

Campus Sustainability Accomplishments

This report, a summarized timeline of campus sustainability efforts, has been compiled for the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE) 2015 conference by the UI Sustainability Center (UISC). Many accomplishments profiled in this report can be viewed in our interactive timeline at www.uidaho.edu/sustainability. The UI is revamping our website, which will render some of the hyperlinks in the report inactive in August 2015. For more information please contact us at uisc@uidaho.edu or jeanniem@uidaho.edu.

2005 Talloires Declaration— In 1990 at an international conference in Talloires, France, the “Talloires Declaration” was issued as the first official statement made by university administrators of sustainability in higher education. The Talloires Declaration (TD) is a ten-point action plan for incorporating sustainability and environmental literacy in teaching, research, operations, and outreach at colleges and universities. It has been signed by over 350 university presidents and chancellors in over 40 countries. The University of Idaho signed the Talloires Declaration in 2005 as one of the first steps in the effort to incorporate sustainability and environmental literacy in teaching, research, operations, and outreach. For more information, visit [University Leaders for a Sustainable Future](#).

2006 Sustainability Center—The UISC was established as the first student-led Sustainability Center west of the Mississippi in 2006 as part of a campus-wide student movement with support from staff, community, faculty, all three student governments (undergraduate ASUI, graduate student GPSA and law student SBA), residence hall presidents and many clubs. This effort culminated in the passing of a \$5.00 per semester student fee that continues to support UISC activities. The UISC is led by a student director and nine student staff responsible for coordinating events, volunteers, recycling, marketing, grant projects, website, and technical support.



UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO
SUSTAINABILITY CENTER

Sustainability Center Mission—A student-led and student fee-funded organization, the UISC supports efforts to create an active culture of sustainability, and we are committed to developing and maintaining healthful, educational living environments while fully integrating sustainable practices at the University of Idaho. Sustainability involves reorganizing our life support systems: climate, energy, biodiversity, food, consumerism and consumption, waste, transportation, and built environment. We do this through developing and implementing projects that reduce our environmental footprint and increase participation and collaboration among students, faculty, staff, and community members. For more information, visit www.uidaho.edu/sustainability.

What is Sustainability?—Sustainable development has been defined in many ways, but the most frequently quoted definition is from Our Common Future, also known as the Brundtland Report: "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts: the concept of needs, in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs."

What Motivates Us?—Climate change is happening, and the evidence is clear. Earth's average temperature has risen by 1.4°F over the past century, and is projected to rise another 2 to 11.5°F over the next hundred years. Small changes in the average temperature of the planet can translate to large and potentially dangerous shifts in climate and weather. With the current level of atmospheric carbon dioxide at 397ppm, we are rapidly approaching the projected “tipping point” of 450 ppm. But what does that mean for us? Temperature changes will affect ecosystems and alter landscapes throughout the world, and major economic drivers in the state of Idaho, such as recreation and agriculture, will become compromised. The truth is, climate change affects everyone. While it might seem impossible to address this global issue, we are dedicated to addressing climate change where we can, in our home state of Idaho. Idaho currently emits the least amount of carbon dioxide per person of the United States, less than 23,000 pounds a year! However, the future is uncertain. To learn more about temperature projections for Idaho go to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and results from the [UK Hadley Centre's climate model](#).

2003 Soil Stewards established—The University Soil Stewards farm is managed by a student group committed to organic farming and sustainable community food systems. The farm serves as both an educational tool and a source of fresh local vegetables. [Soil Stewards](#) sells organic produce, primarily root crops, to UI Campus Dining.

2005 Fair Trade coffee—For the first time, Fair Trade Coffee was served in all campus coffee shops thanks to a group of Environmental Club students who decided to take action.

2006 Mini-Grant program established—The UISC began awarding \$9,000 annually to fund student-led projects that advance campus sustainability. Grants are available to any U-Idaho undergraduate, graduate or law student. A request for proposals (RFP) is posted each year in August/September. For more information, visit the [UISC website](#).

2007 UI signs ACUPCC—In 2007, then-president Duane Nellis signed the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment ([ACUPCC](#)), which is a framework for universities to implement comprehensive plans in pursuit of climate neutrality.

