



# TETON VIEW REGIONAL PLAN

*for sustainable development*

MAY 2015

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# *Preface*



*Sustainable communities*  
*partnership*

On June 16, 2009, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) joined together to help communities nationwide improve access to affordable housing, increase transportation options, and lower transportation costs, all while protecting the environment. This “Sustainable Communities Partnership” identified six livability principles that would form a framework for the variety of funding programs that each agency intended to design over a multi-year period. These principles are:

- Provide more transportation choices
- Provide equitable, affordable housing
- Enhance economic competitiveness
- Support existing communities
- Coordinate policies and leverage investment
- Value communities and neighborhoods

The Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant program was launched by HUD in 2010 to encourage cities and counties to collaborate on studies related to regional land use, affordable housing, economic development, community vitality, food equity, public transportation and environmental quality. The grants also provided for training and technical assistance for local communities as means to build their resilience for the future.

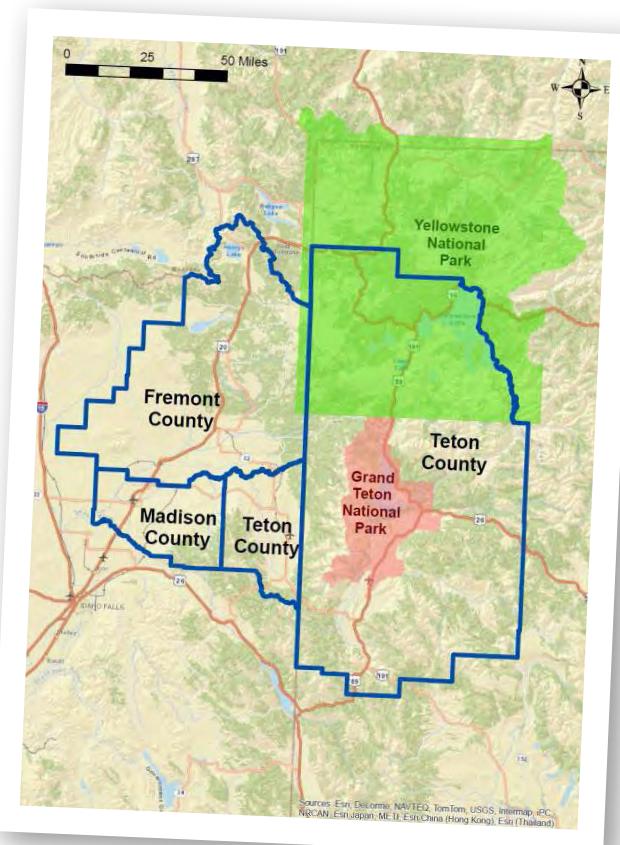
In November 2011, the Western Greater Yellowstone Consortium (Consortium) was awarded a \$1.5 million HUD grant and launched its three-year planning process in February 2012. The four counties that comprised the Consortium were Fremont, Madison and Teton counties, Idaho, and Teton County, Wyoming. Additional Consortium members included the Idaho cities of Island Park, Ashton, St. Anthony, Rexburg, Driggs, and Victor, plus the Town of Jackson, Wyoming. State and federal agencies



that signed onto the Consortium were the Caribou-Targhee and Bridger-Teton national forests, the U.S. Department of the Interior (USDI) Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Upper Snake River District, the Idaho Department of Lands, and the Idaho Transportation Department. The Yellowstone Business Partnership (now dissolved) and the Ashton Community Foundation participated as nonprofit partners in the Consortium. As the original applicant for the HUD Grant, Fremont County served in a leadership role and handled project management and grant administration.

The findings, conclusions and recommendations of some 20 research studies and data assessments were integrated into a draft document that received public scrutiny in February/March 2015. The final Teton View Regional Plan profiles high-priority community-scale projects and multi-sector initiatives to be led voluntarily by local cities, counties and organizations. Additional projects are summarized that may be implemented by localities over the long-term.

Over the past three years Consortium members have focused on what the region shares in common while respecting the varied economic, political and cultural views of each community. The group has accepted the reality of differing perspectives across the two states and four counties, and presents this Plan as a voluntary, “livability roadmap” that will guide each jurisdiction in its future development. The Plan outlines parallel paths that each locality may travel independently or through coordinated, region-wide implementation.





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Section One



*Because we lead regional lives*



## An Introduction to the Teton View Regional Plan

The Teton View Regional Plan for Sustainable Development (Plan) has been designed to help city and county officials, and public land managers better coordinate their land-use planning, resource management, and community development efforts for the region's long-term benefit. The studies and tools developed during the planning process should help communities assess their current situation and effectively respond to changing socioeconomic and environmental conditions for years to come.

The Plan was written on a four-county, two-state scale because past studies have shown that our 83,000+ residents actually lead regional lives. Many live in one county, but commute daily to work in another. Rural residents tend to travel great distances to shop or visit medical facilities that are found in the region's larger cities. While there may be outstanding recreation choices in each community, most will travel across state and county lines for the best fishing or thrilling adventures far from home.



Results of the 4,000-person "Housing/Quality-of-Life" survey conducted for this Plan clearly show that people *choose* to live in Fremont, Madison, or Teton counties, Idaho, or Teton County, Wyoming. When averaged across the entire Teton View region:

- 79% of respondents choose to live here for the fresh air and clean water
- 79% cite the safe, small-town feel
- 77% cite the natural environment, wildlife and scenery
- 73% cite the many outdoor recreation opportunities
- 62% cite connections to their neighbors and community

Fifty percent or fewer of all survey respondents in all counties cited job opportunities and good quality services as reasons for living in the area.

Almost 50% of respondents in Fremont County cited the importance of family and farmland connections to the quality of their lives, but fewer than 20% of respondents in the other counties cited those connections. While affordable housing increases the quality of life for 51% of Fremont County respondents, affordable housing was cited by only 21% respondents in Teton County, Idaho, and only 4% in Teton County, Wyoming, where housing overall is less affordable.

These statistics proved useful in shaping the themes and strategies presented in sections 3 and 4 of this plan. The conclusions from the 20 research studies also contributed to the strategies and recommendations that are incorporated into 60 regional initiatives and community-scale projects proposed for implementation. As they are voluntarily pursued, these projects will help improve access to quality housing, well-paying jobs, healthy foods, outdoor recreation and public transportation, all while protecting the region's natural resources and working landscapes. In summary, the Teton View Regional Plan provides a platform for improving the region's livability and quality of life, and for building more inclusive and resilient communities on both sides of the Teton Range.

## The Plan's Guiding Documents

The Regional Plan features three companion documents for those localities seeking more specific guidance in pursuing equitable, sustainable development and building resilience into their economies and infrastructure:

- Model Development Code – Prepared especially for small cities in this region, the Model Code provides a menu of land-use concepts, building types, zoning districts, and design standards that a locality may choose to adopt to advance its sustainability goals and objectives.



- Greater Yellowstone Framework for Sustainable Development (GY-Framework) – This voluntary, ecosystem-based rating system was originally designed for private developments seeking a sustainability certification analogous to the LEED Green Building program. A version designed for local governments was developed under the HUD Grant with voluntary certification criteria that are cross-walked to the Model Development Code.
- Regional Analysis of Impediments (RAI) – Fremont County was required by HUD to undertake "Fair Housing Planning" as a condition of receiving the grant and signed a certification that the Consortium would affirmatively further fair housing. This means that, under the grant, the Western Greater Yellowstone Consortium signatory members:
  - » Have conducted an analysis to identify impediments to fair housing choice
  - » Will plan appropriate actions to overcome the effects of any identified impediments
  - » Will maintain records reflecting the analysis and actions taken

Taken together, the Plan and its 20 supportive studies and companion tools chart a realistic path towards economic and community sustainability across a changing social and environmental landscape. As they are implemented, the Plan's recommended strategies, initiatives and projects will help promote equity, fairness, and quality of life for current and future residents.



## Navigating the Regional Plan

The Teton View Regional Plan for Sustainable Development (Plan) is presented in five sections, including this introductory section (Section I). Section II provides an overview of the region's explosive volcanic origins that continue to shape the landscape and the lives of its residents. Sections III and IV present the themes, strategies, and recommended projects that emerged from the 20 research studies supported by the HUD Grant and informed by existing city and county comprehensive plans. The themes, strategies, and projects – plus relevant evaluation metrics – are presented in six chapters that correspond to six regional character types:

1. Distinctive Major Cities
2. Smaller Cities
3. Vital Connections
4. Agricultural Areas
5. Public Land Resources
6. Four-Season Recreation

A total of 60 regional initiatives and projects were proposed in the Plan's public review draft to advance the strategies. During the public review period the Western Greater Yellowstone Consortium asked the public to identify the proposed initiatives and projects of greatest importance to the region.

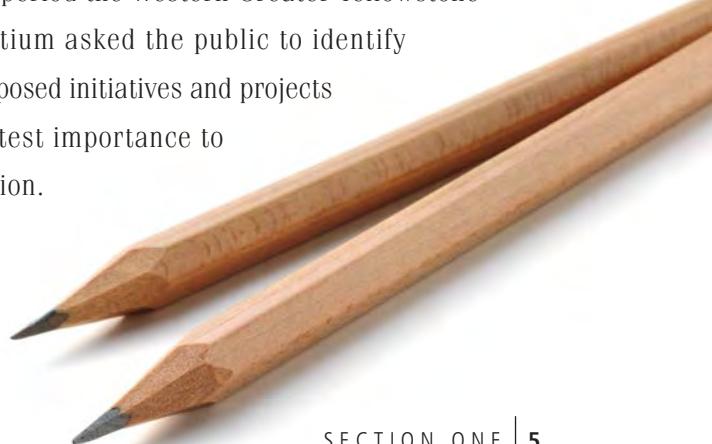
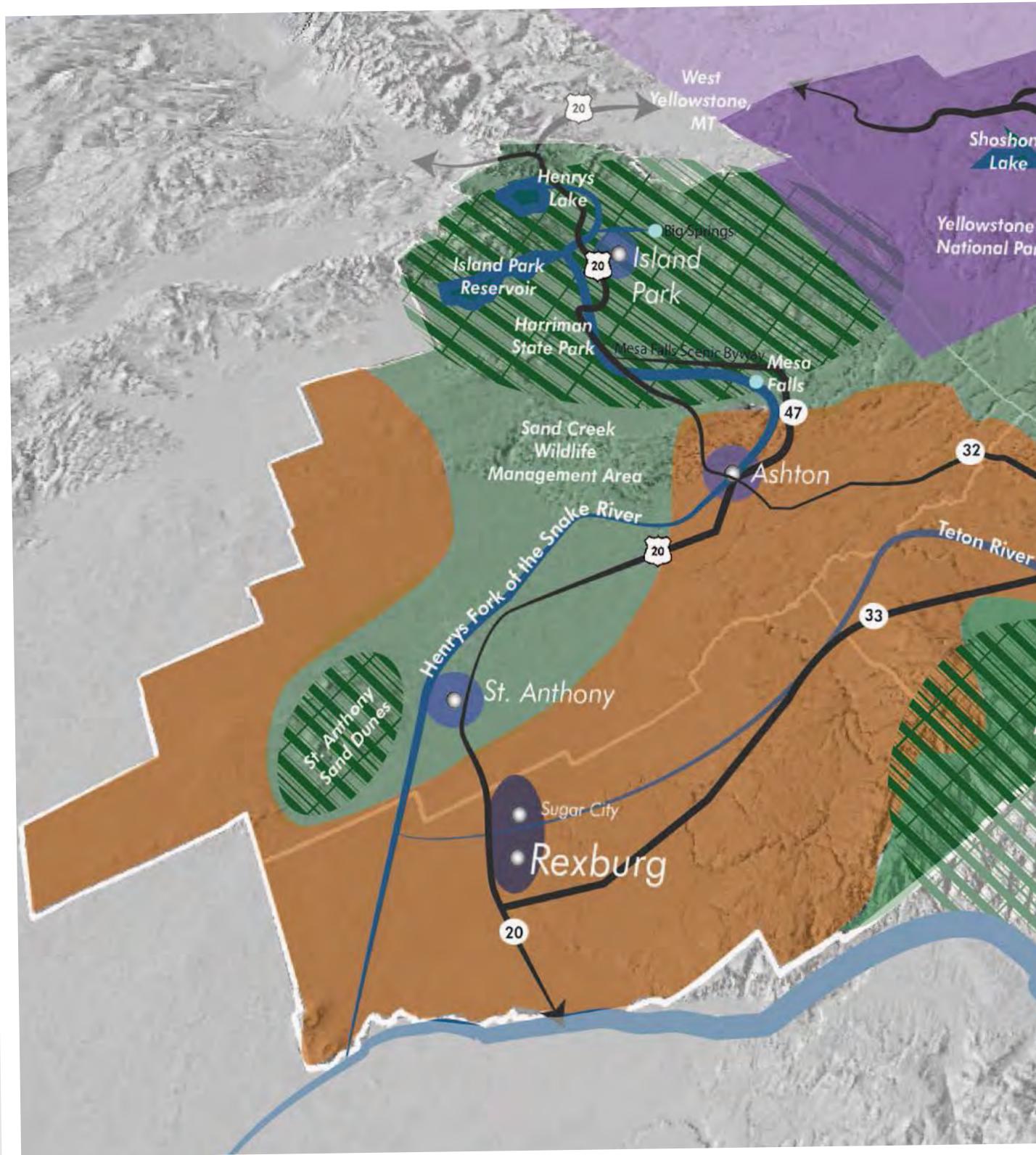
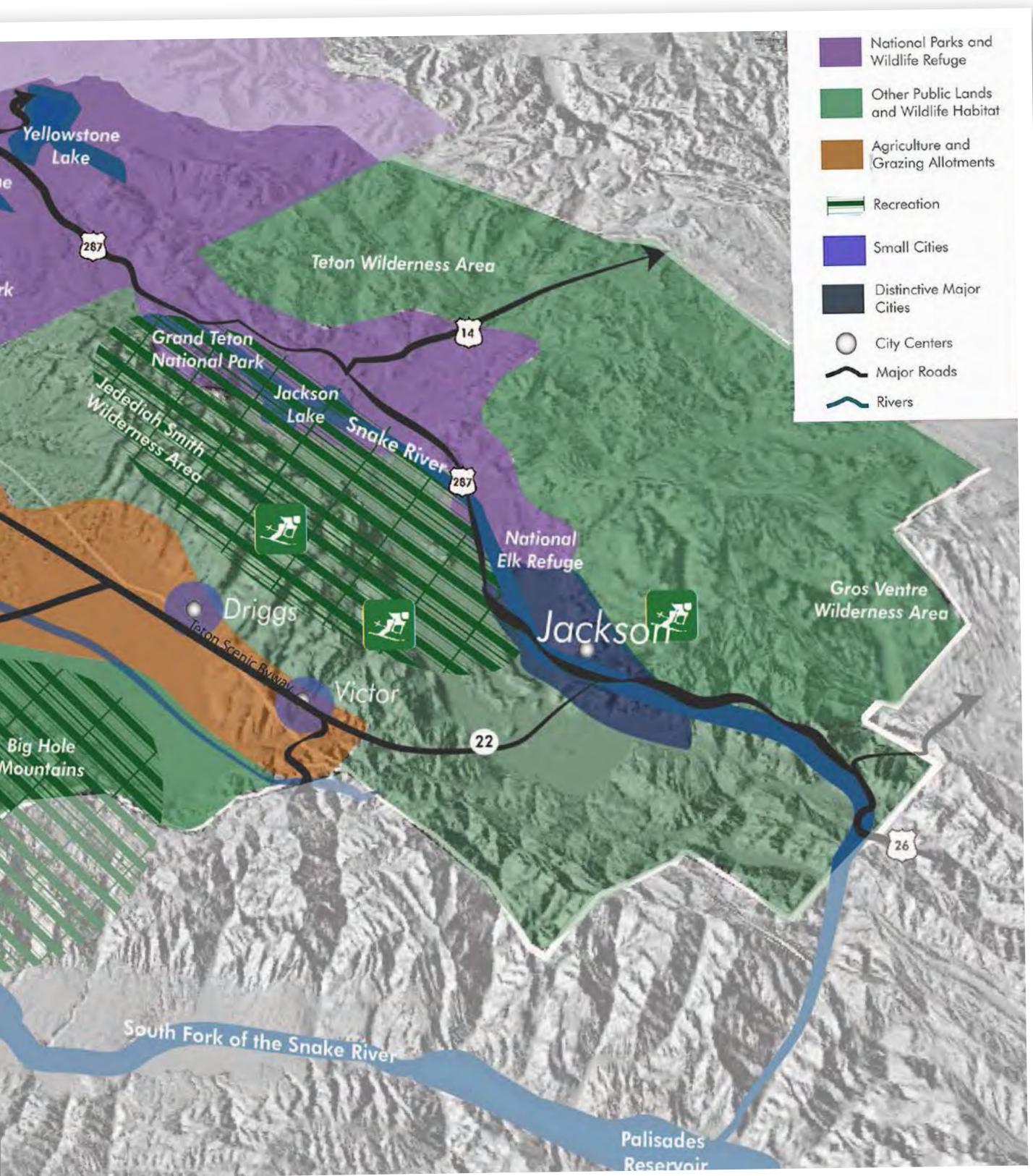


FIGURE 1. LANDSCAPE CHARACTERS





Those initiatives and projects that received public support AND have secured local, voluntary leadership are listed in each chapter as implementation priorities.

Finally, Section V lists the 20 research studies that form the Teton View resource library (organized in seven appendices) plus other references used in the preparation of the Plan.

## About Sustainability Indicators

Woven throughout this document are a series of “indicators” to measure outcomes from implementing the Teton View Regional Plan. In the simplest sense, an indicator monitors the condition of a system and shows how well it is working, whether it is a company, a financial market, or a geographic region.

A sustainability indicator, particularly in the context of a community or region, focuses on the relationships and interactions among key elements such as the economy, environment, and society.

Indicators can serve as alerts to emerging problems or challenges and help policy makers recognize the steps that need to be taken to address them. Characteristics of effective indicators include the following:<sup>1</sup>

- They are relevant to the goals of regional plans and/or local plans and track meaningful desired outcomes
- They are clear and concise and do not rely on overly complex definitions or calculations that are difficult for stakeholders, decision makers or the public to understand
- They are well grounded in good-quality data and are therefore credible
- They are usable in making decisions that affect the region, reflecting topics that regional planners can address through local plans or policies
- They provide for a long-range view, rather than tracking disconnected short-term outcomes
- They are based on reliable and regularly reported data and can be consistently and accurately tracked over time, and
- They cover multiple social, economic, and/or environmental topics.

## THE ROLE OF INDICATORS IN THE TETON VIEW REGIONAL PLAN

By regularly monitoring their performance, project leaders can use sustainability indicators to determine whether the region is moving toward or away from its desired outcomes.

<sup>1</sup> Hart, Maureen. 2006. *Guide to Sustainable Community Indicators*. 2nd Ed. Sustainable Measures, West Hartford, CT.

More specifically, sustainability indicators – designed to be well aligned with the Plan – will help monitor and measure progress across the Plan’s themes and strategies. They will signal whether progress is being made toward intended outcomes, and whether corrective action needed to achieve new policies or initiatives is necessary.

Regional sustainability indicators can also be a powerful way to help each county and city in the region, as well as other state and federal resource agencies, link and align their plans. If each major plan in the region – for example, each county or city comprehensive plan – were to integrate a common set of indicators, this would provide a platform for collaborating interests, sharing data to understand regional trends, and coordinating on those issues that are common to the region.

Finally, coordinating the tracking of regional indicators can also help organizations such as non-profits, schools, and chambers of commerce to collaborate and partner with public agencies on issues of shared interest.

While there is no one proposed central organization to track and report on the indicators, the Plan provides guidance for local, state and/or federal agencies to integrate them into their respective plans so that each jurisdiction can work toward common regional outcomes with similar indicators. Periodically, jurisdictions will come together to collaborate on regional issues and evaluate indicator trends.

The Plan’s indicators are the culmination of a multi-year process to discuss with the region’s stakeholders what matters to them and how to measure what matters. They also reflect extensive research into indicator best practices, and how the region can best build on available data to consistently measure progress.

## **TYPES OF INDICATORS**

The Plan includes both system and performance indicators.<sup>2</sup> Performance indicators include metrics specific to topics such as agriculture, jobs/economic growth, multi-modal transportation, education, wildlife, recreation, and affordable housing. Performance indicators are listed under specific chapters and themes; the Plan includes a total of 17 performance indicators.

System indicators can be considered as the “vital signs” for the health of the region as a whole, focusing on critical issues of quality of life as well as the interdependence of the region. The Plan includes three system indicators addressing healthy waters, housing and transportation affordability, and the degree of interconnectedness among the region’s cities and counties. For each system indicator, identifying regional organizations or entities to compile data, regularly track trends, and communicate results with others in the region would help manage these regional vital signs over time.

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<sup>2</sup> Innes, Judith and David Booher. 2000. *Indicators for Sustainable Communities: A strategy building on complexity theory and distributed intelligence*. *Planning Theory and Practice*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 173-186.



# Why

Water is important to the entire region for economic, environmental, and social reasons. Additionally, "clean water and air" was the attribute most valued by the region's residents for contributing to quality of life.

Water sustains the region's recreation and fisheries. It is also critical for the region's agriculture and recreation industries. With a changing climate water will be increasingly stressed as precipitation patterns change and drought conditions threaten water availability. Watersheds also cut across counties and water quality is tied to good land use practices.

As such, three primary elements contribute to this "healthy waters" system indicator. It measures overarching conditions and designations that indicate threats to water quantity and quality including composite water supply, groundwater levels, and total miles/area of waters impaired by pollutants. Together these indicators can help illustrate when major changes are occurring that threaten the region's water use and health. As data may become more available over time, the region may wish to add groundwater quality to this system indicator as groundwater contamination is also a concern in the region.

THIS INDICATOR IS  
A COMPOSITE OF  
THREE DIFFERENT  
INDICATORS FOCUSED  
ON THE HEALTH OF  
THE REGION'S WATERS,  
INCLUDING QUANTITY  
AND QUALITY.

## UNITS OF MEASURE

Components of this indicator include the following:

- Groundwater levels at select representative wells in each jurisdiction. (Depth in Feet)
- Surface Water Supply Indices (SWSIs) for the major watershed basins covering each jurisdiction. These indices measure available surface water supply in relation to historical levels and are calculated by adding spring reservoir carryover (end vs. beginning of the season) and spring streamflow runoff levels (Average Total Flow in Acre Feet and/or Index Value). Essentially, these indices are measuring trends in basin-level consumption vs. natural supply (snowpack, runoff).
- Water quality impairment, which is measured in total acres of surface water bodies and miles of streams listed as impaired on state water quality reports 303(d).

For this system indicator, looking at the components separately as well as in relation to each other will help provide a complete picture of water health. For example, water supply as measured by the SWSI provides a clear trend-line of water supply over time, but since that may be more affected by such variables as annual precipitation, it is important to also look at groundwater levels to see whether they are both trending the same direction in a given year, or whether there is a disparity. Increasing depths to water table would be indicative of less sustainable overall water use patterns in terms of aquifer recharge, while increasing values for the SWSI would be positive indicators

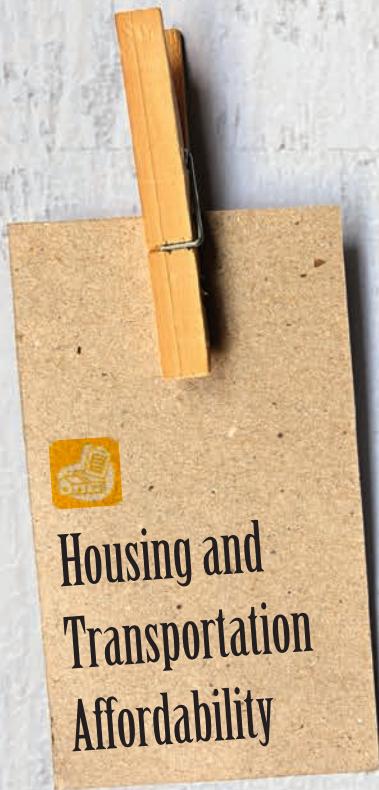
that water management is either being more effective, or that weather patterns are resulting in more moisture. For the water quality component, increasing area/miles of impaired waters could indicate a need for improved pollution management practices.

## SOURCE

Sources for the components of this indicator are identified below.

- Groundwater Levels:
  - » Idaho: Data for this component are kept by the Idaho Department of Water Resources and are publicly available. The portal is located at: <http://www.idwr.idaho.gov/hydro.online/gwl/>
  - » Wyoming: Data for this component are monitored by the Ground Water Division of the Wyoming State Engineer's Office located at: <http://seo.wyo.gov/ground-water>
- Surface Water Supply:
  - » Data for this component are managed by the National Resource Conservation Service through the SWSI portal found at: <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/wsf/sysi.html>
- Water Quality:
  - » Data for this indicator are reported every two years to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The 303(d) listings are available from the EPA at: [http://iaspub.epa.gov/waters10/attains\\_nation\\_cy.control?p\\_report\\_type=T](http://iaspub.epa.gov/waters10/attains_nation_cy.control?p_report_type=T)





## Housing and Transportation Affordability

THIS INDICATOR IS A COMPOSITE INDICATOR THAT INCLUDES HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION COSTS AS A PERCENTAGE OF WAGES.

Why

Housing costs and an ability to earn a good living wage were the top threats to the region identified by quality of life survey participants. Because of the relatively low cost of housing in Fremont and Teton counties, Idaho,

people travel long distances from home to work in Rexburg and Jackson, respectively. Depending on the distance, social impacts may result including increased isolation in small cities and loss of diversity in the region's larger cities. In some cases the reduction in costs paid for housing in a distant county is more than offset by the additional costs of commuting.

One of the most significant variables that affects both economic and social impacts is the time spent commuting. Longer commutes take away time that could otherwise be utilized more productively participating in community activities or earning additional income. In addition, increased numbers of commuter vehicles can stress existing transportation infrastructure and affect the region's Class I air quality.

This indicator demonstrates the interconnectedness and scale of housing and transportation in individual counties. Since these counties are also closely intertwined, with jobs being in one county and housing in another, the indicator can also indicate disparities between wages and available housing between counties. This indicator can also be tied to transit availability; since transit is typically more affordable than using a personal vehicle.

### UNITS OF MEASURE

This indicator is measured in terms of a combined housing and transportation percentage. Each jurisdiction (city and county) will have a percentage of housing affordability as a function of annual money spent relative to income and the same percentage for transportation costs. The sum of these percentages will result in the Housing and Transportation Index for that city or county.

Increasing values for this indicator could mean that there continues to be less affordable housing proximate to job centers that can pay enough to live in these places. Decreasing values could mean that wages are increasing, home prices and rents are decreasing, consumers are utilizing public transit at a higher rate, or some combination of the above.

### SOURCE

Data for this indicator are available from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) at: <http://www.locationaffordability.info/> and can be analyzed by navigating to the Location Affordability Index page and entering the specific cities, counties, or zip codes. It is recommended to use the default variables to ensure consistency, but the data can also be altered to look at specific demographic populations. A willing and able regional organization could be identified to regularly track and report out on trends over time.



# Why

This indicator examines the extent to which cities and counties are working together to reach common goals. The number of opportunities that local governments and organizations are creating to interact are reflected in the number of cross-jurisdictional agreements and participation in collaborative meetings. By combining this potential with a measure of the extent to which localities are tracking performance on common sustainability indicators, a broad picture will emerge illustrating the degree of connectivity.

As local governments form intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) to work with one another out of necessity and desire, there is a shared intent for the agreements to result in success. That shared intent tends to build rapport and understanding over time. When representatives from different cities and counties participate in inter-jurisdictional meetings, issues can be aired, common ground can be sought, and resolution attained. As the localities move through their processes to determine which indicators to track more robustly, the extent to which they are mirroring efforts in adjacent jurisdictions will result in stronger bonds and more complete information.

This indicator is a baseline of interconnectedness, which can be supplemented with looking at the more qualitative aspects of relationships. In addition to how many times people see each other and agree, the quality of those interactions will help dictate to what extent a spirit of collaboration grows.

## UNITS OF MEASURE

This indicator is measured as a sum of independent variables. The number of IGAs in place for a given year between multiple jurisdictions will be combined with the number of inter-jurisdictional meetings attended by multiple entities. The number of indicators will be included when at least two jurisdictions have reported on them. The three numbers will be added into an index.

An increase in the indicator will most likely mean that there is greater collaboration among jurisdictions and that there are relatively frequent opportunities for interaction. A decrease could indicate fewer opportunities to interact or that fewer indicators are being tracked over time. Though the total IGAs over the course of the year should account for some variability, it is possible that a number could come to their conclusion at once, which may skew the indicator downward.

## SOURCE

Data for this indicator will be compiled internally by each locality, agency, or organization. A willing and able regional organization could be identified to regularly track and report out on trends over time. The number of IGAs and meetings will be recorded, as will the indicators that are being tracked. These data points should be shared annually and cross-checked to arrive at the final index value.

## Public Participation Requirements and Philosophy

From the beginning of the grant process, HUD emphasized the importance of involving the public in all activities associated with the Western Greater Yellowstone Consortium. The Consortium members agreed and embraced the opportunity to design a full suite of public participation activities consistent with the fundamental principles of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2). Those principles include the IAP2 Core Values (<http://www.iap2.org/?page=A4>) and Code of Ethics (<http://www.iap2.org/?page=8>) to guide the design and implementation of public

involvement activities. The complexity of the project as a whole has afforded multiple opportunities for participation by stakeholders, depending on their specific interests.

In what is called its Public Participation Spectrum, IAP2 also outlines five possible levels of public involvement ([http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/Foundations\\_Course/IAP2\\_P2\\_Spectrum.pdf](http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/Foundations_Course/IAP2_P2_Spectrum.pdf)) including inform, consult, involve, collaborate, and empower. Four of those levels have been used over the duration of the project, in accordance with specific needs as shown in Figure 2.

**FIGURE 2.** IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum

### IAP2'S PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SPECTRUM

The IAP2 Federation has developed the Spectrum to help groups define the public's role in any public participation process. The IAP2 Spectrum is quickly becoming an international standard.



INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION					
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

SOURCE: IAP2 International Federation

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**Inform:** The Consortium has hosted a website (<http://sustainableyellowstone.org/library/>) that has been updated as information becomes available. All documents produced over the course of the project are posted here. Documentation of all public participation, including Consortium meeting records and annual summit presentations, can be found on the project website.

**Consult:** The Consortium has invited input from the public at various junctures with each individual study and throughout the project. One example is the Wayfinding Signage Project for the City of Driggs, Idaho. Following a community workshop where information was shared to explain “wayfinding,” stakeholders had the opportunity to submit comments and assist a contractor in developing Sign Design Plan for Driggs. Please refer to the specific project reports contained in the appendices for descriptions of how each contractor has consulted with stakeholders.

