under a legislative charter in force since 1994 that also designates the Council as the advisory body for state water quality protection. In 2003 Congress directed the Council leaders to annually engage in drought management planning to maintain or enhance watershed health even in years of below-average precipitation. The mission of this water management plan is to balance the health of the basin's famous fisheries with agricultural needs through flexible and adaptive water management within the context of Idaho water law.

Measure: Healthy Waters; Regional Interconnectedness

Plan Theme: 4.2 – Manage water resources in accordance with state water law and beneficial use doctrines, and in a manner that helps sustain our agricultural heritage

Source: Henry's Fork Watershed Council – webpage. A Guide to Hydrology and Water Management Planning. Henry's Fork Drought Management Plan.

INITIATIVE RR.8 SOIL HEALTH INITIATIVE

Summary: This initiative affirms the importance of healthy soils for food security and essential ecosystem functions, and it raises awareness of 2015 as the International Year of Soils. In aligning with voluntary statewide initiatives in Idaho and Wyoming, localities would collaborate with local farmers, area conservation districts and the National Resource Conservation Service in encouraging soil conservation practices across the region. A soil health management system that combines several on-farm practices can help lower energy costs by reducing tillage, decrease disease and pest problems, limit weed growth, improve plant health, and increase soil biodiversity. A system considers these four basic principles to improve soil health:

- Keep the soil covered as much as possible
- Disturb the soil as little as possible
- Keep plants growing throughout the year to feed soil organisms
- Diversify as much as possible using crop rotation and cover crops

Measure: Land in Farms

Plan Theme: 4.1 – Support and enhance local agriculture, including crops and ranching/grazing

Source: Natural Resource Conservation Service – website.

PROJECT RR.9 NEW CROP ASSESSMENTS

Summary: The Aberdeen Research and Extension Center in Southeast Idaho conducts research into many of Idaho's most important crops, including potatoes, wheat and barley. Operated by the University of Idaho College of Agricultural and Life Sciences through the Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station, the center conducts research into plant breeding and crop production. The center also supports close collaborative efforts with the USDA Agricultural Research Service, which focuses on potato and small grains germplasm improvement and on increasing rainbow trout production efficiency through use of grain-based feeds. The center also supports discovery and development of native plants for the horticulture industry. Field testing of new potato and grain varieties and other crops such as quinoa would be encouraged of those Teton View farmers wanting to bring new foods to the commodities market or the regional consumer.

Measure: Value of Agricultural Products Sold; Land in Farms

Plan Theme: 4.1 – Support and enhance local agriculture, including crops and ranching/grazing, 4.4 – Enhance the local food movement

Source: E.1 – Assessment of Teton View Agriculture for Local and Regional Markets

PROJECT RR.10 COOPERATIVE WEED MANAGEMENT

Summary: A recommitment to region-wide weed management programs is envisioned under this Plan with Teton View counties supporting efforts of the Teton Conservation District in Wyoming and the Henry's Fork Cooperative Weed Management Area in Idaho. Efforts to manage, contain, reduce and eradicate noxious weeds occur through public education and direct control measures such as spraying weeds, biological weed control using insects, and other measures such as grazing by goats. Cost-share programs with private landowners would be promoted by municipalities in partnership with the conservation districts and High Country RC&D. Renewed coordination with federal land management agencies also would be emphasized.

Measure: Value of Agricultural Products Sold; Land in Farms

Plan Theme: 4.1 – Support and enhance local agriculture, including crops and ranching/grazing

Sources: High Country Resource Conservation & Development – website. Teton Conservation District (WY) – website.

Community-Scale Projects

These are opportunities for Individual farmers and ranchers to engage with their local communities in direct marketing of their products and in the growing tourism sector.

PROJECT RR.11 AGRICULTURAL TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES

Summary: One promising strategy for promoting local agriculture and food systems is to benefit from the tourism base that already exists in the region. This project would begin by assessing traveler interest in a variety of “agri-tourism” enterprises such as fee hunting, horseback riding, farm/spud cellar tours, barn dances, and U-pick produce. An analysis would also be conducted on what types of on-farm accommodations might be financed and built on the least productive parcels along our scenic byways and recreational trails. A network of simple campsites, huts, cabins and lodges could be operated by a private

concern or co-op so landowners could benefit from the capital improvement on their properties without having to operate a lodging enterprise.

Measure: Land in Farms, Regional Interconnectedness

Plan Theme: 4.1 – Support and enhance local agriculture, including crops and ranching/grazing, 6.3 – Develop the recreation industry as a means for economic development and enhanced quality of life, 6.4. – Encourage recreation and tourism development during the shoulder seasons to help create a resilient economy

Sources: E.2 – Teton County, Idaho, Economic Development Strategy, E.3 – Fremont County Economic Development Strategy



PROJECT RR.12 FARMERS' MARKET COORDINATION

Summary: Under this project each county would form an individual steering committee to strengthen the farmers' markets in their jurisdictions and to share the planning and coordination roles. While working to find the right time and setting for shoppers, the steering committees also should consider the needs and preferences of local producers so more of them can participate. Rather than requiring each producer to pay for and attend their own stand, multiple producers could benefit from a collaborative effort that advertises their products without them having to be present. Here are suggested tasks for local steering committees:

- Survey farmers' market customers to understand more about local food demand and their willingness to try new, in-season products
- Work to increase demand for local products by buying samples of a prepared product and distributing them at the farmers' market along with recipe handouts
- Dedicate one booth at the market to promoting and taking orders for local meat and grain products
- Organize a study tour of successful farmers' markets across the three-state region, in both small and large settings, so coordinators and local producers can learn from others' successes



Measure: Value of Agricultural Products Sold; Land in Farms

Plan Theme: 4.1 – Support and enhance local agriculture, including crops and ranching/ grazing, 4.4 – Enhance the local food movement

Sources: E.1 – Assessment of Teton View Agriculture for Local and Regional Markets, E.2 – Teton County, Idaho, Economic Development Strategy, E.3 –Fremont County Economic Development Strategy







THIS INDICATOR MEASURES THE TOTAL MARKET VALUE OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS SOLD WITHIN THE REGION.

Why

Agriculture contributes greatly to the Greater Yellowstone region's economic vitality, providing income to farmers and ranchers through the sale of products including crops, livestock, and poultry. While commodity prices and productivity may fluctuate from year to year, trends in the total value of products sold over time shows the level of importance and relative influence of agriculture within the regional economy. It helps to illustrate trends related to the preservation and use of land for agricultural purposes, since conversion of agricultural land to other uses will likely decrease overall product yields and sales.

This indicator also indirectly reflects resource availability and environmental quality, because the quantity and quality of agricultural products produced depends on factors such as the availability of water and soil health. In addition, the region's heritage is strongly rooted in agriculture, contributing to the sense of place and character of the people and the land.

UNITS OF MEASURE

This indicator is measured in dollars (total market value of crops sold) per county.

Increasing values for this indicator could indicate greater reliance on agriculture as an industry, or could mean that the agricultural commodities produced are in greater demand. Decreasing values for this indicator might suggest loss of land used for agricultural purposes (leading to lower yields) or decreasing demand for or value of products sold.

SOURCE

Data for this indicator is available from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Census of Agriculture, which is conducted every five years. The most recent Census of Agriculture was conducted in 2012.

County-level data are available at the following website: http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_2_County_Level/.

Total sales (in dollars) is available in Table 2: Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold Including Direct Sales.



**THIS INDICATOR
MEASURES THE TOTAL
AREA OF LAND
IN FARMS.**

Why

The agricultural heritage of the Greater Yellowstone region is evidenced by the significant amount of acreage devoted to farming. Though the values of the products that are harvested on these lands contribute to overall economic vitality and cultural significance, the relatively low land costs associated with farming are attractive to developers looking to expand housing and non-residential development options. When that farmland is sold or otherwise taken out of active use, the region experiences a decrease in the amount of locally produced farm products. As an indicator, the land in farms helps to illustrate the extent of development that is encroaching on more rural parts of the region that may be more of a sprawling type of development. The risks and negative effects of sprawling development can be significant including infrastructure strain, rural character degradation, and increased drive times and distances. The preservation of agricultural uses relates directly to desired lifestyle values in the region, and the additional benefits to natural systems such as water management and air quality can be correlated as well.

UNITS OF MEASURE

This indicator is measured in acres (total land in farms).

Increasing values for this indicator show more land used for farming and agricultural purposes, while decreasing values could indicate farmland lost to development or the loss of viable land or resources for agriculture.

SOURCE

Data for this indicator is available from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Census of Agriculture, which is conducted every five years. The most recent Census of Agriculture was conducted in 2012. This data may be supplemented by city and county property records, as applicable (especially between Census periods).

County-level data is available at the following website: http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2012/Full_Report/Volume_1,_Chapter_2_County_Level/.

Total land in farms (in acres) is available in Table 8: Farms, Land in Farms.

Chapter 5. Our Wildlife, Public Lands, and Special Sites

Regional Context

Wildlife resources in the Teton View Region 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 as well. Elk, moose, deer, buffalo, bighorn sheep, black bear, grizzly bear, bald eagles, and other species, many of which are endangered or threatened, live in the area.⁴²

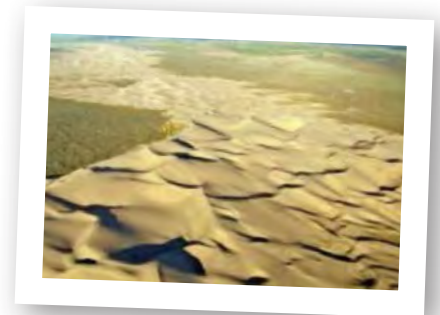
Elk (Wapiti) have long been an important game animal in the area, and their occurrence depends mainly upon the presence of their food supply. Their numbers have varied, but the present population is increasing after a 10 to 15 year low. In summer, elk are distributed in forested areas throughout the region. Habitat use patterns vary with climate and various activities in the area (grazing, logging, and recreation). Most elk migrate by late November

⁴² Teton Conservation District (2013, August 8). Teton Conservation District Long Range Plan: 2010-2015. Retrieved from http://www.conservewy.com/docs/LongRangePlan_2010_2015TCD.pdf.

and congregate and feed in staging areas in the lower elevations to prepare for winter. During mild winters they also use staging area for winter range. By mid-December of most winters, elk have moved to their wintering grounds.

Two main wintering grounds for elk exist in the southwestern part of the Greater Yellowstone area. In Idaho, the Juniper Mountains and St. Anthony Sand Dunes provide winter range that is administered by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) in cooperation with the Department of Lands and private landowners. In Teton County, Wyoming, the National Elk Refuge provides important winter habitat for the one of the largest elk herds in the United States, as well as habitat for endangered species, birds, fish, and other

big game animals. The Refuge is six miles wide at its widest point and ten miles long



St. Anthony Sand Dunes

This 10,600 acre playground of clear, shifting, white quartz sand is known for its unique beauty and exceptional recreation opportunities. Prevailing winds carried the sand from the nearby Teton and Snake Rivers and deposited them as dunes among the hills. These hills were once active volcanic vents pouring great depths of lava over the earth. Today the St. Anthony Sand Dunes are home to a Wilderness Study Area (see more info below) and one of the largest population of desert wintering moose in the United States.

SOURCE: www.blm.gov

from southwest to northeast, and is home each winter to approximately 11,000 elk and the largest single herd of bison under federal management.

Henry's Lake Flat, the flat bottomed valley southeast of Henry's Lake, is habitat for pronghorn antelope. This flat is predominantly private grassland used for livestock grazing, with small pockets of sagebrush throughout. The IDFG estimates that 180 pronghorn antelope use the summer range in and around Henry's Lake Flat. The herd migrates north over Reynolds Pass into Montana for the winter.

