

Watershed Moment

Planning today's land uses
for tomorrow's river

City of Ketchum, Idaho
Ketchum City Council

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WOOD
RIVER
LAND
TRUST





Today's presentation

✓ WRLT Program: Community Planning

✓ **Policy Alignment**

- Regional
- Ketchum

✓ **Current Project: Watershed Moment**

- Purpose
- Context & Deliverables
- Process

✓ **Community Engagement**

✓ **Project Timeline**

WRLT Program: Community Planning

Purpose

- Regional and long-range planning

“Building capacity to steward a livable future”

Focus Areas

- Habitat Conservation
- Water Availability
- Transportation Mobility
- Community Housing
- Livability

Approaches

- Engage
- Evaluate
- Educate
- Encourage
- Coordinate

What does this look like?

- Special projects
- Regional Coordination



Shared Goals: Regional Policies

H.2 - Minimize the impact of development on habitats and wildlife, especially in the floodplain and on hillsides.	Blaine County - Chapter 3: Recreation, Policy Statements F-1, F-2. Chapter 5: Natural Environment: Resources, Hazard Areas, and Conservation, Policy Statements C-3, C-7, C-8, C-9, C-10. Chapter 8: Land Use, Policy Statements C-6, C-7, LW-9, LW-10, LW-11.
	City of Carey - Land Use, Overlay Areas, Objective 1.
	City of Bellevue - Chapter 6: Natural Resources, Goal 1, Objective 1. Chapter 6: Natural Resources, Goal 2, Objective 2.
	City of Hailey - Section 1: Natural Resources, Energy and Air Quality, Goal 1.1.
	City of Ketchum - Chapter 5: Natural Resource Stewardship, Goal NR1, Policies NR1.1, 1.2, 1.3. Goal NR2, Policies NR2.1. Chapter 6: Parks, Recreation, and Open Space, Goal OS-2, Policies OS2.1.
	City of Sun Valley - Principle I, Goal 1, Objectives 1.2, 1.3.

W.2 - Mitigate the impacts of existing and new development on water availability.	Blaine County - Chapter 5: Natural Environment: Resources, Hazard Areas, and Conservation, Policy Statement E-4, E-13, E-14, E-16. Chapter 6: Public Services, Facilities and Utilities, Water and Wastewater C-9, C-10. Chapter 7: Economic Development, Policy Statement D-7. Chapter 8: Land Use, Policy Statements B-5, B-6.
	City of Carey - Natural Resources: Desirable Goal 1, Objectives 1, 2, 3, 7. Land Use, Agricultural/Residential Low Density Areas, Desirable Goal 7.
	City of Bellevue - Chapter 6: Natural Resources, Goal 2, Objective 4. Chapter 8: Public Services, utilities, and Facilities, Goal 1, Objectives 2. Chapter 13: Community Design, Goal 1, Objective 3.
	City of Ketchum - Chapter 1: Community Vision and Core Value 10. Chapter 4: Community Design and Neighborhoods, Goal CD-2, Policies CD-2.5. Chapter 5: Natural Resource Stewardship, Goal NR-3, Policies NR-3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4. Goal NR-4, Policies NR-4.1, 4.2, 4.3; Goal NR-6, Policy NR-6.5. Goal NR-8, Policy NR-8.1. Chapter 9: Public Safety and Utilities, Goal PSU-2, Policy PSU-2.1.
	City of Sun Valley - Principle I: Goal 4, Objectives 4.1. Principle II, Goal 6, Objective 6.1.

Recognizing the significant overlap in Comprehensive Plan policy statements from Blaine County and the cities therein, WRLT scoped the Community Planning program and its action plan objectives to stem from policy statements shared between three or more municipalities.

Shared goals H.2 and W.2 summarize the policy statements backing this Watershed Moment project.

Check out the full policy inventory [here](#).

Evaluate growth scenarios to build consensus for land use regulations and tools that:



**Preserve
Open Space**



**Hydrate
Landscapes**



**Sustain our
Water Sources**



**Grow
Smartly**

Process: Scenario Planning

TARGET QUESTION

“Which land use regulations, zoning tools and programs can best protect the land, water and wildlife of Blaine County, Idaho?”