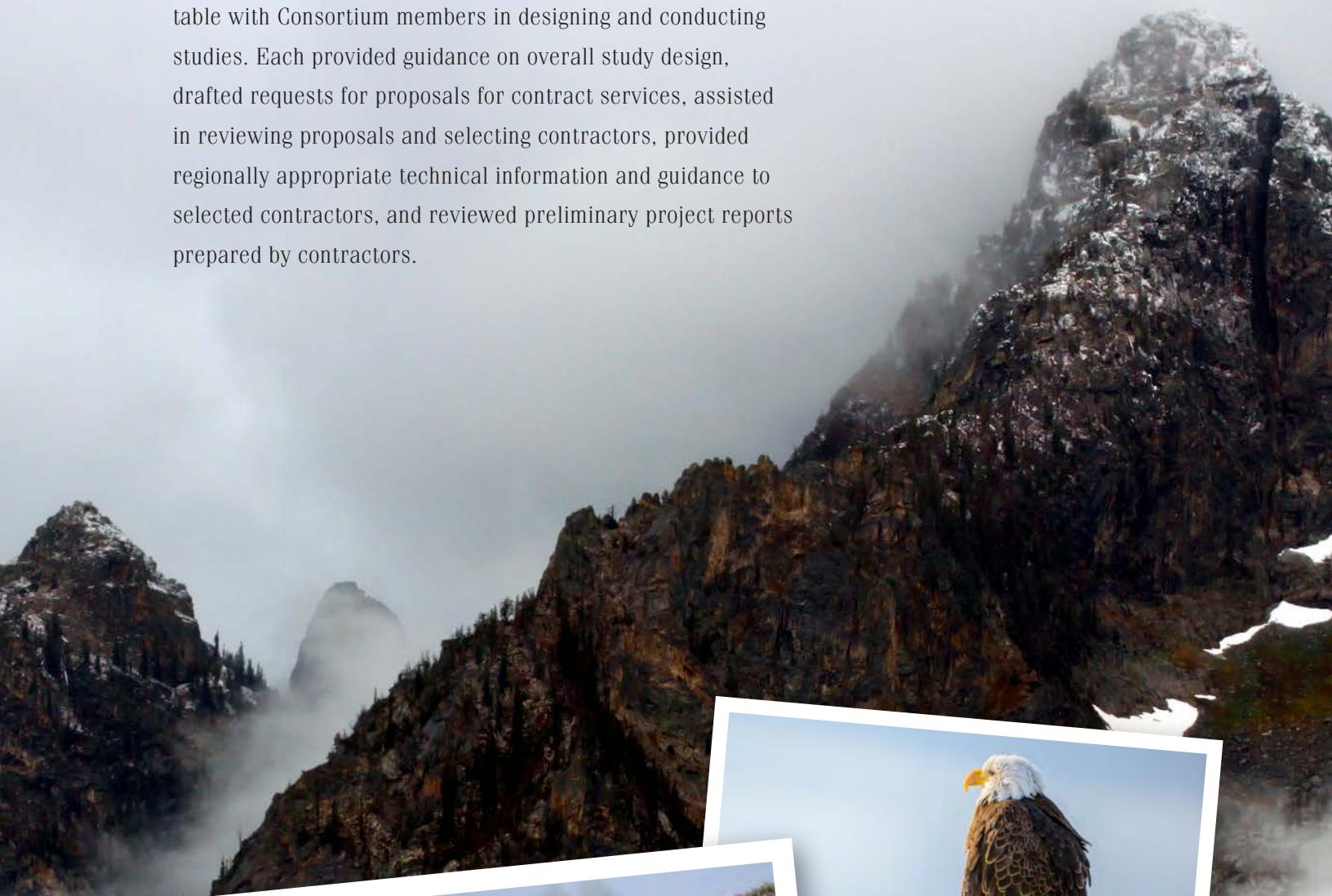


**Involve:** Some studies have afforded more frequent involvement of key stakeholders throughout their development. One example is the Greater Yellowstone Trail Concept Plan. The project team traveled the entire length of the proposed 182-mile Greater Yellowstone Trail corridor in 2014 to meet with stakeholders in each community and view existing sections of rail bed or trail. The intent of this two-day trip was to gain a feel for the area, verify trail gaps, and obtain a realistic understanding of community needs and desires. A November 21, 2014, workshop pulled 25 key stakeholders together to discuss the findings of the site visits, consider specific issues (i.e., motorized access, paving, etc.) and discuss various project proposals for completing the entire trail corridor.

**Collaborate:** The Consortium formed “design teams” for several of the studies, including the following:

- Assessment of Teton View Agriculture for Local and Regional Markets
- Greater Yellowstone Framework for Local Governments
- Regional Recycling System Feasibility Study
- Regional Index of Sustainability Indicators
- Western Greater Yellowstone Area Housing Needs Assessment
- Regional Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice

These teams invited interested stakeholders to sit at the table with Consortium members in designing and conducting studies. Each provided guidance on overall study design, drafted requests for proposals for contract services, assisted in reviewing proposals and selecting contractors, provided regionally appropriate technical information and guidance to selected contractors, and reviewed preliminary project reports prepared by contractors.



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## PROGRAM-WIDE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Some stakeholders have been engaged in the entire planning process since 2012. Program-wide public involvement opportunities have included:

1. A project kick-off meeting held on February 15, 2012. This session was attended by 59 people. Objectives for this session included:
  - » Sharing information about how the HUD grant would address common problems faced by the four counties in the Consortium
  - » Discussing how HUD's "livability principles" would be used to guide the Consortium's sustainable development plan
  - » Identifying existing resources, ongoing efforts, information gaps, and critical areas of focus
  - » Discussing the best ways to engage the interested public and underserved populations
  - » Inviting participants to sign up for one of the design teams to provide project direction.

2. An annual summit held on May 2, 2013, and attended by 48 people. Objectives for the session included: 1) providing an overall status of the project, 2) introductions to the two Regional Administrators for the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, 3) reports on the progress of several specific projects, and 4) obtaining input to inform the development of the Regional Index of Sustainability Indicators.
3. An annual summit held on May 7, 2014, and attended by 62 people. Objectives for the session included: 1) receiving an overall status of the project as well as project-specific status reports for most of the specific projects, and 2) providing feedback to HUD officials in response to the following four questions: a) In your experience, what have been the positive outcomes attributable to the HUD grant in our region to date? b) What barriers do you think the Western Greater Yellowstone Consortium has faced over the last two years? c) What strategies or resources might we consider to help overcome barriers and address gaps to finish and implement our plan? d) What suggestions do you have for HUD, DOT, and EPA as the Partnership for Sustainable Communities continues its work to strengthen communities, particularly for rural places?



In addition, the Consortium conducted a final public involvement period between February 23 and March 22, 2015. During the public involvement period, Consortium members provided briefings on the draft Teton View Regional Plan for the four county commissions and the seven city councils at regularly scheduled meetings. The briefings were designed to provide an overall orientation to the entire project as well as an introduction to the Teton View Regional Plan to the elected officials. A video was developed to introduce the Plan.

The public involvement period was designed to share the draft Teton View Regional Plan with interested members of the public and solicit input regarding 60 possible initiatives and projects. The initiatives and projects were organized into six regional character types and presented in the Draft Teton View Regional Plan.

The public at large was invited to:

- Attend four open houses (one in each county) to talk with Consortium members and examine the document as a whole
- Complete an on-line or paper survey to rate 60 proposed projects
- Visit the website to watch the video, review all project documentation, and complete the survey.

The survey instrument was translated to Spanish and Spanish-language translators were present for all four open houses.

The open houses held during the public involvement period are summarized as follows:

- The Teton County, Wyoming Open House was held in the Auditorium at the Teton County Library, located at 125 Virginian in Jackson, Wyoming on March 9, 2015, from 4:00 to 7:00 pm. A total of seven people signed in at the registration table for the Open House in Jackson.
- The Fremont County Open House was held in the Ashton Community Center Gymnasium, located at 925 Main in Ashton, Idaho, on March 12, 2015, from 4:00 to 7:00 pm. A total of 30 people signed in at the registration table for the Open House in Ashton; another ten or so people did not sign-in but attended.
- The Madison County Open House was held in the Community Room at the Madison County Library, located at 73 North Center in Rexburg, Idaho, on March 18, 2015, from 4:00 to 7:00 pm. A total of 20 people signed in at the registration table for the Open House in Rexburg.
- The Teton County, Idaho Open House was held in the Auditorium at Victor Elementary School, located at 43 East Center in Victor, Idaho, on March 19, 2015, from 4:00 to 7:00 pm. A total of 27 people signed in at the registration table for the Open House in Victor.

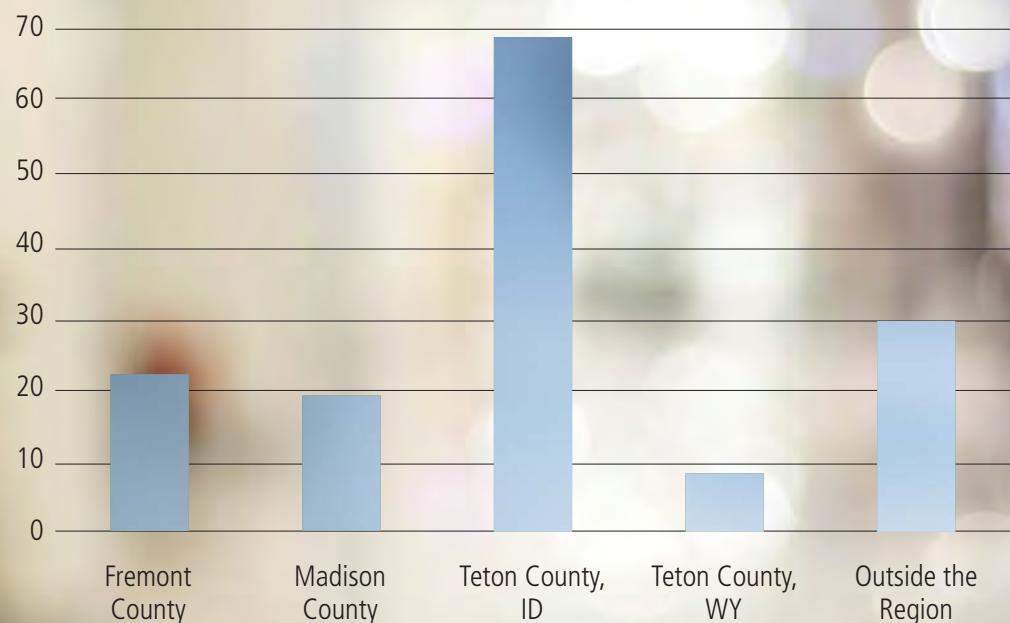


A total of 150 people completed surveys; twenty of those surveys were completed in Spanish.

Those completing the survey online were required to provide the zip code of their primary residence. Based on those responses, the residence of survey participants is illustrated in the following chart.

In addition, four people submitted comments in letters addressed to Fremont County.

Complete results from the public involvement period, including the results of the survey and copies of the letters sent to Fremont County, are provided in Appendix G.



**FIGURE 3**

Location of Primary Residence  
for Survey Participants





# *Section Two*





*Belton view landscape  
and its people*

## What Lies Beneath<sup>3</sup>

The combination of geologic processes at work in the Yellowstone-Teton region is not seen anywhere else on Earth on such a large scale and with such vivid manifestations. Hotspots help shape Earth's surface as they release heat from the Earth's interior through volcanic eruptions and hydrothermal activity, which is the activity of hot water in geysers, hot springs, and steam vents. The Yellowstone Hotspot is the largest hotspot under a continent and among the largest of some 30 active hotspots on Earth.

The North American plate of Earth's crust has drifted southwest over the Yellowstone Hotspot at a rate of about 1 inch per year (see graphic below). The ground at Yellowstone emits 30 to 40 times more heat than the average for North America. The subterranean movements of hot water and molten rock only occasionally emit lava onto the surface and rarely explode in a violent caldera-forming eruption. The last known eruption was 174,000 years ago.

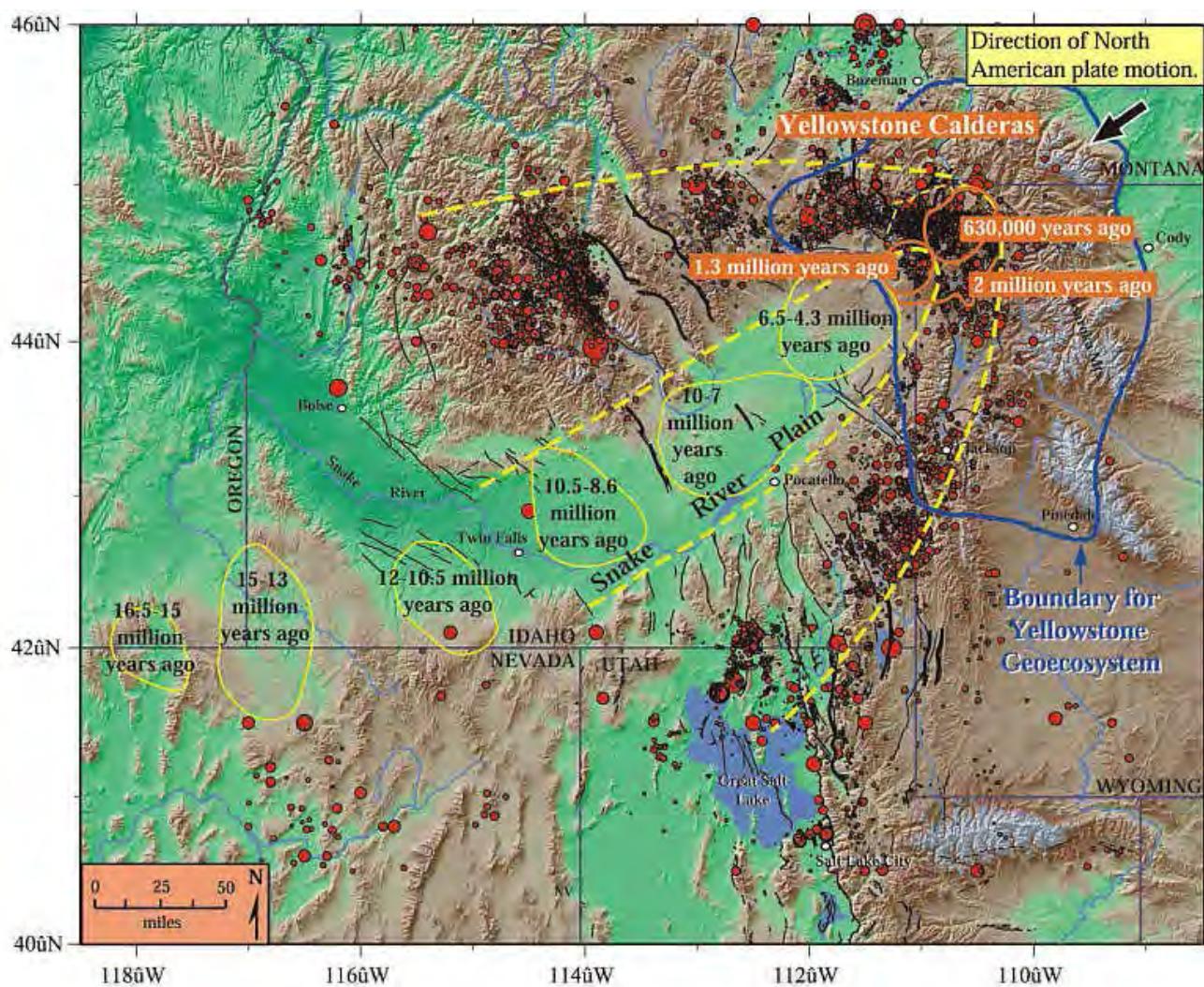
Yellowstone already sat high in the Rocky Mountains before it was pushed to loftier heights – above 7,700 feet – atop the hotspot's broad, upward bulge. The high elevation and resulting climate have helped determine the plants and wildlife that thrive in [and around] Yellowstone.

The lofty heights also helped to form a 3,500-foot-thick icecap atop the Yellowstone Plateau during at least three global glacial episodes within the past 250,000 years to 2 million years. The Yellowstone ice field was so large it covered most of Yellowstone and Grand Teton parks – an area extending more than 100 miles north-south and 70 miles east-west. After volcanism shaped Yellowstone's landscape and the Teton fault produced the terrain of the Teton Range and Jackson Hole, the Ice Age glaciers left their own marks.

*Text from the section  
What Lies Beneath  
is excerpted from  
Windows Into the Earth:  
The Geologic Story of  
Yellowstone and Grand  
Teton National Parks*



<sup>3</sup> *Windows into the Earth: The Geologic Story of Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks*. Robert B. Smith and Lee J. Siegel, Oxford University Press, 2000. Text and graphic excerpted from pages 9-10; 15-17; 110

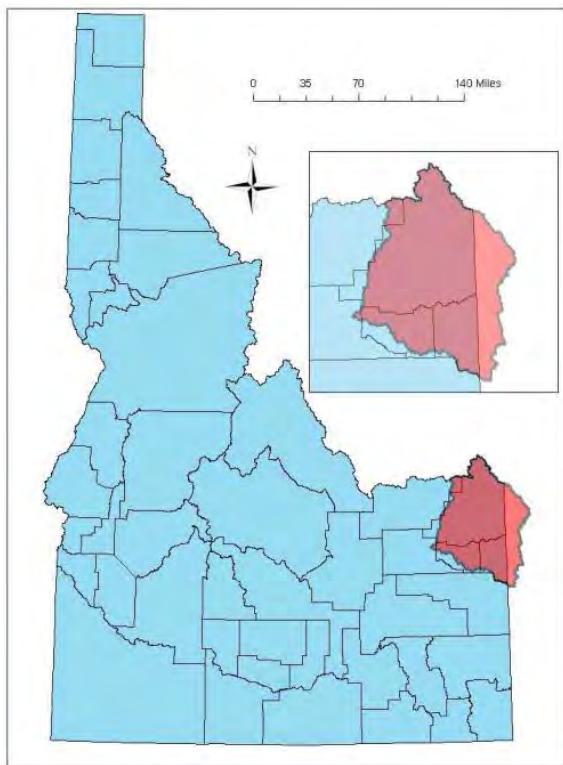


They shaped the spires of mountains and carved valleys such as those occupied by the Snake and Yellowstone rivers. The glaciers excavated smaller lakes at the base of the Teton Range and deepened Yellowstone and Jackson lakes.

*Path of the Yellowstone Hotspot. Yellow and orange ovals show volcanic centers where the Hotspot produced one or more caldera eruptions – essentially “ancient Yellowstones” during the time periods indicated. As North America drifted southwest over the hotspot, the volcanism progressed northeast, beginning in northern Nevada and southeast Oregon 16.5 million years ago and reaching Yellowstone National Park 2 million years ago. A bow-wave or parabola-shaped zone of mountains (browns and tans) and earthquakes (red dots) surrounds the low elevations (greens) of seismically quiet Snake River Plain. The greater Yellowstone “geoecosystem” is outlined in blue. Faults are black lines.<sup>4</sup>*

<sup>4</sup> Windows into the Earth: The Geologic Story of Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks. Robert B. Smith and Lee J. Siegel, Oxford University Press, 2000. Text and graphic excerpted from pages 9-10; 15-17; 110

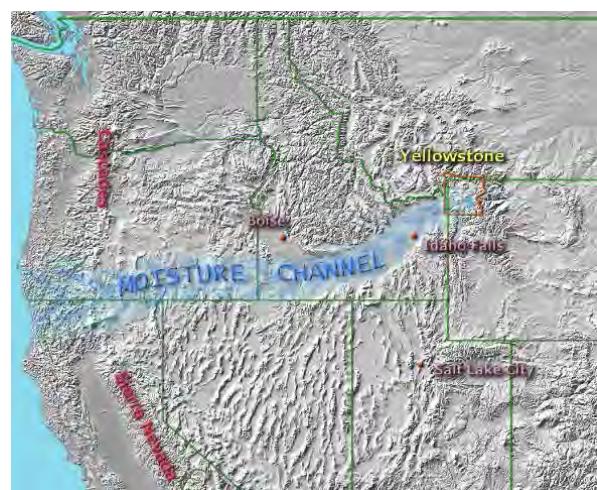
Of all the geological processes fostered by the Yellowstone hotspot, earthquakes are the most dominant on a human timescale. Today in the U.S., only faults in California produce more earthquakes than in the area around Yellowstone. This also includes the Teton fault... that became active in its present form about 13 million years ago. Since then, a few thousand major earthquakes have lifted the Teton Range into its towering setting while simultaneously making the valley of Jackson Hole sink...by a total of 13,000 feet.

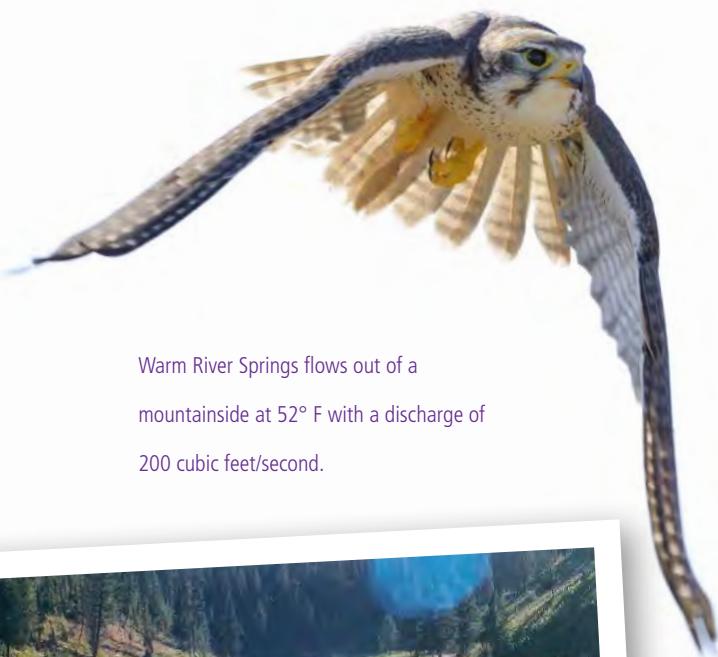


Henry's Fork Basin

## THE TETONS AND YELLOWSTONE PLATEAU CAPTURE MOISTURE FOR THE REGION

Moisture from the Pacific Ocean streams onshore in the Pacific Northwest in the form of clouds and humid air. It passes through the gap between the Sierra and Cascade mountain ranges and into the Snake River Plain, where it is channeled through southern Idaho with no high plateaus or mountain ranges to impede its progress. Clouds finally encounter upslope conditions at the head of the Snake River Valley in Ashton and Island Park, at the Teton Range east of Driggs, and on the Yellowstone Plateau inside Yellowstone National Park where the channeled moisture falls as rain and snow. The result is a localized climate that is similar to a climate on the western slope of the Cascades or the northern Sierras. The head of the Snake River Valley, the Tetons, and the Yellowstone Plateau receive much more precipitation than other areas of the region and the area is known for its many streams and abundant winter snows.





The Henry's Fork watershed in eastern Idaho captures much of the moisture that falls west of the Continental Divide and on the west slope of the Tetons. The basin encompasses 1.7 million acres and is underlain by four major aquifers.

The Yellowstone Plateau Aquifer is recharged by snowmelt and is approximately 150 to 900 feet thick. This aquifer discharges hundreds of thousands of acre-feet of water annually into the headwaters of the Henry's Fork drainage at Big Springs, Buffalo River Springs, and Warm River Springs. It is estimated that nearly half of the discharge of the Henry's Fork (about 500,000 acre-feet per year) at Ashton comes from this aquifer. It responds to changes in recharge on the scale of two to three years, and the groundwater residence times vary from 10 to 100 years.

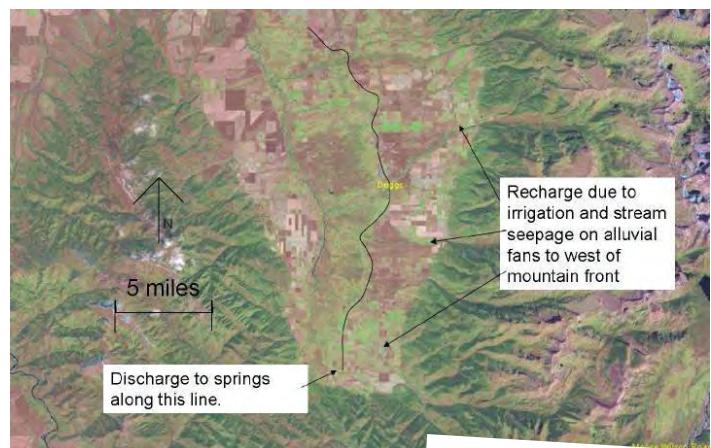
The Eastern Snake River Plain Aquifer lies west of the Henry's Fork and downstream of Ashton. This aquifer is situated in basalt and the interbedded sediments of the Snake River Plain. Its residence time is 100+ years and it responds to change on a time scale of around 20 years.

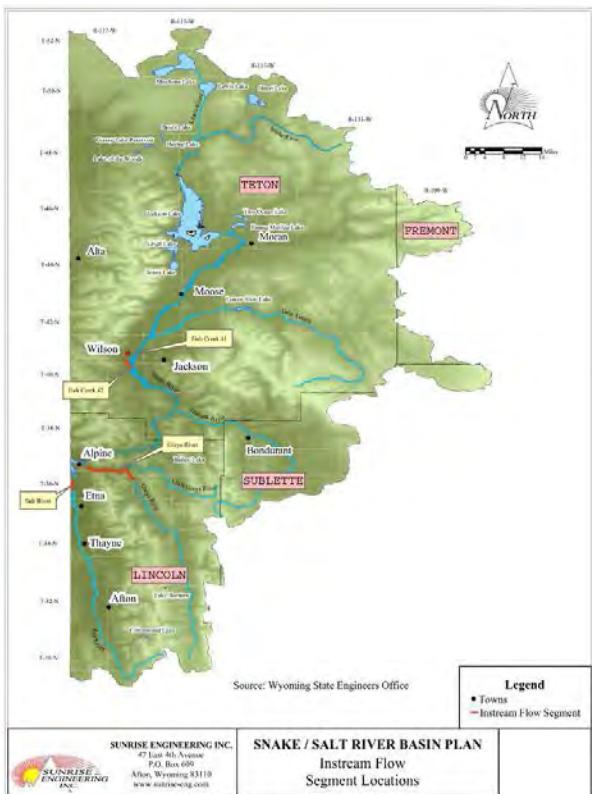
The Teton Valley Aquifer covers around 90 square miles and ranges in depth from 100 to 800 feet. Historically recharge naturally occurred from stream channel seepage, but currently seepage from irrigation canals back into the ground and infiltration from direct irrigation application dominates recharge.

There is a fourth unnamed aquifer located northwest of the Big Hole Mountains and Teton Canyon. Historical recharge occurred primarily from snowmelt in the low-relief glacial drift east and south of Ashton. Modern recharge occurs due to seepage from irrigation canals and direct application of irrigation water from flood irrigation. Discharge appears to occur along the banks of the Henry's Fork at the bottom of the terraces from St. Anthony all the way to the mouth as well as along the lower Teton River, downstream from Rexburg.<sup>5</sup>

Back on the surface, the Henry's Fork Basin contains more than 3,000 miles of rivers, streams and canals. Canals divert water from the Henry's Fork, Fall River, Teton River and smaller tributaries, and dams built on Henry's Lake Outlet and the Henry's Fork (Island Park Reservoir) store irrigation water. Over 235,000 acres of farmland are irrigated from surface or groundwater sources in the Basin; potatoes and grains are the primary crops. Other important sectors of the economy relying on this water include recreation in the form of angling and boating services, plus municipal usage all across southern Idaho, and the southeast corner of Yellowstone National Park.

<sup>5</sup> *The Influences of Geology and Water Management on Hydrology and Fluvial Geomorphology in the Henry's Fork of the Snake River, Eastern Idaho and Western Wyoming*. Garrett B. Bayrd, Idaho State University Master's Thesis in Geology, 2006. Excerpts and graphics from pages 21-35; 52





## SNAKE RIVER HEADWATERS

On the east side of Teton Range in Wyoming, the headwaters of the Snake River originate in the southeast corner of Yellowstone National Park and flow through Grand Teton National Park and the Bridger-Teton National Forest. The main stem and most of its tributaries, totaling 388 river miles, were included in the Snake River Headwaters Legacy Act of 2009 (PL 111-11) and are among the most pristine in the nation. Jackson Lake was created by Jackson Lake Dam, which raised the lake level to store irrigation water for Idaho farmers. In normal years the lake level affords season-long boating both on the lake and downstream through the park. However, during dry years Idaho farmers, who own senior water rights to the water, may draw water from the lake to use for irrigation if not mitigated by reservoir storage down stream.



Recreational fishing and boating are hallmarks of a Jackson Hole summer experience with the Teton Mountain Range serving as pure inspiration through Grand Teton National Park. .

## Forests, Meadows and Wildlife

State wildlife agencies in Idaho and Wyoming develop Strategic Wildlife Action Plans to identify species of concern and the priority habitats that are essential to wildlife survival. Whether this habitat lies on private lands, state lands or federal lands (managed by the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), the fish and wildlife existing within each state legally belong to its residents.<sup>6</sup>

Two “ecoregions” – large areas of land or water that contain geographically distinct assemblages of natural communities – overlap the four-county Teton View Region. Within these two ecoregions are three smaller distinct ecological units. Ecological units that cover the four-county Teton View region are as follows:<sup>7</sup>

### **YELLOWSTONE HIGHLANDS ECOLOGICAL SECTION – EASTERN IDAHO AND WESTERN WYOMING**

**Geomorphology.** The Yellowstone Plateau was formed from two volcanic episodes. The area includes high rugged mountains with ridges and cirques at higher elevations and narrow to broad valleys. Much of this area has been glaciated, and moraines are common. Elevation ranges from 6,000 to 13,000 feet in the mountains, and 2,500 to 6,500 feet in the basins and valleys. This Section lies within the Middle Rocky Mountains physiographic province.

**Potential Natural Vegetation.** Vegetation in this area includes wheatgrass-needlegrass-shrub steppe in drier, lower elevation valleys (55%), and Douglas-fir forest and western spruce-fir forest (45%) between 5,500 and 9,500 feet. Lodgepole pine is the common cover type, with an understory of grouse whortleberry, pine grass, heartleaf arnica, or Oregon grape. Alpine vegetation, including whitebark pine and subalpine fir, occurs above 9,500 feet. Sheep fescue, alpine bluegrass, and American bistort are common grass and forb species.

**Fauna.** Birds are typical of the forested portions of the northern Rocky Mountains, including Steller's jay, black-capped chickadee, and pine siskin. Specialist bird species include white pelican, trumpeter swan, and (black) rosy finch; while other typical species include harlequin duck, Barrow's goldeneye, Swainson's hawk, bald eagle, osprey, sage grouse, sandhill crane, Franklin's gull, American dipper, Townsend's solitaire, yellow-rumped warbler, and Brewer's sparrow. Typical herbivores and carnivores include bison, mule deer, pronghorn, elk, moose, black bear, bobcat, and cougar. Smaller common herbivores include the snowshoe hare and the northern flying squirrel. Less abundant species include the grizzly bear, gray wolf, wolverine, fringed myotis (bat), pygmy shrew, pygmy rabbit, Preble's shrew, and Uinta chipmunk. Spotted frog, prairie rattlesnake, rubber boa, boreal toad, and blotched tiger salamander can also be found.

<sup>6,7</sup> Excerpts from Ecological Regions of the United States, USDA Forest Service - Chapters 43 and 48

**Climate.** The climate of this area is cold, moist and continental. Precipitation ranges from 20 to 45 inches annually; most occurs during fall, winter and spring, mostly as snow above 6,000 feet. Rain is common during the growing season. Temperature averages 35 to 47°F. The growing season lasts 25 to 120 days, although it is shorter at some higher elevations.