The Henry's Fork basin is located along a portion of the Pacific waterfowl flyway. Over a million waterfowl migrate over the area in spring and fall. Fall movements begin in mid-to-late-August and continue through December. Large numbers of ducks and geese concentrate on and around Island Park Reservoir, Henry's Lake, and Harriman State Park before moving south. These areas are just over the Continental Divide from the Red Rock Lakes Migratory Water Waterfowl Refuge in Montana, only 15 miles to the northwest. Migrating waterfowl make extensive use of watercourses, lakes, marshes and potholes in the Island Park area. The northward migration begins in late March and continues through May.

The largest of all North American waterfowl, the trumpeter swan (*Cygnus buccinator*) is a common resident of the entire region. The open waters of the Henry's Fork drainage are the



Big Springs

Producing over 120 million gallons of water each day, Big Springs is one of the 40 largest natural springs in the world and a Natural National Landmark. The springs create the headwaters of the Henry's Fork of the Snake River, which travels across Fremont County creating spectacular scenery at Upper and Lower Mesa Falls. With a constant temperature of 52 degrees, the springs is home to rainbow trout, muskrats, ducks, moose and other critters. It is not unusual to see osprey and eagles dive for a meal of fresh fish from the springs.

SOURCE: www.ultimateidaho.com

primary wintering grounds for the entire Rocky Mountain population of trumpeter swans. In addition to the migrants, approximately 50% of the resident trumpeters, called the Tri-State subpopulation, winter within the area. The relative isolation, abundant submerged vegetation, and open waters of the Henry's Fork are critical to the welfare of this important trumpeter population.⁴³

⁴³ Idaho Water Resource Board. (1992). *Comprehensive State Water Plan: Henry's Fork Basin*. Retrieved from <http://www.idwr.idaho.gov/waterboard/WaterPlanning/CompBasinPlanning/Henrys%20Fork/PDF/Executive%20Summary.pdf>.

Coexisting with wildlife is an important priority for the region in the context of planning and future development. A healthy co-existence and integration with national forests and national parks that are prominent in the region will support future economic and environmental resilience.

In response to a quality of life survey distributed as part of the regional plan process, residents most commonly chose the natural environment, wildlife and scenery and outdoor recreation opportunities as the reason they choose to live in the region. Clean air and fresh water, and safe, small town feel were highlighted as important to the community as well.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The East Snake River Plain Aquifer (ESPA), the Snake River Basin, and the Henry's Fork Basin provide for rich agricultural land in the Teton View Region. These water resources and agricultural operations are assets for the future in the face of growing concern over

climate change. The federal land-management agencies that operate within the Teton View Region have a long history of working together to coordinate management of the ecosystem across jurisdictional boundaries and to reduce the environmental impact of their operations. In 1964, the National Park Service (NPS) and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) formed the Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee (GYCC), which was joined by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) in 2002 and the Bureau of Land Management in 2012. The GYCC was formed to allow representatives from each agency to pursue opportunities of mutual cooperation and coordination in the management of core Federal lands in the Teton View Region. The GYCC consists of the national park superintendents, national refuge managers, national forest supervisors, and BLM managers of 13 federal agency units in the Teton View Region.

GYCC priorities for resource management focus on air quality, climate change, disease, invasive species, and species on the brink.

FIGURE 12. GYA CLIMATE ACTION PLAN "DEFINITION OF SUCCESS"



GYCC selected projects for 2015 are categorized under sustainable operations and ecosystem health including aquatic and terrestrial invasive species, wildlife, Whitebark Pine, and Water Quality and Flow, and Climate Change Adaptation. Projects include, but are not limited to, Aquatic Surveying Database Development, Regional Motorized Watercraft Management Assessment, Weed Mapping and Database Support, All Taxa Invasive Species Outreach and Education Campaign, Whitebark Pine Planting, and Wind River Glacial Analysis.

The GYCC is actively working to reduce their environmental impact. In 2007, the Sustainable Operations Subcommittee (SOS) of the GYCC began the process of inventorying greenhouse gas emissions from federal operations in the Teton View Region.

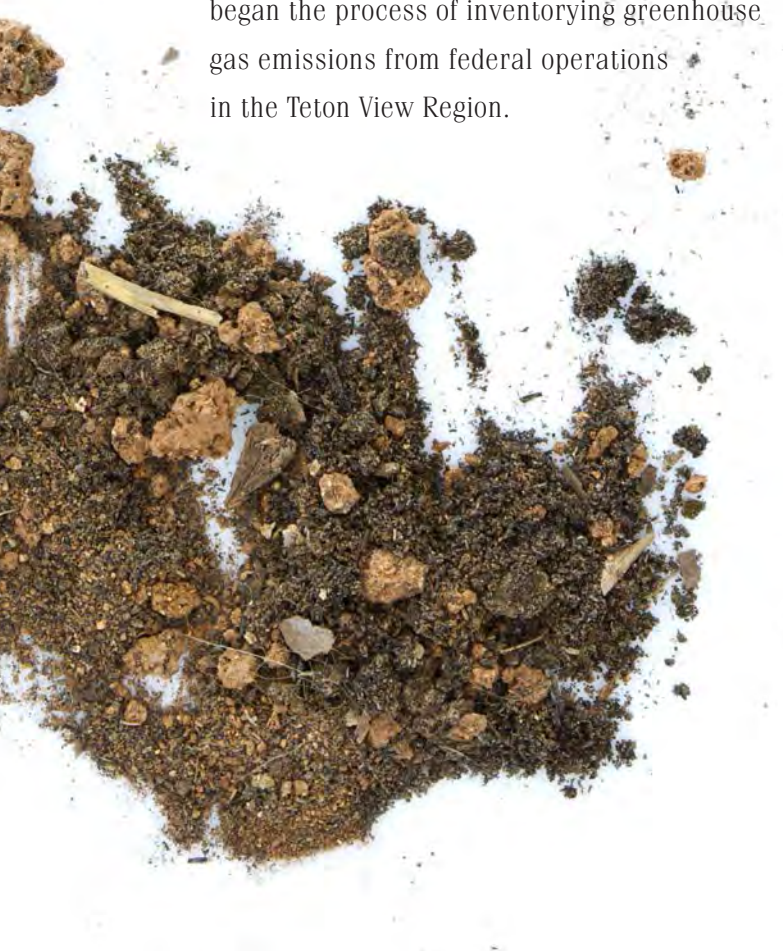
This was accomplished by the six Forests and the two Refuges using the “EPA Climate Leaders” Tool. The two Parks used the “Climate Leadership in Parks” (CLIP) Tool, part of the Climate Friendly Parks Program.

The GYCC managers and the SOS began collaboratively planning for Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions reduction in June, 2009, utilizing a Climate Action Plan Coordinator provided through a 2-year Presidential Management Fellowship with the U.S. Forest Service. As of December, 2010, the ten GYCC agency units have planned 83 separate types of GHG emissions reduction projects for 218 total GHG emissions reduction projects scheduled for completion by 2020.⁴⁴

MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

For many new recreation opportunities, much of the interest is on National Forest lands. However, the current fiscal realities on the national forests caused by reduced budgets and more spending on fighting and preventing wildfire must be considered. The capacity of our two national forests region to participate in new recreation programs is impacted by the agency’s shifting priorities and constrained budgets. The increasing cost of fighting wildland fire has had an impact on the Forest Service’s non-fire, mission critical activities and has contributed

⁴⁴ Fiebig, Michael. (2011) *Sustainability Across Boundaries: The Greater Yellowstone Area Climate Action Plan*. Accessed Nov 4th, 2014.





Wildlife and Public Lands

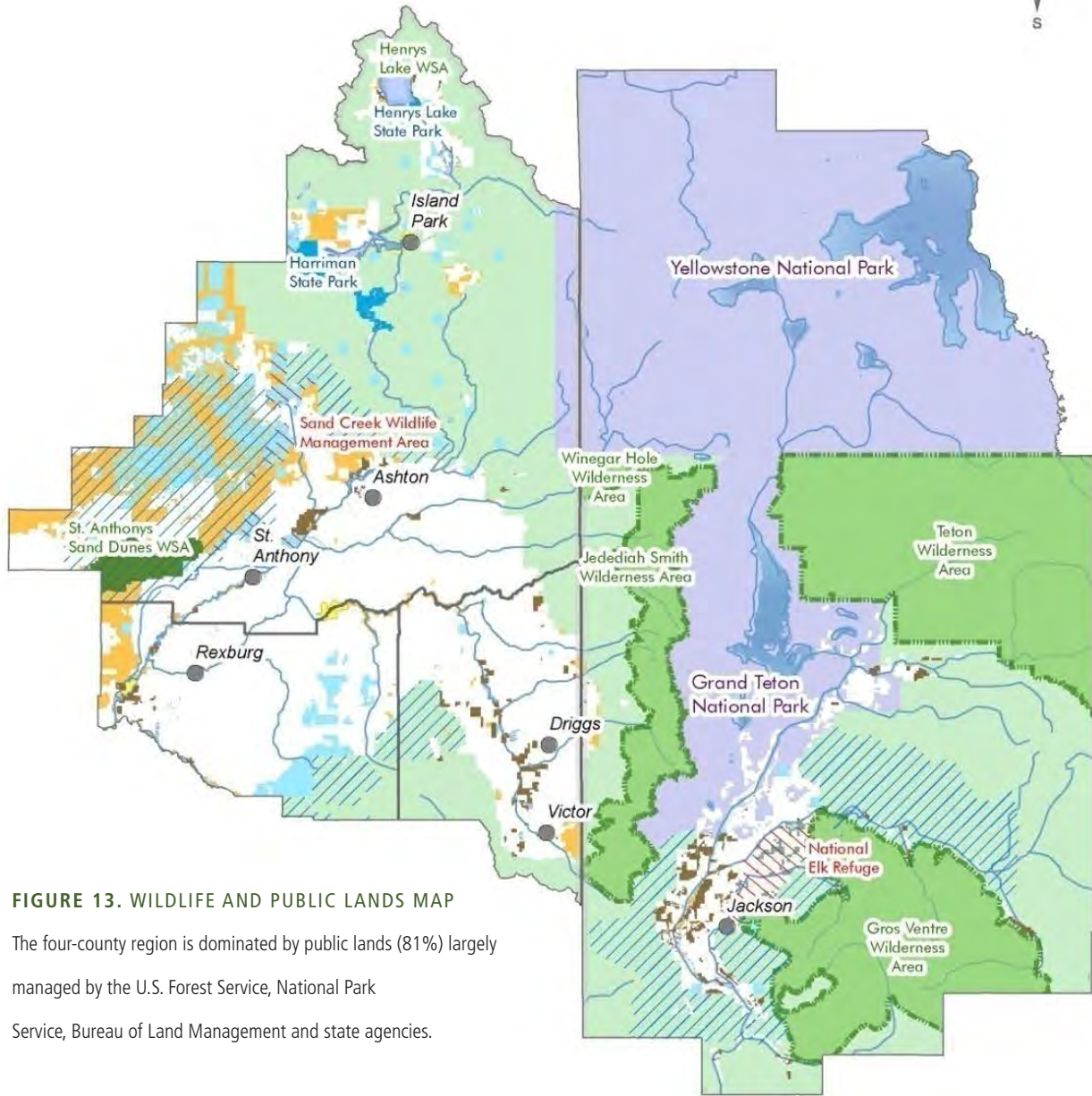


FIGURE 13. WILDLIFE AND PUBLIC LANDS MAP
 The four-county region is dominated by public lands (81%) largely managed by the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management and state agencies.

