

Salmon Valley Stewardship

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How does SVS benefit Lemhi County?

Salmon Valley Stewardship's work has been instrumental in:

- Creating local natural resource-based jobs, especially in forestry and agriculture
- Reducing the threat of wildfire in and near our community
- Improving forest and stream health
- Building better connections between those who grow our food and those who consume it
- Encouraging members of the public to become more involved in planning and zoning issues

2. What does SVS do?

SVS works to promote a sustainable economy and a healthy environment in the Salmon River Region. We've been working in the forestry, community planning, and agriculture sectors since 2004, promoting the values and traditional ways of life that make this place special.

3. What projects are you currently working on?

SVS focuses on work that re-connects people with this amazing and diverse landscape.

- We sponsor the Lemhi County Farmers Market and through that effort hope to strengthen our local food network.
- We coordinate the Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group, a collaborative that has been successful in reducing conflicts about forest management activities on the Salmon-Challis National Forest. The thinning, logging and prescribed fire work being done in the 13,000-acre Hughes Creek area is a result of those efforts. The group is now working with the Salmon-Challis to move forward the more than 40,000-acre Upper North Fork project with the goal of creating local jobs, and restoring the forest to a more healthy and resilient condition.
- We look for opportunities for community members and visitors to help steward our public lands. Our volunteers have helped build new trails, clean up Discovery Hill, document the condition of aspen stands, and photograph birds in our valley, to just name a few of the events we've sponsored recently.

4. How many jobs has SVS created?

Salmon Valley Stewardship has been working to create and keep jobs in Lemhi County since our inception.

- Vic Phillips will tell you that we helped him secure a \$250,000 grant that made it possible for him to buy a post and pole business that now employs up to 12 people annually.
- Through our work in aspen regeneration and monitoring on both BLM and National Forest lands, SVS has been able to directly employ local youth and 2 adult supervisors in the summer, and we provided a local contractor with a \$15,000 job removing conifers from aspen stands. This summer, we expect to be able to offer a similar \$15,000 contract to a local bidder.
- The long-term results of our work with the Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group have already shown incredibly promising results. The collaborative Hughes Creek project has already generated more than \$400,000 in work, more than half of which has gone to Lemhi County residents.
- Every Saturday through the summer, dozens of farmers market vendors enjoy a unique opportunity to earn income selling locally raised produce or locally crafted goods. Some vendors have reported making as much as \$500 each week. The market also provides part-time employment for the farmers market manager. We have yet to calculate the added impact from market visitors staying downtown to shop at local retailers.

5. Is SVS working to put ranchers out of business?

No. SVS has invested considerable time and resources in making sure ranchers can stay in business in Lemhi County, despite a lot of changes that make ranching increasingly more difficult. Recently we've been focusing on strengthening our local food network and creating new markets for producers. We're doing this because we believe that ranchers are critical to help maintain many of the values we think make this place special – clean air and water, and open space that provides some of the most important wildlife habitat.

6. What is the Harvest Celebration all about?

For what will be our 4th year, SVS has put on an annual harvest celebration as a means of telling the community about our work, and demonstrating the deliciousness of our local food network. We use the event as an opportunity to bring in guest speakers who have insights that can help our community make progress in becoming more resilient and sustainable.

7. What is the David Krosting Sustainability Award?

At our Harvest Celebration each year, we present our David Krosting Sustainability Award – named in honor of the former BLM field office manager and an SVS founder – to the individual, business, or entity that best exemplifies what we call the Triple Bottom Line. That means those people who are contributing to our community, environment, and economy. Previous recipients are Salmon Valley Honey (2008), the Lemhi County Farmers Market (2009), and the Lemhi County Humane Society (2010).

8. What is SVS' affiliation with the Sonoran Institute?

In the early 2000s, people like BLM field office manager Dave Krosting, Commissioner Bob Cope, and rancher Tom McFarland started meeting to discuss the changes and conflicts occurring in Lemhi County. They felt strongly that a coordinated effort needed to happen to maintain working lands, protect wildlife habitat, and grow a viable economy. They and other Lemhi County residents had attended a Western Community Stewardship Forum in Colorado, sponsored by the Sonoran Institute. Sonoran later agreed to provide 2 years of seed money for staff and office space for what was then called the Salmon River Mtns. Working Group. That arrangement ended, as planned in July 2006, and SVS has been a separate and independent 501c3 organization ever since, receiving no funding from Sonoran.