2007 UI hires first Campus Sustainability Coordinator—A veteran in the field of environmental education and literacy, Darin Saul, was hired as UI's first Campus Sustainability Coordinator. That same year, Saul started strategic committees, which have been the driving force behind many of the accomplishments profiled in this timeline. UI's Blue Ribbon funding initiative ended in 2012, and funding for a Campus Sustainability Coordinator has not been renewed.

2007 Bulk Business Mail Sustainability Initiative—The University of Idaho annually receives many tons of bulk business mail, commonly referred to as “junk mail,” almost all of which is immediately thrown away. Delivering bulk business mail consumes valuable staff time, increases fuel and equipment use and increases the volume of waste that must be processed. This initiative greatly reduced the volume of junk mail on campus and also helps the UI fulfill its commitment to the American Colleges and Universities Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) program signed by President Tim White in April 2007.

2008 Greenhouse Gas Inventory—In September 2008, the UISC completed a report that established a greenhouse gas emissions baseline using data from 2005 to 2007. For more information, visit <http://www.uidaho.edu/community-connections/sustainability-center/resources/reports>.

2008 LEED Building Policy (APM 40.03)—Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) was developed by the U.S. Green Building Council. The LEED Green Building Rating System is the national benchmark for high performance

green buildings. UI adopted LEED building policy in 2008. In 2015, UI's first LEED GOLD building is under construction. For more information, visit <http://www.uidaho.edu/apm/40/03>.

2008 Attitudes About Food Survey—Results from this campus-wide survey showed that 92% of student respondents are very/somewhat interested in eating fresh, local food on campus and 81% of students are very/somewhat interested in a dining option that offers student-grown produce.

2009 Sustainability Revolving Loan Fund (APM 40.12)—The UI Sustainability Revolving Loan Fund (SRLF) was established to fund innovative projects that reduce environmental impacts and provide economic benefits. The SRLF can fund energy conservation, renewable energy, waste and recycling and other sustainability projects that demonstrate sustainable design and save money. Savings resulting from an SRLF funded project shall be used to repay the loan from the SRLF. The SRLF shall serve as a source of money from which loans may be made for projects; as repayments are made, the money will be made available for additional projects. The framework for an SRLF was established in 2008; however, as of 2015 the fund has not been capitalized. <http://www.uidaho.edu/apm/40/12>

2009 Waste Characterization Study—This 2009 campus-wide study determined that 68% of what we throw away on campus can be recycled (40%) or composted (28%). For more information, visit <http://www.uidaho.edu/community-connections/sustainability-center/resources/reports>.

2010 Food and Farm Composting is Established—A waste characterization study conducted by UISC in 2009 found that 68% of what we throw away on the UI-Moscow campus can be recycled (40%) or composted (28%). These findings drove the development of our Food and Farm Composting program. In 2014, 51 tons of campus food waste (from the Commons, Bob's Place and Denny's) was composted with 40 tons of livestock manure and used animal bedding at the UI Dairy. Composting diverts waste from a regional landfill 200 miles away.

2010 Climate Action Plan—The University of Idaho Climate Action Plan was developed to outline the steps the University needs to take to become climate neutral by 2030. For more information, visit <http://www.uidaho.edu/community-connections/sustainability-center/resources/reports>.

2010-2015 Sustainable considerations established in UI's Food Service Contract—Local food is a powerful economic driver, supporting producers and building local economic strength and resilience. Eating local food reduces our ecological footprint by decreasing packaging waste and transportation costs. UI's Food Service Contract includes (1) geographic preferences to purchase 71% of food from regionally grown sources and 12.5% of food from locally grown sources; (2) conversion to a biodiesel fleet; and (3) a 90% reduction in food waste (100 tons annually).

2010 EPA Grant—A \$26,254 project titled "Implementing Cultural Change to Minimize Waste" was funded to implement an outreach program to shift UI culture toward more sustainable practices regarding electronic, paper, and food waste. The results of this project verified that UISC marketing strategies, specifically poster campaigns, raise awareness, encourage individuals to adopt sustainable behaviors and create a culture of sustainability.

2010 UISC Student Grant: Soil Stewards Greenhouse—UISC funded the construction of a \$3,000 greenhouse to facilitate crop rotation, season extension, and increased production of produce for sale to Campus Dining.