Legend

- City
- ▨ Big Game Winter Closure Areas
- ▨ Wildlife Management Areas and Refuges
- ▨ Wilderness
- ▨ Wilderness Study Areas
- State Parks
- Privately Owned Conservation Areas
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- National Park Service
- National Wildlife Refuge
- US Forest Service
- State
- Water
- Private Land

to a slow shift in agency financial resources away from forest management and restoration, research, recreation and other mission-critical objectives and towards firefighting and other expenses related to fire management. Expenses for wildland firefighting, comprised of the costs of preparing for and fighting fire, have grown dramatically over the last two decades. The agency's appropriations in firefighting activities have grown from 16% in 1995 to 42% in 2014. This has resulted in a reduction in funding for other programs and activities, including but not limited to a 22% reduction in vegetation and watershed management, 67% reduction in facilities, 46% reduction in roads, 14% reduction in trails, and a 13% reduction in recreation, heritage and wilderness, and 17% reduction in wildlife and fisheries habitat management.⁴⁵



Elk Migration Corridor – National Elk Refuge

The National Elk Refuge provides, preserves, restores, and manages winter habitat for the nationally significant Jackson Elk Herd as well as habitat for endangered species, birds, fish, and other big game animals. The Refuge celebrated its centennial in 2012.

Themes and Strategies

Theme 5.1: Ensure that development on state and federal lands within the Teton View Region is congruent with state habitat management objectives for species of critical concern.

There are several state and federal agencies actively managing wildlife habitat and species on public lands in the Teton View Region. The two national forests with land in the region, the Caribou-Targhee and Bridger-Teton National Forests, manage ecosystems to be healthy, productive, and sustainable. In addition to specific projects that benefit wildlife such as forest fuel management (managing forests for wildfire), grazing management, and watershed enhancement projects, each forest has a forest plan that addresses wildlife among many other topics. These plans strive to bring habitats closer to ecologically sustainable conditions and include goals related to vegetation composition and structure; providing wildlife

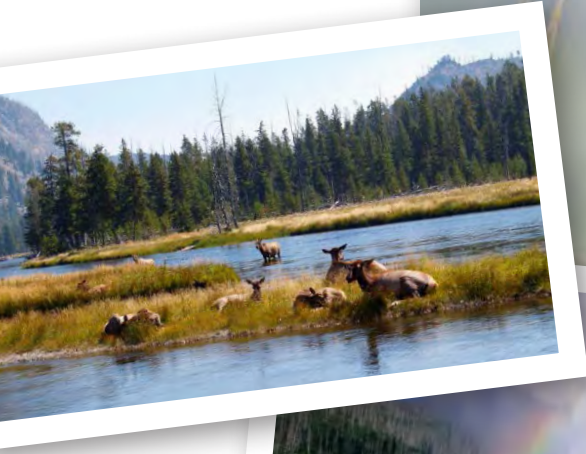


SOURCE: Greg Winston

⁴⁵ *The Rising Cost of Fire Operations: Effects on the Forest Service's Non-Fire Work (August 2014).*

Protection of the Path of the Pronghorn, the longest remaining migration corridor in Greater Yellowstone — Crossing structure and fencing at Trapper's Point

SOURCE: *Greater Yellowstone Framework for Sustainable Development*



National Park Visitors

- Grand Teton National Park 2013: 2,688,794
- Yellowstone National Park 2013: 3,188,030

SOURCE: *sinceretravel.com*

habitat connectivity across forested and non-forested landscapes; and maintaining habitat for threatened, endangered, and sensitive species.

Both Grand Teton and Yellowstone national parks have a variety of plans in place to address wildlife, including each park's master plan. A Bison and Elk Management Plan, completed

in 2007 by the National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, strives to manage elk and bison habitat across several jurisdictional boundaries in northwestern Wyoming, including the National Elk Refuge, Grand Teton National Park, and the John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Memorial Parkway. Both species also cross onto state and private lands in the Jackson Hole area.

Federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands in the Upper Snake River Basin in Idaho, with a small portion of land in Teton County, Wyoming, are guided by a Resource Management Plan, providing a comprehensive, long-range management direction for many elements, including wildlife. The Plan includes several management opportunities such as enhancing grass, forb, and shrub habitat; identifying

wildlife migration routes and developing buffers or seasonal timing restrictions; and managing overall rangeland health.

Big game winter closure areas on each national forest as well as on other lands in both Idaho and Wyoming help protect game such as elk and moose during their critical wintering activities. On the 24,700-acre National Elk Refuge in Teton County, Wyoming, the goals, objectives, and strategies for improving refuge conditions—including the types of habitat provided, partnership opportunities, and management actions needed to achieve desired conditions.

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game has developed a network of wildlife management areas across the state, including the Sand Creek Wildlife Management Area in Fremont County, Idaho. Its primary focus is to provide winter range to support the Sand Creek elk herd, but planning efforts also include long-term protection of other fish and wildlife resources.

Strategies:

- Consider mutually agreeable land tenure adjustments/land exchanges to consolidate/connect wildlife habitats.
- Develop seasonal timing restrictions and buffer zones for sensitive wildlife species migration routes.
- Maintain and provide for habitat connectivity across forested and non-forested landscapes.
- Strive for an appropriate mix of grasses, forbs, and shrubs in sagebrush communities to provide and enhance habitat for a variety of wildlife.
- Manage forest composition and structure to maintain and enhance wildlife habitat.
- Consider development of management direction such as timing and distance stipulations to protect avian species.
- Use standards and guidelines such as the Idaho Standards for Rangeland Health to manage rangelands and grazing to meet habitat requirements for native wildlife and sensitive wildlife species.
- Continue to designate winter ranges and prescription areas to emphasize big game security.
- Continue to develop sound wildlife and habitat management policies and employ sound wildlife and habitat conservation practices.
- Evaluate a range of possibilities of future climate conditions and bringing climate change adaptation into planning and management processes.
- Regularly update all natural and scenic resource inventories to assess the incremental impacts of development on the resource.
- Develop landscape level databases and the use of indicator species to fully understand the change in our environments due to development.



Theme 5.2: Advance practices that minimize the potential for conflicts with wildlife and support a harmonious and safe relationship between humans and the environment.

In both Idaho and Wyoming, there are plans in place and initiatives underway to support collaborative management of wildlife populations and habitat. In Idaho, the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy provides a common framework to enable conservation partners to jointly implement approaches to benefit Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). It includes a number of low, medium, and high-priority actions for implementation on public lands and through collaboration with private landowners. Similarly, Wyoming's Game and Fish State Wildlife Action

Plan strives to maintain the health and diversity of wildlife in the state. A Strategic Habitat Plan seeks to maintain habitat values and address key habitat issues.

There are also non-profit organizations collaborating with public land managers as well as private landowners to conserve wildlife in the Teton View Region. The Teton Regional Land Trust works with willing landowners and partners to restore or enhance wildlife on properties with conservation easements, focusing on regional species conservation priorities and areas where there are opportunities to better connect protected or priority wildlife conservation areas. Projects may include managing grazing, installing fencing, stabilizing stream banks, and restoring wetlands. The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation has implemented habitat enhancement projects in both Idaho (Teton Valley and Bitch Creek) and Teton County, Wyoming. Other active organizations include the Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation and national conservation organizations. The Henry's Fork Legacy Project is a collaboration of local organizations and agencies dedicated to conserving the rural landscapes and unique natural resources of the Upper Henry's Fork. Among other objectives, the Henry's Fork Legacy Project keeps both people and wildlife safe by reducing wildlife conflicts, and assists local communities with development of land and resource management plans that will protect fish and wildlife, clean water, and agriculture.

Strategies:

- Improve the knowledge of first-time landowners about wildlife and rural living issues and increase efforts to mitigate the negative impacts of rural subdivisions.
- Integrate standards, incentives, and guidelines into land development ordinances to help protect wildlife habitat and minimize conflicts.
- Establish standards to avoid wildlife-human conflicts, such as animal-safe storage containers, routine trash pickup, and landfill cover and control.
- In primary conservation areas or areas defined as occupied bear habitat, by the appropriate state wildlife agency, implement a plan for no new fruit trees, no stocking of ponds that are storing water for firefighting, landscaping, etc., no permanent outside grills, gardens/livestock/pet areas fenced to keep wildlife out.
- Establish land use guidelines for developers to properly contain all animal attractants (garbage, recycling, composting, and domestic animal food) in animal safe/bear proof containers, eliminate private feeding of wildlife (salt licks, bird feeders, etc.) that lead to conflicts, and employ sustainable storage for organic composting on farms and ranches.
- Provide technical and implementation support to private landowners in order to improve or maintain the integrity of riparian zones and streambeds.

- Promote natural resource protection by a variety of means, including financial compensation for willing buyer/willing seller agreements that promote land and water conservation easements.

Theme 5.3: Protect identified wildlife migration corridors and critical seasonal habitats on both public and private lands.

Strategies:

- Adopt land use regulations that protect critical wildlife migration corridors from intensive development.
- Pursue voluntary conservation easements and other land stewardship agreements with willing land owners to conserve migration corridors, functioning diverse ecosystems, and other crucial habitats.
- Share priorities and collaborate with land trusts, conservation groups, landowners, land management agencies and other partners to identify wildlife conservation opportunities.
- Maintain up-to-date recommendations (e.g., fencing specifications, mitigation guidelines for pipelines and other infrastructure) and provide them to land management agencies, other decision makers, and project proponents.
- Develop and use partnership funding sources and long-term agreements that provide infrastructure and incentives to facilitate grazing management that sustains wildlife habitat.

- Work with local organizations that are working on a regional strategy to conserve wildlife corridors for migration, including installation of highway overpasses and underpasses to reduce vehicular collisions with wildlife.

Theme 5.4: Preserve continuity and function of rivers, streams and wetlands in support of fisheries and other aquatic species.

The primary organizations working to preserve fisheries and aquatic habitat are Henry's Fork Foundation, Friends of the Teton River, and local chapters of Trout Unlimited.

The Henry's Fork basin provides one of the most important rainbow trout fisheries in the Mountain West. In addition to the Henry's Fork, the Teton, Warm, and Buffalo river tributaries support important regional fisheries. Henry's Lake and Island Park Reservoir are important components of the Henry's Fork fishery. Basin streams contain rainbow trout, Yellowstone cutthroat trout, brook trout, coho, kokanee, and mountain whitefish. Although cutthroat trout are the native salmonid in the drainage, rainbow trout are considered the most important game species present. Mountain whitefish are the most numerous native game species in the basin.⁴⁶

The Teton River fishery has experienced declines in health and quality of life over the years and Friends of the Tetons is an organization working for watershed protection and restoration of the Teton River. Recent work includes the preparation of the Upper Teton Watershed restoration plan.



Strategies:

- Work with the state to ensure sufficient flow in the tributaries to Henry's Lake and the tributary to the Teton River to provide spawning habitat for the resident fishery.
- Examine the need for additional minimum streamflows in important streams. Where the need for a state protected flow is identified, seek to provide such flow.
- Support protection of fish passage on existing and future projects.
- Construct self-cleaning screens on irrigation diversion structures in selected streams to reduce fish mortality.
- Increase the research program to evaluate and improve the fisheries on important Henry's Fork tributaries such as the Fall, Teton, Warm and Buffalo rivers, and Bitch and Robinson creeks.

⁴⁶ Idaho Water Resource Board. (1992). *Comprehensive State Water Plan: Henry's Fork Basin*. Retrieved from <http://www.idwr.idaho.gov/waterboard/WaterPlanning/CompBasinPlanning/Henrys%20Fork/PDF/Executive%20Summary.pdf>.



Moving Ahead with Common Purpose:

Stewarding Our Public Lands and Resources

Eighty percent of the land base of the Teton View region is managed for public benefit by multiple federal, state and local agencies. Collaboration among agencies and public interests is therefore emphasized in these eight projects, two of which were ranked among the top 10 of all 60 projects during the plan's public review period. Local governments are willing to partner with their state and federal counterparts on both new and ongoing initiatives, but coordinating leadership will need to emerge with funded capacity if broader collaborations are to succeed.

