

WATER 4

Conserving water and wetlands for: irrigated agriculture, wildlife and fisheries habitat, groundwater recharge, and landscape resiliency in ways that matter to people.



INTERMOUNTAIN WEST
JOINT VENTURE

The footprint of wetland habitats in large portions of the West decreased by nearly 50 percent over the past two decades. The primary threat to the remaining wetlands—and the migratory bird networks they support—is climate change and the associated landscape drying that leads to wetland loss. **In the Intermountain West, flood-irrigated grass hay agriculture supports nearly 60 percent of temporary wetlands and is primarily located in historic riparian corridors where seasonal flooding naturally occurred.** Conservation of these working lands contributes to system-wide resiliency by providing key habitat for migratory birds, sustaining floodplain function, recharging aquifers, and supporting local communities.

Successful wetland conservation requires working across public, private, and tribal ownership boundaries to support land management practices that sustain water resources and wetland function. The Intermountain West Joint Venture (IWJV)'s Water 4 program is using spatial data and supporting science to create a powerful framework that enables strategic implementation of partner-driven projects that provide landscape-scale benefits for people and wildlife.



THE WATER 4 TOOLBOX

USING **SCIENCE, CAPACITY, & COMMUNICATIONS** TO SUPPORT:

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS



MODERNIZATION OF FLOOD IRRIGATION INFRASTRUCTURE



RESTORING & SUSTAINING HYDROLOGIC FUNCTION



MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC WETLANDS



APPROACH

- **SCIENCE** to identify vital working wetlands; Science to Implementation to enhance access to and use of science for strategic conservation, from field implementation to funding and decision making.
- **CAPACITY** to address conservation bottlenecks and work through existing partnerships to increase the pace and scale of conservation. Adding capacity requires putting the right people with the right skills in the right place.
- **COMMUNICATIONS** to advance conservation through stories about partnership-driven conservation efforts, outcomes, and the tools that get the job done.