9. What is SVS' affiliation with the Lemhi Regional Land Trust?

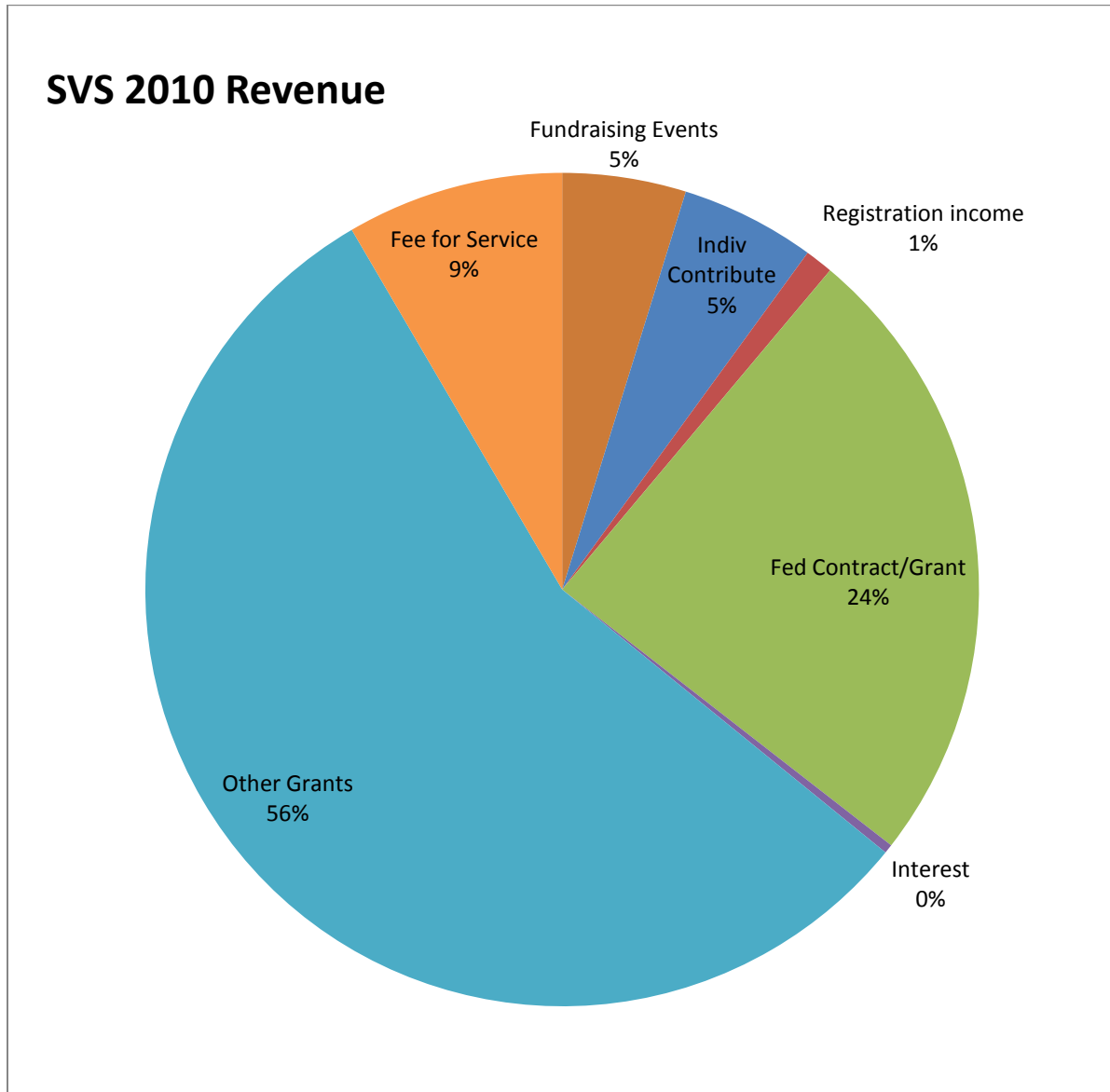
Conserving working ranches was one of the top priorities when Salmon Valley Stewardship started. It became clear that such an undertaking would not simply be a project of SVS, but needed its own organization, governed by local ranchers. SVS' director at the time Adrienne Trapani helped Tom McFarland and Joe and Fran Tonsmeire set up the Land Trust as a separate 501c3 in 2005. We continue to support one another's work and we have started putting out a joint newsletter, but there are no official ties between SVS and LRLT.