Table 11. Wonders & Wildlife (WW) Implementation Priorities

High-Priority Public-Private Collaborations		Willing to Partner	Potential Leaders/New Partners
WW.3	Safe Corridors for Wildlife Migration	Fremont County Madison County Teton County, ID Teton County, WY	Idaho Transportation Department Teton Regional Land Trust Wyoming Department of Transportation Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance
WW.4	Conserving Fish/Wildlife Habitat on Private Lands	Teton County, ID Teton County, WY	Teton Regional Land Trust Friends of the Teton River
Near-Term Project Priorities		Willing to Partner	Potential New Partners
WW.2	Implementation of State Wildlife Plans		
WW.5	Island Park Sustainable Fire Community	Fremont County Caribou-Targhee NF	
WW.6	Greater Yellowstone Area: Ecosystem Health Projects	Caribou-Targhee NF Bridger-Teton NF Bureau of Land Management Ashton Community Foundation	Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee
	Longer-Term Initiatives	Willing to Partner	Potential New Partners
WW.1	Windows to Wildlife Initiative	Ashton Community Foundation	Teton Regional Land Trust
WW.7	Sustainable Operations – Land Management Agencies		Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee
WW.8	Increasing Mobility in Our National Parks		Western Federal Lands Division of the Federal Highway Administration



Public-Private Collaborations

INITIATIVE WW.1 “WINDOWS TO WILDLIFE” INITIATIVE

Summary: Visitor surveys in national parks and forests have consistently documented the popularity of wildlife viewing as it often ranks as the #2 recreational activity behind scenic driving. This initiative seeks to capitalize on the abundant wildlife resources in the Teton View region by developing a four-season, watchable wildlife program in coordination with state wildlife agencies and federal land managers. Greater awareness of wildlife needs among both residents and visitors could lead to greater acceptance of habitat protection and species recovery measures in both states. The initiative also could help reduce human-wildlife encounters and the resulting injuries both inside and outside our national parks. Elements of the initiative could include:

- *A Teton View Regional Wildlife Guidebook* – This would be designed as a small binder with sections that could easily be updated seasonally by downloading from agency websites current schedules, safety messages and wildlife information from participating entities. Sections could include maps of the region’s best wildlife viewing areas; resource agency interpretive services; and a list of naturalist guide services. Bear and fire safety messages from multiple agencies could be emphasized in one section of the guidebook

using a standard template. Sales of the basic binder and dividers could be promoted as a fundraiser to build a matching fund for projects to benefit the region’s species of critical concern. Design and sale of companion mobile app would also be a possibility.

- *A Nature Center Network* – Local, state and federal agencies would partner with nonprofit and business organizations to create a system of nature-oriented facilities that would promote and support one another. These existing centers could lie within existing local, state parks and national parks, wildlife refuges and management areas, nature preserves or resort areas. By jointly publicizing each center’s location and services, initiative proponents would be encouraging longer stays and an appreciation for what each specific area can offer in terms of watchable wildlife.

Measure: Public Land Visitation

Plan Theme: 5.2 – Advance practices that minimize the potential for conflicts with wildlife and support a harmonious and safe relationship between humans and the environment, 6.3 –Develop the recreation industry as a means for economic development and enhanced quality of life

Source: E.3 – Fremont County Economic Development Strategy

PROJECT WW.2 IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE WILDLIFE PLANS

Summary: A State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) is a comprehensive strategy to maintain the health and diversity of wildlife within any given state. Congress has mandated that these plans be developed for all 50 states so species protection can be coordinated across state boundaries. The SWAP outlines the steps needed to conserve wildlife and their habitats before they become more rare and costly to protect. Taken together, SWAPs present a national action agenda for preventing wildlife from becoming endangered; an agenda that Teton View counties may choose to apply locally through planning and zoning processes in concert with their state wildlife agency. Competitive state grants are available should the Teton View counties choose to pursue special, SWAP-related projects as a region.

Measure: Hunting and Fishing License Value

Plan Theme: 5.1 – Ensure that development on state and federal lands within the Teton View Region is congruent with state habitat management objectives for species of critical concern

Sources: Websites of Idaho Fish and Game; Wyoming Game and Fish departments



INITIATIVE WW.3 SAFE CORRIDORS FOR WILDLIFE MIGRATION

Summary: This initiative would include a variety of cooperative projects in both states to safeguard critical wildlife migration routes between summer habitats and winter forage areas. Pronghorn antelope, elk and moose are among those species most vulnerable to highway collisions and human development inside their migration corridors.

A recent study focused primarily on moose and elk movements recorded 169 collisions with wildlife on the stretch of U.S. 20 between Ashton and Island Park from 2005 to 2009, resulting in moose, elk and deer fatalities, and millions of dollars in vehicle damage. Researchers have tracked the animals' migration routes from their winter range (St. Anthony Sand Dunes vicinity and Sand Creek Wildlife Management Area) to their summer feeding grounds in the Island Park

area of Fremont County. Scientists have recommended mitigation measures such as overpasses and underpasses at eight locations to allow wildlife to safely move over or under roads during the spring, summer and fall. The potential use of the same infrastructure by snowmobilers should be examined to afford safer highway crossing for winter recreationists.

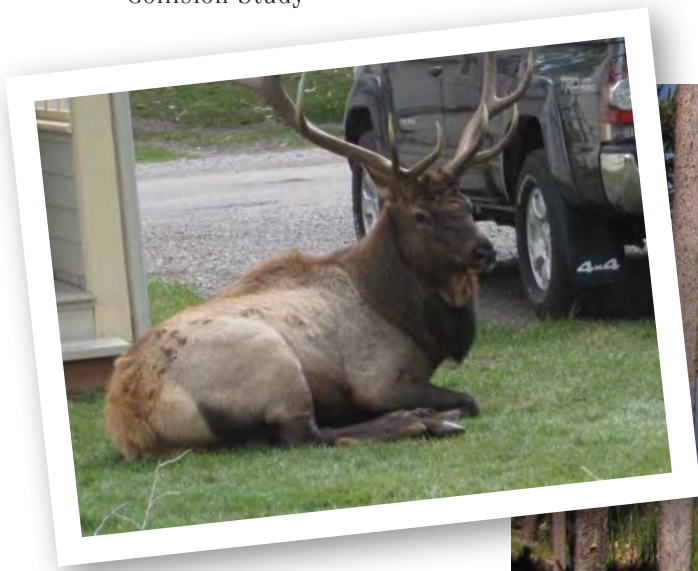
Measure: Hunting and Fishing License Value, Elk Harvest

Plan Theme: 5.2. Advance practices that minimize the potential for conflicts with wildlife and support a harmonious and safe relationship between humans and the environment, 5.3. Protect identified wildlife migration corridors and critical seasonal habitats on both public and private lands

Source: US 20 Island Park Wildlife Collision Study

INITIATIVE WW.4 CONSERVING FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ON PRIVATE LANDS

Summary: There are several local and regional nonprofit organizations that work with government agencies and private landowners seeking to preserve valuable fish and wildlife habitat and open space in the Teton View region. These organizations often bring different resources to bear on land and river conservation challenges and frequently work together under joint initiatives such as the Henry's Fork Legacy Project. Teton View cities and counties may choose to collaborate with these organizations when intensive development is proposed on sensitive lands or along critical waterways. Land trusts work only with willing agencies landowners and use a market-based approach when dealing with land exchanges or purchase/donation of land or conservation easements. This project would be launched by an informal workshop introducing the



organizations linked above to locally elected officials to become current on the regional conservation programs available.

Measure: Wildland Urban Interface Development; Hunting and Fishing License Value

Plan Theme: 5.2 – Advance practices that minimize the potential for conflicts with wildlife and support a harmonious and safe relationship between humans and the environment, 5.3 – Protect identified wildlife migration corridors and critical seasonal habitats on both public and private lands, 5.4 – Preserve continuity and function of rivers, streams and wetlands in support of fisheries and other aquatic species

Sources: Jackson Hole Land Trust; Teton Regional Land Trust; The Flat Ranch Preserve – The Nature Conservancy in Idaho; Wyoming Nature Conservancy; Henry’s Fork Foundation; Friends of the Teton River; Trout Unlimited



PROJECT WW.5 ISLAND PARK SUSTAINABLE FIRE COMMUNITY

Summary: The Island Park Sustainable Fire Community (IPSFC) is a group of concerned citizens comprised of regional officials, Forest Service personnel, residents, and others who seek to raise awareness and minimize the wildfire risk in Island Park, Idaho. Five steps are being promoted through the group’s education campaign that could be applied in any Teton View community within the wildland urban interface:

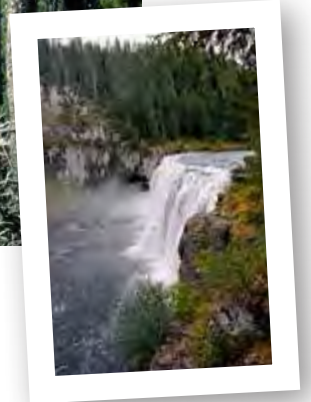
- Strengthen your fire department
- Create defensible space around your home
- Use fire resistant building materials
- Know your evacuation route
- Request a risk evaluation for your cabin

Measure: Wildland Urban Interface Development

Plan Theme: 5.2 – Advance practices that minimize the potential for conflicts with wildlife and support a harmonious and safe relationship between humans and the environment

Source: Project website.





Interagency Initiatives

INITIATIVE WW.6 GREATER YELLOWSTONE AREA: ECOSYSTEM HEALTH PROJECTS

Summary: The Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee (GYCC) was formed in 1964 to allow representatives from the National Park Service, US Forest Service, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Land Management to pursue opportunities of mutual cooperation and coordination in the management of core federal lands in the Greater Yellowstone area. Members of the GYCC strive to find intersection in the missions of their agencies and opportunities of cooperative management of GYA resources that make sense, enhance public service and maintain or enhance the integrity of the Greater Yellowstone.

This initiative would ask our agency Consortium partners to more fully engage GYCC in implementing the final regional plan priorities. This would allow GYCC to coordinate strategic thinking for the region and provide for more

efficient sharing of resources.

Cities and counties may already be involved with the ecosystem health priorities shown below, and would intensify their involvement under this initiative:

- Aquatic Invasive Species
- Terrestrial Invasive Species
- Whitebark Pine
- Wildlife
- Water Quality and Flow
- Climate Change Adaptation

Measure: Healthy Waters; Wildland Urban Interface Development; Hunting and Fishing License Value

Plan Theme: 5.1 – Ensure that development on state and federal lands within the Teton View Region is congruent with state habitat management objectives for species of critical concern, 5.2 – Advance practices that minimize the potential for conflicts with wildlife and support a harmonious and safe relationship between humans and the environment, 5.3 – Protect identified wildlife migration corridors

and critical seasonal habitats on both public and private lands, 5.4 – Preserve continuity and function of rivers, streams and wetlands in support of fisheries and other aquatic species

Source: Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee Website

INITIATIVE WW.7 SUSTAINABLE OPERATIONS AT LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCIES

Summary: The GYCC Sustainable Operations Subcommittee facilitates overall coordination and collaboration of sustainable operations practices throughout the public lands of the Greater Yellowstone Area (GYA) in areas such as: water conservation, energy conservation, green purchasing, fleet and transportation management, recycling and waste stream reduction, and employee, visitor and community education. An Alternative Fuels Feasibility Study has been a recent priority in cooperation

with the Yellowstone-Teton Clean Energy Coalition. This project proposes that the Teton View cities and counties approach an adjacent land management agency to partner on ONE mutually beneficial sustainability project that aligns with a Teton View Plan priority and monitor the results over the next five years.

Measure: Healthy Waters;
Regional Interconnectedness

Plan Theme: 1.5 – Support a regional recycling program and encourage multi-sector partnerships and policies to improve and promote waste diversion, 3.2 – Encourage development of distributed, small-scale renewable energy sources, and promote green energy purchasing by regional utilities.