### **OVERTHRUST MOUNTAINS ECOLOGICAL SECTION – IDAHO AND WYOMING**

**Geomorphology.** The Overthrust Mountains Section is part of western Wyoming, southeastern Idaho, and north-central Utah. Mountain ranges in this four-county region include the Teton and Salt River Ranges in Wyoming, and the Snake River (Big Holes) in Idaho. Anticlinal and synclinal structures and thrust fault zones control development of linear valleys and ridges in the northern part of this Section. Some ranges are bound by thrust faults that dip west. The Snake River Mountains are mostly steep, rugged mountains with narrow to broad valleys, while the Teton Range is the highest in this Section. Higher altitude areas have been glaciated, with a few active glaciers and snow fields in the Teton Range. Mass movements are common and helped form the Wyoming Range. Elevation ranges from 5,000 to 13,000 feet, while local relief ranges from 3,000 to 7,000 feet.

**Potential Natural Vegetation.** Vegetation types include lodgepole pine-subalpine forest, and Douglas-fir forest with outer fringes of sagebrush steppe in the northern portion of the Section. About 50% is Douglas-fir forest. Vegetation zones are controlled by a combination of altitude, latitude, slope exposure, and prevailing winds. Areas of alpine tundra exist on the highest mountains, subalpine zones have spruce – fir forests, and ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir forest are found in montane zones. Sagebrush occurs at the lower elevations.

**Fauna.** This Section was once characterized by bison, bighorn sheep, and large carnivores such as the gray wolf and grizzly bear. These species have been reduced, primarily due to man-made causes, to isolated areas within their historic range. Large ungulates found today include Rocky Mountain elk, mule deer, and moose; cougar and black bear comprise the large predators. Historical and present-day herpetofauna include the western toad and Great Basin spadefoot; spotted and northern leopard frogs; tiger salamander; short-horned and sagebrush lizards; the gopher snake, rubber boa, racer, several species of garter, and the western rattlesnake. Habitats in this ecological section support a rich and diverse populations of neotropical migratory land birds, waterfowl and terrestrial bird species. One subspecies of inland cutthroat trout (Yellowstone) are found in the Section, along with rainbow, brown, brook, and hybrid trout.

**Climate.** Precipitation ranges from 16 to 40 inches annually; most occurs during fall, winter and spring. It occurs mostly as snow above 6,000 feet. The semiarid steppe regime is where precipitation falls mostly in the winter, with large amounts falling as snow. Climate is influenced by prevailing winds and the general north-south orientation of the mountain ranges. Summers are dry with low humidity. Temperature averages 35 to 45 °F, but may be as high as 50 °F in the valleys. The growing season lasts 80 to 120 days.

### SNAKE RIVER BASALTS ECOLOGICAL SECTION IN IDAHO

**Geomorphology.** Most of this Section is characterized by nearly horizontal sheets of basalt laid down in the Snake River drainage to form a plain. Lava flows range from less than 100 feet thick to several thousand feet thick. Block-faulted mountains are also included in this Section. The Section is about 60 miles wide and is essentially flat; however, the eastern portions of the Section are much higher in elevation. Shield volcanoes, cinder cones, and squeezed-up lava ridges are common. Elevation ranges from 3,000 to 6,000 feet. Lava plain and hills are nearly level to steeply sloping.

**Potential Natural Vegetation.** Vegetation types in this Section predominantly include sagebrush steppe. The U.S. Soil Conservation Service identifies the area as having a sagebrush-grass potential natural vegetation.

**Fauna.** This Section was once characterized by bison and bighorn sheep, and large carnivores such as the grizzly bear and gray wolf. These species have been reduced, primarily due to man-made causes, to isolated areas within their historic range. Currently, large ungulates include Rocky Mountain elk, mule deer, and pronghorn. Cougar, bobcat, black bear and coyote constitute a portion of the predator component. Historical and present-day herpetofauna include the western toad, Great Basin spadefoot; short-horned and sagebrush lizards; and the gopher snake, rubber boa, racer, and several species of garter snakes. Habitats in this Section support a rich and diverse avifauna of neotropical migratory land birds, waterfowl, and terrestrial species. Yellow pine chipmunk, Great Basin pocket mouse, and the dark phase pika, are endemic to this Section. Salmonid species include rainbow, brown, and brook, as well as hybrid trout.

**Climate.** Precipitation ranges from 5 to 12 inches annually; it is evenly distributed throughout the fall, winter, and spring, but is low in the summer. Summers are dry with low humidity. Temperature averages 40 to 58 °F. The growing season ranges from 60 to 165 days, decreasing from west to east and with elevation.

## Population of the Teton View Region

Below is an excerpt from the Regional Analysis of Impediments (RAI-Appendix C.1) summarizing population statistics for the Teton View Region (TVR). Extensive 4-county analyses of household condition, employment and income data, and commuting patterns is presented in Appendix C.1 and thus will not be replicated here.

According to the 2013 U.S. Census, about 82,920 persons resided in the Teton View Region (TVR). About 45% lived in Madison County, Idaho, 27% in Teton County, Wyoming, and the rest in Fremont (16%) and Teton counties (12%) in Idaho.<sup>8</sup>

The region added about 33,000 persons between 1990 and 2010, growing at a rate of 29% during both decades. About 42% of these persons were added in Madison County; 34% in Teton County, Wyoming; 21% in Teton County, Idaho; and 6% in Fremont County. The rates of growth in each county show significant variation:

- Teton County, Idaho, grew at the fastest rate – over 70% during each decade. This was fueled by increased jobs, growth in the Grand Targhee Resort area, and demand from workers in Teton County, Wyoming, looking for more affordable homes. Victor grew over 560%, from under 300 persons in 1990 to over 1,900 today.
- Madison County showed modest growth in the 1990s (16%), but then picked up in the 2000s (37%), with 81% of this growth occurring within the city of Rexburg. BYU-I fueled rapid growth in the 2000s.
- The population in Teton County, Wyoming, grew by 63% in the 1990s. The growth rate dropped to 17% in the 2000s. Due to fear of losing the community's character, the County adopted land-development regulations in 1994 to manage the significant growth that was occurring. Land regulations and the increased scarcity of developable private land (97% of the County is federal land) limited growth in the 2000s.<sup>9</sup>
- Fremont County had the slowest growth rate, increasing 12% in the 2000s. The City of Island Park experienced the most growth, increasing over 33% in each decade; however, this equates to only 127 additional persons.

The year-round, permanent population is unevenly distributed throughout the region. As shown on the following table:

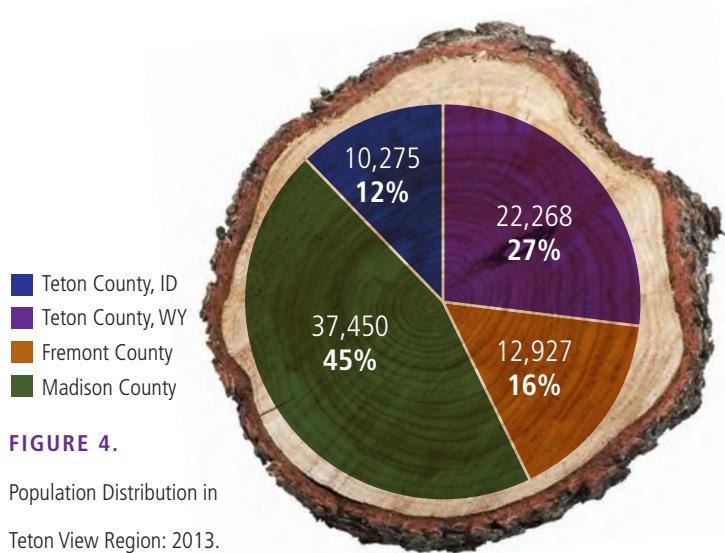


FIGURE 4.

Population Distribution in  
Teton View Region: 2013.

SOURCE: 2013 Census Population Estimates

<sup>8</sup> 2013 Census Population Estimates

<sup>9</sup> Student enrollment increased from about 8,900 in 2000 to over 15,000 in the fall of 2013. Enrollment is projected to increase to about 20,600 students in 2018 (or by about 1,000 students per year).

- The area north of Ashton in Fremont County and much of the unincorporated area in Teton County, Wyoming average less than five permanent residents per square mile. According to the Fremont County Transportation Plan (2000), 25 percent of Fremont County residential units are “Summer homes” for non-permanent residents. At the same time, the Teton County Wyoming Comprehensive plan estimates that summer resident counts can swell to twice the number of October residents because of summer home residents and vacation home rentals.
- The most populated area of Fremont County is in and around St. Anthony, with between 88 and 250 persons per square mile. The City of St. Anthony is of sufficient size and density to qualify as an urban cluster (a Census Bureau category).
- The most populated area in Teton County, Wyoming, is in and near the town of Jackson.
- Rexburg in Madison County has the densest population in the Teton View Region.

**Table 1.** Teton View Regional Population: 1990 to 2013 – Counties and Incorporated Cities/Towns

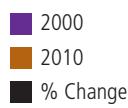
WGYC Region	1990	2000	2010	2013	% Change 1990-00	% Change 2000-10
<b>WGYC Region</b>	<b>49,222</b>	<b>63,536</b>	<b>82,242</b>	<b>82,920</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>29%</b>
Fremont County, ID	10,937	11,819	13,242	12,927	8%	12%
Ashton	1,114	1,129	1,127	1,084	1%	0%
Island Park	159	215	286	276	35%	33%
St. Anthony	3,010	3,342	3,542	3,465	11%	6%
Madison County, ID	23,674	27,467	37,536	37,450	16%	37%
Rexburg	14,302	17,257	25,484	26,520	21%	48%
Teton County, ID	3,439	5,999	10,170	10,275	74%	70%
Driggs	846	1,100	1,660	1,657	30%	51%
Victor	292	840	1,928	1,938	188%	130%
Teton County, WY	11,172	18,251	21,294	22,268	63%	17%
Jackson	4,472	8,647	9,577	10,135	93%	11%

SOURCE: 1990, 2000, 2010 US Census; 2013 Census population estimates

## AGE OF POPULATION

The proportion of residents between the ages of 5 and 24 declined in the TVR between 2000 and 2010, whereas the proportion of residents under 5 and over 25 increased. The largest percentage increase occurred at the two extremes – for persons age 5 and under (59% increase) and those age 65 and over (38% increase). Compared to data for the entire states of Idaho and Wyoming:

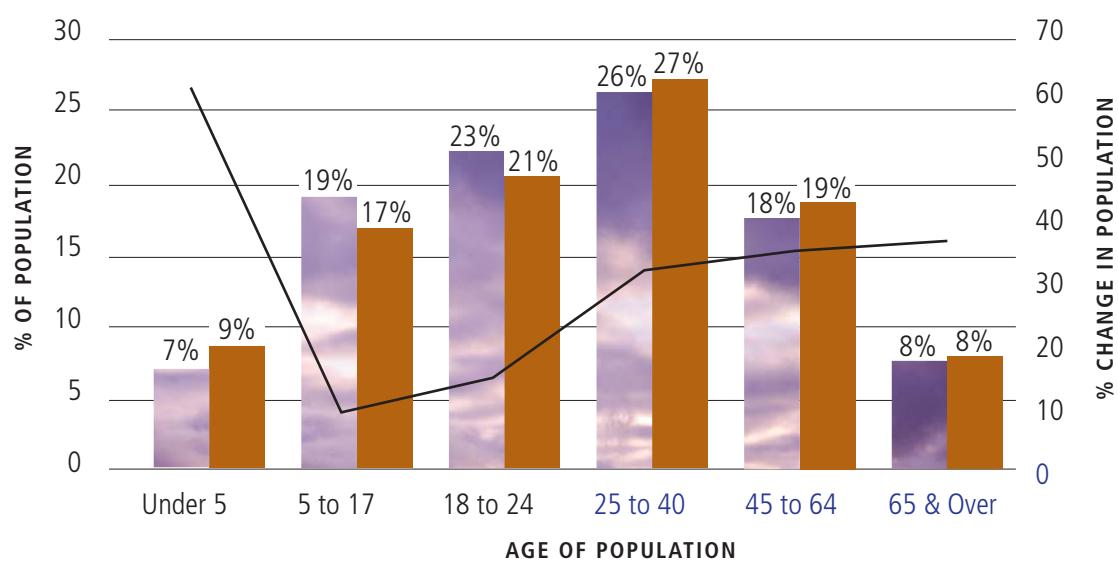
- The percentage of college-aged residents (between 18 and 24) is high (21%). About 10% of residents in both Idaho and Wyoming are in this age group;



**FIGURE 5.**

Teton View Region. Percentage of Population by Age: 2000, 2010, % Change.

SOURCE: 2000 and 2010 US Census



- The percentage of residents between 45 and 64 is low (19%) compared to the states of Idaho (25%) and Wyoming (28%) as a whole; and
- The percentage of seniors age 65 and over is low (8%). About 12% of the population in both Idaho and Wyoming are seniors. There are variations within the region; for example, Fremont County has a higher percentage of seniors.

When evaluated by area, it is apparent that:

- The high proportion of college-aged residents (18 to 24) in the area is related to the students in Rexburg (49% of the population). The town of Jackson also attracts this age group (14%) through seasonal park, ski resort and other tourism-related jobs. The proportion of the population in this age group in all other areas is similar to the state averages (10%);

- Between 2000 and 2010 the percentage of residents under 5 increased faster than the population as a whole in all counties and cities/towns, with the cities of Victor (205% increase) and Rexburg (138% increase) topping the list;
- Not surprisingly, young adult residents, age 25 to 44, also increased the most in Victor (165%) and Rexburg (147%) from 2000 to 2010, as these households are the most likely to have young children. Victor has been attracting young families employed in Teton County, Wyoming, due to comparatively lower housing prices;
- All three major cities in Fremont County and all of Teton County, Wyoming, lost residents between the ages of 5 and 24 between 2000 and 2010. These populations increased in both Madison County and Teton County, Idaho, although at slower rates than the population as a whole in each county;
- The population of seniors age 65 and over grew at a faster rate than the corresponding population in both Fremont County (26% vs. 12%) and Teton County, Wyoming (66% vs. 17%) between 2000 and 2010. Within incorporated communities, only the town of Jackson (18% increase) and the City of Island Park (55%) show similar trends. This can be attributed in part to an aging population and second homeowners retiring to their homes in Teton County, Wyoming, and the Island Park area;
- Fremont County has the highest percentage of seniors of all counties in the region (14%).

About 16% of the population in the City of Ashton, City of Island Park and the unincorporated county are seniors.

All cities, towns and Census-designated places (CDPs) in the area were analyzed to determine where the highest concentrations of seniors reside in the TVR. This is important because it can affect the types of housing and services needed, such as access to nursing and medical care and alternative transportation options.

For the TVR, where 8% of the population is 65 or older, concentrations (as defined by HUD) occur where the proportion is 18% or more. Other findings include the following:

- There are no notable concentrations of seniors in the region. The populations in Warm River and Drummond in Fremont County are each over 33% seniors; however, only seven (7) seniors reside in these communities in total. About 18% of the population in Teton Village, Wyoming, are seniors (61 total). These areas combined comprise only 1% of seniors in the region.
- No areas in Madison County exceed 10% seniors, including the census tracts, and all areas in Teton County, Idaho, are 7% or below.
- About 17% of the population in the unincorporated area of Teton County, Wyoming, are seniors. While not technically high enough to be defined as a concentration, this equates to 29% of the senior population in this county.
- No census tract in the Town of Jackson exceeds 12% seniors.

**Table 2.** Percentage of Population by Age: 2000, 2010 and % Change

2000	Under 5	5 to 17	18 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 & Over
Fremont County, ID	8%	25%	9%	25%	20%	12%
Ashton	8%	25%	8%	25%	17%	17%
Island Park	4%	15%	11%	27%	28%	13%
St. Anthony	10%	23%	10%	27%	18%	11%
Madison County, ID	7%	19%	40%	16%	12%	6%
Rexburg	6%	12%	57%	12%	8%	5%
Teton County, ID	9%	23%	8%	34%	19%	7%
Driggs	8%	23%	11%	35%	16%	8%
Victor	10%	22%	7%	38%	16%	8%
Teton County, WY	5%	15%	10%	38%	25%	7%
Jackson	5%	13%	14%	44%	18%	6%

2010	Under 5	5 to 17	18 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 & Over
Fremont County, ID	9%	23%	8%	24%	23%	14%
Ashton	9%	24%	7%	24%	21%	16%
Island Park	6%	13%	6%	24%	34%	16%
St. Anthony	11%	21%	10%	27%	21%	10%
Madison County, ID	10%	16%	36%	21%	11%	6%
Rexburg	10%	11%	49%	20%	7%	4%
Teton County, ID	10%	20%	7%	34%	23%	7%
Driggs	10%	20%	9%	34%	21%	7%
Victor	13%	19%	6%	43%	15%	4%
Teton County, WY	6%	13%	8%	35%	28%	10%
Jackson	7%	11%	12%	44%	21%	6%

% Change 2000-2010	Under 5	5 to 17	18 to 24	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 & Over
Fremont County, ID	17%	3%	-7%	7%	28%	26%
Ashton	4%	-4%	-7%	-4%	21%	-9%
Island Park	89%	15%	-25%	19%	61%	55%
St. Anthony	15%	-5%	6%	8%	18%	-3%
Madison County, ID	84%	18%	25%	77%	31%	26%
Rexburg	138%	28%	27%	147%	34%	11%
Teton County, ID	93%	46%	37%	73%	104%	48%
Driggs	87%	30%	29%	48%	95%	30%
Victor	205%	96%	114%	165%	111%	11%
Teton County, WY	36%	4%	-5%	8%	29%	66%
Jackson	33%	-3%	-7%	11%	25%	18%

**Table 3.** Population by Race: 2000 and 2010

TVR Region	2000		2010		% Change
	#	%	#	%	
<b>TOTAL Population</b>	<b>63,536</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>82,242</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>29%</b>
White	59,594	93.8%	74,620	90.7%	25%
Black or African American	121	0.2%	305	0.4%	152%
American Indian and Alaska Native	280	0.4%	338	0.4%	21%
Asian	309	0.5%	664	0.8%	115%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	77	0.1%	95	0.1%	23%
Some other race	2,437	3.8%	4,974	6.0%	104%
Two or more races	718	1.1%	1,246	1.5%	74%

**SOURCE:** 2000 and 2010 US Census

The TVR has never had a racially diverse population. In 2010, about 91% of the population was white, down from about 94% in 2000. Asian, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Black/African American residents combined comprise 1,300 residents, or 1.6% of the population in the region.

#### PERSONS OF HISPANIC/LATINO ORIGIN

The Hispanic/Latino population has historically constituted a very small percentage of the population in Idaho and Wyoming, including the TVR. Until the 1990s, Idaho and Wyoming were predominately white (over 95%). In the TVR, less than 4% of the population (under 2,000 persons) was Hispanic/Latino in 1990. No county in the TVR had more than 762 Hispanic/Latino persons in 1990. Teton County, Wyoming, only had 158 persons of Hispanic/Latino origin in 1990, yet it now has the highest number of Hispanic/Latino persons in the region (near 3,200 total).

Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin are now more prevalent. Where this population used to reside only seasonally in the area, persons of Hispanic/Latino origin have been making the TVR their permanent home in recent decades. The Hispanic/Latino population increased from under 4% in 1990 to 11% in 2010. This is very similar to the growth rate seen in the state of Idaho as a whole. In Idaho this population increased from 5% in 1990 to 11% by 2010;<sup>10</sup> growth in Wyoming was slower, increasing from 6% in 1990 to 9% in 2010. A study by the University of Idaho, Idaho Commission on Hispanic Affairs, reported that, as of 2008, most of Idaho's Hispanic residents were born in the United States. Just 10% of the state's total Hispanic population moved to the U.S. in the last decade.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup>This growth prompted Mexico to open its first Idaho consulate in 2008. See <http://consulmex.sre.gob.mx/boise/>

<sup>11</sup>University of Idaho, Idaho Commission on Hispanic Affairs, "Hispanics: An Overview," June 2010. See also State of Idaho, "2011 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice," May 2012, Sec. II p. 3.

While the growth of this population was greater in the 1990s than during the following decade, this population still more than doubled in the 2000s, accounting for 25% of the population growth in the region, which is similar to state trends.<sup>12</sup> By area,

- The strongest growth has been in Teton County, Wyoming. About 66% of the total population growth in the 2000's were persons of Hispanic descent.
- The City of Victor has had the strongest growth of all cities and towns in the region and presently houses about 14% of its population.
- The growth of this population picked up in Madison County in the 2000s after comparatively modest growth in the 1990s.

Comparing the distribution of the Hispanic/Latino population in the region to the overall population distribution by county, we find that:

- Madison County has significantly fewer Hispanic/Latino persons relative to its share of the overall population in the TVR – 25% versus 46%, respectively;
- The two Teton counties have disproportionately more persons of Hispanic descent than their share of the population in the region; and
- Fremont County has a similar percentage of the two populations.

<sup>12</sup> The WGYA is similar to both the state of Idaho and the state of Wyoming with respect to this figure. The Hispanic/Latino population accounted for 27% of the population growth in each of these states during this same period. Source: 2000 and 2010 US Census.

**Table 4.** Population of Hispanic/Latino Ethnicity by Area: 1990, 2000, 2010

	1990	2000	2010	% Change 90-00	% Change 00-10
<b>Teton View Region</b>	<b>1,910</b>	<b>4,223</b>	<b>8,824</b>	<b>121%</b>	<b>109%</b>
Fremont County, ID	762	1,255	1,694	65%	35%
Ashton	149	157	198	5%	26%
Island Park	5	9	19	80%	111%
St. Anthony	179	514	741	187%	44%
Madison County, ID	753	1,078	2,218	43%	106%
Rexburg	441	697	1,435	58%	106%
Teton County, ID	237	705	1,721	197%	144%
Driggs	74	226	525	205%	132%
Victor	4	90	435	2150%	383%
Teton County, WY	158	1,185	3,191	650%	169%
Jackson	81	1,024	2,607	1164%	155%

SOURCE: 1990, 2000, 2010 US Census

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***The following pages provide more discussion of the drivers behind these statistics.***

The relative distribution of persons of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity among the counties the TVR is due first to employment opportunities, and second to access to housing they can afford.<sup>13, 14</sup> While agriculture was a primary driver of the Hispanic/Latino population to this area originally, as economies in the TVR have diversified, this has permitted many previously seasonal workers to move to the area on a year-round basis.<sup>15</sup> Idaho counties with the highest proportion of Hispanic/Latino residents (greater than 20%) have economies that rely on agriculture and food processing (i.e., mostly south-central Idaho).<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> 2014 Housing Survey, see Appendix 3. The State of Idaho, "2011 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice," May 2012, report similarly found that there were not strong correlations between affordability and Hispanic presence in a county; rather Hispanic presence may be more strongly related to employment industries. See Sec. I, p. 9.

<sup>14</sup> Madison County Comprehensive Plan, 2008, p. 13. Available at: <http://www.co.madison.id.us/index.php/depts/planning-a-zoning/62-comprehensive-plan>

<sup>15</sup> See 2009 Fremont County Comprehensive Plan. See also the Economic section of this report for more information on economic trends in each county.

<sup>16</sup> University of Idaho, Idaho Commission on Hispanic Affairs, "Hispanics: An Overview," June 2010; State of Idaho, "2011 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice," May 2012, Sec. I, p. 4; University of Idaho, College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, "Community Level Impacts of Idaho's Changing Dairy Industry," 2009, available at: [http://icha.idaho.gov/docs/Uof%20I%20Dairy%20Report%20Community\\_Level\\_Impacts\(10\\_13\\_09\).pdf](http://icha.idaho.gov/docs/Uof%20I%20Dairy%20Report%20Community_Level_Impacts(10_13_09).pdf)

Growth in non-agricultural jobs in the TVR in which Hispanic/Latino residents are predominately employed has been strongest in Teton County, Wyoming, and Teton County, Idaho. Spanish speaking residents are predominately employed in construction and landscaping jobs (36%) and service sector jobs, including janitorial/housekeeping (29%), food service (24%) and lodging (21%), followed by agriculture (19%). Hispanic residents of Idaho overall were mostly employed in these same professions, with the addition of manufacturing (mainly food manufacturing) and education, health and social assistance.<sup>17</sup> Correspondingly, growth in the Hispanic/Latino population has also been strongest in these counties. Job growth has been more modest in Fremont County and this county has had the slowest growth in this population in the region in the past decade. In Madison County, while jobs for this population have shown little growth, BYU-I enrollment has increased since 2000, helping to increase this population.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> See the Economic section of this report. See University of Idaho, Idaho Commission on Hispanic Affairs, "Idaho at a Glance Hispanics: Labor Force & Economy," Nov. 2010.

<sup>18</sup> Madison County Comprehensive Plan, 2008, p. 13. Available at: <http://www.co.madison.id.us/index.php/depts/planning-a-zoning/62-comprehensive-plan>



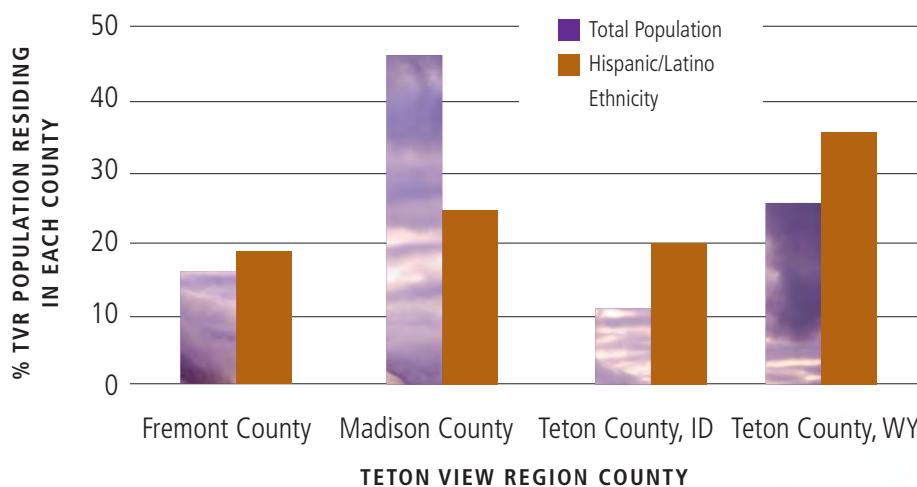
The two Teton Counties are the two most expensive counties in which to live in terms of housing costs,<sup>19</sup> yet the Hispanic/Latino population comprises the largest percentage of the population in these counties. When asked why they live in their present community, Hispanic/Latino respondents to the 2014 Housing Survey (Spanish language version) predominately responded that they live there for work or jobs, followed by housing costs/availability and family. Similar to the population as a whole, some workers live in Teton County, Idaho, yet work in Teton County, Wyoming, for the comparatively cheaper housing costs. Likewise, some who are employed in Madison County reside within Fremont County. These



factors – jobs, then housing and family – have been the primary drivers of where Hispanic/Latino residents live in the region.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> See the *Housing Profile and Conditions* section of this report.

<sup>20</sup> See 2014 Spanish Housing Survey comments, Appendix 3 of this report.



**FIGURE 6**

Distribution of Population by Hispanic/Latino Ethnicity: Teton View Region Counties, 2010.

SOURCE: 2010 US Census





Section Three

*Resilient communities*



*We will respect local autonomy while working together to improve the lives of year-round residents and seasonal guests.*

# Chapter 1. Distinctive Major Cities

## Regional Context

The two most densely populated cities in the

Teton View Region – Jackson, Wyoming, and Rexburg, Idaho – are each at the center of two distinctive micropolitan areas and serve as cultural, educational, and retail destinations.

As host to Brigham Young University-Idaho (BYU-I), Rexburg is the educational center of the region, while Jackson thrives as a destination resort area that caters to local, national, and international visitors. Both cities share the goal of being sustainable and resilient communities.

According to the Regional Analysis of Impediments, the four counties that comprise the Teton View Region contrast sharply when it comes to the cost of housing, with the biggest contrast between Jackson, Wyoming and Rexburg, Idaho. However, these two communities are closely aligned in terms of affordability relative to incomes when the cost of utilities and commuting to work are considered.

In response to the quality of life survey distributed as part of the regional plan, residents identified clean air, fresh water, and outdoor recreation as reasons they choose to live in these two communities. Residents in Rexburg also appreciated their educational opportunities.



## Jackson, Wyoming

The Town of Jackson, Wyoming, is a major gateway to Yellowstone National Park, Grand Teton National Park, Bridger-Teton National Forest, and the National Elk Refuge. Jackson's natural setting is an important aspect of the high quality of life that residents enjoy and is key to drawing visitors from around the globe.

In order to help preserve its important natural resources and wildlife habitat, the Jackson community has made active growth management a key component of the Jackson/Teton County Comprehensive Plan.<sup>21</sup> For example, the Comprehensive Plan directs growth away from rural areas to complete neighborhoods within the community. Although most parcels of land are developed within the corporate limits of the Town of Jackson (only 12 percent of the land is vacant), significant additional development could be permitted through infill and redevelopment, of suitable parcels.



There is also strong support for ecosystem stewardship and environmental sustainability in Jackson. In addition to the Comprehensive Plan's growth management guidelines and code that emphasizes transfer of development rights, additional regulations focus on and encourage environmentally sustainable development. The Town of Jackson has taken the initiative to set an example and install solar panels at the wastewater treatment plant and on bus shelters. Other sustainability initiatives include a Vertical Harvest project and county operated recycling and composting programs. One of the greatest contributions to the local sustainability initiative is the effort to reduce vehicle miles travelled. The START bus system is a year-round public transportation system that operates weekday commuter routes over to Teton County, Idaho and is partially funded by the Town of Jackson, Teton County, and federal funds.

Because Jackson's population has nearly doubled over the last 20+ years, its relaxed and near pristine outdoor setting is threatened by increasing congestion and rural sprawl. Additionally, the area experiences large seasonal fluctuations in population and commerce due to the enormous influence of visitors to the national parks, other public lands, and the abundance of recreational attractions in the Jackson area.

<sup>21</sup> AECOM, Clarion Associates, Collins Planning Associates, Fehr & Peer. (2012, April 6). Teton County Wyoming Comprehensive Plan.

The Sustaining Jackson Hole report contains additional information on summer, winter, and shoulder season recreational activities and visitors.

Although the Town and County have been working to smooth out seasonal population and economic fluctuations by promoting off-season activities, challenges remain. According to the Housing Needs Assessment report, workforce housing is in short supply and is too expensive for many households to afford. With demand for workforce housing increasing faster than the supply, the rental market has become very tight. As a result of these housing issues, more than 80 percent of residents consider affordable housing to be a moderate or major threat negatively affecting quality of life.



## Rexburg, Idaho

Known as “America’s Family Community,”<sup>22</sup> the City of Rexburg has a history of creating a safe, family-oriented atmosphere supported by educational institutions. In 1888, just five years after the city was founded, Ricks Academy was established, which later became Ricks College. In 2001, this two-year college officially became BYU-Idaho (BYU-I), the only four-year liberal arts university in the Teton View Region.

The presence of BYU-I in Rexburg creates a small cultural hub and brings some diversity to the population. Students from 60 countries and nearly all 50 states attend BYU-I. Rexburg is also the host city for the annual Idaho International Summerfest where dance teams from all over the world share their talents and culture.

In addition to being the central cultural component of the Rexburg community, BYU-I serves as a catalyst for growth. BYU-I attracts educators and students to the community and will continue to have a major impact on the population over the next several decades as enrollment increases and the University works to increase its capacity. With students making up approximately half of the current population, Rexburg has grown considerably in the last two decades, from 14,330 in 1990 to 26,520 in 2013 due to the University.

