NORTH FORK PAYETTE RIVER WATERSHED COALITION WORK GROUP:

Drought Planning, Conservation and Climate Change

VALLEY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

North Fork Payette River Watershed Coalition

KEY CONCERN OF GROUP

Integrating land use and water management planning is a crucial step that communities can take to addressing the interrelated challenges of climate change, ongoing population growth and decreasing water supplies.

TOP PRIORITIES

- INTEGRATION OF LAND USE AND WATER MANAGEMENT PLANNING
- WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN
- GROUNDWATER PROTECTION
- WATERWAYS MANAGEMENT PLAN
- WATER CONSERVATION

CONTACT INFORMATION

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IDEAL OUTCOME:

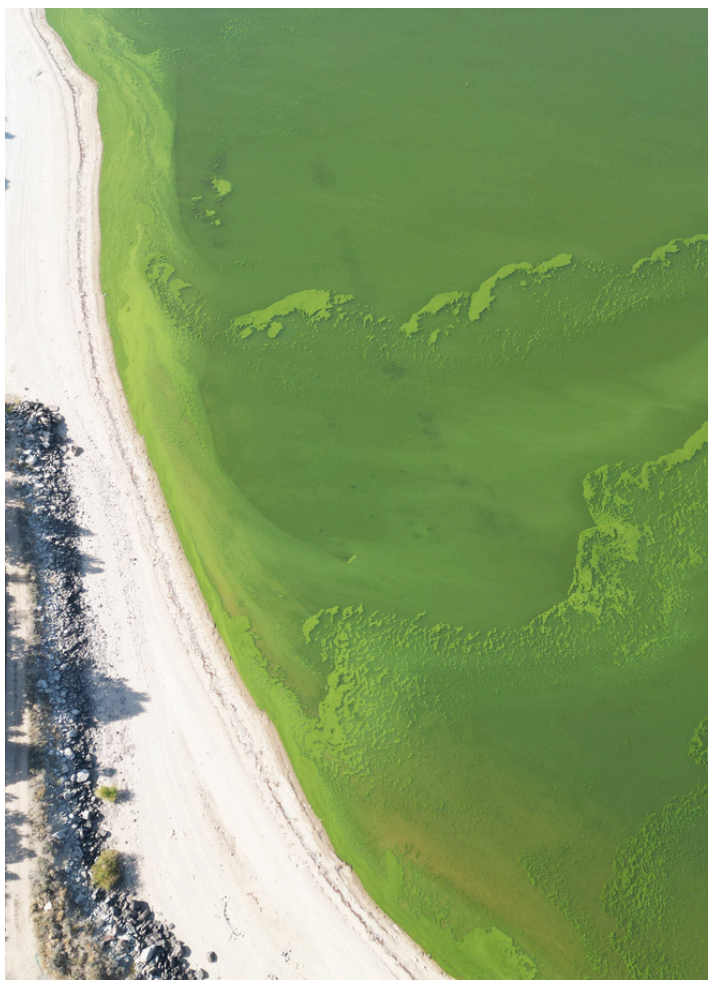
Integration of Land Use and Water Management Planning.

- Integrate water related goals into one blended land use and water management plan.
- Comprehensive Plans must reflect a common understanding of how climate change, population growth and land use patterns are impacting water availability and quality.

TOP PRIORITY:

Form partnerships within and across jurisdictions.

- To increase knowledge and support for incorporating water saving measures into land use policies.
- Incorporate water management agencies into all stages of the development approval process.
- Emphasize water quality protection in land use policies and ordinances and consider climate change in all decisions.



ACTION ITEMS:

Each community and watershed needs to do a Water Availability Assessment where they map and understand the source, including applicable water rights, capacity, and present conditions of their communities' water supply, distribution system and infrastructure.

- Include the vulnerability, health of the water supply and the projected effects of climate change.
- Cities should develop a water budget
- A formal request to IDWR to monitor more wells in Valley County.

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IDEAL OUTCOME:

Water Resource Management Plan

- Every jurisdiction has integrated into their land use planning document a Water Resource Management Plan including policies to stop potential harmful pollutants from entering surface or groundwater.

ACTION ITEM:

Design all aspects of landscaping to reduce water demand, retain runoff, decrease flooding and recharge groundwater.

TOP PRIORITY:

Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plans consistent across the jurisdictions informed by climate change, ensuring that stormwater infrastructure is properly sized to accommodate emerging climate driven events.

- Development agreements, or PUDs, should include water efficiency standards and watershed protection efforts.

