

## ***Boise Urban Wetland Restoration: Five Mile/Victory Wetland***



Photo taken December 2004.

### **What was done and why?**

The Five Mile/Victory Wetland (Site) was originated in 1996 when the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) wanted to build a site to demonstrate the value of surface water retention rather than the common pipe and burial methods used in so many residential developments. The land chosen for the project was originally owned by the Ada County Highway District (ACHD), which they used as a storm water runoff retention basin. According to the NRCS, this site was essentially a "weedy mess" that contained old tires, broken-up concrete, and 7-ft high thistle brush. The site consisted of a 1.3 acre, narrow strip of land in a natural drainage of an urban Boise subdivision. Retaining most of the slow-moving water, was a broken and rundown concrete structure. Downstream of this consisted of a back hoe "sluice box" to direct the water flow.

The goals of the Five Mile/Victory Wetland were the following:

- Increase wildlife habitat and use
- Improve water quality (especially storm water runoff containing petro-chemical constituents)
- Demonstrate wetland benefits to city developers and private consultants
- Educate elementary school children and high school and college students to the benefits of wetlands, through the use of interpretive signs and an interpretive trail.
- Increase local property values
- Restore and refurbish native vegetation

The Ada Soil & Water Conservation District began a plan to convert this neglected area to a restored wetland in 1996. The project, which was a voluntary wetland construction effort rather than a mitigation plan, was funded by grants. Project construction costs totaled \$44,000, which does not include in-kind contributions from the NRCS and volunteers. To all those involved, especially the adjacent homeowners, the project has been a great success for urban wetland restoration.

### **Who was involved?**

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Ada County Soil Conservation District, Ada County Parks and Waterways, Ada County Commissioners, Ada County Highway District

### **Contact:**

Skip Vetten, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service  
(208) 888-1890 x112  
[skip.vetten@id.usda.gov](mailto:skip.vetten@id.usda.gov)

Dr. Peter Goodwin, Ecohydraulics Research Group, University of Idaho , Boise  
(208) 364-6164  
[pgoodwin@uidaho.edu](mailto:pgoodwin@uidaho.edu)

Jeanne McFall, Ecohydraulics Research Group, University of Idaho , Boise  
(208) 364-6164  
[mcfall@uidaho.edu](mailto:mcfall@uidaho.edu)