SCENARIO PLANNING

To clarify and estimate how projected growth—under the different land use regulations—will impact water consumption and riparian habitats in the Big Wood River watershed.

“plan[ning] for an uncertain future by exploring multiple possibilities of what might happen” -
[Lincoln Institute of Land Policy](#)

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Will assist with the data analysis & geospatial mapping.

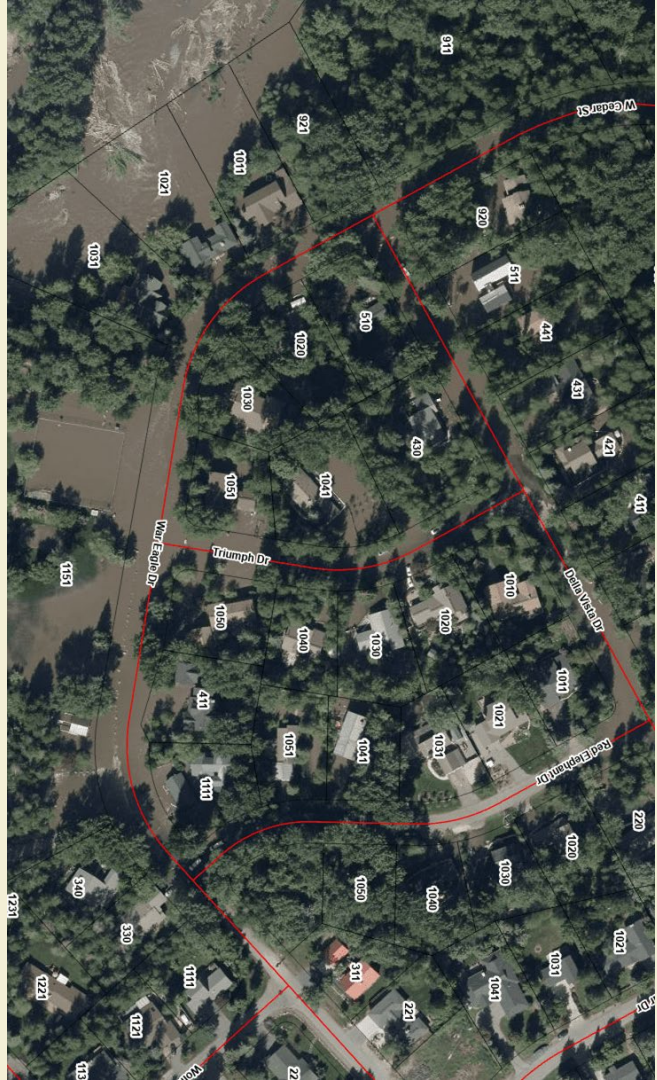
[Read more about the UofA’s methodology.](#)

WOOD RIVER WATER COLLABORATIVE

The [WRWC](#) is a collection of over seventy-five diverse water users, originally convened in 2014 by WRLT, TU & TNC. The Bureau of Reclamation awarded WRLT a [WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program](#) grant on behalf of the WRWC, our regional grassroots watershed management group.

How will this project be helpful to updating land use regulations?

- Visualize and map areas of the basin where planned growth stands to negatively impact the watershed
- Evaluate the benefits and risks of *potential* land use regulations within the Big Wood River basin
- Build consensus for zoning regulations and tools that can increase the protection of critical water resources