<sup>22</sup> City of Rexburg website, [www.rexburg.org](http://www.rexburg.org), accessed February 10, 2015



The effects of population growth have been felt throughout the city. Thousands of new multi-family dwellings have been constructed, and apartments continue to spring up. Many single-family neighborhoods have begun transitioning to more dense housing, including dormitory housing. Population increases have also made it possible for new commercial developments to become established and for local businesses to expand.

This growth has also stimulated reinvestment in the downtown, which is a goal strongly supported by the city and embodied in the downtown blueprint or revitalization plan. This plan responds to the desires of residents

to maintain a community where the downtown functions as the core from which the rest of the community radiates. Success of this effort is dependent on grassroots efforts and support from the downtown business and property owners.<sup>23</sup>

There are many other plans and efforts in place to help support growth in Rexburg. The design and layout of the original city plat reflects the vision of the pioneers who settled the region, and road systems conform to a “grid” layout, which makes it easier and more cost-effective to extend roads and utilities into new growth areas.

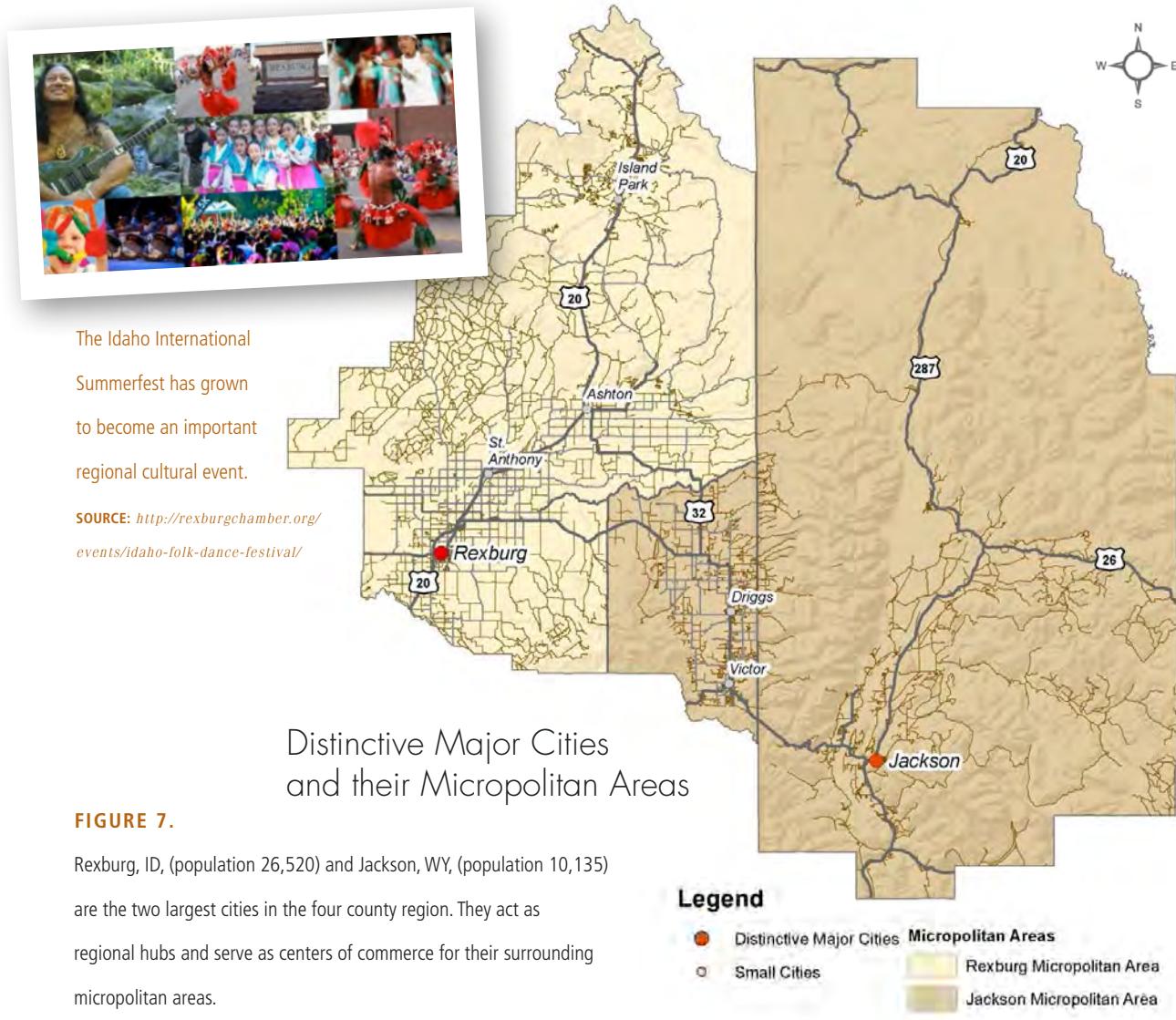
<sup>23</sup> Cooper Roberts Simonsen Associates, and Lewis Young Robertson and Burningham. (2008) Rexburg 2020 Comp plan.pdf. Retrieved from [i-way.org/LiteratureRetrieve.aspx?ID=37551](http://i-way.org/LiteratureRetrieve.aspx?ID=37551).

Some of these new growth areas have been recently annexed by the city, and the city has annexed more land in the past few years than it has during its entire history, dramatically illustrating the city's growth. Planning efforts include a new transportation plan that was developed collaboratively by the city and county. Even neighborhood associations are becoming more involved with city government in assessing and making recommendations on growth issues that impact the community.

## Themes and Strategies

**Theme 1.1:** Protect and interpret the historical and cultural heritage of each major city as a means of preserving community integrity.

Communities in the region value their distinct cultural heritage while striving to be vibrant economies. Through the protection of special areas or sites with cultural, historical, or local significance, the region can draw upon the history of the communities to guide their future development and preserve community character.



**Jackson Hole and Yellowstone Sustainable Destination Program** – <http://sustainabledestination.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/jackson-hole-and-yellowstone-sustainable-destination-program-plan1.pdf>



### **Strategies:**

- Partner with local historians, schools, and volunteers to create an inventory of significant historic, archaeological, cultural, and architectural resources.
- Launch programs to protect those historic, archaeological, and architectural resources of greatest public value.
- Consider regulatory options and official designations from the State Historic Preservation Office to protect the highest priority historic resources.
- Explore and facilitate grant opportunities for building restoration, adaptive reuse, and historic inventories.
- Support the expansion of cultural venues that are focused on improving visitor experience.



Jackson and Teton County's Comprehensive Plan ensures that 60 percent of development occurs in complete communities and not in rural areas and that the majority of the workforce must have the option to live in these communities through a progressive housing program. They monitor this annually through an adaptive management program and will be updating their housing action plan in 2015.

**Theme 1.2:** Encourage managed growth, access to services, and a healthy economy through sustainable land use planning.

The Town of Jackson and surrounding Teton County updated their Land Development Regulations (LDRs) in order to strengthen their ability to implement their jointly-adopted 2012 Comprehensive Plan and remove barriers to more sustainable growth in the town and county. The vision for Jackson and Teton County, Wyoming, is to achieve a healthy environment, community, and economy by achieving three mutually supportive common values:

- Ecosystem Stewardship
- Growth Management
- Quality of Life<sup>24</sup>

The primary vision of the City of Rexburg Comprehensive Plan is to ensure that qualities such as recreational opportunities and mixed land uses, are maintained, preserved, and enhanced. A key focus of the plan is encouraging infill and redevelopment. The city has recently implemented an Infill Redevelopment Standard Method for identifying prime areas for redevelopment with a scoring method based on the following:

- Protection of stable non-fragmented single family neighborhoods
- Identification of vacant and underutilized lots
- Proximity to existing utilities
- Distance from significant locations and amenities

- Availability of street access
- Historic qualities and desire for preservation<sup>25</sup>

### Strategies:

- Promote compact development in key infill areas where amenities and utilities are available to reduce cost of services.
- Limit densities in hazard prone, rural, natural, and sensitive areas.
- Encourage development to be located away from sensitive visual, environmental, and agricultural areas to create an atmosphere that promotes tourism and high quality of life.
- Coordinate city and county planning through joint planning processes, mutual agreements, or concepts including impact zones.
- Ensure compatible planning efforts and the application of consistent regulations in the areas adjacent to each city.
- Design downtowns as the center and heart of each city – an attractive and dynamic place for residents, shoppers, civic users, students, and business owners.
- Pursue local and inter-city transit options for each city's workforce that is frequent, reliable, and provides options for shift workers. Ensure all transit is connected to secondary transportation systems, including bike/ pedestrian facilities.

<sup>24</sup> Western Greater Yellowstone Consortium. (2013, April 17) Jackson-Teton Audit Diagnosis of Land Development Regulations.pdf. Retrieved from <https://sustainableyellowstone.org/library>

<sup>25</sup> Rexburg Planning Interview, 2014

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**Theme 1.3:** Create local, living-wage jobs and strengthen each city's diverse business climate.

**Strategies:**

- Support new forms of businesses that allow residents to work in the place they live including live-work opportunities, technology centers, co-location, resource-sharing arrangements, and home businesses.
- Study how the two cities might benefit one another given labor shortages in Jackson and labor surpluses in Rexburg.
- Improve regional networks among existing businesses in both cities and explore benefits of local, state, and federal business-support programs.
- Participate in regional and statewide business recruitment programs to increase their awareness of our large city offerings.
- Pursue innovative and creative industries that have the option to locate in the two cities, adjacent to many outdoor attractions.

**Theme 1.4:** Improve access to workforce housing through programs that expand the supply and variety of housing types.

Jackson and Teton County, Wyoming, have the most extensive affordable housing production programs and development requirements of all jurisdiction within the Teton View Region. However, these areas still have the tightest rental market, highest priced ownership market, and are struggling to keep pace with

the rising numbers of jobs. Development and redevelopment constantly threatens to reduce the existing affordable housing stock in the area. Although Jackson has a town goal to house 65% of its workforce locally and has an immediate need for more affordable rental units, current densities on the limited amount of available land for construction may not be in line with these goals. Jackson should identify areas where increased density for affordable housing is appropriate and determine ways by which density could be increased. All households, particularly families looking to buy and cost-burdened Hispanic/Latino households, can benefit.

Rexburg has the highest densities zoned and permitted in the Teton View Region, but still has housing related challenges. Rexburg, which could likely double in size under current zoning and growth pressures, has had the majority of new development in large multi-family apartment projects. In light of this trend, Rexburg should continue to ensure that large-scale apartment and multi-family unit developments do not displace other housing options for those who work in the community. Likewise, it is important for the city to preserve single-family neighborhoods for ownership, provide a mix of ownership opportunities for seniors looking to downsize and families wanting to purchase homes, and possibly incentivize large-scale developments

in parts of the city (e.g., near campus). The city should work with BYU-I to coordinate the needs of both the city and the university and ensure zoning and development meets the needs of the whole community rather than just certain segments.<sup>26</sup>

### **Strategies:**

- Locate higher density housing in each city in targeted areas in order to meet workforce housing needs (e.g. complete neighborhoods).
- Locate and design these areas in a way so as not to detract from the overall community character and mix with other housing types.
- Require or encourage employers to provide housing for workers on or off-site to accommodate the demand generated by these projects.
- Explore incentives to build a variety of denser housing, including density bonuses and height bonuses.
- Encourage large employers to provide housing assistance to their employees.

- Seek funding sources to offset the cost of providing housing to families in the most need.
- Continue to encourage the coordinated activities of the Jackson/Teton Housing Authority and non-profit housing groups in meeting the housing needs for all affordable housing income ranges.
- Provide a one-stop-shop organization(s) to be a coordinated and accessible resource for housing in Rexburg.
- Provide a coordinated resource for renters to locate information about rental properties and options – including low income and market rate rentals – for English and Spanish-speaking residents alike.
- Create a policy or Language Access Plan defining Spanish communication practices and explore opportunities to share interpreter and translation services.



<sup>26</sup> 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>.



## Tales of Two Cities:

### Jackson, Wyoming and Rexburg, Idaho

Three cooperative initiatives and six locally defined projects are outlined below for Rexburg and Jackson and their individual micropolitan areas. The two major cities will coordinate with their respective county governments to respond to the impediments to fair housing compliance cited in the Regional Analysis of Impediments and the recommendations in the referenced multi-modal, economic and land use studies.

Presented as “Tales of Two Cities,” nine of the projects and initiatives are considered to be near-term priorities for those local governments willing to lead, co-lead or partner on their implementation over the next one-to-three years. One project is shown as having a longer-term horizon for action (three-to-five years out).



**Table 5.** Tales of Two Cities (TTC) Implementation Priorities

No.	Local/Micropolitan Area Near-Term Priorities	Willing to Lead/Co-Lead	Willing to Partner	Potential New Partners
TTC.2	Code Updates for Fair Housing Compliance – Teton County, WY	Town of Jackson Teton County, WY		
TTC.3	Jackson Hole Workforce Housing Initiative	Town of Jackson Teton County, WY	City of Victor	
TTC.4	A Regional Transportation Authority for Jackson Hole	Town of Jackson Teton County, WY	City of Victor Teton County, ID	
TTC.5	A Madison-Fremont Housing Authority	Madison County Ashton Community Foundation	Fremont County	
TTC.6	Fair Housing Policies/Procedures: Rexburg Micropolitan Area	Madison County	Fremont County	
TTC.7	Code Updates for Fair Housing Compliance – Madison County	Madison County	City of Rexburg	
TTC.8	Wastewater Treatment Demonstration Projects	City of Rexburg Fremont County Ashton Community Foundation		
TTC.9	Rexburg Transit Feasibility Study	City of Rexburg	Rexburg Chamber currently leads	Idaho Transportation Department
TTC.10	Jackson-Rexburg Workforce Connection	City of Rexburg	Town of Jackson City of Victor	Jackson Hole Chamber of Commerce

No.	Long-Term Goal	Explanation
TTC.1	Greater Yellowstone Framework Certification – Jackson/Teton County	Although an audit of their land development regulations has determined that GYF certification would be likely if pursued, the Town of Jackson and Teton County will wait until a new certifying authority becomes active.



## Jackson Micropolitan Area

These four projects/initiatives directly affect the Town of Jackson and Teton County, Wyoming, and indirectly affect Teton County, Idaho, home of many workers who commute to Jackson.

### PROJECT TTC.1 – GREATER YELLOWSTONE FRAMEWORK CERTIFICATION – JACKSON HOLE

**Summary:** In 2013, under a HUD technical assistance grant, the town of Jackson and Teton County, Wyoming, performed an audit of their land development regulations as they relate to sustainability and environmental responsibility. An assessment of achievable points was made under the local government version of the Greater Yellowstone Framework for Sustainable Development. Both entities achieved similar scores for Gold certification under this analysis, with particular strengths in the areas of Land Use and Conservation, Biodiversity, Transportation and Connectivity, and Community Vitality. Submission for first-ever certification under Version 2.0 of the GY-Framework for Local Governments would occur under this project, with the required third-party evaluation.

**Measure:** Development in City Centers; Regional Transit Connectivity, Wildland Urban Interface Development

**Plan Theme:** 1.2 – Encourage managed growth, access to services and a healthy economy through sustainable land use planning.

**Source:** A.2 – Diagnosis of Land Development RegulationsProject





## TTC.2 CODE UPDATES FOR FAIR HOUSING COMPLIANCE, TETON COUNTY, WY

**Summary:** Teton County, Wyoming, and the Town of Jackson both permit group homes within their development codes as an “institutional residential” use, but have slightly different definitions. To reduce confusion among developers, Jackson and Teton County, WY, would explore using a common group home definition while ensuring its compliance with the Fair Housing Act. Each entity also would review (and modify, if needed) zoned densities to ensure needed diversity in types of housing and affordability of product, especially for low-moderate income and underserved populations. Specifically Jackson would review its zone densities in light of the town goal to house 65% of its workforce, as well as its immediate need for more affordable rental units. The town/county could identify areas where increased density for affordable housing is deemed appropriate and determine ways by which density could be increased in tandem with other site aspects. Use of accessory dwelling units is one method that may be explored where code modifications may be necessary.

**Measure:** Housing Cost Burden

**RAI Impediment:** 6. Jurisdictions can improve aspects of their development codes to help incent or create fair access to and provision of a diversity of housing for residents.

**Source:** C.1 – Regional Analysis of Impediments (Conclusions)

## INITIATIVE TTC.3 JACKSON HOLE WORKFORCE HOUSING INITIATIVE

**Summary:** According to recent studies, housing for the workforce in Teton County, Wyoming, is in short supply, increasing in price, and not keeping up with growth in demand. Historically, housing in Jackson Hole has been too expensive for many households to afford. The goal of this initiative and of Teton County itself is to house 65% of the workforce locally rather than forcing employees to commute from adjacent counties. Teton County’s existing housing authority and its non-profit housing trust will continue to work together to advance the recommended policies, code regulations, incentives and funding mechanisms to build more affordable housing and to address the tight rental market in Jackson Hole.

**Measure:** Development in City Centers; Commute Time

**Plan Theme:** 1.4 – Improve access to workforce housing through programs that expand the supply and variety of housing types

**Source:** C.2 – Housing Needs Assessment (Teton County, WY section)

## INITIATIVE TTC.4 A REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY FOR JACKSON HOLE

**Summary:** In 2014 the Town of Jackson and Teton County, Wyoming, contracted with Charlier & Associates for an Integrated Transportation Plan to address multi-modal challenges in the greater Jackson Hole area. The plan recommends doubling the investment in the START Bus system and organizing a Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) to coordinate the mobility efforts of the town, county, Grand Teton National Park and the Wyoming Department of Transportation. This initiative will generate regional support for formation of an RTA that should, at a minimum, include the entire Jackson Micropolitan Area to adequately address the commuter challenges faced by residents of the Teton Valley. It would be worthwhile to expand this dialogue to include the four-county region.

**Measure:** Regional Transit Connectivity

**Plan Theme:** 3.1 – Create and maintain safe, well-connected multi-modal transportation throughout the region

**RAI Impediment:** 5. Access to transportation, education and medical services in the region is limited, disproportionately affecting Hispanic/Latino households, seniors, persons with disabilities, and single parent households.

**Source:** D.1 – Multi-Modal Transportation Assessment (Chapter 4, Goal 1)



## Rexburg Micropolitan Area:

These five projects/initiatives directly affect the City of Rexburg and indirectly the bedroom communities of Sugar City and St. Anthony, as well as the rest of Fremont County.

## INITIATIVE TTC.5 A MADISON – FREMONT HOUSING AUTHORITY

**Summary:** This initiative suggests creation of a two-county joint powers board to increase, preserve, and rehabilitate affordable and resident-occupied housing for low income and underserved populations in this two-county area. The governing leadership would need to reflect the diversity of communities in both urban and rural parts of this area. Impediments to fair housing would be addressed by the new authority as it works to achieve the following objectives recommended in the two referenced housing studies:

- Preserve and protect home ownership, especially in Rexburg
- Address the mortgage financing difficulties faced by women and Hispanic residents
- Diversify and stabilize the rental market in each community

- Develop senior and multi-family housing in each community as needs warrant
- Coordinate with BYU-I to meet students' diverse housing needs as campus enrollment expands

**Measure:** Housing Cost Burden, Development in City Centers

**RAI Impediment:** 7. Jurisdictions can improve access to affordable homes through various programs that expand the inventory for protected classes and improve and preserve existing homes.

**Sources:** C.1 – Regional Analysis of Impediments (Conclusions), C.2 – Housing Needs Assessment (Madison & Fremont County sections)



## PROJECT TTC.6 FAIR HOUSING POLICY AND PROCEDURES: REXBURG MICROPOLITAN AREA

**Summary:** It is recommended that each jurisdiction within the new Madison-Fremont Housing Authority work to adopt a fair housing policy that will specify protections for at least the same classes as federal law, with additional protections considered for Victims of Domestic Violence. Local remedies and procedures for violations would put into effect where feasible so residents could have community-based options for resolving claims outside the federal court system.

**Measure:** Housing Cost Burden

**RAI Impediment:** 1. Not all jurisdictions have Fair Housing policies and others can be improved to better support and educate residents on Fair Housing issues.

**Source:** C.1 – Regional Analysis of Impediments (Conclusions)

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## PROJECT TTC.7 CODE UPDATES FOR FAIR HOUSING COMPLIANCE: MADISON COUNTY

**Summary:** Under this project Madison County would consider incorporating group home provisions pursuant to IC 67-6531 into its development code so they are adequately defined and consistent with Idaho state law. In addition, both Rexburg and Madison County could review and modify, as needed, zoned densities to ensure needed diversity in types of housing and affordability, especially for low-moderate income and underserved populations. Rexburg would continue to ensure that development of large-scale apartment and multi-family units do not displace other housing options for those who work in the community. As part of this effort, the City of Rexburg would explore ways to:

- Preserve single-family neighborhoods for ownership
- Provide a mix of ownership opportunities for seniors as well as families
- Incentivize large-scale developments in parts of the city in which it is desired
- Work with BYU-Idaho in zoning decisions to ensure that the needs of the whole community are met as well as those of the university

**Measure:** Housing Cost Burden

**RAI Impediment:** 6. Jurisdictions can improve some aspects of their development codes to help incent or create fair access to a diversity of housing for residents.

**Source:** C.1 – Regional Analysis of Impediments (Conclusions)

## PROJECT TTC.8 WASTEWATER TREATMENT DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

**Summary:** Needs for wastewater system upgrades have been identified in both Madison and Fremont Counties in recent years. Research has been focused on installing more “natural” systems that use biological processes in processing sewage and contaminants. These demonstration ideas need more assessment, prioritization and seed among the cities and counties that could be involved:

- BYU-Idaho Campus Onsite System
- St Anthony Landfill Leachate System
- Sand Mound Wastewater Collection & Treatment designed for an Island Park subdivision
- Treatment of Bio-Solids for Rexburg's Wastewater System – system used in London

**Measure:** Healthy Waters; Development in City Centers

**Plan Theme:** 1.2 – Encourage managed growth, access to services, and a healthy economy through sustainable land use planning

**Source:** *Whole Water Systems Technical Assistance Proposal to Fremont County – 2012. Rexburg City Council Minutes – December 3, 2014.*

## PROJECT TTC.9 REXBURG TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

**Summary:** The Community Transportation Association of America has been awarded a USDA Rural Development grant to study the feasibility of a public transit start-up for the City of Rexburg in FY 2015. The Rexburg Chamber of Commerce is forming a steering committee to help guide the scope of the study, facilitate public outreach, and gain community and university cooperation in data collection. Also included in the study will be the establishment of a transit center and/or Park & Ride facility at the new Super Walmart location north of town and expanding WE Car/Zip Car services currently on campus. Conceived under the Multi-Modal Assessment and developed in partnership with Fremont County, the feasibility study should explore how to improve connectivity across the entire Rexburg Micropolitan Area.



**Measure:** Regional Transit Connectivity

**Plan Theme:** 3.1 – Create and maintain safe, well-connected multi-modal transportation throughout the region

**RAI Impediment:** 5. Access to transportation, education and medical services in the region is limited, disproportionately affecting Hispanic/Latino households, seniors, persons with disabilities, and single parent households.

**Source:** D.1 – Multi-Modal Transportation Assessment (Chapter 4, Goal 1)



## Two-City Initiative

### INITIATIVE TTC.10 THE JACKSON – REXBURG WORKFORCE CONNECTION

**Summary:** When adding the student population, the unemployment rate in Rexburg exceeds 20% with roughly 7,000 students seeking employment. Although this surplus of student labor might appear attractive on the surface, many Rexburg employers do not hire students due to high turnover rates and a mismatch in skill sets needed. This workforce-related research project would examine the feasibility of filling the labor needs of Jackson Hole – largely in the retail and hospitality industries – with the available labor pool across the mountains in Rexburg, Idaho.

**Measure:** Employment Diversity

**Plan Theme:** 1.3 – Promote economic development through investment in local, living-wage job creation and strengthening of each city's diverse business climate

**Source:** E.5 – Workforce Analysis of Rexburg, Idaho





# Why

Employment diversity is an important measure in assessing the total economic potential and performance in a region. Where employment opportunities are highly concentrated in a single sector, the potential for that industry to have

a disproportionate impact on the economy is high. With a more diversified base of employment, not only are there more services available to community members, but as a whole the economy can be more resilient to any shocks to the system such as a major fire in the park system or significant layoffs due to fluctuations in commodity prices.

This indicator also demonstrates disparities and differences among cities and counties, which may indicate the potential for more sharing of services as well as opportunities for some localities to grow certain employment sectors. The diversity of employment also impacts the type and quantity of workforce training, housing and transportation needed in the region.

## UNITS OF MEASURE

This indicator is measured as an annual average percent of employment by high-level industry by county.

A diverse economy is one that features a distribution of employment across the various industry categories, and an industry-reliant economy is one that has high levels of employment in one or several specific industries and low levels in the others.

Increasing values for an industry suggest growth in that industry in that locality, either through overall growth or importing those jobs from another area. Decreasing values could suggest declining employment in a particular industry, or loss of a particular sector or industry to another area.

## SOURCE

Data for this indicator is available from the US Bureau of Labor and Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW – see: <http://www.bls.gov/cew/>).

The QCEW Data Viewer provides data by industry at different geographic levels (see: [http://www.bls.gov/cew/apps/data\\_views/data\\_views.htm](http://www.bls.gov/cew/apps/data_views/data_views.htm)). Data is available quarterly but can also be reported in annual averages.



# Why

By developing within municipal boundaries and in defined city or activity centers, communities leverage existing resources and concentrate development where it can benefit the most people. In addition to using existing

infrastructure for services like water and sewer, concentrating development in and near activity centers provides more opportunities for economic activity whether it is more consumers in the case of residential development or more products in the case of commercial development. The continued development of new uses enhances the experience of being located within a municipality and provides additional choices for people to access.

The inverse of development within municipal areas is the developing in more rural or outlying areas. These areas are typically not as well served, require additional infrastructure to be built, and result in people spending more time traveling to meet their basic needs. Additional consequences of sprawling development patterns can include habitat fragmentation and conversion of agricultural lands.

## UNITS OF MEASURE

**THIS INDICATOR  
MEASURES THE AMOUNT  
OF DEVELOPMENT  
ACTIVITY OCCURRING  
IN EXISTING MUNICIPAL  
BOUNDARIES AND  
DEFINED ACTIVITY  
CENTER AREAS.**

This indicator is measured as the percentage of annual building permits for new construction (quantity residential and nonresidential) occurring in established municipal boundaries or defined activity center areas, out of the annual total number of permits in each county. Communities may also choose to include adjoining impact areas around municipal boundaries where joint city/county planning is occurring.

Increasing values for this indicator suggest that development is becoming more centralized and concentrated. Decreasing values for this indicator could mean that development is occurring in a less coordinated or concentrated manner, which could also mean loss of agricultural land and increased costs to extend services and infrastructure.

## SOURCE

Data for this indicator is available from city and county building departments and GIS property records.



# Why

A well connected road network (higher connectivity index) emphasizes accessibility by providing for direct travel and increased route choice. A connected roadway network helps to disperse traffic over more roads by providing options for motorists to choose the most direct route, or another alternative if congestion delays exist. Road networks with a high connectivity index are also beneficial by providing options for emergency access and route alternatives when construction activities or other delays interrupt a segment.

While not all pedestrian and bicycle routes are on-street facilities, higher roadway connectivity also supports pedestrian and bicycle travel because, as with motorists, direct routes and route alternatives for pedestrians and bicyclists are important factors in convenience and safety for these transportation modes.

## UNITS OF MEASURE

This indicator is measured as a composite index, which is calculated by dividing the number of road segments (links) by the number of intersections (nodes). A connectivity index of 1.4 is generally considered the minimum needed for a walkable community (Source: Ewing, 1996). The best applicability of this indicator will be to city centers.

Increasing values for this indicator suggest that there are more opportunities for route variation and enhanced traffic dispersion. Decreasing values for this indicator could suggest that there are fewer options for route alternatives, meaning travelers must funnel onto fewer routes, which could lead to increased congestion or trip delays.

## SOURCE

Data for this indicator is available from city and county GIS roadway records.



THIS INDICATOR  
MEASURES THE AVERAGE  
COMMUTE TIME FOR  
EMPLOYED PERSONS IN  
EACH CITY AND COUNTY.

## Why

As a region, there is a significant relationship between where people live and where people work that contributes to quality of life. If people are able to afford and choose to live near where they work, there is more time available for other activities, less strain on the region's roadway infrastructure, and reduced impacts on the natural environment. Measuring how much time people spend getting from their homes to their jobs provides insight into how both small and large communities are faring and relating to each other in the region.

Many factors come into consideration when deciding where to live, and proximity to work is a significant part. This indicator can serve in an indirect manner to illustrate housing affordability as well as environmental factors such as air quality. While it may be a choice to live in a more rural setting, especially in a community that values natural settings, it may also indicate that there are simply no affordable housing options in some of the larger cities. If people are driving long distances to get to work, they contribute more pollution into the air and end up paying a greater proportion of their income on transportation costs. This indicator helps illustrate how inter-dependent the region's communities are in terms of housing, employment, and transportation opportunities.

### UNITS OF MEASURE

This indicator is measured in terms of mean travel time to work (in minutes).

Increasing values could suggest that residents are traveling longer distances to work, or that traffic congestion or other delays are slowing their commutes. Decreasing values could suggest that residents are living in closer proximity to places of employment, or that traffic levels or delays are decreasing.

### SOURCE

Data for this indicator are available from the American Fact Finder website provided by the US Census Bureau: <http://factfinder2.census.gov>. Data is available by county, and select cities (census designated places), through the American Community Survey estimates of economic characteristics, within the "commuting to work" category.

# Chapter 2.

# Our Small Cities

## Regional Context

Within the micropolitan areas of Jackson, Wyoming, and Rexburg, Idaho, lie several small cities, including Driggs and Victor in Teton County, Idaho, and St. Anthony, Ashton, and Island Park in Fremont County.

Key challenges of the region's smaller communities are related to housing and economic development, with walkability and access to transit service being other issues that the small cities are working to address. For example, alternative transit hubs for buses, shared bikes, car sharing, and more bike paths are common goals for sustainable land use planning for several of these communities.<sup>27</sup>

In response to a housing/quality-of-life survey distributed as part of the regional plan process, residents of small cities identified the natural environment, including wildlife and scenery, as the reason they choose to live in the region.

<sup>27</sup> 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>.



The Music on Main concert series began on a small vacant lot in downtown Driggs and quickly grew to become the most popular venue for free music every week during the summer. It now attracts thousands of spectators from all over the region and is hosted at the Victor City Park on Main Street.

**SOURCE:** <http://tetonvalleyfoundation.org/music-on-main/>

A sense of safety, a small-town feel, and outdoor recreation opportunities were also highlighted, as well as clean air, fresh water, and a feeling of being connected to neighbors and the community.

## Teton County, Idaho

Teton County, Idaho, lies within the valley between the western slope of the Teton Mountain Range and the eastern slope of the Big Hole Mountains. From 2000 to 2010, it was one of the fastest growing counties in the nation. The small cities within Teton County, Idaho - Driggs, Victor, and Teton - lie along the highway on the eastern side of the Teton River, which bisects the valley from north to south. The eastern side of the valley also includes foothills, wildlife habitat, crucial water resources, and active agricultural areas. The west side of the valley is less populated with no incorporated cities, and it is characterized by rural residential areas, agricultural uses, wildlife habitat, and foothills.