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IDEAL OUTCOME:

P&Z Commissioners as well as Valley County Commissioners must seriously consider the harmful effects that may occur to groundwater resources before approving subdivision development, specifically residential developments using individual wells and septic systems.

TOP PRIORITY:

Commissioners should request a nutrient-pathogen evaluation from IDEQ of parcels where there is a question of contamination from high septic density.

ACTION ITEM:

IDEQ will be releasing a septic guidance study hopefully within a year which will specifically address recommended septic density in specific areas in Valley County. Until then, precaution would be advised concerning the proliferation of septic systems in the valley.

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IDEAL OUTCOME:

The Valley County Waterways Management Plan is implemented.

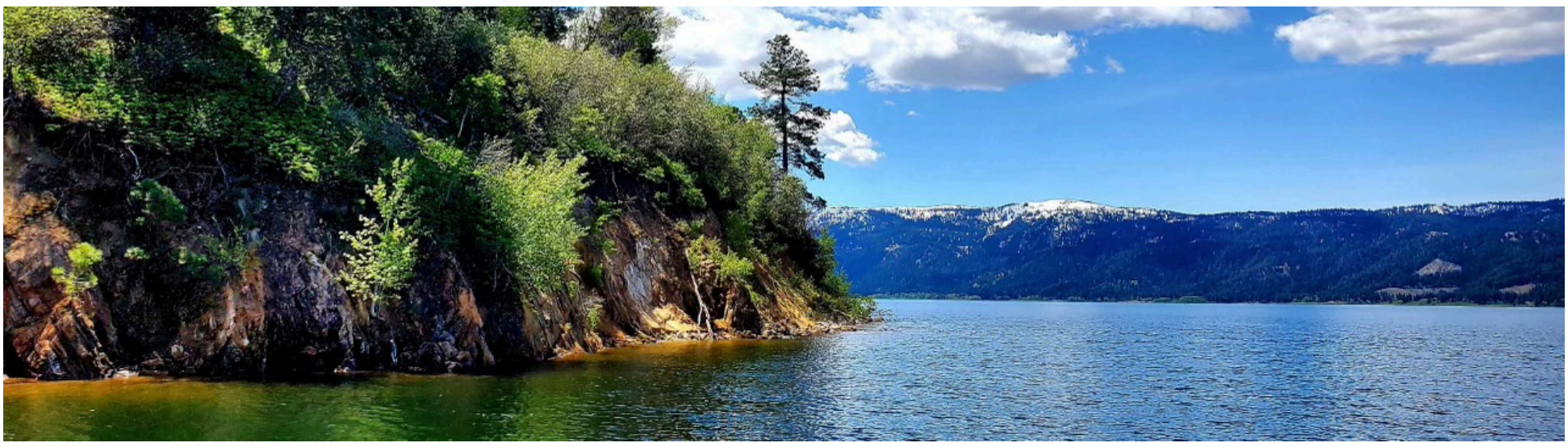
TOP PRIORITY:

Cities of McCall, Donnelly and Cascade work together with the County to fund the necessary data collection, surveys, monitoring of indicators and implementation of necessary actions recommended in the Waterways Management Plan.

ACTION ITEMS:

City councils and county commissioners abide by and implement the Waterways Management Plan. Integration of a comprehensive aquatic weed management plan is also essential.

- Monitoring phosphorus levels in the near shore environment.
- Pollution of waterways and groundwater decreases water availability for drinking and irrigation. Higher temperatures, lower snow pack and drought driven by climate change will also impact water availability as will population growth and demand. All these factors interacting will reduce our critical water supply and make planning for a water crisis essential.



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IDEAL OUTCOME:

Water Conservation

- Valley County and cities adopt Water Smart land use and development policies

TOP PRIORITY:

Water conservation, efficiency and re-use of water as a priority in all development plans. Incentivize and assist current customers to reduce water demand.

- Adopt a conservation rate structuring strategy for water bills including drought-demand pricing and higher rates for users when drought is declared and cut-offs for overuse
- Create a program to support households with low incomes to meet water efficiency standards.

ACTION ITEMS:

Distribute with permits: landscape guidelines with specific recommendations on water efficiency, plants, soil enhancement, mulching and irrigation.

- Reducing irrigation to lawns during drought.
- Limit use of turf grasses to functional applications.
- Education programs in schools, as well as county and city outreach that explain our watershed. Specifically, how the ways we use our water affects others, our environment and our water supply.

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