Project deliverables



1. Scenario Planning to Reduce Demand

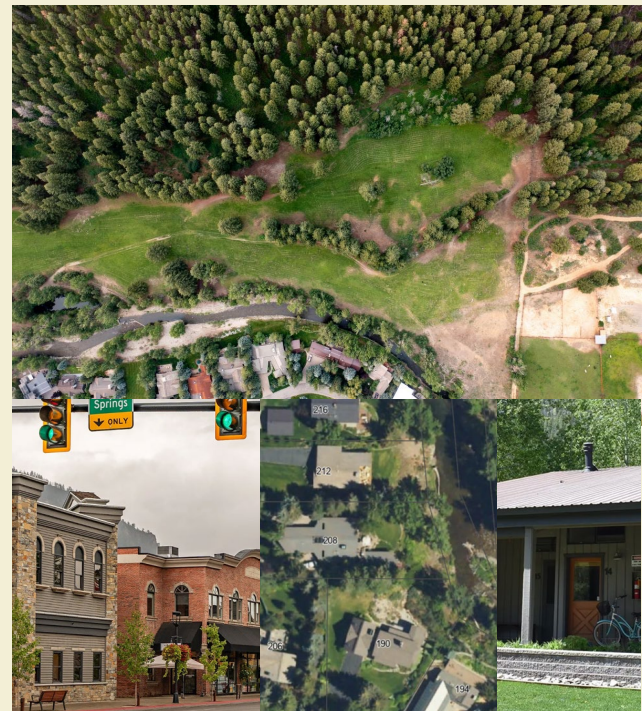
- a. Forecasting land cover change
- b. Forecasting water demand
 - Using “water duties”

2. Contextualizing Municipal Use

- a. Estimating water withdrawal across the County

Project deliverables: **Future Growth Scenarios**

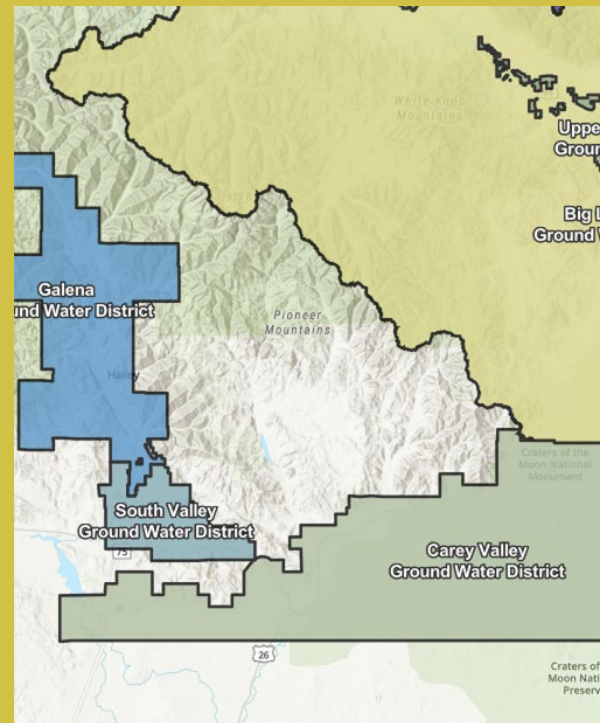
- Under different land use regulations
- Relying on historical land cover change
- Forecasting water demand
 - Using “water duties”
 - Scenarios to explore the effects of prospective, conservation-oriented land use regulations to:
 - Expand water-wise landscaping policies;
 - Transfer development rights away from sensitive habitats;
 - Cluster development for open space protection;
 - Site plan for habitat protection;
 - Restrict or disincentivize consumptive turf grass; and
 - Incentivize infill rather than sprawling development.
- Measuring impacts to the watershed