The Driggs July 4th Balloon Festival is a regional attraction.

**SOURCE:** <http://www.hotairballoon.com/Teton-Valley-Balloon-Rally>

Teton County, Idaho is similar to, but less intense than, Teton County, Wyoming, as it has attracted many second homeowners and a tourism industry due to its proximity to the scenic Teton Range, national parks, and resort attractions. As a result, much of the county's employment is seasonal and tourism dependent, with three of the county's five main employment sectors related to tourism or construction. Because trade, leisure, hospitality, and construction jobs are highly dependent on tourism and the national economy, the economy of Teton County has experienced large boom and bust fluctuations.

Despite having a large number of seasonal workers, Teton County still has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the State of Idaho. The unemployment rate dipped to 1.6 percent in 2007 and remained low in December 2013 (3 percent) and 2014 (4.5 percent). The

second largest employment sector outside of construction and tourism related industries is government, which includes the county run hospital, state and local government agencies, and schools.

Contributing to the county's low unemployment rate is the large number of county residents who commute to jobs in Wyoming. About 53 percent of households with at least one employed person has a worker who is employed across the pass in Teton County, Wyoming. Many of these families, including those of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity, have moved to Teton County, Idaho, where homes are comparatively more affordable.

Although the county has low unemployment, the majority of jobs are in lower paying tourism or construction related industries. There is a growing concern about the unavailability of high paying professional and technical jobs, especially given increasing housing costs in Teton Valley.<sup>28</sup> As a result, there are several organizations in the county that are working to attract internet-based businesses and "recreation technology" manufacturing, such as ski or outdoor equipment manufacturers. Efforts are also being focused on providing more educational and technical training opportunities within the county so that those who want to increase their skills and formal education are not forced to relocate outside the community.

<sup>28</sup>City of Victor. (2003). *Victor Comprehensive Plan.pdf* Retrieved from <http://www.victorcityidaho.com/content/comp-plan>.

The development of a multi-modal transportation system is important in Teton County. The County Comprehensive Plan includes a vision for a trail system that rivals the best trail systems in the nation, with pathway connections along old railroad beds, existing roads, and around the perimeter of the valley. The Comprehensive Plan also envisions the primary transportation routes through the valley – Highways 33, 32, 31, and Ski Hill Road – that is anchored by formalized gateways and flanked by protected scenic viewsheds.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> *Harmony Design & Engineering, AECOM, Jorgensen Associates, Intermountain Aquatics (August 2012) Comprehensive Plan – A Vision and Framework 2012-2030. Teton County, Idaho.*



Mountainside Village in Victor is a successful pilot project for the GY Framework for Sustainable Development. Mountainside Village is a neighborhood as unique as it is authentic, graced by thoughtful design, a spectacular location, and a commitment to fine homebuilding.

**SOURCE:** *SelkoPhoto*

## Driggs

In 2007, National Geographic magazine listed Driggs as one of the 10 best outdoor recreation destinations in the nation. As the county seat, the City of Driggs has a population of more than 1,600 persons based on the 2010 census, although more than 3,800 are included in the Driggs CCD (county subdivision from the US Census). After decreasing in population between 1950 and 1970, the city's population has steadily increased in each subsequent decade until the 2000s when the population increased rapidly.

Much of Driggs' population growth has come from in-migration. Of the persons who moved to a new house in the city between 1995 and 2000, 89 percent of those persons moved from another state in the West. New arrivals often leave other resort towns due to the higher cost of living compared to Driggs.

As Driggs continues to grow, the need for a wide variety of housing types – from single family homes in traditional neighborhoods to high quality apartments – will also grow in order to meet the needs of persons of different ages, family status, incomes, and backgrounds. A new model land use code could permit this higher density as long as it does not conflict with local neighborhoods. Currently, Driggs has incentives for affordable housing development in its code that have yet to be used. This includes two incentives for housing that targets households with incomes ranging from 80 percent Area Median Income (AMI) to 120 percent AMI:

- A 15 percent density bonus for affordable housing in new residential subdivisions. The existing bonus provision contemplates that such an agreement will be negotiated by a housing authority; however, no authority is currently in place.
- Relaxation of the 75 percent lot coverage standards for affordable housing (among other things) in the Mixed-Use Employment (MUE) zone “at the discretion of the reviewing authority.”<sup>30</sup>

Driggs has an emerging downtown commercial core, which is being supported by active downtown-focused organizations. The Downtown Driggs Community Association (DDCA) is a local non-profit group comprised of business owners, property owners, city staff, and local advocates. DDCA is a member of the National Main Street Program, one of the first three cities designated under the Idaho program. DDCA is working to share knowledge of the Main Street Program to assist other communities in the region and participated in the National Main Street training and orientation held in Ashton, Idaho, in 2014. The Driggs Urban Renewal Agency is a taxing district and another organization that supports downtown revitalization and redevelopment.

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<sup>30</sup> City of Driggs. (2007) *City of Driggs Comp Plan.pdf*. Retrieved from <http://www.driggs.govoffice.com/index>

## Victor

The City of Victor lies south of Driggs in Teton County, Idaho, at the foothills of the Teton Mountains. As the closest Idaho town to Jackson, Wyoming, Victor has a high number of people who commute to Wyoming for work due to the relative affordability of housing in Victor. Due in part to spill over growth from Jackson, Victor’s population has increased substantially in the last 23 years, increasing from 304 people in 1990 to 1,938 in 2013; 5,158 people reside in the Victor CCD (County Census Division). Similar to Driggs, Victor has also experienced a large number of people moving into the city from many different locations.

As its population grows, Victor has been proactive in ensuring that affordable housing will be available into the future. The city’s Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) Overlay permits a 20 percent density bonus in exchange for deed-restricted housing units attainable to those at or below 120 percent AMI. These units can be ownership or rental units with mortgage and rental rates established in the TND regulations. A new model code is also assisting in housing diversification, which will help provide housing that meets a variety of needs for various populations.

## Fremont County, Idaho

Fremont County was established March 4, 1893, and it was named for John C. Fremont, an explorer known as the "Pathfinder" who passed through the area in 1843. The county occupies 1,877 square miles or about 1,201,300 acres. Public lands predominate and only 31.9 percent (599 square miles) of the County's land is in private ownership. About 821 square miles (43.7 percent of the total area) in the northern and eastern portions of the county are in the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. Another 220 square miles (11.8 percent of the total area), mostly in the western part of the County, is administered by the Bureau of Land Management. The state of Idaho manages about 175 square miles in parcels scattered throughout the county.

The diversity of the Fremont County landscape reflects its geologic history. The northern and eastern parts of the county are on the volcanic highlands of the Yellowstone Plateau, where the landscape features lodgepole pine forests, mountain meadows, streams, and the headwaters of the Henry's Fork of the Snake River. The county is bordered to the east by the Yellowstone Plateau and the Wyoming border. The Centennial Mountains and Henry's Lake form a distinctive landscape on Fremont County's northern border. The crest of the mountains defines both the Continental Divide and the Idaho-Montana state line. The southern

and western parts of the County lie over the basalt flows of the Snake River Plain - an area of irrigated cropland and sagebrush steppes that also includes a belt of active sand dunes.

Fremont County has three significant cities (St. Anthony, Ashton, and Island Park) located on U.S. Highway 20, which is heavily traveled by tourists headed for Yellowstone National Park. The county also attracts many Idaho and Utah residents to its local and state parks, national forest campgrounds, and BLM recreation areas.

The closure of a sawmill in the early 1990s and relocation of the U.S. Forest Service office to nearby Idaho Falls, hurt the local economy and rebounding has been difficult. Since 2002, the unemployment rates have fluctuated from a low of 3.1 percent in 2007 to a high of 9.2 percent in 2010. However, the labor force has held steady during much of the last decade, and government provides the most nonfarm payroll jobs, primarily through the state Juvenile Correction Center in St. Anthony. Federal and state land management agencies, as well as trade, construction, leisure, and hospitality industries also account for large percentages of the jobs in Fremont County.

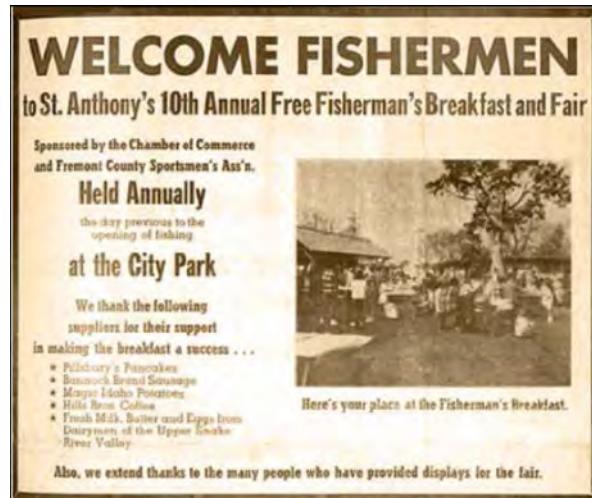
## St. Anthony

St. Anthony is the county seat of Fremont County, Idaho. St Anthony's population has maintained a conservative growth rate, growing from 3,064 in 1990 to 3,465 in 2013; 8,010 people reside in the St. Anthony CCD (county subdivision from the US Census).

St. Anthony has housing challenges related to its proximity to Rexburg and overall costs. Housing in St. Anthony is influenced by BYU-I in Rexburg, which now operates year-round on a trimester system. According to property managers, rents continue to increase in the St. Anthony area in part due to student demand. One hundred seventy households spend more than 30 percent of their income on their housing payment. Due to the high cost of housing and the high percentage of households with children, overcrowding in a household is common in St. Anthony.

Commuting out of the county for work is necessary for many residents; 680 households include at least one employee who commutes to work in another county. While most commuters surveyed would rather live in Fremont County than in the county where they work, 190 households indicated they would rather live in a different county, (mostly Madison) if housing could be secured.<sup>31</sup>

The Henry's Fork Greenway has been a successful community effort in St. Anthony and is a major contributor to the city's quality of life.



The St. Anthony free fisherman breakfast is a successful community event that recognizes the high quality recreational resources in the area.

**SOURCE:** <http://www.rheafamily.org/resume/SFNAV/events/freefishbreak/index.php>

The greenway follows the Henry's Fork of the Snake River and has two parts, north and south; the north trail entrance is located near River View Cemetery, and the south trail entrance is located near the north side of the State Highway 20 overpass. The greenway features paved trails for biking, hiking, wildlife viewing, and access to the river for fishing. In the winter, the trails can be used for cross country skiing.

The trails not only provide an important recreational amenity, but also help bring the community together. Many local organizations work together annually to clean and repair the

<sup>31</sup> 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>.



trails. Funding for the projects has come from the City of St. Anthony, private donations, and grants. Currently, two local clubs are organizing fund raisers to improve the south trail.<sup>32</sup>

Another regional recreational amenity is the St. Anthony Sand Dunes Special Recreation Management Area, a 46,000 acre area managed by the Bureau of Land Management that contains five active sand dune complexes. These dunes are made of white quartz sand that range from 50 to over 400 feet in height. The largest dune complex is part of a 21,000 Wilderness Study Area. Much of the area is closed in winter as it is home to the largest wintering desert elk herd in North America. During the summer season, the sand dunes have become one of the most popular motorized recreation areas in the United States. Visits have increased at an annual rate of 7 percent, reaching an estimated 356,000 visits in 2005. To support visitors, the BLM campground at Egin Lake offers 48 sites and operates near full capacity. In addition, there are two private resorts—Sand Hills Resort offers 109 campsites, while the Desert Oasis Resort offers 250 RV sites and 150 campsites, with a variety of amenities.

*“We are the doorway to the Dunes.”*

RESIDENT QUOTE

## Ashton

Ashton is a tight-knit community that envisions developing a vibrant downtown with new thriving businesses. The city's population has remained relatively stable compared to other communities, with little change since 1990. The current number of households is approximately 395, with an average household size of 2.79.<sup>33</sup> Ashton has a variety of summer/winter recreation opportunities. Ashton recently completed a Main Street road diet to bring four lanes down to two lanes, which has helped to shape and create an identity for the community.

The City of Ashton is predominantly developed with single-family housing near the core of the city, averaging about four dwelling units per acre, with agriculture lands surrounding the city. The city recently reviewed and revised its development code and its sewer and water regulations to be less stringent in key locations.

*“We don't want to be 70 years old and still talking about potential. Ashton has been talking about the potential of the community for 34 years.”* RESIDENT QUOTE

<sup>32</sup> St. Anthony Website <http://www.cityofstanthony.org/>

<sup>33</sup> J-U-B Engineers, Inc., 2008





American Dog Derby – Ashton. The Oldest All-American Dog Sled Race. This historic dog sled race runs from Ashton, Idaho to Cascade Corner of Yellowstone Park. It is an exciting winter experience with events for mushers, spectators, and dogs of all sizes.

**SOURCE:** <http://www.americandogderby.com/dog-derby-photo-gallery>

## City of Island Park

The City of Island Park was created in 1947 and is located in northern Fremont County, Idaho. With 286 permanent, year-round residents according to the 2010 census, the City of Island Park is the county's third largest city (St. Anthony and Ashton are larger). This figure can be misleading because 80% of the Island Park area residents live outside the defined city limits, across a vast forested landscape. As a result, the population of the entire Island Park CCD (county census district) is actually 1,492 residents. The city is just 6.77 square miles in size, is 34.8 miles long, and ranges from 1,000 feet to 5,000 feet in width. Island Park residents proudly boast that their city has the "Longest Main Street in America."

The city is striving to preserve and improve the physical environment of the community to make it a more functional and desirable place in which to live, work, and visit. The area boasts some of the best recreational opportunities in the county, supported by an array of lodges, motels, restaurants, lounges, convenience stores, gas stations, fly fishing outfitters, and recreational vehicle rental businesses.

During the summer months the population of the Island Park area swells to include thousands of part-time (5-6 month) residents; vacation cabin owners and short-term renters; weekend campers and recreationists; and a seasonal workforce. They occupy more than 3,500 residential dwellings in more than 200 platted subdivisions and forest recreation sites across 100+ square miles. Because the Census accounts for the majority of these dwellings as "unoccupied", the seasonal residential household is not considered in the demographic characterizations in Fremont or other Teton View counties.

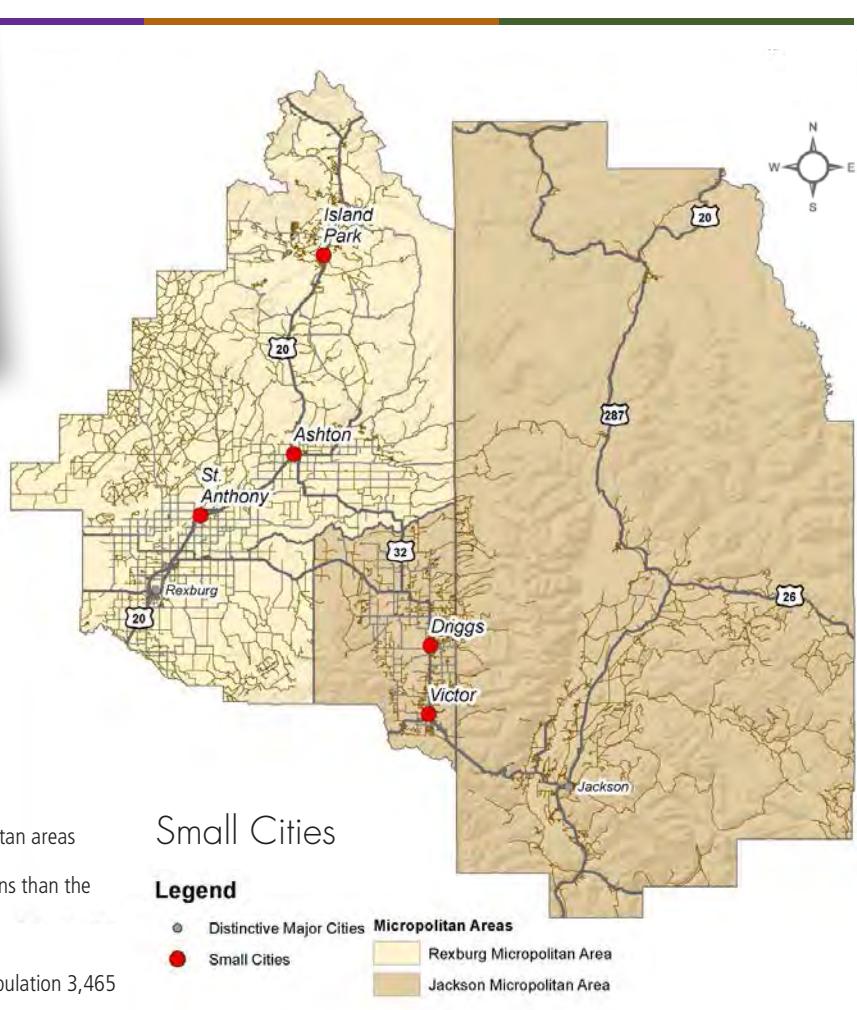
The housing needs assessment conducted as part of the regional planning process found that, in general, Island Park has a greater housing affordability problem than other areas of Fremont County. Relatively more households spend in excess of 30 percent of their income on housing, and the Island Park area has the highest priced real estate in the county. Rental availability for seasonal employees is also a challenge as it is very limited during the summer in the Island Park area.



**FIGURE 8. SMALL CITIES MAP**

Small established cities that are not within the metropolitan areas of the distinctive cities, but have slightly larger populations than the agricultural communities are.

- Driggs, population 1,657
- Ashton, population 1,084
- St. Anthony, population 3,465
- Victor, population 1,938



Homes tend to be in good condition. Unlike some of the other small cities in the region, there is very little commuting to other counties for work, and residents who live in Island Park report that they wish to live there.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>34</sup> City of Island Park Comprehensive Plan. (2014). *City of Island Park Comp Plan 10 2 2014 Draft.pdf*. Retrieved from Jeffrey L. Patlovich, Planning and Zoning Administrator City of Island Park

## Themes and Strategies

**Theme 2.1:** Promote managed growth through downtown planning and updates to development codes.

Rural character is essential to maintaining the distinctive identity of the Teton View region. Its smaller communities strive for vibrant economies while still protecting their natural heritage and community character. The new Model Development Code (Appendix B) will help willing localities achieve these goals. The purpose of this Model Development Code is to guide development in accordance with the respective comprehensive plans for each

community and their existing and future needs in order to protect, promote, and improve the public health, safety, and general welfare.

HUD funding has allowed for a pilot demonstration and test case of the Model Development Code with Teton County, Idaho, and the cities of Driggs and Victor. The Model Development Code provides a mechanism for achieving the following goals related to rural, residential, mixed use, industrial, civic/open space, and special districts:

- Mix land uses
- Take advantage of compact building design
- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices
- Create walkable neighborhoods
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
- Preserve open space, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas
- Provide a variety of transportation choices
- Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions

### **Strategies:**

- Encourage new development in close proximity to downtowns and rural town centers to promote vibrant walkable areas where infrastructure, including central water and sewer, can be provided more efficiently.
- Promote infill and development activity within existing boundaries of downtowns

and rural town centers using incentives and regulations.

- Encourage development and densities that are consistent with community character and the preservation of historic building and cultural landmarks.
- Encourage downtown zoning that promotes flexibility, density, mixed-use, and walkability.
- Provide zoning, regulations, and incentives to attract businesses to the area that target the local tourism and online markets.
- Encourage civic buildings to be located in town centers to stimulate economic development.
- Encourage higher residential densities in close proximity to downtown to support local businesses.
- Actively pursue dedicated funding sources through general funds, establishment of downtown development districts, and special districts.



### **The Teton Geotourism Center in Driggs is a tourist destination.**

Geotourism is a growing category of travel developed by National Geographic, offering the traveler an ability to experience the culture, heritage, food, art, geology, and music of an area.

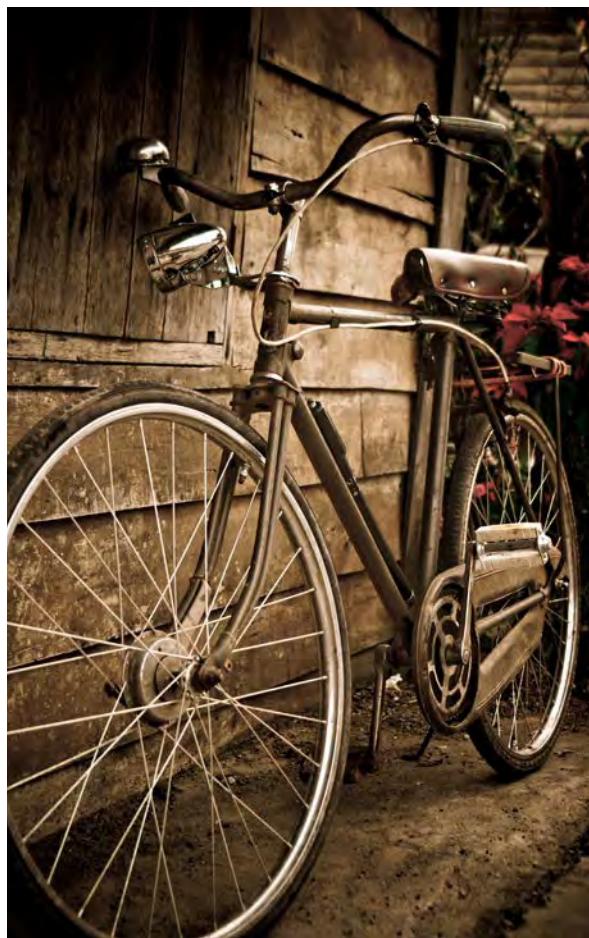
**SOURCE:** <http://www.driggs.govoffice.com/>

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**Theme 2.2:** Promote a healthy economy by positioning communities for new downtown investments.

**Strategies:**

- Continue to revitalize our downtowns and create the appropriate environment and locations for new office and commercial businesses.
- Promote pedestrian activity in downtowns by improving the ability to access employment, shopping, and services through walking and biking.
- Seek dedicated funding sources for downtowns to support amenity improvements.
- Coordinate regional marketing campaigns with a focus on local businesses and small towns.
- Pursue grant opportunities, including those available through state and national Main Street Programs.



**Theme 2.3:** Employ economic development strategies that support entrepreneurs, create living-wage jobs, and strengthen each city's overall business climate.

**Strategies:**

- Support new forms of businesses that allow people to work in the place they live, including live-work opportunities, technology centers, co-location, resource-sharing arrangements, and home businesses.
- Foster a community culture that appreciates and supports entrepreneurs.
- Actively assist existing business owners in their efforts to sustain and expand their businesses.
- Inventory and make available a range of business planning and financial assistance tools.
- Improve regional networks among businesses and build bridges with local, state and federal business-support programs.
- Institute regional and local programs targeted at youth, including mentoring, internship, and apprenticeship programs.
- Establish industrial arts hubs and shared workspaces to inspire innovation and support creative business activities in even the smallest cities.
- Cooperate with regional and statewide business recruitment programs to leverage their resources and increase their awareness of Teton View community offerings.

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**Theme 2.4:** Encourage the development and support of high-quality education and community enrichment activities for all ages.

**Strategies:**

- Work with school districts, private schools, and non-profit organizations to identify funding for the expansion and development of education programs.
- Encourage the siting of new schools near existing neighborhood centers to promote walkability.
- Develop new educational programs, both online and within our communities, that allow additional access to secondary education.



**Habitat for Humanity**

The Idaho Falls affiliate of Habitat for Humanity received a \$1.4 million gift from the estate of an Ashton-area farm family for use in the region. Fremont County is the top priority as specified by the donor. Significant improvements have been made to one an existing Ashton home and another a new home has completed construction.

- Support the construction of a multi-use recreation facility or network of facilities.
- Encourage expansion and evolution of community libraries as local community centers, centers for education and technology, meeting spaces, and business centers.
- Work with education institutions to improve opportunities for vocational training and trades education.

**Theme 2.5:** Provide access to affordable and suitable housing and create additional diversity in the housing supply in appropriate and sustainable areas.

It is important that housing efforts be coordinated within the region. Comprehensive plans adopted by the individual communities in the region call for adequate and high quality housing that meets the full range of resident's needs with variety in unit type and choice. Housing for the workforce in Teton Valley has recently decreased in supply and is too expensive for many households to afford.

**Strategies:**

- Support programs that help households with persons with disabilities afford needed renovations.
- Expand the first-right of refusal purchase regulations for tenants residing in converted apartments and renovation programs/assistance.



- Ensure housing for all generations by allowing codes that encourage the retrofitting of older homes for families and seniors.
- Consider methods to improve the condition and livability of existing homes through grant programs that improve their condition.
- Preserve the affordability of key homes in the area through the placement of restrictions, buy-down assistance, and subdivision of lots in appropriate areas.
- Continue to encourage collaboration among non-profit housing agencies, government housing agencies, and employers to develop and improve housing in the communities.
- Work with lenders to mitigate loan denial disparities and educate residents about financial repair.
- Improve resident education about the availability of ADA accessible and adaptable units and support programs that help households with persons with disabilities afford needed renovations. Modify group home provisions to provide consistency with Idaho state law, where applicable, and among jurisdictions.
- Review and modify zoned densities to ensure needed diversity in type and affordability of product for low-moderate income and underserved populations.



- Maintain good quality water to meet the present and future domestic, commercial, municipal, and industrial water use needs.
- Maintain, protect, and enhance the quality of surface and ground water resources.



**Theme 2.6:** Provide quality public services to residents, businesses, and institutions.

**Strategies:**

- Integrate public services, utilities and facilities into the fabric of neighborhoods so as to create a pleasing visual appearance.
- Encourage undergrounding distribution utility lines where feasible.
- When possible, manage the timing of residential development so that adequate streets, water, sewer, drainage facilities, schools, broadband, and other essential services can be economically provided.



*Moving Ahead with Common Purpose*

## Staying the Course:

### A Renewed Commitment to Small Rural Places

Below are six multi-sector initiatives and six community-specific projects designed to address the housing, economic, mobility and community development needs of small cities and counties in the Teton View region. Local governments have volunteered to lead or co-lead 11 of the 12 projects that will help them “Stay the Course” as they seek to strengthen their economies, improve the quality of their homes, and upgrade community infrastructure. Localities will seek to launch their implementation of these projects over the next one-to-three years.

One of the top three region-wide initiatives in the Teton View Regional Plan is “Main Street Matters” – a commitment to revitalize the downtown cores of at least five of our region’s cities in coordination with one another. Public response ranked this initiative the highest in overall importance (out of 60) and it enjoys the support of many partnering localities.



**Table 6.** Staying the Course (SC) Implementation Priorities

No.	#1 Region-Wide Priority	Willing to Lead/Co-Lead	Willing to Partner	Potential New Partners
SC.4	Main Street Matters – Downtown Revitalization	City of Driggs Ashton Community Foundation	City of St. Anthony City of Victor City of Rexburg	Idaho Department of Commerce – New Downtown Improvement Network

No.	Local/Micropolitan Near-Term Priorities	Willing to Lead/Co-Lead	Willing to Partner	Potential New Partners
SC.1	Neighborhood Revitalization with Habitat for Humanity	City of St. Anthony	City of Victor Ashton Community Foundation	Habitat for Humanity (Idaho Falls Affiliate) Idaho Community Foundation
SC.3	Walkability and Wayfinding Concepts	City of Driggs	City of Victor Town of Jackson	Idaho Transportation Department
SC.5	Collaborations for Business Retention and Recruitment	Teton County, ID	Fremont County City of Driggs City of Victor Ashton Community Foundation	
SC.6	Our Rural Schools Challenge	Teton County, ID	City of Victor Ashton Community Foundation	
SC.7	A Teton Valley Housing Authority	Teton County, ID	City of Driggs City of Victor	
SC.8	Code Updates for Fair Housing Compliance: Teton County, ID	Teton County, ID	City of Victor	
SC.9	Code Updates for Fair Housing Compliance: Fremont County	Fremont County	Ashton Community Foundation	
SC.10	Mobile Integrated Health Care	Fremont County		
SC.11	Building Community Across Fremont County	Fremont County	Ashton Community Foundation	
SC.12	Welcoming Seniors to Fremont County	Fremont County	Ashton Community Foundation	

No.	Needs Coordinating Entity	Explanation
SC.2	Rural Rideshare and Local Shuttle Services	The Idaho cities of Driggs and Victor, plus the Town of Jackson and Teton County, Wyoming, are willing to partner on this initiative if a coordinating entity can be recruited to fulfill the leadership roles.

## Multi-City/Multi-County Initiatives

The initiatives proposed below apply to one or more small cities that lie within Fremont and Teton counties, Idaho, including St. Anthony, Ashton, Island Park, Driggs and Victor.

### INITIATIVE SC.1 NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION WITH HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

**Summary:** The housing surveys performed for the four Teton View counties showed that between 11% and 17% of all occupants consider their homes to be in fair to poor condition, depending on the county. In Fremont County, where homes are generally older, 30% of the very low-income households have indicated the need for multiple repairs to make their homes livable. To address this need, a multi-year Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative (NRI) is being proposed with the Idaho Falls affiliate of Habitat for Humanity. Habitat completed its first build in Ashton in 2013 and envisions an ongoing relationship with the community in financing new home construction and “gut” rehabs of existing homes. Under this initiative, new NRI projects would be launched in both Ashton and St. Anthony over the next year, dependent on funding. The focus in St. Anthony would be a 3 x 12-block area in the West Main Street neighborhood where street improvements are scheduled for 2016. In

addition to a home rehabilitation, several “A Brush with Kindness” volunteer projects are proposed that would involve exterior painting, landscaping and minor repair of eligible homes. Additional neighborhood revitalization projects would be designed for other Teton View communities as needs are demonstrated and funds permit.

**Measure:** Housing Cost Burden; Housing and Transportation Affordability

**Plan Theme:** 2.5 – Provide access to affordable and suitable housing and create additional diversity in the housing supply in appropriate, sustainable areas.

**RAI Impediment:** 7. Jurisdictions can improve access to affordable homes through various programs that expand the inventory for protected classes and improve and preserve existing homes.

**Sources:** C.1 and C.2 – Regional Analysis of Impediments/Housing Needs Assessment, E.3 – Fremont County Economic Development Plan (Community Improvements)



## INITIATIVE SC.2 RURAL RIDESHARE AND LOCAL SHUTTLE SERVICES

**Summary:** Having a range of multi-modal transportation services is of growing importance to rural communities to attract new residents, businesses and travelers who seek an alternative to driving private vehicles. Under this initiative, more support would be given to the Teton Valley Mobility Advisory Committee (TVMAC) and an equivalent group in Fremont County to:

- Promote use of the Northwest states' [Rideshare Online](#) program or help develop an equivalent program for the Greater Yellowstone region (e.g. "Shotgun Rides" for more Western branding)
- Ensure that the demand-response service currently provided in St. Anthony, Driggs and Victor by Targhee Regional Public Transportation Authority (TRPTA) is cost-efficient and meets local needs
- Evaluate transportation improvements that would provide fair access to services and options for all types of commuters (e.g. START Bus in Teton Valley). Persons with disparate need of this service include low-income single parent and Hispanic/Latino households and persons of limited mobility.
- Fund needed vehicles and transit infrastructure such as the Driggs Bus Storage Facility

- Support and expand recreational shuttle services (e.g. Grand Targhee Resort Shuttle) in view of Greater Yellowstone data and recommendations cited in the 2014 Buses for Byways study<sup>35</sup>
- Improve intercity connections throughout the region in cooperation with private companies (e.g. Salt Lake Express) and emerging public transit authorities in Rexburg and Jackson



<sup>35</sup> *Buses for Byways Concept Plan, Norma Nickerson, Kara Grau and Christine Oschell, Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research, University of Montana. May 2014*

**Measure:** Regional Transit Connectivity; Regional Interconnectedness; Housing and Transportation Affordability

**Plan Theme:** 3.1 – Create and maintain safe, well-connected, multimodal transportation throughout the region

**RAI Impediment:** 5. Access to transportation, education and medical services in the region is limited, disproportionately affecting Hispanic/ Latino households, seniors, persons with disabilities and single parent households.

