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# Sara Cohn, Rachel Winer and Tim Breuer: Plan to preserve open space deserves support

## Reader's View: Ada County Budget

We are truly lucky to live in the Treasure Valley. As more and more people call our valley home, we need to take steps to keep our communities vibrant and landscapes healthy.

It's no wonder people want to move to the Boise area. Where else can you enjoy safe and friendly neighborhoods, spectacular scenery, hiking trails and miles of parks along the rush and tumble of the Boise River - and all within minutes of a bustling downtown?

As the Treasure Valley has grown, local residents have made it clear that they want to preserve the wide open spaces that make our valley beautiful.

Fortunately, our elected officials are listening. Ada County commissioners recently proposed to set aside \$500,000 for open space preservation in the county.

Allocating seed money to kick off this effort is a smart first step in making a countywide, interconnected system of trails and open space a reality. These initial funds can provide a foundation for a larger movement. Looking to the future, it will be critical to identify additional sources of funding for open space.

Keeping the Treasure Valley beautiful in the face of rapid change isn't just the job of the Ada County commissioners. We all have a role to play.

The Idaho Conservation League, Idaho Smart Growth, and the Land Trust of the Treasure Valley are committed to working with the commissioners to support open space and trails preservation within Ada County. Like many of you, we understand that the ability to enjoy Idaho's beautiful natural resources is what makes life in Idaho so special. Keeping the Treasure Valley beautiful in the face of rapid change will take support from citizens like you who care about the future of our communities.

Now is a good time to show your support for the county's move to begin a foundation for open space and trail preservation in your backyard.

The county has released its proposed budget for review and it is available on the county's Web site ([www.adaweb.net](http://www.adaweb.net)). We encourage you to send in your comments supporting the commissioners' proposal to fund open space preservation by e-mailing [bocc1@adaweb.net](mailto:bocc1@adaweb.net) or commenting in person at the Ada County budget hearings on August 26.

By working together, we can make sure the Treasure Valley remains a great place to live and work as we grow.

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