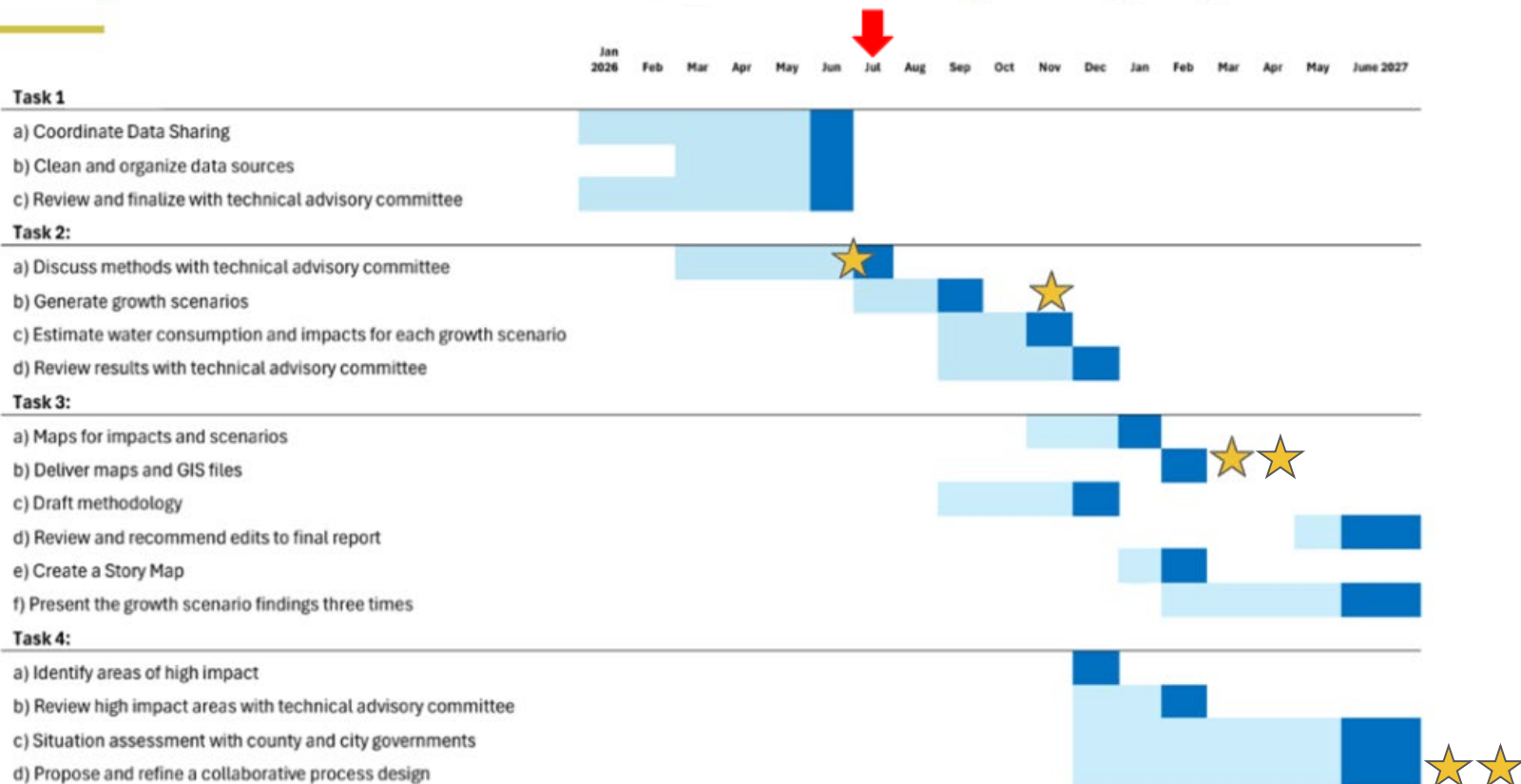
Project deliverables: Contextualizing Water Use

Estimated water withdrawal across the County

- Withdrawal by jurisdiction, 2021-2025
 - Groundwater districts' withdrawal
 - Surface water withdrawals from water districts
- Addressing Domestic well entitlements
- Discussion on depictions
 - Water use levels through shades of blue
 - Reduced rates of water use through shades of red-yellow-green
 - Hover-over narratives include:
 - Differences in use by water rights (%)
 - Irrigated acreage (acres)
 - Land uses (%)
 - Water source (surface or groundwater)
 - Service area size (acres)
 - Full-time residential population (people)
 - Metric on food produced



Project Timeline & Community Engagement



Municipal & Community Engagement

Technical
advisors

Interested
community
members

General public

Quarterly
workshops

Social media

Elected &
appointed
leadership

WRWC
members

Quarterly e-mail
updates

Presentations

Informational
website

Municipal & Community Engagement

Watershed Moment Workshop | Ketchum

Fri, Jul 24 | The Community Library

How will today's land use decisions shape tomorrow's water resources and wildlife habitat? Join the Wood River Land Trust for an interactive workshop where you'll hear from experts, explore future growth scenarios, and help evaluate how different development patterns can reduce water use. RSVP Req'd

[Register Now](#)