Source: GYCC Sustainable Operations Webpage



INITIATIVE WW.8 INCREASING MOBILITY IN OUR NATIONAL PARKS

Summary: This initiative would encourage the concession companies in both Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks to cooperate with adjacent city and county governments in conducting an in-depth survey of those visitor types most likely to use public transportation. Based on the 3-year Yellowstone pilot, those potential customers include international guests, seasonal employees (both inside and outside the park), hikers and cyclists, RV owners who have parked their rigs, and individuals traveling separately from a larger party. The survey would complement the 2013 findings issued in the Buses for Byways report that found highest in shuttles to trailheads and airports. Once survey results have been analyzed, the following mobility goals would be best addressed through a multi-state initiative led by gateway communities:

- A comprehensive transportation plan for Yellowstone National Park that replaces the 1992 version
- Recreational shuttle development that could link to an emerging transit system
- Feasibility of a seasonal travel pass or discount card to encourage visitor use of public transportation

Measure: Regional Transit Connectivity; Regional Interconnectedness; Public Land Visitation

Plan Theme: 3.1 – Create and maintain safe, well-connected, multimodal transportation throughout the region, 6.5 – Develop a region-wide trails network and advance economic development scenarios that integrate the trails network concept

Source: D.1 – Multi-Modal Transportation Assessment (Yellowstone Pilot Demo) Buses for Byways research report and concept plan







THIS INDICATOR MEASURES THE TOTAL LAND AREA CONSERVED BY FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES, AS WELL AS ORGANIZATIONS.

Why

The natural environment is one of the most commonly cited reasons for residents to live in the Greater Yellowstone Region. As such, the conservation of land for ecosystem functionality, recreation, and protection of habitat and sites of special significance is directly supportive. Conservation occurs at a variety of regulatory levels including local, state, and federal through a variety of mechanisms. Regardless of how the land is acquired, any increase in acreage provides additional opportunities for land stewardship and preservation of the natural functions of that land.

This indicator demonstrates the extent to which there is an overall appreciation and value placed on land conservation, and conversely how much land is being taken out of the supply for development. The indirect benefits of watershed maintenance, habitat preservation, and increased connections to nature for residents are also captured by ensuring that those acres are available as resources for the foreseeable future.

UNITS OF MEASURE

This indicator is measured in total acres of land permanently conserved under public ownership by fee simple purchase (by land trust, for example) and/or in conservation easement. Increasing values indicate the conservation of more land, whereas decreasing values could mean the sale or loss of land or easements for conservation purposes.

SOURCE

Land ownership information for this indicator is available from Headwaters Economics' Economic Profile System – Human Dimensions Toolkit (EPS-HDT). This toolkit uses published statistics from federal data sources and the most recent version is 2013. The toolkit is available at the following website: <http://headwaterseconomics.org/tools/eps-hdt>.

Data for this indicator related to conservation easements is available from annual County assessor or GIS records. Data for Wildlife Management Areas is available from each state's Fish and Game department, while for state parks is available from each state's Parks and Recreation department.



Why

The health of native species is often dependent on keeping ecosystems functioning at historic levels. In the case of the native Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout, the species faces a number of challenges ranging from habitat loss to predation by non-native species of fish. In addition, the particular species of trout is a desirable sport fish for fly fishermen due to its uniqueness and propensity to feed on insects at maturity.

By gauging the presence of this particular native fish species, the region's water and habitat quality can be tracked along with the impacts of and to the recreational fishing population. As a well-studied species, the presence or absence of Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout can also be related to specific environmental conditions such as droughts as well as indicating the prevalence of introduced species as they interbreed with some of the non-native Rainbow Trout.

UNITS OF MEASURE

This indicator is measured in miles of presence in streams and water bodies.

Increasing values could indicate growing trout populations or increased availability of habitat suitable for this species. Decreasing values could indicate threats to the trout population or habitat (e.g., decreasing water quality, loss of habitat, or increase in predators).

SOURCE

Data for this indicator are maintained through an interagency agreement for the Columbia River Basin from the website <http://streamnet.org>. Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout data are maintained by Montana Fish and Game, but draws upon data collected by each state's Fish and Game department.

THIS INDICATOR MEASURES THE PRESENCE OF YELLOWSTONE CUTTHROAT TROUT IN REGIONAL STREAMS AND WATER BODIES.



Why

Elk hunting is an important nexus of recreation, economic activity and ecosystem health in the Greater Yellowstone region. The number of elk harvested annually are based on estimated population levels and hunter success, which are affected by habitat quality as well as several other factors such as predation. Since elk are one of the more popular types of game animals to hunt as well as being a prominent trophy species, elk hunting harvests are a robust measure of hunting performance and continued interest from hunters.

The annual elk harvest can also demonstrate the effects of resource management efforts, as elk populations are symbiotic with predator populations as well as particular forage species. Since the relationship between elk and predators also affects economic activity in terms of available elk for hunting, the indicator can help inform the appropriate balance not only of elk but of predator populations as well. Finally, since there are specific tasks often associated with elk hunting such as processing that many hunters will pay for locally, the harvested elk can provide an indication of the activity in that specific sector.

THIS INDICATOR MEASURES THE DEMAND FOR ELK HUNTING IN THE REGION AND IS CORRELATED WITH THE HEALTH OF THE ELK POPULATION.

UNITS OF MEASURE

This indicator is measured in total number of elk harvested each year (by residents and nonresidents), as reported to and by the state departments of Fish and Game, for the hunting zones that fall within the desired region.

Increasing values could indicate a greater economic benefit from increased hunting activity as well as increased game availability from habitat improvements. Decreases in this value could indicate a decrease in hunting activity due to either decreased populations of elk or degradation of the hunting experience.

SOURCE

Data for this indicator is available from annual hunter and harvest reports from the state departments of fish and game, as follows:

- Idaho - <https://fishandgame.idaho.gov/content/mhr>
- Wyoming - <http://wgfd.wyo.gov/web2011/HUNTING-1000184.aspx>

Chapter 6. Four-Season Recreation

Regional Context

The Teton View Region is known worldwide for its outdoor recreation. Mountain climbing, biking, hiking, skiing, snowmobiling, wildlife viewing, fishing, and hunting are just a few of the outdoor recreation activities that are considered first-class and attract visitors from around the world to the region during every season of the year. Recreation assets that are unique to the Teton View Region include approximately 3,988,112 acres of public lands, world class fishing along the Snake, Teton, and Henry's Fork rivers, and spectacular hiking, skiing, and climbing around the Grand Teton peak and the Teton Mountain Range. It is our wildlife, public lands, and special sites that



SOURCE: YBP Outdoor Recreation Prospectus

support the four-season recreation in the area. As such, the Teton View Region exemplifies the complexity and challenges of balancing outdoor recreation and wildland preservation.

The inherent difficulties in protecting the region's natural qualities while realizing the economic opportunities for recreation will only intensify as more people move into the region

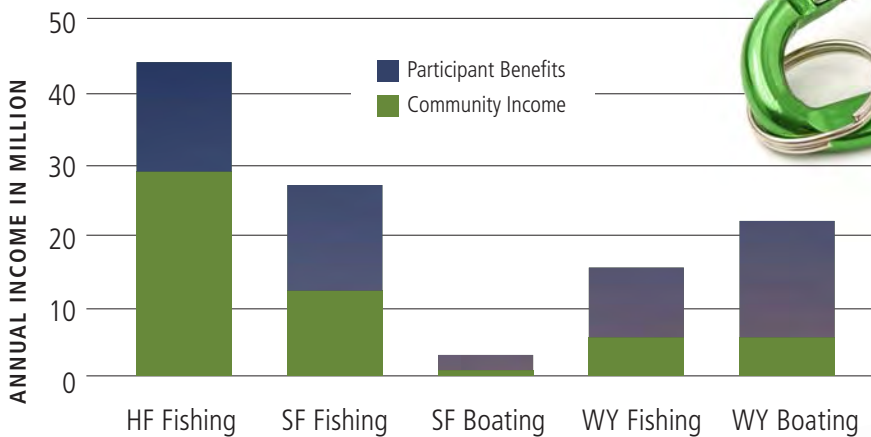


FIGURE 14.
Annual Income To Counties and Participant Recreation Benefits

SOURCE: 2005 Loomis Report



- OHVs
- Hunting
- Destination Angling
- Dude Ranches
- Mountain Biking
- Whitewater Rafting
- Fat Bikes
- Snowmobiling
- Skiing



and seek outdoor experiences. Given the rate of population increase in the fastest-growing counties of the Teton View Region, a 10-15% annual increase in recreation use is possible (U.S. Census Bureau 2004). Beyond their increasing numbers, people are bringing new forms of recreation with greater technological sophistication, intensity of use, and potential for impacts on natural resources. Accelerating development of private land in the Teton View Region is transforming the region and creating pressure on public land for recreation and other uses. Environmental influences beyond the Teton View Region (climate change; airborne pollutants; etc.) are currently or anticipated to have an effect on the area as well.

In response to a quality of life survey distributed as part of the regional plan process, residents in recreation character districts most commonly chose the natural environment, wildlife and scenery, and outdoor recreation opportunities as the reason they choose to live in the region. Clean air and fresh water are also highlighted as important reasons.

With only 19% of the four-county region in private ownership, the region's public lands are the primary attraction for four-season recreation activities. The natural beauty and outstanding recreation opportunities of the Snake River corridor as it stretches from Jackson Lake in Teton County, Wyoming, to where it joins the Henry's Fork in Madison County, Idaho, draws thousands of visitors a year.

Improving ecological conditions and fisheries along the corridor has the potential to further increase economic benefits, income, and employment in the area. Through careful management, the Snake River can support irrigated agriculture and hydropower generation, as well as robust recreational activities.

Fishing, boating and other river related recreation along the Henry's Fork, South Fork, and Wyoming stretches of the Snake River provides substantial economic values to local businesses, workers, communities, and visitors. Nearly half a million visitors recreate along the Snake River each year.



HENRY'S FORK BASIN AND ISLAND PARK RECREATION AREA

Recreational opportunities in the Henry's Fork Basin and Island Park areas of Fremont and Madison Counties cater to local residents and visitors from throughout the United States. Proximity to Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks contributes to recreational use, but the basin also charms visitors with its own outstanding attractions: Big Springs, Mesa Falls, Harriman State Park, and fishing in Henry's Lake or the Henry's Fork. Sightseeing, nature study, fishing, boating, and winter sports attract thousands of people annually to the basin.

The Island Park recreation area is part of a magnificent landscape within the Teton View region. It is located in the Caribou-Targhee National Forest west of the boundary of Yellowstone National Park and southwest from the Town of West Yellowstone, Montana (the west entrance to Yellowstone National Park). From many places one can see the Teton Mountain Range that largely lies within Grand Teton National Park and Teton County, Wyoming. The combination of its proximity to Yellowstone National Park, the mountain and ridgeline horizons, forested hillsides, Henry's Lake, the Henry's Fork of the Snake River, and other landscape features provide a beautiful setting and a strong identity to the area. Island Park's beauty lies at the core of the community's local values, economic vitality, and aspirations for the future.



Island Park Dam

In the summer, the Island Park area is a destination for anglers looking to catch trophy trout or families vacationing at guest cabins and rustic resorts. Others may come to ride ATVs or horses; hike or bike in the mountains; or camp next to a stream or lake. Some come to view the bald eagles, grouse, sandhill cranes, songbirds, raptors, waterfowl, large and small mammals, and wildflowers. In the winter, the area becomes a mecca for snow-related sports enthusiasts. More than 500 miles of snowmobile trails and groomed trails for snowshoeing and Nordic skiing are found on national forest land. Fees associated with snowmobiles, ATVs, and other trail uses are an important revenue stream for the region. Fremont is the #1 county in Idaho where people direct their snowmobile license fees.

Several resorts and lodges in Island Park provide a variety of accommodations for tourists including restaurants, cabin and condominium rentals, and RV parking. They provide supervised float and horseback riding trips and fly-fishing guide services. In the winter, they rent snowmobiles and winter gear and conduct guided tours. Some of the working cattle ranches nearby also accommodate needs of tourists. Patrons of these ranches can watch cowboys doing their jobs, participate in cattle drives, ride horses, fish, or just relax.