2011 Recycled Paper Policy (APM 60.50)—This policy was implemented to align procurement processes with sustainability efforts at the University and to be sensitive to the impact our purchases have on the environment. All University of Idaho units are required to purchase office paper with a minimum sustainable specification of acid-free 30% post-consumer waste recycled paper content. In addition, the University strongly supports purchasing the maximum

recyclable content possible, up to 100% recycled, and processed chlorine-free paper. For more information, visit <http://www.uidaho.edu/apm/60/50>.

2011 Campus recycling survey—Business 378 Project Management course students and instructor Tracie Lee partnered with the UISC to conduct a campus-wide survey of student attitudes and behaviors toward waste minimization and recycling. Among total respondents, 89.7 % reported recycling at least one material consistently. Of the 368 students surveyed who live on campus, 73.3% requested an increase in the visibility and quantity of recycling bins on campus and more support from the University. To learn more, visit resources/surveys www.uidaho.edu/sustainability.

2011-2013 USDA Grant—“Developing Strategies to Increase Prosperity for Small Farms through Sustainable Livestock Production, Processing and Marketing” was funded with \$438,000. This study optimized strategies for small producers to increase revenues and minimize environmental impacts, such as building local processing capacity and developing producer co-operatives. To learn more, read the [project summary](#).

2011 Bike For Change Community Bike Ride and Rally—The Palouse-Clearwater Environmental Institute, UISC, and several other community organizations gathered on September 24th, 2011 to host a "Bike for Change" event as part of a 350.org International Day of Action event called "Moving Planet: A Day to Move Beyond Fossil Fuels." A survey was conducted during the event to evaluate public feelings toward cycling as a form of transportation and what encourages or limits them from cycling in town. The survey is now being used in a larger city-wide evaluation of bike paths in town and in the development of cycling education materials for the community.

2012 UI Commons Water Bottle Refill Station Installed—Since installation in January 2012, this refill station has helped to conserve resources, save money, and reduce our carbon footprint by encouraging students to refill their own water bottles rather than purchasing single-use disposable bottles of water.

2013 IDEQ Recycling Grant—In Fall 2013, the UISC was awarded a \$20,000 Sustainable Materials Management grant from the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) to help initiate a new, standardized recycling program at the Kibbie Dome Activity Center. The grant also incorporated an educational campaign about waste reduction, and specifically the harmful effects single-use plastic water-bottles have on our environment. To learn more, visit the [project page](#).

2013 Soil Stewards Survey—In 2013 a campus wide survey revealed that 67% of the 1089 respondents support an ASUI student fee increase to support Soil Stewards, U-Idaho’s student-led organic farm. Of 777 participants who answered the question, 100% support a fee increase of \$1.00 to provide more than \$2.50 per student per year to support the farm. To learn more visit, resources/surveys www.uidaho.edu/sustainability.

2009-2013 SBDC Grant—Small business energy efficiency evaluations. The Idaho Small Business Development Center (Idaho SBDC) received a grant from the U.S. Small Business Administration to create a program to provide energy efficiency-related services to small businesses in Idaho. This grant program consisted of several components, including developing an energy efficiency evaluation program that provided no-cost evaluations to small businesses owners. From September 2009 through May 2013, 82 student interns from three universities evaluated 294 facilities in 18 Idaho communities. For each evaluation, the interns visited the business facility, analyzed utility records, and drafted a custom report that detailed opportunities for reducing energy use. Most clients implemented at least one recommendation after receiving the final report. The most common energy efficiency recommendations were low- or no-cost upgrades such as weather-stripping, replacing incandescent bulbs with CFL’s, retrofitting T12 lamps and ballasts, insulating water heaters, programming thermostats for seasonal settings, performing HVAC maintenance, activating computer power management functions, and upgrading fluorescent lights.

2014 Campus Food Survey—In this survey we asked students if they prefer to purchase “fast food” or “nutritious meals, made from scratch utilizing local/regional ingredient such as student-grown produce, local milk and vandel meats”. 82% of respondents reported that they prefer to purchase nutritious meals made with local ingredients and that they are willing to pay an additional \$1.00 - \$2.50 more, per meal, for their preference.