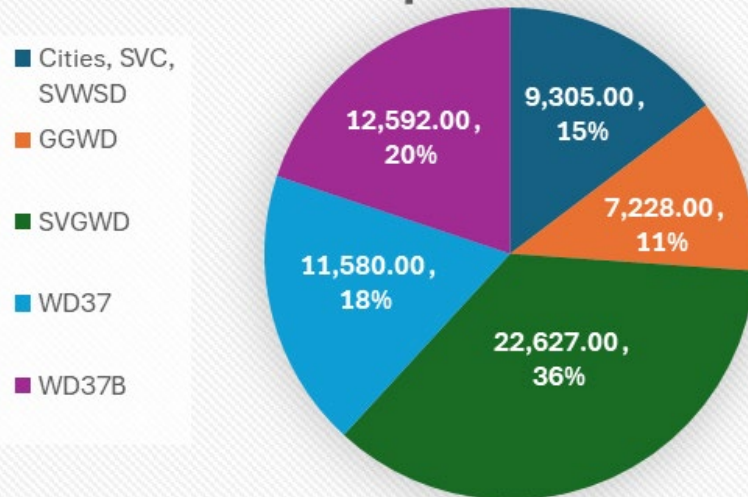
Q&A

Preliminary Data Analysis

Groundwater withdrawals associated with residential and recreational land uses accounted for approximately 36% of the groundwater withdrawn in the Big Wood River basin in 2025.

Referring to the cumulative withdrawal by the Cities, SVC, SVWSD and GGWD in 2025. Source: <https://idwr.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/groundwater-mgmt/big-wood-gwma-advisory-comm/BWRGWMA-Ground-Water-Use-Summary.pdf>

2025 Groundwater Withdrawal by BWGWMP User Group





How can zoning accomplish water goals?

- **Increase the options that private property owners have to develop their properties in ways that reduce water demand:**
 - Voluntary incentive programs
 - By-right development standards that allow for the concentration of development away from water resources
 - Attractive discretionary pathways for entitlements associated with land uses and zoning districts that are particularly consumptive or located near water resources

Project deliverables: **One-off Analyses**

1. **Estimated water demand reductions associated with participation in:**
 - a. incentives for xeriscaping and/or 100% native planting for private residential uses
 - b. incentives for greywater systems for private residential and commercial uses
 - c. incentives for pervious surfaces for private residential and commercial uses
 - d. incentives for low-flow appliances for private residential uses
 - e. expanded reuse
2. Estimated square feet of incidental recharge opportunities
3. Revenue generating streams associated with revised fee structures and rates
 - a. for conservation and efficiency measures



Project deliverables: **General Tools**

- **water demand calculator tool**
 - **to analyze the impacts of future developments and zoning changes**
- **requirements domestic well reporting via remote metering**
- **water supply compensation in Annexation Code**
- **landscaping in public ROWs**
- **enforcing compliance of riparian protections/regulate habitat disturbance in the floodplain**
- **Watershed Improvement District & water rental pool**
- **managed aquifer recharge for WW discharge**

Shared Goals

Shared Regional Goal	H.2 - Minimize the impact of development on habitats and wildlife, especially in the floodplain and on hillsides.	W.2 - Mitigate the impacts of existing and new development on water availability.
2014 Ketchum Comp Plan Policy Statement	Chapter 5: Natural Resource Stewardship, Goal NR1, Policies NR1.1, 1.2, 1.3. Goal NR2, Policies NR2.1. Chapter 6: Parks, Recreation, and Open Space, Goal OS-2, Policies OS2.1.	Chapter 1: Community Vision and Core Value 10. Chapter 4: Community Design and Neighborhoods, Goal CD-2, Policies CD-2.5. Chapter 5: Natural Resource Stewardship, Goal NR-3, Policies NR-3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4. Goal NR-4, Policies NR-4.1, 4.2, 4.3; Goal NR-6, Policy NR-6.5. Goal NR-8, Policy NR-8.1. Chapter 9: Public Safety and Utilities, Goal PSU-2, Policy PSU-2.1
2025 Ketchum Comp Plan Policy Statement	Chapter 3: Responsible Stewardship of Natural Resources, Goal NR-1, Policies NR-1.1, NR-1.2, NR-1.4, NR-1.5, NR-1.6, NR-1.7. Goal NR-2, Policies NR-2.1, NR-2.2, NR-2.7.	Chapter 3: Responsible Stewardship of Natural Resources, Goal NR-2, Policies NR-2.3, NR-2.4, NR-2.5, NR-2.6.