Many visitors are fly-fishing enthusiasts who come to fish on the famous Henry's Fork of the Snake River, Henry's Lake, or many of the other nearby rivers, streams, and smaller lakes. For the fly-fisherman, the area has specialized fishing equipment shops and expert guides.

Boating and fishing in the Island Park area contributes to the region through economic benefits, local employment, and income effects.⁴⁷

With abundant recreation opportunities, there are also challenges. The Island Park area has a very high percentage of vacant/second homes, and, as a result, home prices in the Island Park area are considerably higher than elsewhere in Fremont County. Rental availability for seasonal employees is very limited during the summer in the Island Park area. A recommendation from the housing needs assessment conducted as part of the regional planning process is to build seasonal employee accommodations in Island Park. The study recommended that Island Park explore housing options for summer-only

occupancy. Low cost construction, bunkhouses, and a campground with central cooking and bathhouse facilities where large tents/yrurts could be erected are possibilities to consider.⁴⁸

TETON MOUNTAIN RANGE

The high quality of outdoor recreation in the Teton Mountain Range, including Teton County, Idaho, and Teton County, Wyoming, is a direct result of having a healthy and functioning ecosystem in the area.⁴⁹

Recreation opportunities in the Teton Mountains include hiking, boating, and rock climbing in Grand Teton National Park, and downhill skiing at Grand Targhee Resort and Jackson Hole Mountain Resort. Grand Targhee Resort also offers mountain biking in the summer and fat biking during the winter. Grand Targhee was the first ski resort to create fat bike trails for this emerging winter activity.

The Town of Jackson is a gateway to Yellowstone National Park, Grand Teton National Park, Bridger-Teton National Forest and the National Elk Refuge. While the economy of Jackson Hole has been diversifying in recent years, tourism remains the foundation of the local economy.

⁴⁷ Dr. Loomis, John. (May 2005). *The Economic Value of Recreational Fishing & Boating to Visitors & Communities along the Upper Snake River*. Accessed December 9, 2014.

⁴⁸ Rees Consulting Inc, WSW Associates, Frontier Forward LLC, RRC Associates LLC (2014, December 30) *Western Greater Yellowstone Area Regional Analysis of Impediments.pdf*. Retrieved from <https://sustainableyellowstone.org/library>.

⁴⁹ Brown, Janice, *Yellowstone Business Partnership*. (January, 2006) *Outdoor Recreation. Prospectus for the Yellowstone-Teton Region; The Case for Collaborative Investment*. Accessed January, 2015.



The community is working to strengthen this sector by pursuing sustainable tourism that is not over-reliant on wasteful consumption (see sidebar). Outdoor recreation and eco-tourism are primary focuses for future planning.⁵⁰

The Snake River through Jackson Hole includes roughly 33 miles of river between Grand Teton National Park and Bridger-Teton National Forest from Moose to Hoback. The river offers residents and visitors outstanding opportunities for boating, fishing, and riverside recreation, with spectacular views of the Teton and Gros Ventre mountain ranges. Recreation use on the river has increased over the past two decades,

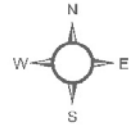
particularly in commercial fishing and scenic rafting trips.⁵¹ The recently finalized Snake River through Jackson Hole Final River Management Plan manages recreation access, facilities, and public use to protect or enhance the quality of recreation opportunities and other resource values in the corridor.

⁵⁰ AECOM, Clarion Associates, Collins Planning Associates, Fehr & Peer. (2012, April 6). *Teton County Wyoming Comprehensive Plan*.

⁵¹ Whittaker, Doug and Bo Shelby. *Confluence Research and Consulting* (20145, March). *SNAKE RIVER THROUGH JACKSON HOLE DRAFT FINAL RIVER MANAGEMENT PLAN*.



Summer Recreation



- Legend**
- Resorts
 - ▲ Campgrounds
 - City
 - Major Roads
 - National Park Service
- Summer Trails**
- Motorized
 - Non-Motorized

FIGURE 15. SUMMER RECREATION MAP

The Snake River and its tributaries, three major ski resorts, miles of summer and winter trails, two Idaho state parks, and two national parks provide a variety of outdoor recreational activities within public lands that contribute to quality-of-life for residents and year round attractions for tourists.



Winter Recreation

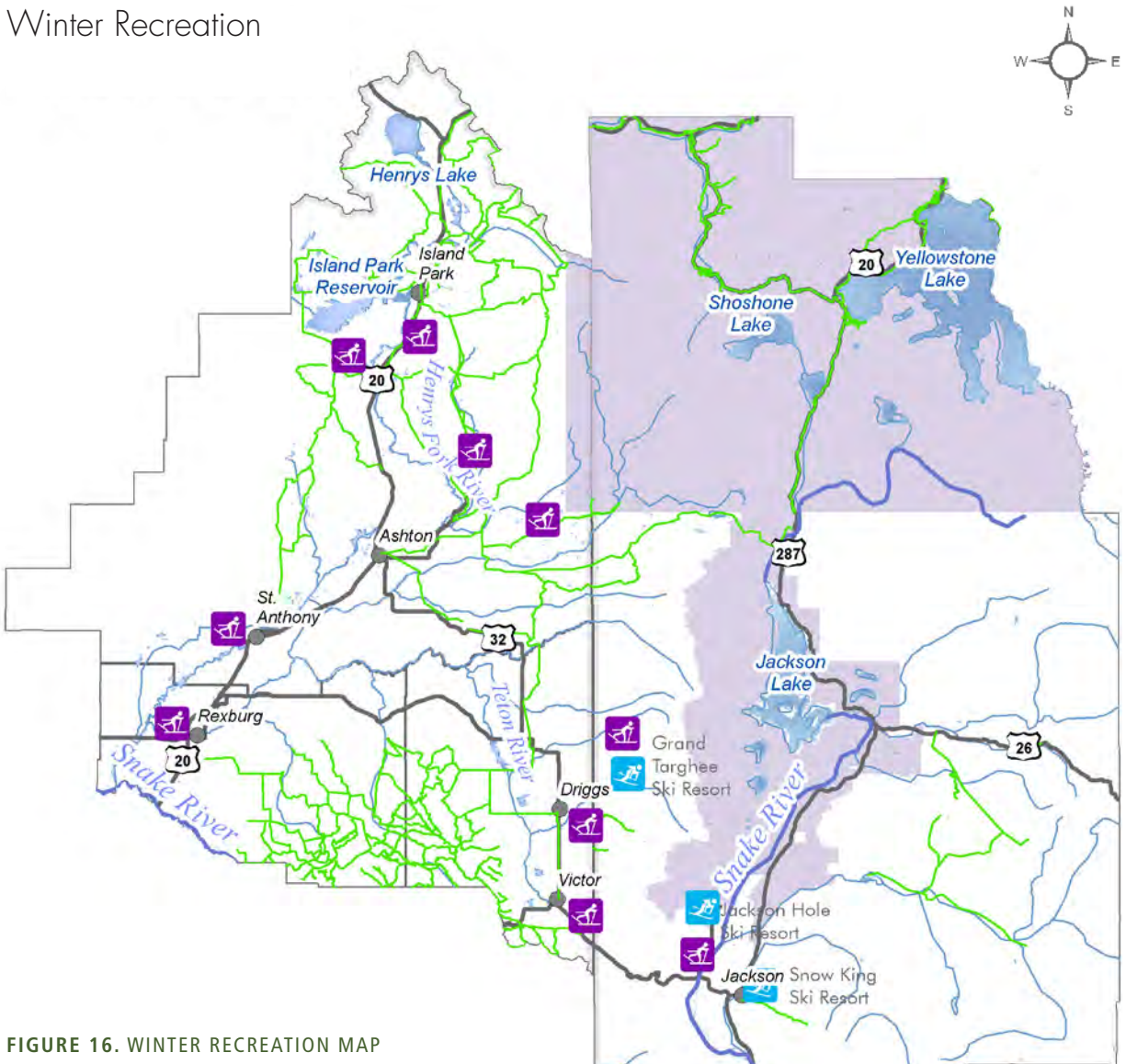


FIGURE 16. WINTER RECREATION MAP



SOURCE: www.grandtarghee.com



In the summer, Teton County, Idaho is a destination for anglers. Driggs has been named the “Flyfishing Hot Spot” by Field and Stream and has been listed in the top 20 Best Fishing Towns in America. A 2005 study documented a total of 460,418 anglers using the Snake River and its tributaries from May through September 2004. The total economic contribution of fishing from the summer of 2004 on the Snake River (including the Henry’s Fork) was estimated to be \$86 million. The study also found that anglers would be willing to pay an additional \$85 per trip to fish these waters rather than not fish them or fish at other rivers.⁵²

Themes and Strategies

Theme 6.1: Provide a diversity of recreation opportunities to match the diversity of potential users.

With such a wide range of recreation activities available, it is important that recreation areas are designed to limit conflicts between different user groups. Additionally, recreation opportunities should be fully developed as appropriate and while preserving the natural resources that make the area so special. Outdoor recreation opportunities contribute to enhancing public welfare and increasing the vitality and well-being of the citizens and communities within the region.⁵³

Due to the high percentage of public lands in the Teton View Region, most outdoor recreation is dependent on access to public land and waterways. Maintaining existing accesses for

fishing, boating, hiking, and riding off-highway vehicles is important as is developing new access where appropriate. At the same time, it is also important to preserve the natural feel and the wild and scenic character of the forest lands and rivers or they will lose their value as authentic recreational attractions.

Strategies:

- Enhance and improve existing all-season access and support the development of new access to public lands and waterways, except where necessary to protect areas from environmental degradation, negative impact to wildlife habitat, or to protect public safety.
- Recognize the need to accommodate different user groups in a way that minimizes user conflicts and resource damage.
- Support a diversity of recreation through all four seasons as a mechanism to bring communities together and build acceptance of diverse lifestyles.
- Give special attention to the recreation needs of disadvantaged populations, evaluating what economic, cultural, and physical barriers exist to their full enjoyment of the region.
- Encourage “rights to hunt” and mitigate conflicts with other recreational uses.

⁵² Brown, Janice, *Yellowstone Business Partnership*. (January, 2006) *Outdoor Recreation. Prospectus for the Yellowstone-Teton Region; The Case for Collaborative Investment*. Accessed January, 2015.

⁵³ *Recreation in the Greater Yellowstone Area. An Interagency Assessment Draft Report to the Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee*. (April 2005)

Theme 6.2: Promote recreation development that is consistent with resource protection.

Biophysical, geologic, and historic resources are the attractors, destinations, and settings for outdoor recreation and must be protected. As the number of visitors increases, the most accessible and popular destinations within the national forests within the Teton View region could experience degradation to their natural resources.

Strategies:

- Ensure that recreation development is consistent with the natural setting, scenery, and recreation opportunities of the region.
- Employ management standards that help gauge when recreation resource conditions (both biophysical and social) are at risk.
- Evaluate and remediate, if needed, the most accessible and popular destinations located in the national forests to prevent unacceptable resource damage and visitor conflict.
- Support the creation of new public land access only when it is consistent with natural resource conservation goals.
- Protect natural resources from unnecessary recreation impacts by not allowing high impact activities in sensitive areas, using seasonal restrictions as needed, and placing structural improvements where they will have the least amount of impact.

Theme 6.3: Develop the recreation industry as a means for economic development and enhanced quality of life.

The Teton View Region already attracts tourist from around the world to experience our unique features and natural beauty. Further development of all aspects of the recreation industry can increase the economic sectors that serve visitors, such as hospitality, food service, tour services, and transportation. Recreational tourism is a niche segment of the outdoor recreation market that can be further developed through regional collaboration between the public and private sector to offer special packaged activities and itineraries. The snowmobile industry is already doing this in the region, and this idea can be expanded to other activities, such as Nordic skiing, mountain biking, hiking, or climbing, with one or two week destination vacations. The goal would be to expand the offering of the destination, attract tourists that are seeking specific experiences, and extend the length of stay of visitors.

