

It's Not What You Say That Counts.

What Matters Is What You've Accomplished!

For more than two years the Coalition for Agriculture's Future has informed the public about the kinds of change needed to better protect and preserve our agricultural lands from rampant, ill-conceived and poorly managed growth and development; the kind of haphazard uncontrolled expansion that has helped get us into the economic mess in which we now find ourselves mired. Now, we owe you an accounting of the major things we have actually been able to do to that will help change things for the better.



The CAF Legislative Team of Roger Batt (right) and Dan Steenson (left) visited with House Speaker Lawrence Denny (center right) and Majority Leader Mike Moyle (center left) to thank them for their support after HB148 successfully cleared both Chambers of the Idaho legislature.

The Coalition spent months researching and drafting legislation that will strengthen agricultural protections in Idaho's land use planning laws. And we got 'er done!

The legislation was introduced as House Bill 148 in the Idaho Legislature where it passed 66-0 in the House and 35-0 in the Senate. It was signed into law by the Governor on March 16. The revised Act takes effect July 1, 2011.

One key change now mandates that planning and zoning policies must adhere much more closely to existing comprehensive plans. This closed a loophole that let some developers end-run local comprehensive plans.

- We worked tirelessly to prompt Canyon County to launch an in-depth rewrite of county Planning and Zoning ordinances. It did and we participated closely in the process. The revisions will eliminate the "planned community" Conditional Use Permit provision which for two decades allowed harmful 'spot development' residential subdivisions to be dropped in the middle of agricultural lands. Our involvement also produced a more precise definition of rural residential zones to prevent unmanaged piecemeal residential infiltration into agricultural lands.
- We testified in writing and in person before the Canyon County Planning and Zoning Commission and the County Commissioners on projects that would have affected the preservation of the crucial agriculture lands that are the heart of the our agricultural economy.
- We helped fund a University of Idaho economic study of agriculture that shows clear just how valuable agriculture is in Canyon County and have used the data in a wide range of newspaper ads, presentations and briefings around the area.
- Now we're trying to protect agricultural lands by getting deeply involved in the rewrite of the Canyon County Comprehensive Plan.

So far it's been an awesome trip. Please allow us to say modestly that we feel delighted about what we have achieved so far. But there's a lot of work left to do if we are to continue to safeguard our agricultural lands and the economic benefits and rich heritage they bring to Idaho. We are hard at work to do just that and we invite you to join us in the journey. Visit our website to find out how you can.



The Coalition for Agriculture's Future is made up of more than 30 agribusiness, financial institutions, Associations and other companies and individuals with agriculture interests in Idaho and elsewhere. You can learn more about the issue of agricultural land loss and the Coalition by visiting our web site:

www.agriculturesfuture.org