

## PART I – AGENCY PROFILE

### AGENCY OVERVIEW: PROMOTING CONSERVATION THE IDAHO WAY

Idaho is endowed with a magnificent blend of diverse natural landscapes – rivers, lakes, mountains, forests and desert canyons – combined with rich and fertile agricultural lands well-suited for growing a wide variety of crops and raising livestock. People who work in Idaho agriculture have deep roots in the land and know that caring for the land will reap benefits for future generations. They are convinced that the best way to care for and enhance the soil, water, air, plants and wildlife is through voluntary, locally led efforts. The Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission's (SWCC) guiding philosophy is to use the state's natural resources to benefit Idahoans while maintaining and improving those resources for future generations.

The SWCC focuses on Conservation the Idaho Way: voluntary stewardship, not regulatory mandates. We promote responsible stewardship by providing cost sharing and technical expertise to individual agricultural producers for implementing conservation projects. Proactive, non-regulatory projects address issues of concern and help avoid costly lawsuits and onerous regulations. We also provide financial and technical assistance to conservation districts, oversee conservation incentive and delivery programs, and administer public funds in a fiscally responsible way.

Conservation the Idaho way is locally led. The SWCC and our partners - local soil and water conservation districts (districts), the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and others - combine efforts to assist farmers and ranchers engaged in voluntary stewardship activities. Together we are the heartbeat of voluntary conservation and partners in Idaho's oldest conservation movement.

The SWCC was created as a state agency during the Dust Bowl era to address significant soil erosion issues such as sheet erosion, wind erosion and severe gully erosion. . A 1934 soil erosion survey in Idaho revealed that more than 27 million acres of land, or roughly half the state, had serious soil erosion problems. The state's first order of business was to help form soil conservation districts at the county level. Farmers and ranchers were elected directors of the districts, providing leadership on project priorities. As districts formed, NRCS and the SWCC provided technical assistance to assist with stewardship projects.

Today there are 50 local soil and water conservation districts located from Bonners Ferry to Montpelier. Their efforts are guided by 5-year plans containing conservation goals and prioritized projects and activities. We provide funding and technical staff to empower districts - the boots on the ground - to get things done. While we began working 75 years ago to reduce soil erosion, our efforts now include soil, water, plants, air, and animal conservation activities, as well.

The Idaho Legislature appropriated about \$2.7 million to the SWCC for FY 2014 (in general and dedicated funds) to support voluntary conservation in Idaho, \$1.1 million of which went directly to districts for projects and operations. Because we're committed to being good stewards of public funds, we all work to wring every last drop of conservation from every dollar invested.

The Idaho Soil SWCC (SWCC) was originally created in 1939 by Idaho's soil conservation district law (Idaho Code § 22-2716, et. seq.) and was charged with creating and supporting local conservation districts. Since then, Idaho's water quality law designated SWCC as a lead agency on conservation programs like the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), Total Maximum Daily Load Program (TMDL) for privately owned

agricultural lands, and for the voluntary planning, and implementation of projects related to grazing and agricultural activities (Idaho Code § 39-3602). SWCC has no regulatory authority. In addition to these responsibilities, SWCC operates the Resource Conservation and Rangeland Development Program (RCRDP), which offers low interest loans to agricultural borrowers for conservation purposes (Idaho Code § 22-2730).

The SWCC is led by five Commissioners appointed by the Governor: Chairman H. Norman Wright, Vice Chairman Roger Stutzman, Secretary Gerald Trebesch, and members Dave Radford and Richard Bronson, and an administrator, Teri Murrison, who reports to them. The administrator oversees 16 administrative staff and technical experts located in offices around the State (most field staff are co-located with local conservation districts within U.S. Department of Agriculture NRCS field offices).

The SWCC was administratively housed at the Department of Lands until 1997, when the Legislature transferred it to the Idaho State Department of Agriculture. In 2010, the Legislature recognized the importance of the independent, non-regulatory nature of the SWCC in providing a vehicle for promoting voluntary conservation efforts. In FY 2011, the Legislature renamed the SWCC the Soil and Water Conservation Commission (formerly known as the Soil Conservation Commission), and granted SWCC autonomy by authorizing it to enter into contracts for the proper administration of its statutory authorities. The SWCC contracts with the Department of Administration for fiscal, human resources, and information technology support.

Over the last several years, the size and capacity of SWCC has been significantly reduced: at the beginning of fiscal year (FY) 2009, the SWCC had 33 full-time and contract staff responsible for technical and administrative program delivery. By the end of FY 2010, the SWCC had 15 full-time staff and two vacancies, and in FY 2012, SWC had 16 FTPs. This reduction of personnel has significantly impacted service delivery.

#### VISION

Conservation in Idaho reflects locally-led natural resource conservation leadership and priorities, is voluntary and incentive-based, non-regulatory, and demonstrates scientifically sound stewardship. The SWCC and local conservation districts are the primary entities to lead coordinated conservation efforts to provide landowners and land-users with assistance and solutions for natural resource concerns and issues.