Well-developed and promoted recreation has direct economic impact to communities. For example, Jackson, Wyoming, has spent an estimated \$1.7 million over the past decade on area trail systems and, in return, has benefited from an estimated \$18 million annual boost to their economy as a direct result of sales of trail-related goods and services in addition to supporting \$3.6 million in jobs and generating \$1.8 million in taxes every year.⁵⁴

In addition to the direct economic impacts from tourism, having well developed recreation opportunities improves the quality of life for

⁵⁴ Kaliszewski, Nadia. *Jackson Hole Trails Project Economic Impact Study*. University of Wyoming. May 2011.

residents and attracts new businesses to the area. According to a report by the Trust for Public Land, corporate CEOs say that employee quality of life is the third most important factor in locating a new business, and small company owners say that recreation, parks, and open space are the highest priority in choosing a new location for their business (TPL, 1999). These new corporations and small businesses provide professional, living wage jobs and can be key to creating an economically resilient community.⁵⁵

Strategies:

- Collaborate with Federal, State, non-governmental agencies, and the private business sector to improve key recreational opportunities that are economically vital to our communities.
- Establish funding mechanisms, such as establishing recreation districts, a regional recreation trust, business sponsorships, or private donations, for funding recreation improvements within all four counties of the Teton View Region.
- Encourage the development of regional guidebooks and multi-state fishing and hunting licenses.
- Encourage collaboration within the industry to promote and market niche recreational tourism with packages of special itineraries, activities, and experiences.
- Provide business opportunity and recruitment literature to visiting CEOs and small business owners.

Theme 6.4: Encourage recreation and tourism development during the shoulder seasons to help create a resilient economy.

For many communities that have a tourism driven economy, the spring and fall, or “shoulder” seasons can be a difficult time financially. Many tourist oriented businesses, such as restaurants and retail stores, shut down between the peak winter and summer seasons. Although this may be a welcome break by those who work double time during the busy season, many businesses struggle to make ends meet until the next peak season arrives. By developing and promoting the region for shoulder-season activities, the economy can become more stable and resilient.

Additionally, recreation use is changing in response to population, technology, and social trends. Planning for recreation and tourism development must address these changes and accommodate new types of visitors and recreation opportunities.

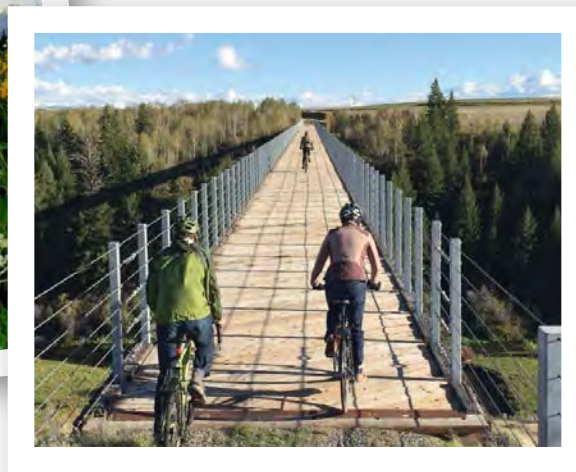
Strategies:

- Sustain adequate river flows to support fish habitat and fishing conditions in order to expand and capitalize on the economic value of angling tourism year round.
- Develop a comprehensive website that encompasses all information about the region and that can be used as a tool in recruiting new four-season business/industry to the area.

⁵⁵ TPL (Trust for Public Land). *The Economic Benefits of Parks and Open Space*. 1999.



SOURCE: *Outdoor Recreation Prospectus*



The Greater Yellowstone-Teton Trail Concept Plan establishes a vision for a world-class regional trail system that would enhance quality of life, improve access to recreation and spur economic development opportunities for local communities along the unique and diverse corridor.

SOURCE: *Greater Yellowstone-Teton Trail Concept Plan 2015*

- Develop, enhance and market spring and fall off-season recreation opportunities to contribute to year-round tourism and quality-of-life for residents. This may include indoor facilities that can be used year-round.
- Improve transportation connections between airports, retail centers, gateway communities and area attractions to serve residents and visitors in all four seasons.
- Assist businesses and tourist attractions with workforce training, marketing expertise, technology upgrades, financing for expansion/research, new market development, and organizational capacity.

Theme 6.5: Develop a region-wide trails network and advance economic development scenarios that integrate the trails network concept.

Well connected and integrated trails, pathways, and sidewalks are important for providing access to natural resources and for improving public health through increased physical

activity. An integrated multi-modal trails network would fill in the gaps between existing trails in the region.

Strategies:

- Develop the missing links in the Greater Yellowstone Trail to connect West Yellowstone with Island Park, Ashton, Teton, Driggs, Victor, Wilson, Jackson, Teton Village, Moose, and Jenny Lake.
- Encourage coordination within the snowmobile industry to promote tour packages outside the national parks.
- Coordinate with the Nordic ski community in a manner similar to that of the snowmobile industry to promote one and two-week destination vacations in the 4-county region.
- Create a regional task force to organize and prioritize trail development that will fill the gaps in the regional trail system and provide funding resource information and aid.
- Expand public awareness of the regional trail system.

Moving Ahead with Common Purpose:

Four-Season Recreation Opportunities

Because most outdoor recreation in the Teton View region occurs on public land and waterways, collaboration between the public and private sectors will be essential. The highest ranked initiative in this category and #3 in the overall plan – The Greater Yellowstone Trail – will require unprecedented cooperation across three states, four counties, multiple cities and several federal and state agencies if it is to proceed.

Three other projects have local governments willing to lead them in the near-term, all of which focus on four-season recreation potential for economic benefit. Four of the region-wide projects need more private sector involvement over the long-term, but several local entities are willing to partner if leadership capacity emerges. Finally, the two projects outlined for the Island Park recreation area will require further definition and long-term commitments before they can be launched.



Table 12. Adventures for All (AA) Implementation Priorities

Number	#3 Region-Wide Priority	Willing to Partner	Potential New Partners	
AA.1	Greater Yellowstone Trail Concept Plan	City of Victor City of Driggs	Fremont County Teton County, ID Teton County, WY Town of Jackson Caribou-Targhee NF	Idaho Transportation Dept. State Pathway Organizations Bridger-Teton NF
	Near-Term Collaborative Projects	Willing to Lead/Co-Lead	Willing to Partner	Potential New Partners
AA.2	Economic Potential of Adventure Tourism	Teton County, ID	Fremont County City of Rexburg Ashton Community Foundation	
AA.3	Retrofitting Recreation Facilities for Four-Season Use	Fremont County	City of Victor	Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation
AA.8	St. Anthony's Henry's Fork Greenway Enhancements	City of St. Anthony BLM	Fremont County	Henry's Fork Foundation
	Long-Term Collaborative Initiatives	Willing to Partner	Potential New Partners	
AA.4	Accommodating New Recreation Technologies			
AA.5	Seasonal Employee Housing in Resort Areas	City of Driggs City of Victor Ashton Community Foundation		
AA.6	Recreation Services Business Network	Ashton Community Foundation		
AA.7	Coordinated Marketing to the Geo-and Adventure Traveler	Ashton Community Foundation	Yellowstone-Teton Territory National Geotourism Council Teton Geotourism Council	
AA.9	Island Park Visitor Information/Welcome Center	Fremont County Ashton Community Foundation Caribou-Targhee NF		
AA.10	Island Park Community Facilities – Feasibility Study			





Region-Wide Initiatives

INITIATIVE AA.1 GREATER YELLOWSTONE TRAIL CONCEPT PLAN

Summary: The Greater Yellowstone Trail Concept Plan formalizes a vision for a world-class regional trail system that would enhance quality of life, improve access to recreation and spur economic development opportunities for local communities along the unique and diverse corridor. The project would link two national parks, three national forests and a state park while simultaneously

integrating regional history lessons and recreation opportunities for all seasons. The concept leverages previous investments and existing trails with new projects to develop a unified and consistently branded long-distance, 180-mile trail system.

To implement the plan, Teton View agencies and communities would need to make a decades-long commitment to final design, construction and maintenance of this major infrastructure investment. This initiative would explore a variety of creative approaches to trail system management that do not fully rely on any one entity and that would necessitate user fees. The initiative also would encourage investment in cyclist services such as repair shops, lodging and meal establishments, and waysides in areas far from town. Economic developers have long recognized the potential for hut-to-hut travel, which would be well-suited to the Greater Yellowstone Trail.

Measure: Regional Interconnectedness, Public Land Visitation; Trail Miles

Plan Theme: 6.2 – Promote recreation development that is consistent with resource protection. 6.4 – Encourage recreation and tourism development during the shoulder seasons to help create a resilient economy. 6.5 – Develop a region-wide trails network and advance economic development scenarios that integrate the trails network concept.

Source: D.2 – Greater Yellowstone Trail Concept Plan



PROJECT AA.2 ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF ADVENTURE TOURISM

Summary: This is a research project that would help quantify the unrealized potential of adventure tourism that could capture more value from visitors already coming to the Teton View region. These studies would better estimate the total value of both travel/tourism and outdoor recreation to the region as a whole. An in-depth economic impact study also could determine to what extent each community currently benefits from expenditures related to Yellowstone and Grand Teton visitor traffic and what might be possible in the shoulder seasons under various development and marketing scenarios. This could include the economic potential of off-season visitor attractions such as small business conferences, recreational events, and seasonal birding and wildlife watching when the Yellowstone's west and south entrances have winter closures.

Researchers should also examine how national forests could collect user fees or other revenues to cover the cost of outdoor recreation administration and facility maintenance.

Measure: Hunting and Fishing License Value;
Public Land Visitation

Plan Theme: 6.3 – Develop the recreation industry as a means for economic development and enhanced quality of life

Source: Turning on the Off Season





PROJECT AA.3 RETROFITTING RECREATION FACILITIES FOR ALL-SEASON USE

Summary: This project would involve an assessment of public recreation facilities in Teton View counties to determine which have the potential for extended-season use if funding was available. All four counties have demonstrated interest in growing business during the fall and spring seasons, but not all recreational and sanitary facilities on public lands are functional or accessible during those periods. The assessment could also include a survey of business owners to determine under what conditions guest services could stay open to accommodate off-season visitation.

Measure: Public Land Visitation; Hunting and Fishing License Value

Plan Theme: 6.4 – Encourage recreation and tourism development during the shoulder seasons to help create a resilient economy

PROJECT AA.4 ACCOMMODATING NEW RECREATION TECHNOLOGIES

Summary: The development of UTVs, track conversions for ATVs, and fat tire bikes have created new ways to enjoy the winter. However, some of these technologies may create new challenges for compatible trail use and for covering the cost of trail maintenance. This project would make recommendations on how to welcome new uses on summer and winter trail systems within the Teton View region. The study team would need to determine under what conditions fat bikes could be allowed on snowmobile trails and how to treat them equitably under the fee permit system governing snowmobiles. Proactive planning would allow Teton View counties to embrace new recreation technologies and competitively market our local opportunities.

Measure: Public Land Visitation, Trail Miles

Plan Theme: 6.1 – Provide a diversity of recreation opportunities to match the diversity of potential users.

Source: E.3 – Fremont County Economic Development Strategy

PROJECT AA.5 SEASONAL EMPLOYEE HOUSING IN RESORT AREAS

Summary: This research project would quantify the need for seasonal employee accommodations in Island Park and other resort areas in need of such facilities. An employer survey would be needed to determine the number of seasonal workers employed in the area, determine their current housing situation and explore potential for employer participation in providing additional housing. Co-sponsorship of such a study by the City of Island Park and the Island Park Chamber of Commerce would need to be explored in order to maximize response rates. Focus groups could also be used to supplement the survey.