10. What is the difference between SVS and LRLT?

The Lemhi Regional Land Trust primarily focuses on keeping private working lands intact. They do this mostly through the use of conservation easements that keep private lands in private hands. Salmon Valley Stewardship works mostly on public lands. We play a role in reducing conflicts over natural resource management on public lands, and hope to re-connect people with their public lands fostering a stewardship ethic and creating local jobs..

11. Where does SVS get its funding?

Our funding comes from a variety of sources including private foundations, fee-for-service, and grants from federal agencies, and individual fundraising or revenue generating events and services. In 2010, SVS received about 40% of our revenue from the Brainerd Foundation, more than 30% from federal sources including the BLM, Forest Service, EPA, and USDA, about 15% from a National Forest Foundation grant, and 10% from private contributors and fundraising events.



12. Since the Brainerd Foundation supports the Y2Y Initiative and supports Salmon Valley Stewardship, aren't you directly tied to activities that are bad for Lemhi County?

Salmon Valley Stewardship has requested and received grants from the Brainerd Foundation since 2006. We outline a proposal to the foundation that is aligned with our local needs, developed to support our mission of promoting a sustainable economy and a healthy environment in the Salmon River Region. The Brainerd Foundation does not impose any agenda on SVS. If you were to ask others who receive funding from Brainerd, including rancher –based groups here in Lemhi County, and in the Madison and Centennial Valleys of Montana, you would hear the same thing.

Private foundations often fund a variety of unrelated causes. In 2009, the Steele Reese Foundation provided grants to both the Defenders of Wildlife and the Idaho Foodbank. Both met the Foundation’s objectives, even though the 2 organizations are quite different.

13. Is SVS part of the Yellowstone to Yukon initiative?

No, SVS is not a participant in the Yellowstone to Yukon Initiative. All of our work is conducted at the grassroots, local level because we believe this is the way to find lasting community-based solutions.

14. Is SVS anti-growth and against private property rights?

Salmon Valley Stewardship recognizes that in Lemhi County, less than 10% of lands are privately held – therefore, private property rights are extremely important values here. We have been pro-active in sponsoring public workshops about things like rural subdivision design and building considerations in riparian areas. We believe that people who live here value and wish to maintain our agricultural way of life, as well as clean air and water, and other outstanding natural features. We believe when the community looks at growth opportunities, these values should be considered early on in the process so that we can reduce conflict.

15. Does SVS support taking private lands off the county tax rolls?

No. We understand that the private property tax base is extremely important in Lemhi County.

16. What is Salmon Valley Stewardship’s role in land use planning?

When SVS first started, both the Lemhi County and the City of Salmon had comprehensive plans that were more than 10 years old. We saw rapid growth in rural areas around the West causing harm to communities, and we wanted to get ahead of the curve. We urged the county and the city to update their plans and include as much input as possible from the community so the end result would have support and buy-in. Now that the comprehensive plans and development

codes have been updated, we continue to believe that community involvement from a diverse range of perspectives helps inform better, more thoughtful land use planning decisions.

17. Is SVS a political organization?

No. Salmon Valley Stewardship does engage in policy work that is in line with our mission of promoting a sustainable economy and a healthy environment. We participate in the Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition and with that group of diverse organizations, landowners, and businesses, we've attended the Western Week in Washington to let members of Congress and others in Washington DC know how natural resource policy affects our rural communities.

18. Why did SVS work with the BLM to close public roads?

In 2008 and 2009, SVS worked on a fee-for-service basis for the Salmon Field Office BLM to make sure as many people as possible helped inform the BLM travel planning. In those public meetings, SVS facilitated a group involving ranchers, OHV enthusiasts, mountain bikers, environmentalists, landowners and other interested citizens to provide recommendations to the BLM about their travel planning area. The minutes of those meetings are available if you have more questions about that process.

19. What does SVS have to do with the Sacajawea Center and the Community Garden?

SVS is one of 12 agencies and nonprofit partners that signed a memorandum of understanding to help support the Sacajawea Center. SVS accepts charitable donations on behalf of the Friends of the Sacajawea Center. As a fiscal sponsor, SVS makes sure that any donations accepted are spent on what the donor intended. Several donors have directed their contributions to the Community Garden or the Kids Garden program.

20. What is a fiscal sponsor?

A fiscal sponsor is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization that acts as a sponsor for a project or group that does not have its own tax-exempt status. SVS occasionally provides fiscal sponsorship for projects or groups that complement our mission and have not chosen to become 501c3 organizations.

21. For which organizations does SVS provide fiscal sponsorship services?

SVS acts as a fiscal sponsor for the Friends of the Sacajawea Center, the Horizons Steering Committee, and the Working Together coalition of local nonprofits.