#### MISSION

To facilitate coordinated non-regulatory, voluntary, and locally-led conservation by federal, state, and local governments including Idaho's conservation districts and other partners to conserve, sustain, improve, and enhance soil, water, air, plant, and animal resources.

#### VALUES AND PHILOSOPHY

The SWCC is dedicated to guiding values for each goal and related activity.

- Satisfy legislative intent and statute
- Benefit the environment and Idaho's agricultural-based economy
- Benefit conservation districts' locally led, voluntary, non-regulatory priorities and projects
- Benefit the SWCC's ability to serve
- Promote fiscal responsibility
- Strengthen existing and build new conservation partnerships
- Incorporate valid scientific data and practices

Our philosophy is to use the state's natural resources to benefit Idaho people while maintaining and improving those resources for future generations.

## CORE FUNCTIONS

### DISTRICT SUPPORT AND SERVICES

The SWCC provides leadership and technical and other assistance to Idaho's 50 local conservation districts as established in Title 22 Chapter 27, Idaho Code. Traditionally, the SWCC has provided technical assistance to the districts in addition to disbursing annual legislative appropriations and ensuring state reporting requirements (Title 22 Chapter 27, Idaho Code; Title 39 Chapter 36, Idaho Code).

### COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION SERVICES

The SWCC is required to provide and promote non-regulatory, science-based incentive programs to develop and accelerate development of voluntary conservation activities around the state. The SWCC also provides policy and program mechanisms to enhance the environmental quality and economic productivity of the state including programs that improve water quality and quantity within the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer, leading TMDL plan development related to agricultural and grazing components, assisting with planning and implementation efforts in Nitrate Priority Areas, and promoting computer-based conservation planning and reporting tools (Title 22 Chapter 27, Idaho Code; Title 39 Chapter 36, Idaho Code). A flagship program is the Resource Conservation and Rangeland Development Program, which provides low-interest loans to eligible applicants to implement resource management projects (Title 22 Chapter 27, Idaho Code).

### ADMINISTRATION

The SWCC carries out and adopts measures that are necessary and proper to ensure continuity of operations and establish protocols to assist Commissioners and staff in the performance of duties. This includes the annual strategic planning process and performance reporting, along with a yearly budget that supports the annual activities of the SWCC. Idaho Code authorizes the SWCC to engage in rulemaking as necessary to carry out the purposes of Title 22 Chapter 27 (Title 67 Chapter 19, Idaho Code).

The SWCC actively engages local, state, and federal partners, non-governmental organizations, and resource and agricultural production groups to coordinate, collaborate, and cooperate in Idaho's non-regulatory conservation efforts. Developing intergovernmental and other relationships to maximize scarce resources and harmonize non-regulatory conservation delivery with regulatory efforts is critical to meeting statewide conservation goals (Title 22 Chapter 27, Idaho Code).

Table I: General Fund Revenue and Expenditures

Revenue	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
General Fund	3,621,679	2,357,740	2,265,932	2,306,400
Receipts	2,000	23,013	0	6,700
RCRDP Loan Program	2,169,543	2,125,270	1,621,209	1,793,900
SRF Loan Program	81,270	107,270	12,815	147,270
Federal Grant Funds	<u>410,730</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>80,000</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 6,285,222</b>	<b>\$ 4,413,293</b>	<b>\$ 3,889,505</b>	<b>\$ 4,118,668</b>
Expenditures	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Personnel Costs	1,559,579	1,000,810	953,306	1,137,421
Operating Expenditures	545,622	254,052	302,787	421,341
Capital Outlay	38,278	6,340	18,761*	10,526
Trustee/Benefits (includes District Allocations & WQPA)	2,057,918	1,105,190	1,103,200	1,103,198
RCRDP Loan Disbursements	562,165	724,664	524,244	232,623
DEQ Loan	<u>67,049</u>	<u>94,693</u>	<u>44,972</u>	<u>116,322</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,830,611</b>	<b>\$3,185,749</b>	<b>\$2,947,270</b>	<b>\$3,021,431</b>

Table II: District Allocations – Breakdown by District

District	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
<b>Ada</b>	\$95,187.11	\$52,196.04	\$58,500.00	58,500.00
<b>Adams</b>	12,876.47	12,364.67	14,280.52	11,208.93
<b>Balanced Rock</b>	19,977.15	16,122.53	19,901.29	19,239.95
<b>Bear Lake</b>	34,285.82	17,676.17	23,872.13	18,725.32
<b>Benewah</b>	13,806.54	12,869.60	15,035.77	9,868.15
<b>Blaine</b>	29,724.93	21,705.91	8,500.00	45,713.59
<b>Bonner</b>	29,903.79	15,054.41	18,303.66	17,734.99
<b>Boundary</b>	21,855.17	17,239.21	20,845.34	20,813.32
<b>Bruneau River</b>	11,284.55	10,830.46	12,711.94	12,467.63
<b>Butte</b>	15,309.91	14,811.65	21,305.75	20,836.58