**Sources:** C.1 – Regional Analysis of Impediments (Conclusions), D.1 – Multi-Modal Transportation Assessment (Section 4), E.2 – Teton County Economic Development Plan (Physical Asset Development)

## INITIATIVE SC.3 WALKABILITY AND WAYFINDING CONCEPTS

**Summary:** This initiative would seek to implement the 10 bike- and pedestrian-friendly recommendations that appear in the Multi-Modal Assessment for small cities and counties, including the adoption of Complete Streets policies by all localities interested in upgrading their applicable regulations, code and design standards. It would include monitoring the safety and traffic flow results of the intersection improvements made by City of Victor in 2014, and sharing those metrics as the city directs. The project could assist with installation of the selected wayfinding signs not only in Driggs, but in communities like St. Anthony which is moving forward with street/sidewalk improvements along West Main Street in 2016.

**Measure:** Trail Miles; Housing and Transportation Affordability

**Plan Theme:** 2.1 – Promote managed growth through downtown planning and updates to development codes, 3.1 – Create and maintain safe, well-connected, multimodal transportation throughout the region

**Sources:** B.1 – Model Development Code (Articles 11 & 12 for applicable code language), D.1 – Multi-Modal Transportation Assessment (Complete Streets Recommendations), D.3 – Graphics & Design Options for the Wayfinding System – City of Driggs, D.4 – Complete Streets Intersection Design – City of Victor, E.2 – Teton County Economic Development Plan (Physical Asset Development)





#### **INITIATIVE SC.4 MAIN STREET MATTERS, DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION**

**Summary:** Downtown character is an undeniable economic asset. Keeping existing buildings occupied and well-maintained is one of the biggest immediate challenges for downtown enhancement. Retail sales volumes, disrepair of buildings vs. rental and listing prices and property owners who are unmotivated to occupy spaces are barriers for downtown occupancy. A deliberate effort is needed to help landowners realize the value of their downtown properties and to bring more vitality into the small towns in the [region]. The built environments of the downtowns are important to produce a vibrant economy, as are infrastructure development and other physical asset development that can be used to recruit/attract new businesses. [Teton County, ID ED Plan]

In view of this need, this initiative would encourage and/or enable the region's small cities to:

- Be active members of the Idaho and/or National Main Street programs
- Coordinate with the State Historic Preservation Office and local historical

societies to make adaptive re-use of historic buildings. A prime property now exists in Ashton for conversion to a local museum

- Apply and prepare for an Idaho Community Review, if not yet completed (e.g. City of St. Anthony)
- Compete for downtown enhancement grants and promote infill of empty downtown lots
- Enhance the local arts and music cultures in each city in cooperation with local organizations
- Coordinate and promote annual downtown events that enhance the region's brand and visibility

**Measure:** Development in City Centers; Employment Diversity

**Plan Theme:** 2.2 – Promote a healthy economy by positioning communities for new downtown investments

**Sources:** E.2 – Teton County Economic Development Plan (Physical Asset Development), E.3 – Fremont County Economic Development Plan (Community Improvements)





## INITIATIVE SC.5 COLLABORATIONS FOR BUSINESS RETENTION/RECRUITMENT

**Summary:** Economic developers are increasingly recognizing entrepreneurs as an important class of change agents within a community and an important foundation, together with existing businesses, for developing a rural economy....[Some] 55% of the new replacement jobs are created by existing businesses and 44% are created by new businesses... Entrepreneurs come in many different forms. An entrepreneur may be a new business start-up, and existing business owner who is trying to innovate with a new product, service, or target market, or a government or non-profit manager who is growing through new partnerships. [Fremont County ED Plan]

Both Fremont and Teton counties have periodically engaged in economic development planning with the assistance of state, federal or private funding. Historically, neither local chambers of commerce nor economic development entities have been able to fully implement the resulting plans or sustain their programs. Some plans have emphasized

recruiting businesses from the outside to secure better-paying jobs; others have promoted means to support businesses already in place with the expectation of new jobs through expansion. This initiative would employ both approaches and pursue joint strategies where feasible to improve the region's overall economic vitality. Together these two rural counties could:

- Form two-county business networks to support emerging regional industries (e.g. outdoor equipment manufacturers; home-based businesses; small agricultural producers)
- Develop joint capacity for new business recruitment so costs could be shared and each community's assets and amenities cooperatively promoted.
- Use the Teton View Regional Plan as a CEDS-equivalent for seeking federal EDA grants

**Measure:** Regional Interconnectedness

**Plan Theme:** 2.3 – Employ economic development strategies that support entrepreneurs, create living-wage jobs, and strengthen each city's overall business climate

**Sources:** E.2 – Teton County Economic Development Plan (Business Recruitment & Development), E.3 – Fremont County Economic Development Plan (Entrepreneurship Development)

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## INITIATIVE SC.6 OUR RURAL SCHOOLS CHALLENGE

**Summary:** The ability to attract new businesses and residents is dependent on a strong school system and diverse educational opportunities for all students, including those with limited English proficiency. This project would involve working closely with the two rural school districts and those providing vocational services to:

- Ensure all districts have the necessary resources to meet the needs of the increasing Hispanic/Latino population, including limited English proficiency courses and parent communication and outreach
- Address the capacity issues currently facing the junior high school in Driggs and other Teton Co. schools
- Evaluate the potential for a charter elementary school in the Island Park area as an alternative for K-5 students who must currently ride the bus between 17-50 miles each way to attend Ashton schools
- Offer more online workforce training and post-secondary courses to those in rural communities

- Create an apprenticeship program that meets actual community needs. One idea would be a “Circuit Rider” program for youth pursuing IT careers to design websites for small businesses in this area

**Measure:** Educational Attainment

**Plan Theme:** 2.4 – Encourage the development and support of high-quality education and community enrichment activities for all ages

**RAI Impediment:** 5. Access to transportation, education and medical services in the region is limited, disproportionately affecting Hispanic/Latino households, seniors, persons with disabilities and single parent households.

**Sources:** C.1 – Regional Analysis of Impediments (Conclusions), E.2 – Teton County Economic Development Plan (Physical Asset Development), E.3 – Fremont County Economic Development Plan (Community Improvements)



## Focus on Teton Valley

These two projects have been designed or are recommended specifically to benefit the cities and rural communities within Teton County, Idaho.

### PROJECT SC.7 A TETON VALLEY HOUSING AUTHORITY

**Summary:** A housing authority was appointed by the Teton County Commissioners in 2007/2008 and a part-time employee hired with funding from the Idaho Housing and Financing Association to establish a shared equity program for affordable home ownership. With the recession, no applications for the program were received, and the board was disbanded by 2010. It is proposed that a reconstituted housing authority take the lead on pursing the following identified objectives:

- Identify suitable land for new multi-family housing
- Enact fee waivers and/or modify existing incentives for affordable housing
- Develop entry-level homeownership opportunities
- Pursue self-help housing with Habitat for Humanity or other similar programs
- Develop rental apartments
- Encourage deed-restricted accessory rental units
- Encourage transit-oriented development

**Measure:** Housing Cost Burden; Housing and Transportation Affordability

**Plan Theme:** 2.5 – Provide access to affordable and suitable housing, and create additional diversity in the housing supply in appropriate, sustainable areas

**RAI Impediment:** 7. Jurisdictions can improve access to affordable homes through various programs that expand the inventory for protected classes and improve and preserve existing homes.

**Source:** C.2 – Housing Needs Assessment (Teton County, ID section)



## PROJECT SC.8 CODE UPDATES FOR FAIR HOUSING COMPLIANCE, TETON COUNTY, ID

**Summary:** Under this project Teton County would modify its group home provisions to provide consistency with Idaho state law and modify its current requirement for a conditional use permit. The cities of Driggs and Victor, while incorporating the state definition in their codes, still require a conditional use permit or special use process for approval that should be reviewed for full compliance with state law. The code updates in this project should also allow for smaller lot sizes, revised accessory unit standards and smaller scale housing. The county needs more multi-family housing stock and more affordable units near town and services that could be encouraged through adoption of the new Teton Valley Development Code.



**Measure:** Housing Cost Burden

**RAI Impediment:** 6. Jurisdictions can improve some aspects of their development codes to help incent or create fair access to and provision of a diversity of housing for residents, 7. Jurisdictions can improve access to affordable homes through various programs that expand the inventory for protected classes and improve and preserve existing homes.

**Source:** C.1 – Regional Analysis of Impediments (Conclusions)

**Teton Valley Land Use Code Project**  
Regional Code for Driggs, Victor, and Teton County

**What will a new Driggs Zoning Code mean for you?**

Since Fall 2012 Driggs, Victor, and Teton County, as members of the Western Greater Yellowstone Consortium, have worked with a planning consultant, Code Studio, to develop a Form Based Code for the Valley. The project has received a great amount of public input which has led to the latest draft Code, available now.

**Help us plan the future of Driggs!**

The DRAFT Form Based Code for Driggs is available at: [www.driggs.gov.office](http://www.driggs.gov.office)

[www.tetonvalley.code-studio.com](http://www.tetonvalley.code-studio.com) • [www.driggs.govoffice.com](http://www.driggs.govoffice.com)

QR code:

## Focus on Fremont County

These four projects have been designed or are recommended specifically to benefit the cities and rural communities within Fremont County, Idaho.

### PROJECT SC.9 CODE UPDATES FOR FAIR HOUSING COMPLIANCE, FREMONT COUNTY

**Summary:** The City of Island Park has among the largest lot requirements of all jurisdictions, in part necessitated by the limited services and topography of the community. Under this project the city would identify potential sites within and near its boundaries for higher density development, such as needed seasonal worker housing. Densities in St. Anthony and Ashton are also relatively modest so incentives may be needed for specific projects such as more affordable senior housing or low-income housing rentals to assist Hispanic/Latino and single parent households. To diversify the housing stock in these cities, densities would be reviewed for attached units, such as townhomes or small duplex or four-plex homes. The City of St. Anthony also could incorporate group home provisions pursuant to IC 67-6531 into its development code.

**Measure:** Housing Cost Burden

**RAI Impediment:** 6. Jurisdictions can improve some aspects of their development codes to help incent or create fair access to and provision of a diversity of housing for residents, 7. Jurisdictions can improve access

to affordable homes through various programs that expand the inventory for protected classes and improve and preserve existing homes.

**Source:** C.1 – Regional Analysis of Impediments (Conclusions)

### PROJECT SC.10 MOBILE INTEGRATED HEALTHCARE

**Summary:** The last hospital in Fremont County closed in 1988, although medical clinics and emergency medical services (EMS) are available in each of the cities as are senior care facilities in Ashton and St. Anthony. Still, as the county with the highest senior and disabled populations in the region, Fremont has the most challenges in meeting the diverse medical needs of its population and could be better served through what is now termed as “Mobile Integrated Healthcare”. This project would upgrade the Fremont County cadre of volunteer EMTs to a more professional, paid level to better staff its clinics, improve communication systems, and identify patient in-home care needs. Formal agreements would need to be negotiated with the three community clinics, public health offices and the large hospitals in Rexburg and Idaho Falls that accept most patient transports. Expanding the role of EMS personnel would foster a more stable healthcare environment in Fremont County, offer pay incentives to retain qualified EMTs and likely reduce long-distance visits to hospital emergency departments. Teton County EMS has already started to pilot this new national program, and lessons could be learned from their one-year experience.



**Measure:** Regional Interconnectedness

**Plan Theme:** 2.6 – Provide quality public services to residents, businesses and institutions

**RAI Impediment:** 5. Access to transportation, education and medical services in the region is limited, disproportionately affecting Hispanic/ Latino households, seniors, persons with disabilities and single parent households

**Source:** C.1 – Regional Analysis of Impediments (Conclusions)

#### **PROJECT SC.11 BUILDING COMMUNITY ACROSS FREMONT COUNTY**

**SUMMARY:** In rural communities, there often are not enough resources or population to justify staff positions for many community organizations. Community services from fire departments to search and rescue, Meals-on-Wheels social programs, libraries, visitor centers, community events, and most community betterment projects

depend on community volunteers to make them happen. While communities in Fremont County have always had difficulty acting in a unified manner, the county-wide social climate seems very divisive at present. Building the capacity for constructive conversations among differing perspectives remains a critical challenge for Fremont County. [Fremont County ED Strategy]

A project of this nature could help build trust and foster positive feelings among the year-round and seasonal residents of Fremont County. Actions could include:

- Host a County Volunteer Week – Organize various groups to hold a week of volunteer activities that are coordinated across Fremont County and then hold a county-wide celebration. Honor the county's long-time volunteers and involve the schools. Use the week to advertise new volunteer opportunities and target recruitment from part-year residents and retirees. This could include recruiting volunteers for neighborhood revitalization in coordination with Habitat for Humanity.
- Form a County-Wide Endowment – Work with the Idaho Community Foundation to establish a philanthropic fund that would receive tax-deductible gifts to benefit cities in Fremont County or the whole county.



- This could include recruiting volunteers for neighborhood revitalization in coordination with Habitat for Humanity.
- Form a County-Wide Endowment – Work with the Idaho Community Foundation to establish a philanthropic fund that would receive tax-deductible gifts to benefit cities in Fremont County or the whole county.

**Measure:** Regional Interconnectedness

**Plan Theme:** 2.4 – Encourage the development and support of high-quality education and community enrichment activities for all ages

**Source:** E.3 – Fremont Co. Economic Development Strategy (Volunteers & Community Attitude)

#### PROJECT SC.12 WELCOMING SENIORS

**Summary:** Research shows that people who move between states upon retirement are wealthier than average senior citizens, are more educated, and more likely to be married. These amenity migrants are diverse in their interests, but a significant portion seeks an active outdoor lifestyle and a climate with four seasons. They are drawn to 1) natural and cultural amenities, 2) a feeling of personal safety, 3) family and friends, 4) friendly, small-town communities with a variety of quality housing options, and 5) a low cost of living. Access to health care is an important consideration. Retirees are often looking for opportunities to volunteer, especially on issues about which they care deeply. [Fremont County Economic Development Strategy]

This project would encourage more seniors to reside full-time or seasonally in all parts of Fremont County using two distinct approaches:

- Organize the “Fremont Ambassadors” – Turn summer residents (snowbirds) into proponents for Fremont County by recruiting them into an Ambassador program. Equip members with materials and talking points that provide a consistent, positive message about their community and Fremont County.
- Explore a new Senior RV Park at the St. Anthony Golf Course – Private RV parks in the Island Park area do fill quickly, often because public campgrounds have a two-week limit for stays, so the demand may exist for more private spaces. A survey and inventory of existing RV parks would be the first step.

**Measure:** Housing Cost Burden

**Plan Theme:** 2.4 – Provide access to affordable and suitable housing and create additional diversity in the housing supply in appropriate areas

**Source:** E.3 – Fremont County Economic Development Strategy (Amenity In-Migrants)

#### Key Indicators

The following indicators from “Our Distinctive Major Cities” also apply to “Our Small Cities:”

- Employment Diversity
- Development in City Centers
- Roadway Connectivity Index
- Commute Time



**THIS INDICATOR  
MEASURES THE  
PERCENTAGE OF THE  
POPULATION SPENDING  
30% OF THEIR INCOME  
OR MORE ON HOUSING.**

## Why

Housing access and affordability is tied to both income (ability to make a living wage) and housing costs themselves. Housing costs typically include rent or mortgage payments, utilities, insurance, and other maintenance and upkeep

costs. When households spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) considers these households as "cost-burdened," meaning that their housing costs limit their ability to spend income on other items such as food and transportation.

The availability of housing that is not burdensome in terms of costs is important in retaining and attracting employees and employers. If housing at reasonable costs is not available within communities where employees work, often times they will drive longer distances to find more affordable housing.

Factors such as second homeownership and vacancy rates can influence housing costs in the region. Low vacancy rates mean that housing is in high demand, and few options exist for housing choice. Likewise, vacation or second homes purchased by non-residents can lead to inflated purchase prices. Since many of these second homes sit unoccupied for large portions of the year, they can decrease opportunities for full-time residents to own or purchase a home.

### UNITS OF MEASURE

This indicator is measured as a percentage of owner and renter households spending 30% or more of their income on housing costs.

Increasing values could suggest that residents are spending more of their incomes on housing costs due to increasing rental or owner housing prices. Decreasing values could suggest that housing costs are decreasing or that incomes are increasing more than housing costs.

### SOURCE

Data for this indicator are available from the American Fact Finder website provided by the US Census Bureau: <http://factfinder2.census.gov>. Data is available by county, and for select cities (census designated places), through the American Community Survey estimates of housing characteristics, within the "selected monthly owner costs as a percentage of household income (SMOCAPI)" and "gross rent as a percentage of household income (GRAPI)" category.



**THIS INDICATOR  
MEASURES THE  
PERCENTAGE OF  
THE POPULATION  
ATTAINING DIFFERENT  
LEVELS OF EDUCATION.**

## Why

Educational attainment reflects the availability and quality of educational facilities and programs in the region. Students who have to travel long distances may be less likely to attend school or pursue higher levels of education, but the increasing availability of online and distance-learning curriculum has the potential to open up new opportunities for remote areas.

Economic development potential and job opportunities are also greatly influenced by educational attainment. Employers typically want to ensure that the skills of the local population align with the jobs offered. Similarly, employment opportunities for residents greatly depends on their education and skill levels.

In tourism-based economies, it is not uncommon for there to be a mismatch between education attainment and the types of jobs available. In many cases, people with higher levels of educational attainment move to resort and tourism-focused communities due to the high quality of life and access to nature and recreation, and then look for job opportunities upon arrival. In such resort and tourism-focused communities, available jobs tend to be in the retail and services sectors, which often require less education than the job seekers possess. This "underemployment" can create many challenges, such as employee turnover and affordability of housing.

### UNITS OF MEASURE

This indicator is measured as a percentage of the population with a high school degree or higher and the percentage of the population with a bachelor's degree or higher.

Increasing values could suggest that residents have increasing levels of educational attainment or opportunities for education. Decreasing values could suggest that opportunities for education are limited, not a priority for the population, or that jobs are available in the region that do not require a high school or bachelor's degree.

### SOURCE

Data for this indicator are available from the American Fact Finder website provided by the US Census Bureau: <http://factfinder2.census.gov>. Data is available by county, and select cities (census designated places), through the American Community Survey estimates of educational attainment.

# Chapter 3.

## Vital Connections

### Regional Context

Modern public transportation, utility, and telecommunication networks, and health care facilities are among the critical infrastructure needed to retain our residents and attract new businesses to the Teton View Region. A systems approach is needed to ensure that public services and infrastructure can reach those in the most remote corners of our four counties.

#### BROADBAND SERVICE

The Regional Broadband Study was a HUD-funded study conducted by the City of Rexburg to evaluate what improvements could be



#### Jackson, Victor, and Driggs All Move to Complete Streets

The City of Victor collaborated closely with the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) to a redesign the intersection of Hwy 33 and Hwy 31 to better reflect the community's vision using the complete street concept. Complete Streets are streets for everyone. They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. They allow buses to run on time and make it safe for people to walk to and from transit stations. In the Teton View Region, complete streets must also be catered to the local environment, which can make a "complete street" in the region distinctive from others across the country.

made in Internet speed and connectivity. The broadband study includes recommendations for expanding services in Rexburg and potentially adding strategic links between municipalities. Expansion of the broadband network is a key component of many communities' economic development strategies to help attract new technology oriented businesses. Higher-capacity fiber networks can also support access to quality health care and online educational opportunities. Options for governance of a regional broadband system include the following:

- Regional Partnership – an independent entity formed by interested municipalities.
- Public/Private Partnership – one private sector company partners with localities.
- Broadband Cooperative – similar to electric co-ops in the region where the business is owned by customers who purchase the services.



**SOURCE:** *Victor Complete Streets Presentation,*

*Brittany Skelton*

The START bus system in Jackson and Teton County, Wyoming, is the largest public transportation system in the region and provides seasonal transportation to recreation areas. The Integrated Transportation Plan seeks to reduce the use of the automobile by decreasing transit headway times, improving regional transit connections, providing connections to recreational destinations, considering the use of managed lanes, and expanding hours to better serve the workforce.



## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

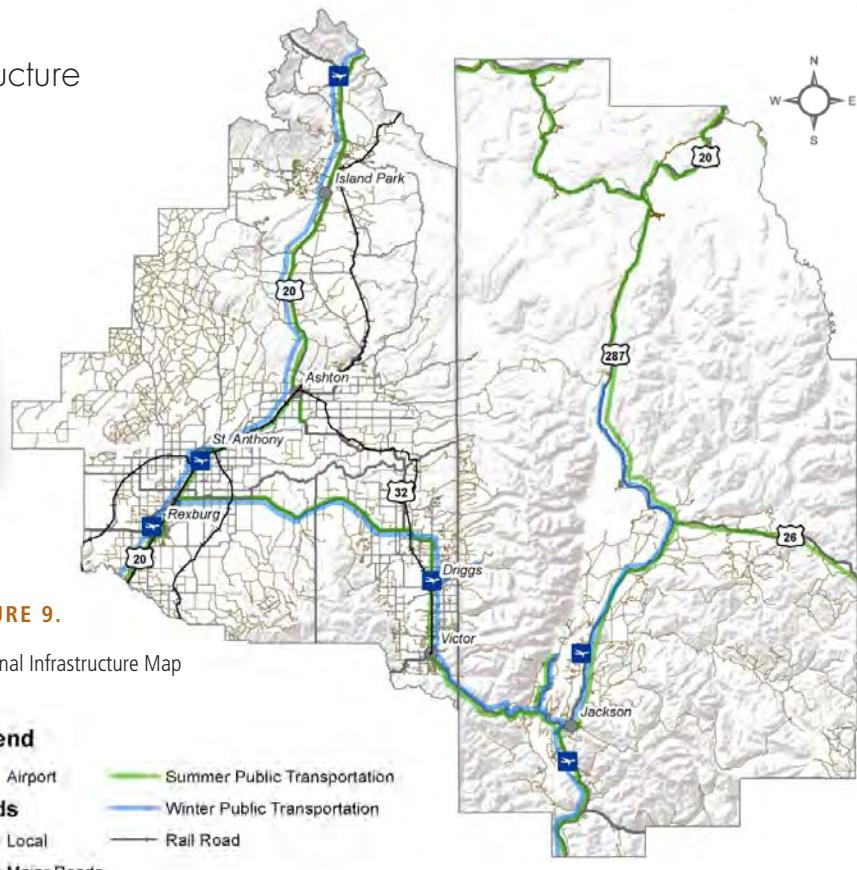
Through technology, many residents can live where they work. However, for many residents travel is necessary and an integrated and interconnected transportation network is important. In addition to traveling for work residents travel for shopping, medical services, education, cultural events, entertainment, community services, and outdoor recreation. Students, senior citizens, disabled populations, and international visitors are all potential riders who could support an integrated public transit system built on resident and visitor needs. Prepositioning for a future regional public transportation network that would serve residents as well as visitors would be an efficient way to connect the major resorts and national parks within the four-county region.

To support improvements to the region's transportation system, several studies were conducted as part of the 3-year HUD Grant. The Multi-modal Transportation Assessment and Development Strategy emphasizes developing a multi-agency strategy for improving mobility across the 4-county region, whether by foot, bike, car or bus. The proposed strategy outlines initiatives that together lay the foundation for an integrated transportation plan that can be implemented individually by local, state, and federal governments since no regional transportation entity currently exists. Other studies include the Greater Yellowstone-Trail Concept Plan, which provides an action plan for interconnecting trails within a 170-mile corridor throughout the region, and the Wayfinding Signage Project, which developed a wayfinding system for the City of Driggs that can be replicated throughout the region.

## ENERGY SOURCES

An assessment of alternative energy sources suited to the region's landscape and climate was also conducted as part of the 3-year HUD Grant. Hydropower has been the electric generator of choice in the Henry's Fork basin, and the basin contains active hydroelectric generating plants, as well as new projects that are actively being pursued. However, there are limits to traditional hydropower development, as federal law prohibits new projects on certain stretches of the Henry's Fork River.

## Regional Infrastructure



Additionally, minimum stream flow requirements are in place on the Warm River, Teton River, Bitch Creek, and Henry's Fork that can affect the feasibility of new hydropower projects.

### HEALTH CARE

A critical component of improving the quality of life of residents is the availability of quality health care. There is demand for additional health care facilities in the region, and new technologies are being considered to help supplement the existing facilities and meet this demand. Technologies such as telemedicine, mobile integrated health care, and online learning sites are all options for improving health care without requiring large public or private investments.

### Themes and Strategies

**Theme 3.1:** Create and maintain safe, well-connected, multimodal transportation networks throughout the region.

The multi-modal assessment was prepared with an emphasis on developing a multi-agency strategy for improving mobility across the 4-county region. A coordinated, connected transportation network that includes trails, roads and transportation hubs can help accommodate the accessibility and mobility needs of residents, visitors, and businesses.

The proposed strategy outlines three separate initiatives that together lay the foundation for an integrated transportation approach that could be implemented individually by local, state, or federal governments, but most effectively in coordination with one another. The initiatives are as follows:

- An incremental approach to developing the region's public transportation system.
- An integrated, recreational trails network with Complete Streets policies.
- Collaborative marketing of multi-modal transportation.<sup>36</sup>

### **Strategies:**

- Provide transportation infrastructure to allow the efficient movement of people and goods by increasing connectivity and improving safety on our roadways.
- Integrate alternative modes of transportation, including transit and bicycles, as part of future roadway projects.
- Expand intercity and commuter bus services to improve connectivity between our large and small cities.
- Advance an integrated public transportation network that links the region's national parks and outdoor recreation areas to city centers, town centers, and transportation and aviation hubs.

- Continually assess existing bus services to ensure ridership is maximized and that the population has good transportation options.
- Partner with private transportation operators (e.g. hotel and airport shuttles) to leverage transportation options for visitors and residents.
- Explore and implement permanent funding opportunities for local and regional multimodal transportation, as well as a larger regional transit authority.
- Continue to develop a local and regional pathway system to connect all communities within the region to each other and adjacent recreational areas.
- Promote development that is of adequate density and design to support the use of alternative modes, including transit.
- Encourage pedestrian and bicycle facilities and infrastructure within and through all new developments.
- Implement new initiatives to "complete our streets" by slowing traffic, adding crosswalks, widening sidewalks, including bike lanes, and, when appropriate, providing access to transit.
- Plan transportation in a holistic fashion by connecting regional trail, transit, and pedestrian facilities.

<sup>36</sup> Yellowstone Consortium. (2013, March 31) *Multi-Modal Transportation Assessment.pdf*. Retrieved from <https://sustainableyellowstone.org/library>.

**Theme 3.2:** Encourage development of distributed, small-scale renewable energy sources, and promote green energy purchasing by regional utilities.

**Strategies:**

- Encourage and incentivize opportunities for residential and commercial projects to use state of the art construction techniques with energy efficient/renewable technologies.
- Encourage and incentivize the use of alternative energy sources to improve our resiliency.
- Encourage building types, features, and low impact storm water designs that reduce our per capita culinary and irrigation water use.

**Theme 3.3:** Implement a regional broadband system to improve redundancy, bandwidth, and connectivity.

The internet has become a widespread and integral part of our personal and professional lives. In 2000, there were an estimated 361 million internet users worldwide. By the end of 2011, that number had grown to 2.2 billion users. This represents a 528.1 percent increase, or 1.8 billion new users in less than 12 years, and almost a third of the population worldwide is now online.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>37</sup> *InternetWorldStats.com data*



**Creative Energies Solar Array in Jackson**

Since 2000, Creative Energies has specialized in designing, engineering, and installing commercial and government renewable energy systems across the US. This represents a movement toward decentralized and independent energy systems.

From an economic development perspective, reliable and fast internet connectivity is important for attracting the growing number of professionals who are able to work from anywhere, and who chose to live and work in places like the Teton View Region with high quality of life and abundant recreation opportunities. This helps bring money from outside of the region into the region and grow the local economy. However, the region is facing competitive threats from communities that have already begun making broadband infrastructure investments. Other regions,

towns, and cities in Idaho, Wyoming, and elsewhere are already building and operating high performance, low cost fiber networks for public and private benefit.<sup>38</sup>

### Strategies:

- Encourage public/private partnerships among local governments, service providers, schools, public safety agencies, water authorities, major businesses, and health care institutions to assist with attracting businesses in order to lower telecom costs for all partners.

<sup>38</sup> Design Nine. (2013). *Rexburg Broadband Recommendations and Findings.pdf*. Retrieved from <https://sustainableyellowstone.org/library>.



- Create new business opportunities for existing private service providers by allowing public entities to provide only basic infrastructure and transport.
- Target investments in broadband to promote business growth and job creation.
- Choose an approach that reduces the cost of telecom services for local governments and businesses, while simultaneously improving service delivery through a shared regional network.
- Develop a co-location facility and data center for the various public and private fiber and wireless networks to reduce costs by aggregating demand, facilitating additional diverse path routing, and providing off-site data storage for local businesses and institutions.

**Theme 3.4:** Support a regional recycling program and encourage multi-sector partnerships and policies to improve and promote waste diversion.

As part of the HUD grant, a regional recycling study was conducted in 2014 for a planning period of 2015 through 2030. The study was at a feasibility-level and offers recommendations on ways to improve recycling rates and increase waste diversion within the Teton

View Region. The drivers of the study were to increase recycling on a regional basis, increase the diversion of landfill bound waste, seek long-term cost-effectiveness, and make recycling accessible to all communities. The study revealed that the combined populations of Fremont County, Madison County, Teton County, Idaho, and Teton County, Wyoming, are not large enough to support a full scale material recovery facility (MRF). The collection area for a MRF would need to extend beyond the four counties in order to be economically sustainable. Recycling can play an integral role in the overall sustainability and resilience of the region by providing local jobs, extending the life of our limited landfill space, and preserving our environment.

#### **Strategies:**

- Form a network of willing localities and organizations across two states to launch a materials recovery system that is financially feasible, yet retains local decision making. Collaborate broadly to maximize the service area and turn the multi-million dollar missed opportunity into a strong drive for increased diversion and reduced costs.



- Evaluate and encourage waste diversion strategies such as composting of organics and agricultural waste and reuse of construction/demolition materials, in addition to the collection and sale of traditional household recyclables.
- Collect waste generation and diversion data to attract private sector investments, and to monitor progress.
- In the process, verify cost impacts to local governments and waste generators.
- Implement effective outreach to increase recyclables.

**Theme 3.5:** Provide the necessary level of service and meet or exceed national standards to ensure that public health and safety are ensured.

### **Strategies:**

- Adopt new regulations, ordinances and codes to prevent the unwarranted establishment of hazardous uses in our communities without appropriate and effective mitigation.
- Direct development away from naturally hazardous areas or, where feasible, require site planning or construction techniques to mitigate the hazard.