Measure: Wildland Urban Interface Development; Housing and Transportation Affordability

Plan Theme: 6.3 – Develop the recreation industry as a means for economic development and enhanced quality of life

Source: C.2 – Housing Needs Assessment (Fremont, Teton, ID sections)



PROJECT AA.6 RECREATION SERVICES BUSINESS NETWORK

Summary: This cooperative project would involve organizing recreation business networks across the Teton View region to link guide services, retail shops, tour operators, and meal and lodging establishments seeking to grow and diversify the outdoor recreation experiences offered in the region. In addition to evaluating potential new activities, this would entail itinerary planning and packaging of local services that would benefit multiple communities if designed over 3, 5 and 7-day visits. Types of networks to explore would be businesses serving birders/wildlife watchers; distance hikers and cyclists; climbers and cavers; anglers; OHV enthusiasts (e.g. Sand Dunes) and whitewater boaters. Group purchasing, web marketing and industry research could be activities.

Measure: Hunting and Fishing License Value; Regional Interconnectedness

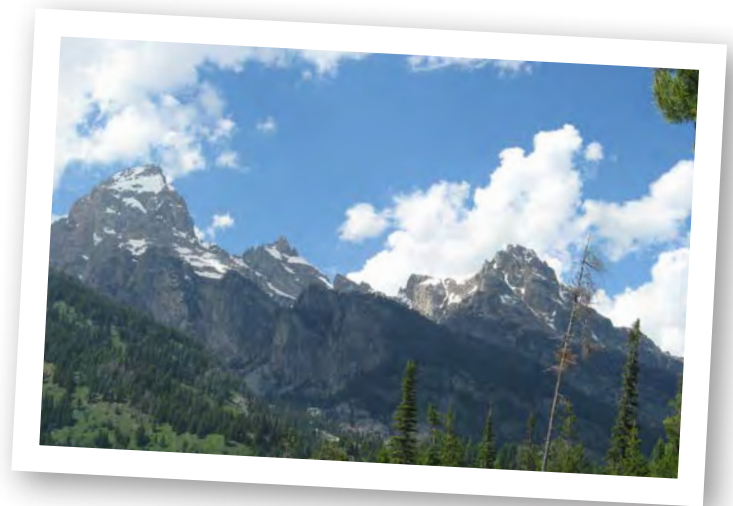
Plan Theme: 6.3 – Develop the recreation industry as a means for economic development and enhanced quality of life

Source: E.3 – Fremont County Economic Development Strategy

PROJECT AA.7 COORDINATED MARKETING TO THE GEO- AND ADVENTURE TRAVELER

Summary: Communities in all four Teton View counties are engaged in tourism marketing programs that could be better coordinated for cost effectiveness. For example, Teton Valley encompasses three separate municipalities, Teton County, Alta, WY and Grand Targhee Resort, all of which can make coordinated tourism marketing a challenge. Given limited resources and the necessity to compete internationally for the geotraveler, it would be advantageous to better coordinate and prioritize the region's marketing efforts. Under this project, each community would work in a more integrated fashion with destination marketing organizations in Idaho and Wyoming to increase visitor stays and expenditures on outdoor recreation services. This could entail:

- Designing a new bi-state website to brand the Teton View counties and cross-boundary attractions
- Building multi-modal travel packages in coordination with bike shops, shuttle services and tour guides



- Scenic byway promotion that learns from data cited under WW.8

Measure: Public Land Visitation

Plan Theme: 6.1 – Provide a diversity of recreation opportunities to match the diversity of potential users. 6.4 – Encourage recreation and tourism development during the shoulder seasons to help create a resilient economy

Sources: E.2 – Teton County, ID, Economic Development Strategy, E.3 – Fremont County Economic Development Strategy Greater Yellowstone Geotourism – website



Community-Scale Projects

PROJECT AA.8 ST. ANTHONY'S HENRY'S FORK GREENWAY ENHANCEMENTS

Summary: The Henry's Fork Greenway trail has been built in phases since first launched in the late 1990s. A master planning effort for the Greenway system is now needed for the south half of what will eventually be a loop trail once a river crossing can be accomplished. While the north half of the system is relatively well defined and planned, the trail corridor on the south side of the river needs a closer look. This project would support a comprehensive process

of engagement with the various stakeholders (BLM, IDFG, USACE, City, County, private property owners, public) so the city can secure a master plan for the trail, possible

expansion downstream in cooperation with BLM, and defined location for the river crossing that everyone can support.

Measure: Healthy Waters; Public Land Visitation; Trail Miles

Plan Theme: 6.2 – Promote recreation development that is consistent with resource protection

Source: D.5 – Henry's Fork Greenway River Crossing – City of St. Anthony



PROJECT AA.9 ISLAND PARK VISITOR INFORMATION/WELCOME CENTER

Summary: The Island Park area lacks a visitor center to help orient guests to the many activities and sights of the region. City officials feel this is a relevant need and report that visitors often stop by the City offices to make information requests. The Forest Service is moving towards closing its Island Park Ranger Station, thus making the agency interested in an intergovernmental visitor center. This project would entail an evaluation of service needs at either a central location (Yale Creek intersection with Highway 20) or at the northern end of Island Park at Valley View to serve as an Idaho Welcome Center and state gateway. Those coming north from Idaho Falls would need to be served by the Ashton Visitor Center that would need to be open longer hours.



Measure: Public Land Visitation

Plan Theme: 6.3 – Develop the recreation industry as a means for economic development and enhanced quality of life

Source: E.3 – Fremont County Economic Development Strategy

PROJECT AA.10 ISLAND PARK COMMUNITY FACILITIES: FEASIBILITY STUDY

Summary: This project has been in the planning phases for more than 15 years, but with money raised for a historical museum and potential land donation, this project could be ready to move ahead with a commitment from the City of Island Park and local leadership. Without City support, it could be difficult to leverage the pledged money and land with a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) or a USDA-Rural Development Community Facilities loan and grant. A feasibility study is needed to fully explore the potential construction and operating costs depending on the breadth of uses intended. The feasibility study would compare possible funding mechanisms to

support the operations of the community center. An auditorium district could be formed for that purpose, and it could have flexible boundaries that match the developed part of the Island Park area, rather than the much smaller city limits that a resort tax would follow. This project would need to be led by the residents of the Island Park area; the County should only play a supporting role.

Measure: Regional Interconnectedness

Plan Theme: 6.3 – Develop the recreation industry as a means for economic development and enhanced quality of life

Source: E.3 – Fremont County Economic Development Strategy





THIS INDICATOR MEASURES THE TOTAL VALUE OF RESIDENT AND NON-RESIDENT HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSES.

Why

Hunting and fishing are activities that tie many values of the Greater Yellowstone region together. By charging fees for licenses, permits and tags, a primary year round recreation activity is able to perpetuate the acquisition and preservation of habitat and provide ongoing stewardship of public lands. The economic impact of the industry as a whole goes far beyond the fees to support local economies due to the need for supportive services such as outfitting, guides, supply manufacturing and more. The value of licenses specifically illustrates the trend of the industry as a whole as it is based on resident and non-resident purchases that qualify them to engage in hunting and fishing activities. Non-resident licenses in particular are much more expensive than resident licenses and can have a significant influence on the overall value. Monitoring the actual number of licenses issued will help demonstrate expected impact to the economy and to the natural lands where hunting and fishing takes place.

This indicator is also a reflection of forest health and ecosystem productivity as interest in hunting and fishing is tied to abundance of game and the overall experience of wilderness. In addition, the hunting and fishing culture is a significant component of the region's character and heritage, supporting the type of overall sense of place desired by the majority of residents

UNITS OF MEASURE

This indicator is measured as total value of licenses sold in each jurisdiction. Licenses are issued by authorized vendors and state Fish and Game offices across the state. The data is tracked internally with location information and also in terms of resident status, and term of validity (one-year, three-year, lifetime). The indicator is tracked by licenses sold per jurisdiction annually. To evaluate trends in the region against state-wide trends, data on state-wide license sales can also be compiled.

SOURCE

Data for this indicator can be obtained from state Fish and Game Licensing departments.



**THIS INDICATOR
MEASURES THE NUMBER
OF VISITORS TO
PUBLIC LANDS.**

Why

The character of the Greater Yellowstone region is tied to the high proportion of lands preserved in the public trust as state and national parks and other lands, such as national forests and recreation areas. The recreation opportunities, quantity and quality of wildlife, and scenic amenities attract year round visitors. The economic impacts of such visits to the surrounding communities vary, but are significant parts of the overall regional economy. Counting and monitoring the number of visitors to these public lands over time helps to gauge the potential and actual economic, environmental, and social impacts of these visitors.

The number of visitors to these public lands can also be used as a comparative statistic when determining the impact visitors have to overall economic activity in the region. Visitors to public lands impact resources outside of the parks including roads and hospitality services, and the number of visitors serves to reinforce the importance of resource conservation. Continuing to support state and national parks not only attracts more visitors that inject spending in local economies, but also preserves the natural resource function of the parks.

UNITS OF MEASURE

This indicator is measured in total visitors. It may be reported in terms of in-state and out-of-state visitors by some agencies.

Increasing values for this indicator demonstrate increasing popularity of and visitation to public lands. Decreasing values might suggest changes in visitor interests, economic conditions, or accessibility of public lands.

SOURCE

Data for this indicator are available from public land management agencies including but not limited to the National Park Service; Bureau of Land Management; and state, county, and municipal parks and recreation departments.

Annual visitor use statistics for national parks are available from the Integrated Resource Management Applications site maintained by the National Park Service (see <https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/>).

Visitation estimates for Forest Service properties are available through the USDA Forest Service National Visitor Use Monitoring Natural Resource Manager (see <http://apps.fs.usda.gov/nrm/nvum/results/>).

Visitor data for Bureau of Land Management properties are available through the University of Idaho BLM Visitor Survey Portal (see <https://www.uidaho.edu/cnr/park-studies-unit/blm/reports>).

Visitor use statistics for state parks and lands are available as follows:

- Idaho Parks Visitation Statistics: <http://parksandrecreation.idaho.gov/about-parks-recreation>
- Wyoming State Parks Visitation Statistics: <http://wyoparks.state.wy.us/Planning/VisitorUse.aspx>

Note that county, municipal, and other public land visitor use data may not be routinely collected or reported, but should be monitored to the extent possible.



**THIS INDICATOR
MEASURES THE PUBLIC
TRAIL SYSTEM AS IT
RELATES TO OVERALL
POPULATION LEVELS.**

Why

The ability to recreate on a year round basis is part of what makes the Greater Yellowstone Region so special. Having the opportunity to find less traveled routes as well as access popular attractions is an important aspect of living here. Recreational trails help direct wilderness traffic and preserve fragile areas from being heavily impacted by off trail users. As population and visitor levels continue to increase, the extent to which the trail network adds additional miles will help define the quality of the recreational experience.

Trail construction provides some economic and recreational opportunities directly during the construction period as well as encouraging visitors to return and enjoy the region's natural wonders in a relatively managed way once complete. This indicator can help to illustrate the supply of recreational access which can be examined in concert with other regional indicators to develop a more robust sense of how balanced the amount of trails are with the amount of people looking to use them.

UNITS OF MEASURE

This indicator is measured in formal (not illegal) miles of trails per capita.

Increasing values for this indicator show that trail development is keeping pace with population growth. Decreasing values for this indicator could suggest that population growth is outpacing investment in trail development or that there are limited opportunities for additional or expanded trails.

SOURCE

Data for this indicator includes trail mileage and population. Trail mileage data is available from municipal and county parks and recreation departments or GIS records. GIS data is also available from state and federal agencies that provide and maintain public trails. Resources for trail GIS data include but are not limited to the following.

- Idaho Geospatial Data Clearinghouse: <http://inside.uidaho.edu/index.html>
- Wyoming Geospatial Hub: <http://inside.uidaho.edu/index.html>
- National Park Service Integrated Resource Management Applications (IRMA): <https://irma.nps.gov/App/>

Population data by county and select cities that are census designated places are available annually from the American Fact Finder website provided by the US Census Bureau: <http://factfinder2.census.gov>.