Mini-Grants—The UISC allocates up to \$9,000 annually to fund projects that engage students in building real-world skills while bolstering campus sustainability and creating real and permanent change. A total of 41 student-led mini-grants have been awarded, \$119,000 in funding since the program began in 2006. Students develop skills they will use well beyond the life of the grant, including grant writing, project management, budgeting, leadership, and teamwork. Mini-grant projects are profiled on our website at www.uidaho.edu.

2014 Leave No Trace—Students are encouraged to “Give a Hoot”. In 2014, 68 student volunteers contributed 186 hours to restore popular recreational areas and scenic destinations for wildlife and humans alike by picking up trash and recycling at locations such as Mann Lake and Boyer Park, and restoring trails at Ilders Rest on Moscow Mountain. To learn more, [watch a 2-minute video](#).

2014 UI Campus Food Strategic Plan—Many representatives of the University of Idaho are dedicated to improving the State of Idaho’s food system to support ecological, economic health, and social outcomes. We are dedicated to providing students with high quality food at affordable prices. We recognize that investing in the use of sustainable food benefits the daily lives of current students, the recruitment and retention of new students and fosters university-community relations by supporting the livelihoods of family farmers.

A coalition of supporters was brought together by the Sustainability Center with representation from Auxiliary Services, ASUI Student President, Sustainability Center Advisory Board, Environmental Sciences and Water Resources Department, U-Idaho Food Systems committees, Vandal Nutrition, Soil Stewards Club, U-Idaho Dairy, and many others. 57% of U-Idaho students surveyed believe campus dining has an obligation to purchase student grown produce. The coalition submitted eleven sustainable considerations into the 2015-2020 Dining Contract, including:

1. Conduct a Campus Food Assessment
2. Goal to purchase 15% of food from “locally produced/raised” sources within 250 miles of Moscow, Idaho
3. Goal to purchase 70% of food from “regionally produces/raised” sources
4. Establish a transparent reporting system
5. Establish direct contracts to purchase all available U-Idaho student produced and student-raised food
6. Minimize waste by 90% and support Food and Farm Composting
7. Eliminate disposable serve ware products
8. Offer zero waste catering, and many more strategies.

2014 Get Rooted—Our most popular volunteer program, Get Rooted has engaged over 1600 student volunteers in replanting the Palouse Prairie and campus with 3350 native trees, shrubs and groundcovers since this program began in 2007. In 2014 alone, 236 students contributed 645 volunteer hours to this program. To learn more, watch a [1-minute video](#).

2014 Food and Farm Composting reopened in February after being closed for 10 months. Installation of a mixer and finishing screener were completed, a 20-year old truck was purchased to transport compost, and bin size was reduced for worker safety. The UI President granted \$10,000 in additional funds for the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences to manage compost operations and oversee transportation of compost from collection locations to the UI Dairy. More than

100 student volunteers and countless dining patrons have helped divert 111 tons of food waste from landfills to the UI Dairy, where it is blended with livestock manure and used as a soil amendment on the fields surrounding the Dairy.

10th Annual Palouse Basin Water Summit 2014—The UISC participated in this community discussion about how we manage our shared water resources. UISC student staff hosted a tap vs. bottled vs. filtered taste test (bottled won). The UISC Director presented, “Drinking tap or filtered water will save you hundreds of dollars a year and reduce your carbon footprint. Consumers pay \$10.32/gallon of bottled water, but only \$.07 to .30 /gallon for filtered water and about 1/3 of a penny/gallon of tap water.”