- Identify high fire prone areas and minimize risks through thoughtful site selection and vegetation management.
- Continue participation in the National Flood Insurance Program to allow local residents potentially affected by flooding to purchase insurance, while implementing regulations that require the protection of stream corridors, discourage development within the 100 year floodplain, and provide construction standards for any development that is permitted within floodplains.
- Create a greater efficiency through the use of technology for emergency response, fire, and other public services.
- Encourage the development of tele-medicine programs in local and regional hospitals and employ mobile integrated health care approaches for the most rural counties.

#### **Jackson Reduce, Reuse, Recycle**

Effort is a community focused effort that has promoted recycling and conservation in the community.



*Moving Ahead with Common Purpose*

# Better Together:

## Vital Connections for a Resilient Region

Eight “Better Together” initiatives are presented below that will require the involvement of multiple jurisdictions to ensure long-term success. The initiative rated “most important” by the responding members of the public that also has attracted significant local leadership is BT.7 Regional Systems for Recycling/Materials Recovery. Three of the initiatives related to sustainable, economic development secured near-term local leadership for the next one-to-three years. Four other initiatives will require leadership from the business or nonprofit sector, but have willing local government partners.



**Table 7.** Better Together (BT) Implementation Priorities

No.	#2 Region-Wide Priority	Willing to Lead/Co-Lead	Willing to Partner	Potential New Partners
BT.7	Regional Systems for Recycling/ Materials Recovery	Teton County, ID Teton County, WY Madison County City of Rexburg	Fremont County	Adjacent counties in Eastern Idaho and Western Wyoming
No.	Local/Micropolitan Near-Term Priorities	Willing to Lead/Co-Lead	Willing to Partner	Potential New Partners
BT.1	Teton View Model Development Code: A Regional Tool Kit	Teton County, ID City of Driggs City of Victor	Teton County, WY Ashton Community Foundation	
BT.5	Impact Hubs for Regional Entrepreneurs	City of Victor	Ashton Community Foundation	
BT.6	Regional Equity in Broadband Access	City of Rexburg	Fremont County	Fall River Rural Electric Co-op
No.	Longer-Term Initiatives Seeking Leadership	Willing to Partner	Potential New Partners	
BT.2	Regional Housing Initiative/ Housing Information Center	Teton County, ID Teton County, WY Town of Jackson City of Victor Ashton Community Foundation		
BT.3	Efficient and Reduced Emission Travel	Teton County, WY Teton County, ID Town of Jackson City of Victor	Yellowstone-Teton Clean Energy Coalition	
BT.4	Integrated Marketing of Multi-Modal Transportation	City of Driggs		
BT.8	Prospects for Distributed Energy Generation	City of Victor		

## Region-Wide Initiatives

Local governments will need to work together to ensure that their land use and housing policies are compatible and that their shared energy, communications, materials recovery and transportation systems are technologically current and maintained to the highest standards.

### INITIATIVE BT.1 TETON VIEW MODEL DEVELOPMENT CODE: A REGIONAL TOOL KIT

**Summary:** This land development code template is designed for city and county governments within the Teton View Region, and should be useful to smaller cities that lack robust planning capacity. It is written to be in full compliance with Idaho statutes and will be reviewed for alignment with Wyoming statutes. Once the document is final, provisions may be adopted into local codes to achieve certain goals in rural, residential, commercial and industrial zoning; site and building design; street and utility improvements; and resource protection. It also features policies that a locality may adopt to incentivize clustering in rural areas or to explore region-based transfers of development rights. The Model Code also is being designed to assist those local governments seeking to certify as sustainable communities under the Greater Yellowstone Framework for Sustainable Development.

**Measure:** Development in City Centers; Land in Farms; Housing and Transportation Affordability



**Plan Theme:** 3.1 – Promote managed growth and a healthy economy through investments in town centers, 3.5 – Provide quality public services to residents, businesses and institutions

**Source:** B – Model Development Code for the Teton View Region

### INITIATIVE BT.2 REGIONAL HOUSING INITIATIVE/INFORMATION CENTER

**Summary:** From a regional perspective, addressing housing needs in any one county will impact a neighboring county... It is, therefore, important that communication occur among the four counties when developing housing policies and addressing housing needs... Discussions about creation of a Regional Housing Initiative could be a first step. [Housing Needs Assessment, Overview – 14]

This proposed initiative would link all existing and proposed housing authorities in the four counties along with related nonprofit organizations under one “Teton View Housing Information Center”. The group could use a centrally-hosted website and newsletters to collaboratively address the following action items recommended in the two housing studies:

- A coordinated resource for renters to locate information about rental properties and options – including low income and market rate rentals – for English and Spanish speaking residents alike
- A Language Access Plan defining Spanish communication practices and exploring opportunities to share interpreter and translation services
- An outreach effort to residents about the availability of ADA accessible and adaptable units and support programs that help households with disabilities afford needed renovations

Improved communication of housing information and high-level coordination of the region’s housing efforts among all Teton View counties would be possible under this initiative. It also could enhance every group’s effectiveness by sharing resources, expertise and lessons learned, thus leading to greater cost efficiencies.

**Measure:** Housing Cost Burden; Housing and Transportation Affordability; Regional Interconnectedness

**RAI Impediment:** 4. Persons with disabilities are occupying homes that do not meet their accessibility needs, 8. Information on affordable and market rentals in the region and access to government services for Spanish-speaking residents can be improved

**Sources:** C.1 – Regional Analysis of Impediments (Conclusions), C.2 – Housing Needs Assessment (Strategy Recommendations)



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### INITIATIVE BT.3 EFFICIENT AND REDUCED – EMISSION TRAVEL

**Summary:** This initiative would engage Teton View agencies and local governments in a regional travel-efficiency campaign developed in concert with the Yellowstone-Teton Clean Energy Coalition, which is based in Jackson, Wyoming. As the sole regional designee of the Department of Energy's Clean Cities program, YTCEC functions as DOE's on-the-ground advocate for petroleum displacement activities in the Greater Yellowstone region. Elements of a campaign especially designed for the Teton View region could include:

- Green Fleet analyses for local governments that evaluate current fuel use and emissions, and then set goals and objectives for vehicle purchases to deliver greater fleet efficiency
- Rebates for purchase or conversion to Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) vehicles

- Idle-free awareness campaigns in town centers or near schools and college campuses
- Incentives to purchase electric vehicles and/or install charging stations within jurisdictions
- Training programs for EMS personnel to identify and properly manage alternatively fueled vehicles in accident situations
- Expansion of the Clean Cities National Parks Initiative to include National Forest and BLM units
- Advocacy for establishing a midday Upper Valley Connector bus service between Rexburg, Teton Valley and Jackson to complement the current commuter service between Driggs and Jackson.





**Measure:** Regional Connectedness

**Plan Theme:** 3.1 – Create and maintain safe, well-connected multi-modal transportation throughout the region

**Source:** D.1 – Multi-Modal Transportation Assessment (Recommendations)

#### INITIATIVE BT.4 INTEGRATED MARKETING OF MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION

**Summary:** More than 40 private, public and nonprofit bus, shuttle and taxi services operate independently across the four Teton View counties with neither their schedules nor marketing efforts well-coordinated across state and county lines. This initiative proposes that local and regional transit authorities, agency mobility managers, and taxi and bus line owners explore formation of a transportation management association (TMA) by to better integrate and market public transportation across the area. Services that a Teton View TMA could conceivably coordinate include:

- Design and financial support of multi-modal hubs in each community
- Online trip planning using Google Maps or similar GPS-based software
- Online ticketing portal
- Cooperative marketing and promotional tools such as regional discount cards
- Research into bus rider archetypes (both resident and visitor) with target market strategies

**Measure:** Regional Transit Connectivity; Housing and Transportation Affordability

**Plan Theme:** 3.1 – Create and maintain safe, well-connected multi-modal transportation throughout the region

**Source:** D.1 – Multi-Modal Transportation Assessment (Chapter 6)

#### **INITIATIVE BT.5 IMPACT HUBS FOR REGIONAL ENTREPRENEURS**

**Summary:** Impact Hubs are part innovation lab, part business incubator, and part community center where entrepreneurs may obtain resources, inspiration, and collaboration opportunities. The impact hub in Jackson, called “Spark Jackson Hole”, is a co-working community of knowledge workers and entrepreneurs whose innovation is inspired by the mountain lifestyle. The hub has a mix of private office, dedicated and shared desk space plus event space supplied to members at a various fee levels. Another type of impact hub is proposed at the Moran Center in Driggs that is intended to house vocational training activities and light manufacturing companies. This initiative would explore the addition of “fab-lab” industrial arts workspaces in the Moran Center, possibly to serve growing interest in Rec-Tech manufacturing of outdoor gear. Expansion of the impact hub concept would also be considered for the smaller cities where such shared, open workspaces might be suitable for arts, local foods and scientific endeavors.

**Measure:** Employment Diversity; Regional Interconnectedness

**Plan Themes:** 2.1 – Create local, living-wage jobs and strengthen each city’s diverse business climate, 2.3 – Employ economic development strategies that support entrepreneurs, create living-wage jobs, and strengthen each city’s overall business

**Sources:** E.2 – Teton County Economic Development Plan (Business Recruitment & Development), E.3 – Fremont County Economic Development Plan (Entrepreneurship Development)

#### **INITIATIVE BT.6 REGIONAL EQUITY IN BROADBAND ACCESS**

**Summary:** This initiative would implement the recommendations of the Regional Broadband Study sponsored by the City of Rexburg as it sought ways to improve connection speeds in the underserved areas in Eastern Idaho. The proposed approach most accepted by prospective participants is creating an open, multi-service fiber network that would operate on a wholesale basis across the Teton View region. By not operating in the retail arena, the “last mile” services to individual business or household customers would still be competitively sought by private companies.

However, all would benefit from the system redundancies, and colocation facility and data centers offered by an expanded, open network. This concept should be attractive to those who could profitably lease their excess fiber capacity and it could spur creation of a consumer cooperative that might seek lower-priced Internet choices. The initiative would start with the formation of an Open Network Exploratory Team to revisit the options presented in the regional study.

**Measure:** Broadband Connectivity

**Plan Theme:** 3.3 – Implement a regional broadband system to improve redundancy, bandwidth and connectivity

**Source:** F.2 – Regional Broadband Study

#### INITIATIVE BT.7 SYSTEMS FOR RECYCLING AND MATERIALS RECOVERY

**Summary:** The referenced study outlines the next steps for the region's localities to rectify the \$4.8M/year missed opportunity in separating out valuable recyclables through a state-of-the-art materials recovery facility (MRF). Although diverting recyclables from the landfill should be key cost-savings component of any public works department, interest in forming a regional recycling organization has been weak across the four counties. As a result, Teton County, Wyoming – that recently adopted a Zero-Waste Resolution – may lead the way in forming a multi-sector partnership

with their adjacent counties to install the first MRF in the Teton View region. Because the City of Rexburg and BYU-Idaho also are currently engaged in recycling, those in Madison County would be logical proponents if public works directors across Eastern Idaho desire to divert more materials away from the landfill in Jefferson County.

**Measure:** Regional Interconnectedness

**Plan Theme:** 3.4 Design a multi-sector materials recovery program that advances recycling, composting and other waste diversion strategies in cooperation with neighboring counties in Idaho and Wyoming

**Source:** F.1 – Regional Recycling Study – Recommendations



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## INITIATIVE BT.8 PROSPECTS FOR DISTRIBUTED ENERGY GENERATION

**Summary:** In 2012 a high-level assessment was made of those alternative energy sources that could feasibly be developed within and for the counties in the Teton View region. This initiative would study in greater depth the following renewable energy priorities identified in the study and what model code provisions would allow for or encourage their development:

- Neighborhood and community photovoltaic (PV) solar prospects were the #1 priority
- Small wind turbines were found to be well-suited for rural areas in all four counties
- Geothermal – a binary system was recommended with new options for greenhouse near Newdale
- Micro Hydroelectric – Nearly 200 potential sites with under 100kw generating capacity were identified within the three Idaho counties
- Biomass – there were mixed reports on economic viability to use available forest resources

**Measure:** Regional Interconnectedness

**Plan Theme:** 3.2 – Encourage development of distributed, small-scale renewable energy sources, and promote green energy purchasing by regional utilities

**Sources:** F.3 – Renewable Energy Feasibility Study, F.4 – Best Practices Analysis – Green Economy

### Key Indicators

The following indicators apply to Vital Connections:

- Regional Transit Connectivity
- Broadband Connectivity
- Wildland Urban Interface Development





# Why

The region's communities are interconnected with residents and visitors frequently traveling throughout the region to access housing, jobs, services, and recreation.

Most of these trips are made in personal automobiles, but regional transit service is in high demand.

Regional transit service allows residents and visitors to spend less of their time and money on driving, and also enables non-drivers to travel throughout the region. Moreover, transit service helps reduce the strain on the region's infrastructure and environment caused by an abundance of personal automobiles and frequent trips.

Direct routes that connect major destinations are one element of a successful regional transit system. Additionally, the frequency of service is another element that factors into transit system success. Not only do people need to be connected to the locations that they wish to reach, but they need to be able to do so at reasonable times throughout the day, week, and year. Some routes may be most successful with seasonal variations to accommodate changing visitor and employee needs, whereas others may need to be fixed schedules with higher frequencies at peak periods.

**THIS INDICATOR  
MEASURES THE TRANSIT  
SERVICE PROVIDED  
WITHIN THE REGION.**

## UNITS OF MEASURE

This indicator is measured in total service miles, which is calculated by multiplying total miles of regional/intra-city transit service routes by the total number of service trips per 24 hour period.

Increasing values for this indicator could mean that the number or length of regional transit routes is expanding, or that the frequency of service is increasing. Decreasing values could mean that the number or length of routes was reduced, or that the frequency of service declined.

## SOURCE

Data for this indicator are available from regional transit providers, including Southern Teton Area Rapid Transit (START, see: <http://www.startbus.com/>) and Targhee Regional Public Transportation Authority (TRPTA, see <http://www.trpta.org/>).



# Why

significant, but so are the connection speeds and technologies used.

Broadband connectivity is especially important at community anchors, such as schools, colleges, libraries, and government facilities. It is also an important consideration in many businesses and industries, including health care, public safety, transportation, and logistics. Household broadband connectivity is becoming increasingly important as well, especially household with school-age children and home-based businesses.

Because of the regional nature of the Western Greater Yellowstone economy, coordination between providers and across technologies is necessary to ensure that broadband gaps or complications do not exist due to jurisdictional boundaries.

## UNITS OF MEASURE

This indicator is measured as a percent of the population within each jurisdiction with a broadband download speed of at least 25 megabytes per second (Mbps). According to the National Broadband Map, at a speed of 25 Mbps, a typical consumer download experience would be:

- Book (1 MB in size) - 0.2 seconds
- Song (4 MB in size) - 0.6 seconds
- Movie (6144 MB in size) - 16 minutes

As of December 31, 2013, approximately 83.8% of the country has access to download speeds of at least 25 Mbps.

Increasing values for this indicator suggest investment in and increased access to broadband infrastructure. Decreasing values would suggest reduction in service availability or possibly shifts to other emerging technologies.

## SOURCE

Data for this indicator are available from the National Broadband Map (see: <http://www.broadbandmap.gov/>).



# Why

part of the region's ecosystems and help restore and maintain healthy forests.

Development activity in the WUI presents risks due to the potential for wildfire. This indicator measures how much development has occurred in the WUI. While the majority of the WUI in the region is undeveloped, significant costs arise from protecting structures in WUI areas when wildfires occur.

While efforts to establish defensible space around existing structures in the WUI are helpful in reducing potential losses due to wildfire, proactive planning and policies limiting new development in WUI areas may present greater benefits in terms of reducing future firefighting costs.

## UNITS OF MEASURE

This indicator is measured as a percentage of the defined Wildland Urban Interface area that is developed. According to Headwaters Economics, "across the West, 84% of the WUI is currently undeveloped."

Increasing values for this indicator could mean that development is occurring within the WUI, placing homes and businesses at greater risk of wildfire potential. Decreasing values for this indicator could suggest that structures have been removed from the WUI, or that the WUI was redefined to encompass a smaller area.

## SOURCE

Data for this indicator are available from city and county GIS records and fire mitigation plans. It is calculated by determining the total estimated developed area within the WUI and dividing that by the entire WUI area.

Estimated county-level data is also available as an interactive map from Headwaters Economics (see: <http://headwaterseconomics.org/interactive/wui-development-and-wildfire-costs>).



*Section Four*

# *Productive landscapes*



# Chapter 4.

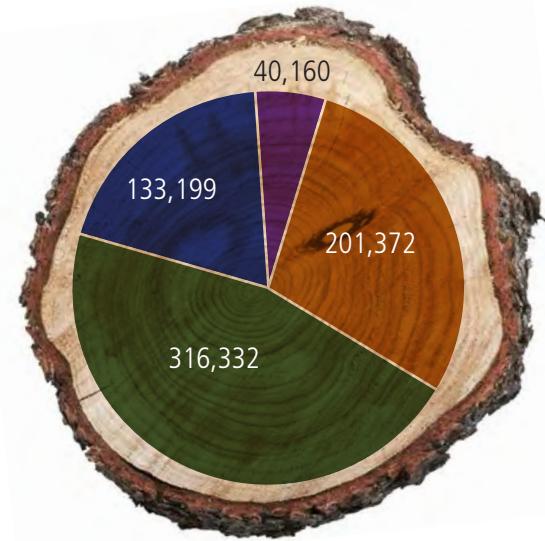
## Our Agricultural Heritage

### 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.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> 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://sustainableyellowstone.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

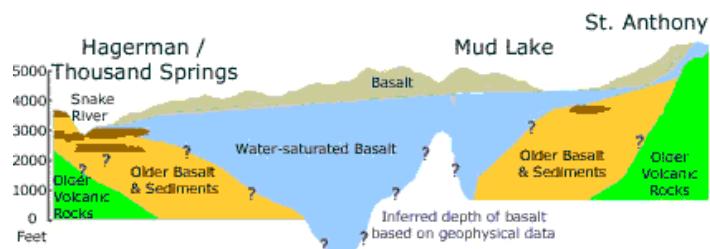
SOURCE: 2014 Agriculture Report Addendum



## 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 near 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](http://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.

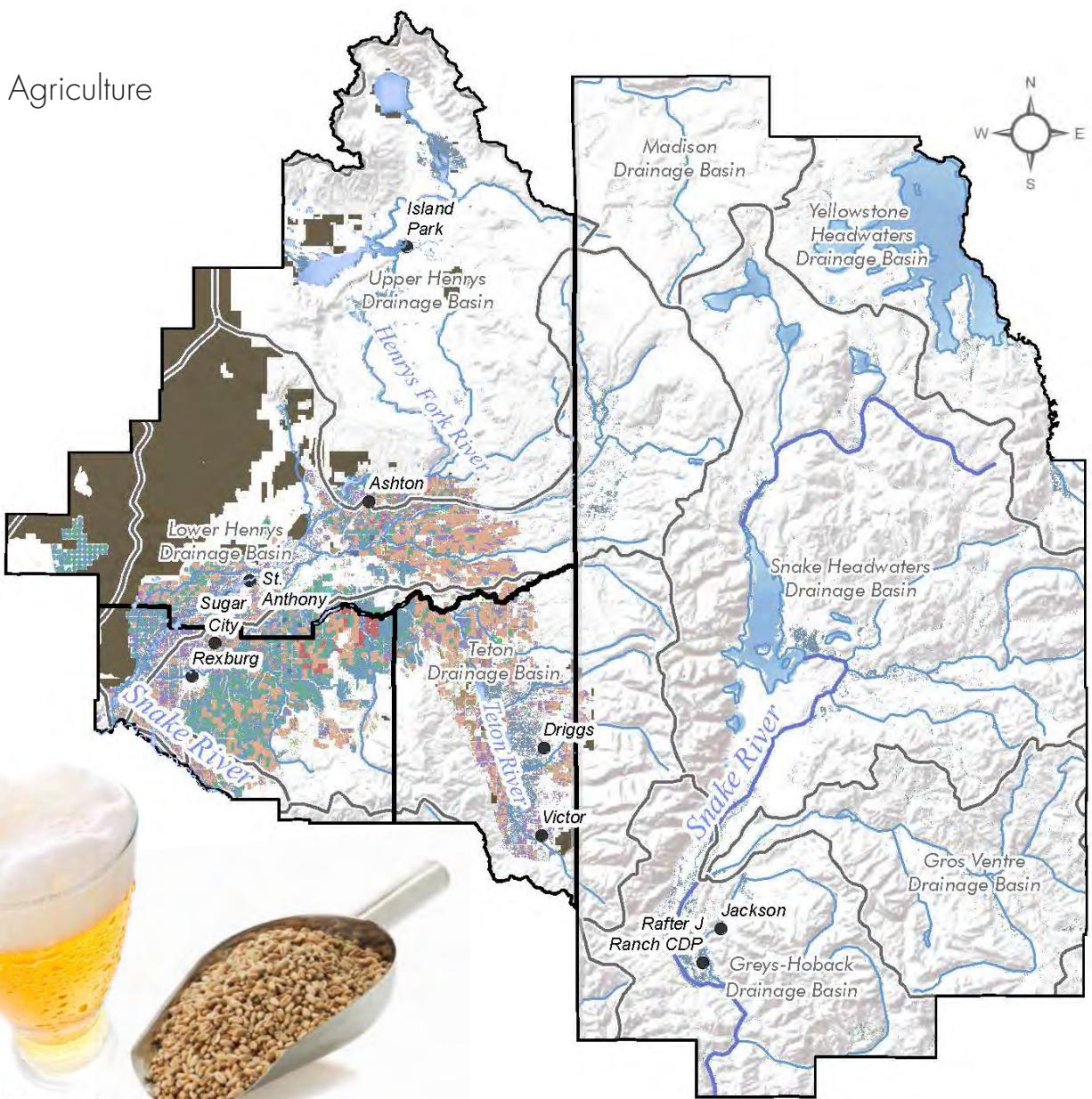
The four storage alternatives that involve dams located on a river or creek (Spring Creek Dam, Moody Creek Dam, Upper Badger Creek Dam, and Teton Dam) do not have broad stakeholder support. Conservation groups have clearly articulated their objection to these alternatives because of potential impacts 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.<sup>40</sup>

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.

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<sup>40</sup> 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/>.



### Legend

Corn	Winter Wheat	Safflower	Camelina	Sod
Barley	Oats	Mustard	Sugarbeets	Fallow
Durum Wheat	Canola	Alfalfa	Potatoes	Open water
Spring Wheat	Flaxseed	Other Hay	Peas	Wetlands
				Triticale
				Drainage Basins

**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 gullying. 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 fencing, 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.



Photo: Charlie Lansche

**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.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup> 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 SPA and meet recovery goals and objectives set out in the SPA 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->

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





*Moving Ahead with Common Purpose*

## Roots & Resilience: 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

No.	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

No.	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

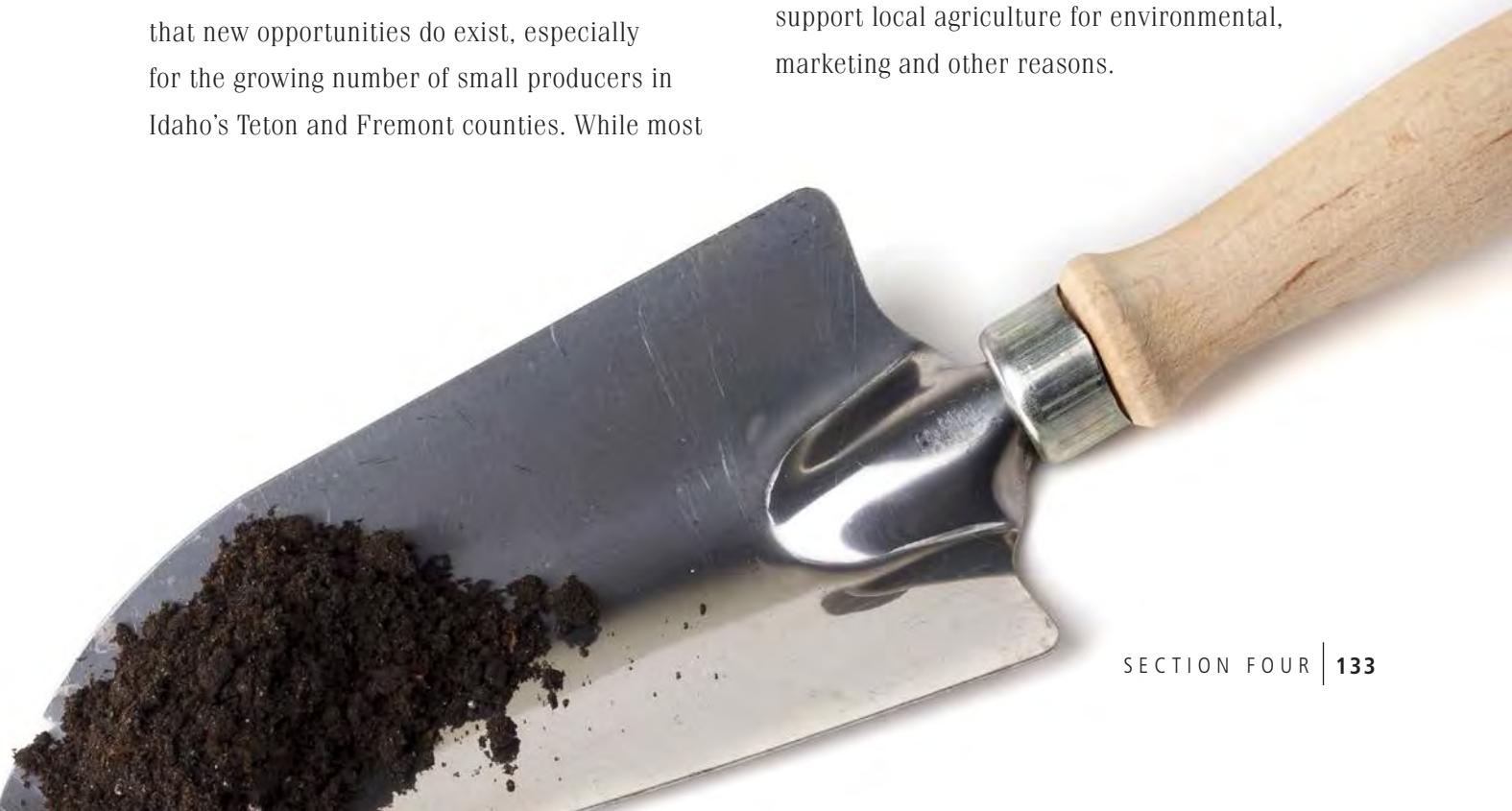
These initiatives are proposed to reconnect city residents to their surrounding productive landscapes and advance local food systems and policies that allow for healthy coexistence.

### 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.

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## 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.

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## 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







# 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/](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.



# 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  
MEASURES THE TOTAL  
AREA OF LAND  
IN FARMS.**

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/](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.<sup>42</sup>

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

<sup>42</sup> 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](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](http://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 Raynolds 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](http://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.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>43</sup> 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.<sup>44</sup>

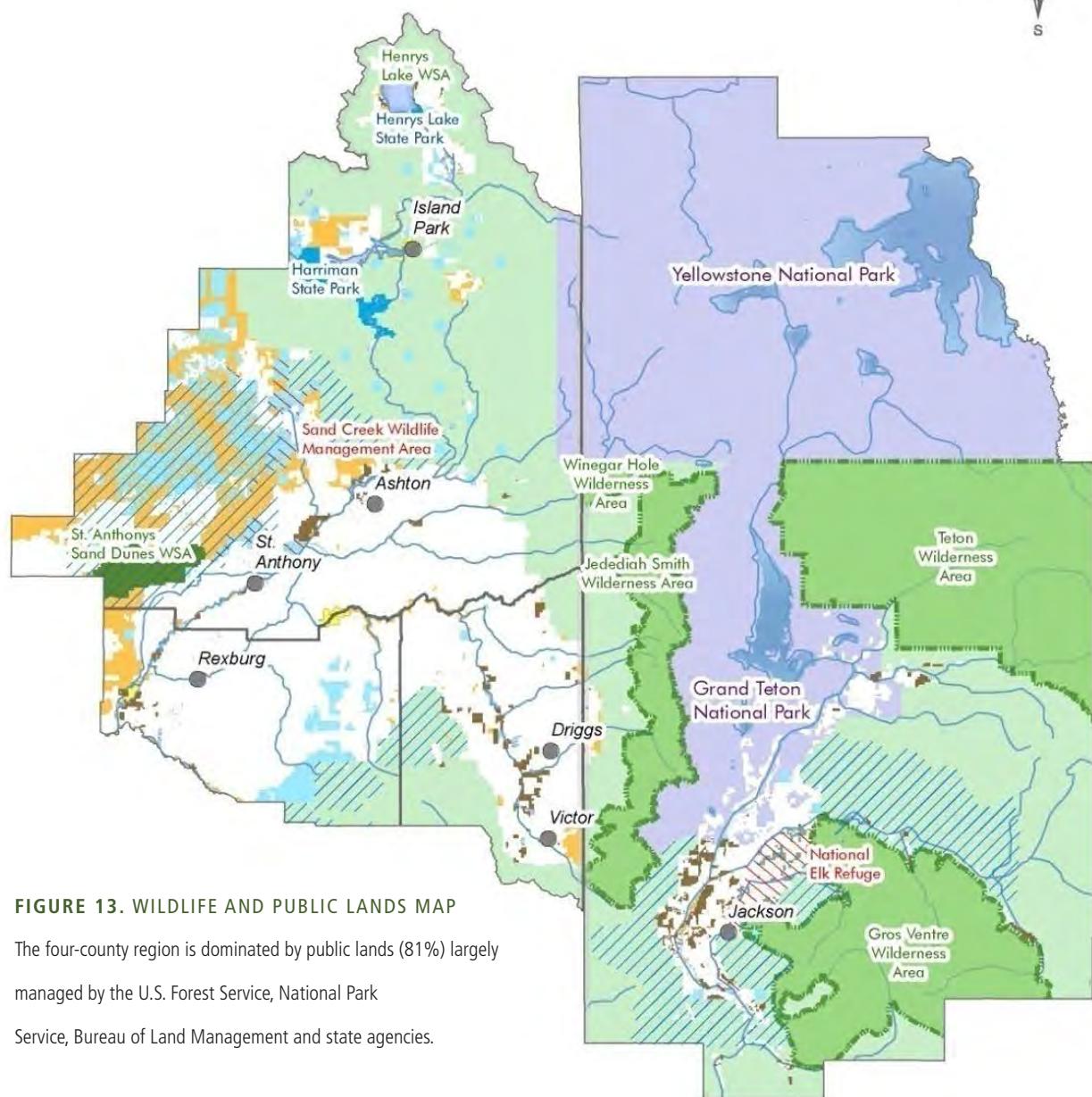
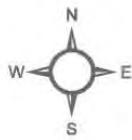
## MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES

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

<sup>44</sup> 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	State Parks	National Park Service
// Big Game Winter Closure Areas	Privately Owned Conservation Areas	National Wildlife Refuge
Wildlife Management Areas and Refuges	Bureau of Land Management	US Forest Service
Wilderness	Bureau of Reclamation	State
Wilderness Study Areas		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.<sup>45</sup>



#### 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

<sup>45</sup> *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](http://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.

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### 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.<sup>46</sup>

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.