2015 Sustainability Center Mini-Grant projects:

- **Kailie Legget, Maddy Bass, Brita Olson and Matt Roth**, members of the University of Idaho Soil Stewards club. Their \$3,000 grant, entitled “*Peas Lettuce Build an Awesome New Farm,*” will fund efforts to help the student-run farm establish infrastructure for farming and outreach activities at a new site located at UI’s North Farm (behind WinCo on Farm Road). With funding from the UISC, Soil Stewards will be able to dismantle, relocate and rebuild two hoop houses, purchase irrigation and farming equipment, construct a classroom/storage building, install a sign and strengthen localized and environmentally conscious food systems. Partners: Soil Stewards and College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.
- **Kelsie Smathers**, a graduate student in Master in Family and Consumer Sciences. Her \$745.58 grant, entitled “*Savvy Finance Skills for Students,*” will educate the campus community on money management. Four presentations will be offered with the goal of helping students to re-think their current spending habits and to educate them how to manage personal finances now and in the future.
 - The Ins & Outs of Student Loans
 - Credit vs. Debit
 - Budgeting
 - InsurancePartners: the Student Success Center, UI Housing, and the Department of Consumer Sciences.
- **Patrick Johnson**, a graduate student in College of Law. His \$3,340.60 grant, entitled “*Theopilus Tower Native Landscaping Project,*” provides soils for the native landscaping project on the raised bed surrounding Theopilus Tower residence hall. Johnson hopes to “create a culture on campus that recognizes the beauty of native landscaping and actively seeks out ways to implement it on campus.” Three Landscape Architecture students (Celeste Valle, Shuting Wang and Andrew Tyler) designed the tower native planting project. Student volunteers are re-planting on March 11, 2015 during UI’s annual Make a Difference Day. Partners: student volunteers, UI Landscape Architecture Department, Facilities—Landscape Services, and the Palouse Prairie Foundation.

No Impact Challenge 2015—Join the UISC for a fun and challenging one-week carbon cleanse experiment and discover how lowering your impact can benefit not only the planet, but also your own quality of life! The No Impact Project, April 17-24, 2015 is designed to increase interest in sustainability, build community, and create positive environmental change. Each day will focus on a different theme including consumption, eating locally, energy & water conservation, and alternative transportation.

Energy Conservation Social Marketing Campaign 2015— Although electricity consumption on campus is trending down, utility rates are trending up. U-Idaho spends approximately 2.6 million dollars each year on electricity. Lighting accounts for up to 15% of the electricity bill, or about \$400,000. The UISC is partnering with Facilities—Utilities and Engineering

Services to develop a “Turn the Lights Out” campaign. Light switch prompts are being designed to change behavior, serve as a reminder and convey a social norm about what folks on campus value—energy conservation, carbon neutrality and saving money. Partners: UI Facilities—Utilities and Engineering Services, and University Housing.

2015 Energy Efficient Vending Machine Upgrades—The University of Idaho Sustainability Center conducted a vending machine assessment in accordance with the institution’s commitment to ACUPCC (American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment) and the institution’s commitment to the UI Climate Action Plan (CAP). The CAP was developed to outline the steps the University of Idaho needs to take to become climate neutral by 2030. The steps towards climate neutrality are also steps towards greater fiscal responsibility, energy conservation, higher performance buildings, reducing fossil fuel use, and other strategies which are cost-effective, not only reducing our greenhouse gas emissions, but also reducing operational costs and the impacts of future increases in energy and fuel prices.

Installing Vending Misers on old vending machines is an effective way to reduce power consumption. However, many modern vending machines are Energy Star certified. According to Energy Star, vending machines that have earned this certification are 50% more efficient than standard refrigerated beverage vending machines. This is even greater the average 46% energy reduction that is realized with the installation of Vending Misers. While replacing all the beverage vending machines currently on campus with Energy Star approved models would be cost prohibitive, requiring that future vending machines be Energy Star approved would greatly improve efficiency.

Refrigerated vending machines on the University of Idaho campus consume a surprisingly large amount of energy every year. The economic and environmental benefits of upgrading campus vending machines are quickly realized, and the only drawback is the somewhat substantial initial cost of installation. An estimated maximum of 1.93 years will be needed to observe a full return on the investment, even neglecting the peak demand reduction. Overall, the results from this study present a strong case for implementing Vending Misers on University of Idaho refrigerated beverage vending machines as soon as possible. For more information visit www.uidaho.edu/sustainability reports page.

2016 STARS—The UI Sustainability Center is coordinating the University of Idaho’s response to three national collegiate surveys that rank universities based on sustainability efforts: STARS, The Princeton Review, and the Sierra Club Survey. The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System™ (STARS) is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance. By participating in the STARS survey the University of Idaho Sustainability Center will gain recognition for sustainability efforts, identify best practices, engage our community in building a culture of campus sustainability, inform strategic planning and budgeting, integrate sustainability into the curriculum, and make real progress toward the University’s goal to reach carbon neutral by 2030 along with a global community of over 700 institutions on six continents.

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