<sup>46</sup> 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*

## Wonders & Wildlife:

### 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.

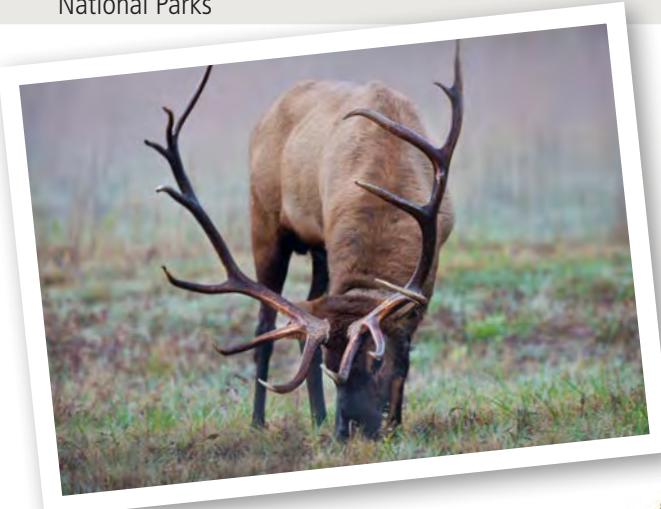
Collaboration among agencies and public interests is therefore emphasized in these eight projects, two of which were ranked among the top 10 of all 60 projects during the plan's public review period. Local governments are willing to partner with their state and federal counterparts on both new and ongoing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

**Table 11.** Wonders & Wildlife (WW) Implementation Priorities

No.	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

No.	Near-Term Project Priorities	Willing to Partner	Potential New Partners
WW.2	Implementation of State Wildlife Plans		Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Wyoming Game & Fish Department
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.

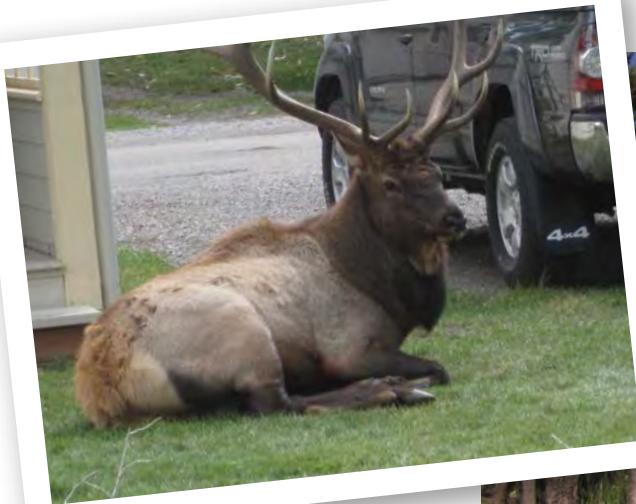
A recent study focused primarily on moose and elk movements recorded 169 collisions with wildlife on the stretch of U.S. 20 between Ashton and Island Park from 2005 to 2009, resulting in moose, elk and deer fatalities, and millions of dollars in vehicle damage. Researchers have tracked the animals' migration 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 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







# 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.



# 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.

## 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

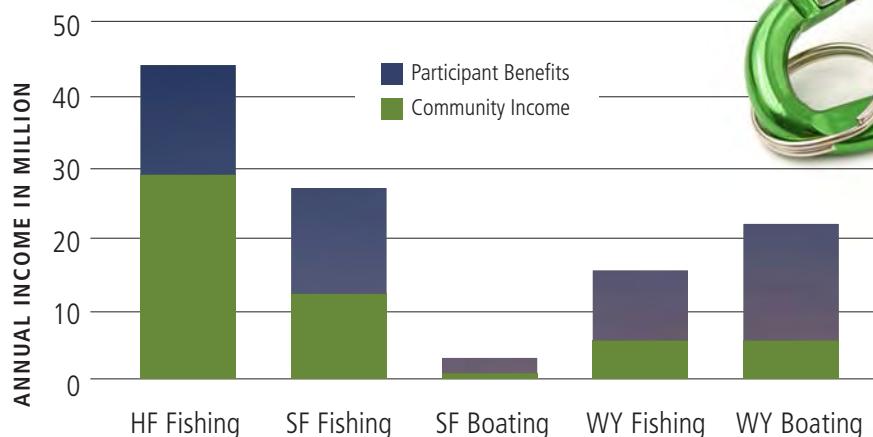


FIGURE 14.

Annual Income To Counties and Participant Recreation Benefits

SOURCE: 2005 Loomis Report



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 housing/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.<sup>47</sup>

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/yurts could be erected are possibilities to consider.<sup>48</sup>

## 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.<sup>49</sup>

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.

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

<sup>48</sup> 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>.

<sup>49</sup> 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.<sup>50</sup>

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,

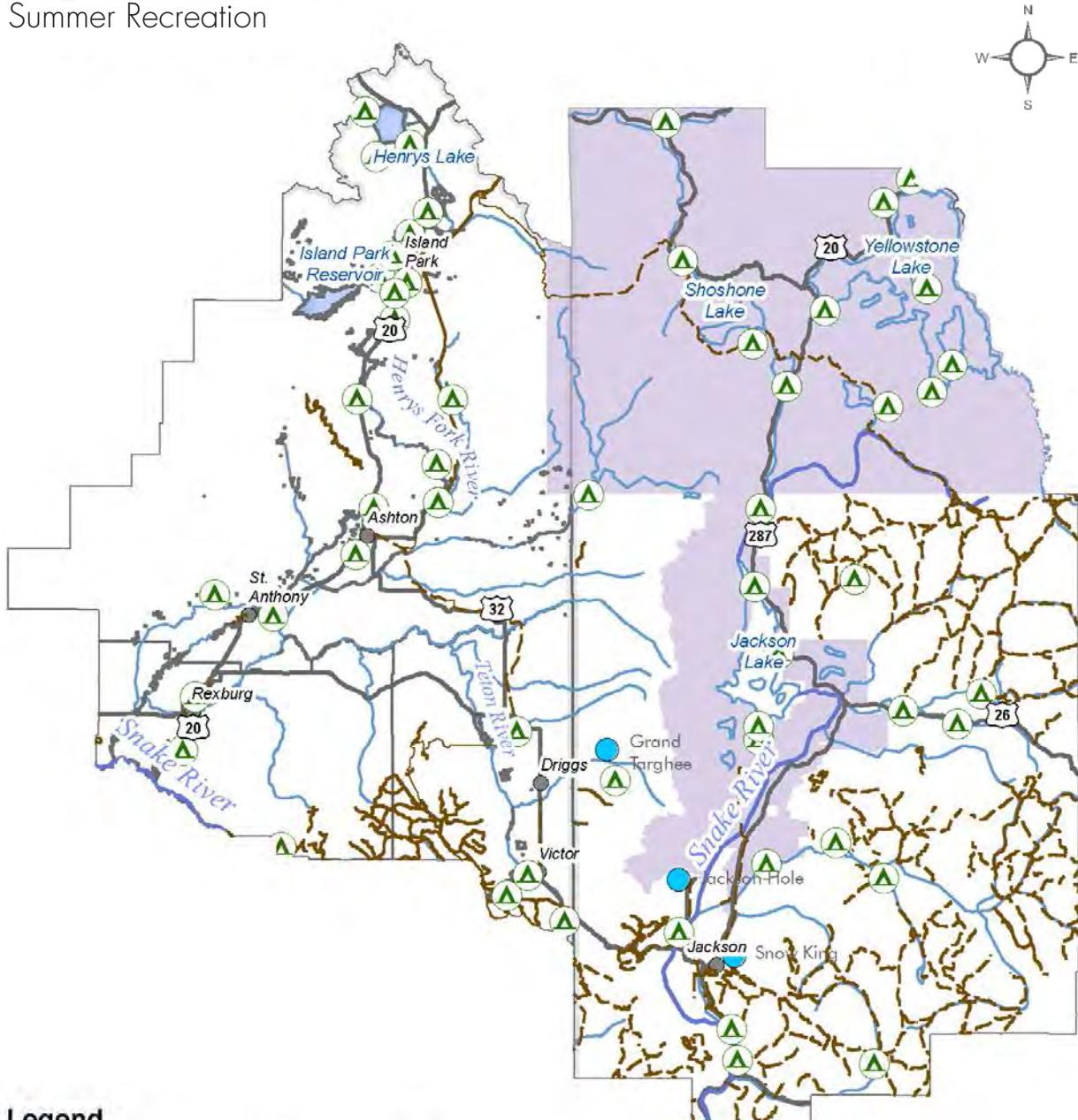
particularly in commercial fishing and scenic rafting trips.<sup>51</sup> The recently finalized Snake River through Jackson Hole Final River Management Plan manages recreation access, facilities, and public use to protect or enhance the quality of recreation opportunities and other resource values in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

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

<sup>51</sup> 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

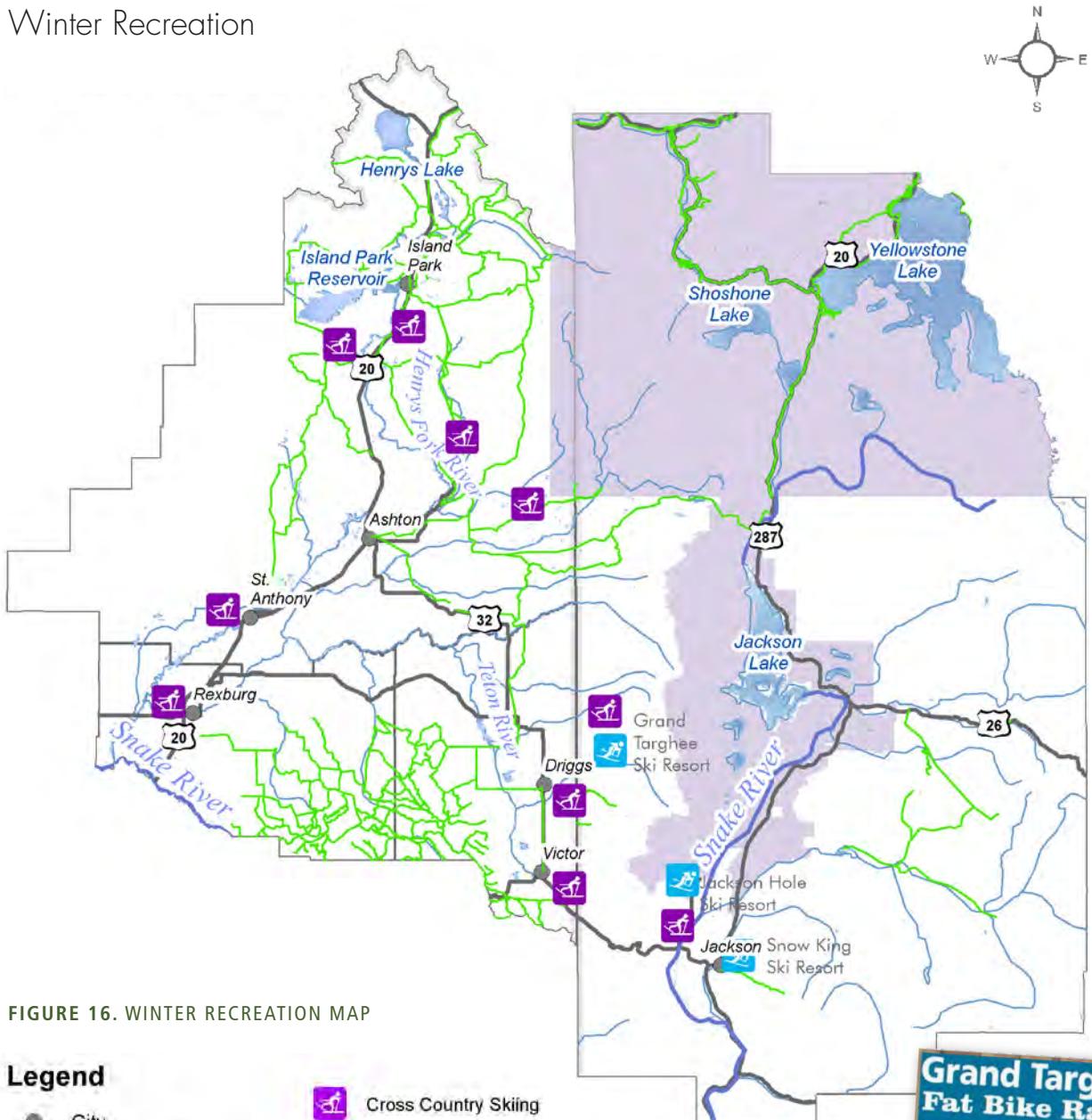
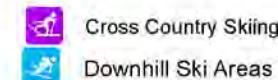


FIGURE 16. WINTER RECREATION MAP

### Legend

- City
- Major Roads
- National Park Service



### Winter Trails

Motorized/Snowmobile Trail (green line)



SOURCE: [www.grandtarghee.com](http://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.<sup>52</sup>

## 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.<sup>53</sup>

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.

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

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

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**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.<sup>54</sup>

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

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<sup>54</sup> 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.<sup>55</sup>

#### **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.

<sup>55</sup> 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 trials 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.

## Adventures for All: 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

No.	#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
No.	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
No.	Long-Term Collaborations	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



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## 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.



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**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





## 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.



# 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.

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

## 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.



# 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>.



Section Five

# *Supplemental materials*



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*Moving Ahead with Common Purpose:*

## Some Final Thoughts on the Path Forward

This plan – and, indeed, the whole body of work leading up to it – has always suffered from the fact that our “region” doesn’t make very much sense. Politically, economically or culturally, there is little that unifies the partners who worked on it. Even geographically, where some thought to find useful ties, the distances and terrain do more to separate than to unite. The extent of the region covered in this work both sweeps up communities that really have little in common with each other and leaves out others whose economic and geographic ties are arguably just as strong as any of those who were included.

What does that say about this plan then? If the region doesn’t make sense, how can the regional plan ever be coherent?

For this plan, coherence has little to do with who carries these recommendations forward or how those efforts are organized. Rather, because these projects have value to the communities they affect, the ultimate meaning of this plan rests on the viability of the projects themselves.

Even without a common identity, each place in this region has real needs. In fact, every place has some needs in common with other places. We can talk about shared needs – and the solutions to those needs – even if we don’t feel like members of the same club.

We saw this as we worked on this plan. When the conversation focused on our whole region, it floundered, but when we talked about specific needs and solutions, we made progress.



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### THE LESSON HERE IS TO FOCUS ON THE ISSUES INSTEAD OF THE GROUP.

The projects in this plan are good projects, designed and selected by the people who live here to meet real local needs. And, now that we've identified them, we can carry this lesson forward by focusing on the solutions.

It was always the intent and design of this plan to focus on the solutions. The means of carrying them out are sometimes suggested, but just as often left undefined. As each project solves a real need, the places that feel those needs most are best suited to defining how to fill in the remaining blanks and bring about the solutions – as well as forging the partnerships to make it happen.

Again, the design of this plan is that locals can take ownership of the process and make these projects succeed. Indeed, the tables in the following pages illustrate that for many of them, there are already leaders willing to make that happen.

Let's not forget that the people of this region already have a track record of working together to solve their problems. The 5C facility in St. Anthony is a prime example of several local jurisdictions pulling together to address a need (juvenile detention) that they couldn't meet as well if they each worked alone.

Similar ad-hoc cooperation can serve to promote and carry out projects in this plan.



### THE LESSON HERE IS THAT WE ALREADY KNOW HOW TO FIT PARTNERSHIPS TO SOLUTIONS.

In some cases, such as with High Country RC&D or the Development Company (East-Central Idaho Planning and Development Association), there are already cooperative organizations that can take the lead on one or more of these suggestions. These represent opportunities to build on past successes and leverage existing investments to carry this work forward.

### THE LESSON HERE IS TO USE THE INSTITUTIONS THAT ALREADY WORK.

Given that these projects represent real solutions to real needs in real local places, the ultimate success of the Teton View Regional Plan simply depends on getting them done. Crediting the plan with their completion, or tying the whole slate of projects to a regional identity, are not important criteria for success.

### TO SUM UP:

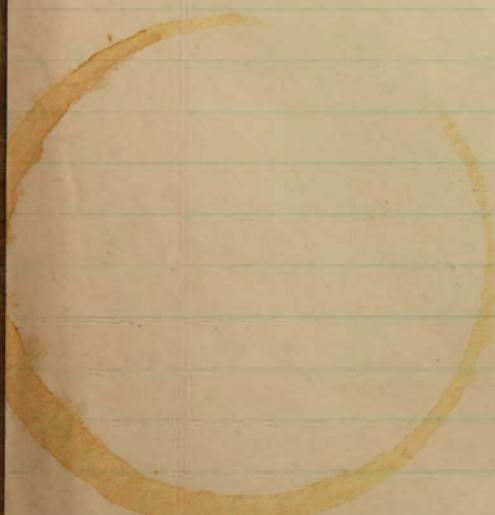
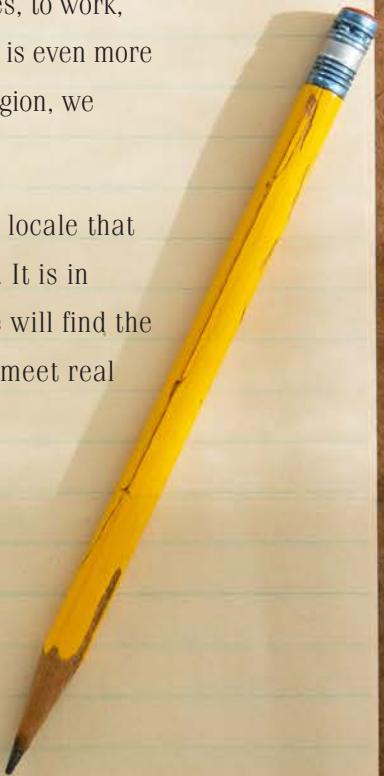
The way forward is not tidy. Nor is it easily defined. Our region, and the problems our communities must face, are far too messy to ever allow a simple roadmap. However, if we focus on solutions, make partnerships fit the solutions they are to implement, and use those successful partnerships we already have, then we will be well on our way to successfully implementing this plan's recommendations.

This plan begins with the observation that we all “lead regional lives,” because we all travel, sometimes great distances, to work, shop and play. As useful as that observation may be, it is even more true to say that, while we function within our larger region, we actually live very locally.

Each of us identifies with our own place – a specific locale that we’ve chosen for our own, deeply personal, reasons. It is in those places that we feel most alive – and where we will find the motivation to go to work and solve real problems to meet real needs – no matter how far afield we may roam.

**THOMAS CLUFF, AICP**

Fremont County Planning and Building Administrator  
Team Lead, Teton View Regional Plan



## Project Leadership for Near-Term Plan Implementation

**Table 13.** Project Leadership for Fremont County, Idaho

Consortium Member	Willing to Lead/Co-Lead	No.	Willing to Serve as Partner	No.
<b>Fremont County, Idaho</b>	Wastewater Treatment Demonstration Projects	TTC.8	A Madison-Fremont Housing Authority	TTC.5
	Code Updates for Fair Housing Compliance: Fremont County	SC.9	Fair Housing Policies/Procedures: Rexburg Micropolitan Area	TTC.6
	Mobile Integrated Health Care	SC.10	Collaborations for Business Retention and Recruitment	SC.5
	Building Community Across Fremont County	SC.11	Regional Systems for Recycling/Materials Recovery	BT.7
	Welcoming Seniors to Fremont County	SC.12	Regional Equity in Broadband Access	BT.6
	Retrofitting Recreation Facilities for Four-Season Use	AA.3	Maximizing Irrigation Water Supply: Policies/Practices	RR.6
			Collaborative Decision Making in Watershed Management	RR.7
			Cooperative Weed Management	RR.10
			Safe Corridors for Wildlife Migration	WW.3
			Island Park Sustainable Fire Community	WW.5
<b>City of St. Anthony, Idaho</b>			Greater Yellowstone Trail Concept Plan	AA.1
			Economic Potential of Adventure Tourism	AA.2
<b>Ashton Community Foundation</b>	Neighborhood Revitalization with Habitat for Humanity	SC.1	St. Anthony's Henry's Fork Greenway Enhancements	AA.8
	St. Anthony's Henry's Fork Greenway Enhancements	AA.8		
<b>Ashton Community Foundation</b>	A Madison-Fremont Housing Authority	TTC.5	Neighborhood Revitalization with Habitat for Humanity	SC.1
	Wastewater Treatment Demonstration Projects	TTC.8	Collaborations for Business Retention and Recruitment	SC.5
	Main Street Matters: Downtown Revitalization	SC.4	Our Rural Schools Challenge	SC.6
			Code Updates for Fair Housing Compliance: Fremont County	SC.9
			Building Community Across Fremont County	SC.11
			Welcoming Seniors to Fremont County	SC.12
			Teton View Model Development Code: A Regional Tool Kit	BT.1

**Table 13.** Continued

Consortium Member	Willing to Lead/Co-Lead	No.	Willing to Serve as Partner	No.
<b>Ashton Community Foundation Continued</b>			Impact Hubs for Regional Entrepreneurs	BT.5
			A Local Foods System to Meet Regional Demand	RR.1
			Infrastructure for Local Foods Processing	RR.2
			Cooperative Marketing and Distribution of Local Foods	RR.3
			Collaborative Decision Making in Watershed Management	RR.7
			Farmer's Market Coordination	RR.12
			Greater Yellowstone Area: Ecosystem Health Projects	WW.6
			Economic Potential of Adventure Tourism	AA.2

**Table 14.** Project Leadership for Madison County, Idaho

Consortium Member	Willing to Lead/Co-Lead	No.	Willing to Serve as Partner	No.
<b>Madison County, Idaho</b>	A Madison-Fremont Housing Authority	TTC.5	Maximizing Irrigation Water Supply: Policies/Practices	RR.6
	Fair Housing Policies/Procedures: Rexburg Micropolitan Area	TTC.6	Collaborative Decision Making in Watershed Management	RR.7
	Code Updates for Fair Housing Compliance – Madison County	TTC.7	Soil Health Initiative	RR.8
	Regional Systems for Recycling/Materials Recovery	BT.7	Cooperative Weed Management	RR.10
			Farmer's Market Coordination	RR.12
			Safe Corridors for Wildlife Migration	WW.3
<b>City of Rexburg, Idaho</b>	Wastewater Treatment Demonstration Projects	TTC.8	Code Updates for Fair Housing Compliance – Madison County	TTC.7
	Rexburg Transit Feasibility Study	TTC.9	Main Street Matters – Downtown Revitalization	SC.4
	Jackson-Rexburg Workforce Connection	TTC.10	Farmer's Market Coordination	RR.12
	Regional Systems for Recycling/Materials Recovery	BT.7	Economic Potential of Adventure Tourism	AA.2
	Regional Equity in Broadband Access	BT.6		

**Table 15.** Project Leadership for Teton County, Idaho

Consortium Member	Willing to Lead/Co-Lead	No.	Willing to Serve as Partner	No.
<b>Teton County, Idaho</b>	Collaborations for Business Retention and Recruitment	SC.5	A Regional Transportation Authority for Jackson Hole	TTC.4
	Our Rural Schools Challenge	SC.6	A Local Foods System to Meet Regional Demand	RR.1
	A Teton Valley Housing Authority	SC.7	Infrastructure for Local Foods Processing	RR.2
	Code Updates for Fair Housing Compliance: Teton County, Idaho	SC.8	Cooperative Marketing and Distribution of Local Foods	RR.3
	Regional Systems for Recycling/Materials Recovery	BT.7	New Avenues for Value-Added Agriculture	RR.5
	Teton View Model Development Code: A Regional Tool Kit	BT.1	Maximizing Irrigation Water Supply: Policies/Practices	RR.6
	Economic Potential of Adventure Tourism	AA.2	Collaborative Decision Making in Watershed Management	RR.7
			Soil Health Initiative	RR.8
			Cooperative Weed Management	RR.10
			Farmer's Market Coordination	RR.12
<b>City of Driggs, Idaho</b>			Safe Corridors for Wildlife Migration	WW.3
			Conserving Fish and Wildlife on Private Lands	WW.4
			Greater Yellowstone Trail Concept Plan	AA.1
	Main Street Matters – Downtown Revitalization	SC.4	Collaborations for Business Retention and Recruitment	SC.5
	Walkability and Wayfinding Concepts	SC.3	A Teton Valley Housing Authority	SC.7
	Teton View Model Development Code: A Regional Tool Kit	BT.1	A Local Foods System to Meet Regional Demand	RR.1
	Greater Yellowstone Trail Concept Plan	AA.1	Infrastructure for Local Foods Processing	RR.2
			Cooperative Marketing and Distribution of Local Foods	RR.3
			Farmer's Market Coordination	RR.12

**Table 15.** Continued

Consortium Member	Willing to Lead/Co-Lead	No.	Willing to Serve as Partner	No.
<b>City of Victor, Idaho</b>	Teton View Model Development Code: A Regional Tool Kit	BT.1	Jackson Hole Workforce Housing Initiative	TTC.3
	Impact Hubs for Regional Entrepreneurs	BT.5	A Regional Transportation Authority for Jackson Hole	TTC.4
	Greater Yellowstone Trail Concept Plan	AA.1	Jackson-Rexburg Workforce Connection	TTC.10
			Main Street Matters – Downtown Revitalization	SC.4
			Neighborhood Revitalization with Habitat for Humanity	SC.1
			Walkability and Wayfinding Concepts	SC.3
			Collaborations for Business Retention and Recruitment	SC.5
			Our Rural Schools Challenge	SC.6
			A Teton Valley Housing Authority	SC.7
			Code Updates for Fair Housing Compliance: Teton County, Idaho	SC.8
			A Local Foods System to Meet Regional Demand	RR.1
			Infrastructure for Local Foods Processing	RR.2
			Cooperative Marketing and Distribution of Local Foods	RR.3
			Farmer's Market Coordination	RR.12
			Retrofitting Recreation Facilities for Four-Season Use	AA.3



**Table 16.** Project Leadership for Teton County, Wyoming

Consortium Member	Willing to Lead/Co-Lead	No.	Willing to Serve as Partner	No.
<b>Teton County, Wyoming</b>	Code Updates for Fair Housing Compliance: Teton County, WY	TTC.2	Teton View Model Development Code: A Regional Tool Kit	BT.1
	Jackson Hole Workforce Housing Initiative	TTC.3	A Local Foods System to Meet Regional Demand	RR.1
	A Regional Transportation Authority for Jackson Hole	TTC.4	Infrastructure for Local Foods Processing	RR.2
	Regional Systems for Recycling/Materials Recovery	BT.7	Cooperative Marketing and Distribution of Local Foods	RR.3
			Safe Corridors for Wildlife Migration	WW.3
			Conserving Fish and Wildlife on Private Lands	WW.4
			Greater Yellowstone Trail Concept Plan	AA.1
<b>Town of Jackson, Wyoming</b>	Code Updates for Fair Housing Compliance: Teton County, WY	TTC.2	Jackson-Rexburg Workforce Connection	TTC.10
	Jackson Hole Workforce Housing Initiative	TTC.3	Walkability and Wayfinding Concepts	SC.3
	A Regional Transportation Authority for Jackson Hole	TTC.4	A Local Foods System to Meet Regional Demand	RR.1
			Infrastructure for Local Foods Processing	RR.2
			Cooperative Marketing and Distribution of Local Foods	RR.3
			Greater Yellowstone Trail Concept Plan	AA.1

**Table 17.** Project Leadership for Federal Agencies

Consortium Member	Willing to Lead/Co-Lead	No.	Willing to Serve as Partner	No.
<b>Bureau of Land Management, Upper Snake River District</b>	St. Anthony's Henry's Fork Greenway Enhancements	AA.8	Greater Yellowstone Area: Ecosystem Health Projects	WW.6
<b>Caribou-Targhee National Forest</b>			Island Park Sustainable Fire Community	WW.5
			Greater Yellowstone Area: Ecosystem Health Projects	WW.6
<b>Bridger-Teton National Forest</b>			Greater Yellowstone Trail Concept Plan	AA.1
			Greater Yellowstone Area: Ecosystem Health Projects	WW.6

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## The Greater Yellowstone Framework/ Regional Plan Crosswalk

The Greater Yellowstone Framework for Sustainable Development (GY Framework) was created by the Yellowstone Business Partnership in 2006-2007 in response to intense development pressure on communities surrounding Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks. Like the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) certification system for buildings, the GY-Framework is a voluntary, scorecard-based certification system. An independent, third-party verification process is used to ensure certifier anonymity and objectivity.

Originally created for private subdivisions and commercial developments, the GY-Framework was tailored by the Yellowstone Business Partnership to be applied by local governments to create more livable, resilient, and sustainable communities. The table below shows where in the regional plan each of the GY-Framework categories is addressed and how many credit points might be earned for local government certification.



**Table 19.** Crosswalk to the Greater Yellowstone Framework

GY Framework Category	Associated Plan Themes	Possible Points
Project Planning and Investments	Chapter 1, Themes 1, 2	
	Chapter 2, Themes 1, 2	
	Chapter 4, Theme 4	9
Land Use and Conservation	Chapter 1, Theme 2	
	Chapter 2, Theme 1	
	Chapter 4, Theme 3	
	Chapter 5, Theme 1	13
Biodiversity	Chapter 4, Theme 2	
	Chapter 5 Themes 1, 2, 3, 4	13
Cultural and Historical Values	Chapter 1, Theme 1	
	Chapter 2, Theme 2	
	Chapter 4, Themes 1, 3	11
Recreation Resources	Chapter 6 Themes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	8
Built Environment	Chapter 1 Themes 1, 4	
	Chapter 2, Themes 1, 2, 5	12
	Chapter 3, Theme 4	
Public Service and Infrastructure	Chapter 2, Theme 6	
	Chapter 3, Themes 2, 3, 4	
	Chapter 4, Theme 2	20
Transportation and Connectivity	Chapter 3, Themes 1, 3	
	Chapter 6, Theme 5	10
Community Vitality	Chapter 1, Theme 4	
	Chapter 2, Themes 3, 4, 5	13
Special Credit Opportunities (not included in Project Total)	Chapter 1, Theme 2	
	Chapter 2, Theme 1	
	Chapter 4, Theme 1	14



## Resource Library/Appendices

### APPENDIX A

#### *Greater Yellowstone Framework for Sustainable Development*

1. Greater Yellowstone Framework for Sustainable Development – Local Governments – Revision 2.0
2. Diagnosis of Land Development Regulations – Town of Jackson and Teton County, WY
3. Mountainside Village Greater Yellowstone Framework Certification

### APPENDIX B

#### *Model Development Code for the Teton View Region*

### APPENDIX C

#### *Regional Housing Studies*

1. Western Greater Yellowstone Area – Regional Analysis of Impediments
2. Western Greater Yellowstone Area – Housing Needs Assessment

### APPENDIX D

#### *Regional Mobility Studies*

1. Multi-Modal Transportation Assessment and Development Strategy
2. Greater Yellowstone Trail Concept Plan and Grant Applications
3. Regional Wayfinding System
4. Complete Streets Intersection Design – City of Victor
5. Henry's Fork Greenway Master Access and Development Plan (Grant Application) – City of St. Anthony

### APPENDIX E

#### *Economic Development Studies*

1. Assessment of Teton View Agriculture for Local and Regional Markets
2. Teton County, Idaho Economic Development Plan
3. Fremont County Economic Development Strategy
4. Fremont County Community Economic Profile
5. Workforce Analysis of Rexburg, Idaho

### APPENDIX F

#### *Teton View Infrastructure Studies*

1. Regional Recycling Study
2. Regional Broadband Study
3. Renewable Energy Feasibility Study
4. Best Practices Analysis – Green Economy

### APPENDIX G

#### *Record of Public Participation*

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