District	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Camas	12,912.25	12,384.09	14,890.53	8,500.00
Canyon	19,172.29	15,782.67	19,392.95	18,761.10
Caribou	23,757.91	19,379.10	23,023.93	23,549.62
Central Bingham	11,123.66	11,413.07	12,857.18	12,604.44
Clark	19,172.29	15,782.67	19,392.95	18,761.10
Clearwater	20,960.87	16,753.70	23,169.16	25,703.76
Custer	12,458.27	12,578.30	14,454.81	14,040.99
East Cassia	10,229.37	10,927.56	12,130.98	11,920.37
East Side	16,489.41	14,326.14	17,214.35	18,077.03
Elmore	17,383.71	14,811.65	18,231.04	17,666.58
Franklin	48,257.92	29,031.51	25,381.89	27,134.35
Gem	23,643.75	13,355.12	15,761.97	15,340.73
Gooding	13,006.16	12,384.09	15,035.77	16,024.81
Idaho	18,278.00	15,297.16	18,666.75	18,077.03
Jefferson	14,700.83	13,355.12	22,297.73	29,997.40
Kootenai-Shoshone	21,408.02	16,996.45	8,500.00	9,594.52
Latah	43,318.17	28,891.48	39,000.25	37,231.08
Lemhi	14,700.83	13,355.12	15,761.97	15,340.73
Lewis	20,960.87	16,753.70	20,845.34	20,129.25
Madison	16,489.41	14,326.14	15,761.97	16,708.8
Minidoka	12,017.95	12,857.18	12,857.18	12,604.44
Mud Lake	13,806.54	12,869.60	8,500.00	0
Nez Perce	53,633.30	41,344.86	58,500.00	58,500.00

District	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
North Bingham	9,692.79	10,636.25	11,695.27	11,509.92
North Side	18,757.91	27,920.46	58,500.00	58,500.00
Oneida	25,208.27	23,987.82	25,202.52	24,233.69
Owyhee	11,123.66	10,927.56	12,130.98	11,920.37
Payette	20,066.58	14,811.65	13,583.38	8,500.00
Portneuf	35,627.26	24,567.52	32,402.03	30,741.96
Power	25,015.59	14,568.89	17,577.46	17,392.95
Snake River	18,904.00	16,996.45	21,208.44	18,555.88
South Bingham	9,335.08	10,442.05	11,404.78	11,236.29
Squaw Creek	16,131.70	13,913.45	16,197.68	16,702.33
Teton	15,720.32	14,070.76	16,832.38	16,598.61
Twin Falls	18,904.00	15,637.02	19,175.09	18,555.88
Valley	50,114.79	28,934.21	46,870.77	44,651.91
Weiser River	23,643.75	18,210.23	23,023.93	22,181.47
West Cassia	10,229.37	10,927.56	12,130.98	11,920.37
West Side	14,253.68	13,112.36	15,398.86	15,340.73
Wood River	12,134.95	12,384.09	15,035.77	17,940.21
Yellowstone	20,357.88	16,151.66	19,944.86	15,340.73
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,117,314.80</b>	<b>\$872,583.00</b>	<b>\$1,053,200.28</b>	<b>\$1,053,199.97</b>

## PROFILE OF KEY SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE IDAHO CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP

Foundational to the partnership is the concept that locally led conservation districts identify and inventory resource needs and make contact with landowners, while the federal NRCS and the SWCC typically provide financial and technical support to assist districts in achieving their goals. This Idaho Conservation Partnership

has been called a “three-legged stool”, each equally necessary to sustaining ongoing voluntary conservation efforts in Idaho.

Working together over the past four years as indicated below, the Idaho Conservation Partnership has provided key services to benefit both private land and natural resources in Idaho. The premise of the partnership, going back many years in the conservation movement, was that the locally led districts would identify the resource needs and make contact with landowners, while the federal and state agencies would provide both financial and technical assistance to accomplish the districts’ missions. The Idaho Conservation Partnership has provided the key services shown in Table III.

**Table III**

Key Services Provided by the Conservation Partnership	FEDERAL FY2010	FEDERAL FY2011	STATE FY2012*	STATE FY2013***
Conservation systems implemented on all cropland (acres)	186,527	178,080	133,967	133,625
Conservation systems implemented on other land uses (acres)	291,162	15,687	18,855	107,090
Grazing/pasture management systems implemented (acres)	257,358	269,295	379,157	539,007
Riparian acres implemented with protection, restoration, enhancement or creation (acres)	72	705	1347	487
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) – Private agricultural land removed from tillage-induced erosion through financial incentive for a contractual time period. *	711,540	670,935	518,341**	349,617

*\* Prior to state FY 2010, conservation data had been reported by federal fiscal year. Starting with state FY 2010, the SWCC will provide conservation data based upon the state fiscal year. Due to the transition, the fourth quarter data for federal FY 2009 has been included as part of the state FY 2010 data.*

*\*\* CRP acres are down again significantly in FY 2013 due to a large number of contracts that expired and fewer new contracts were enrolled.*

*\*\*\* Numbers in FY 2011 and 2012 did not include data from all partners. Beginning in FY 2013, NRCS and district statistics are once again included.*

## FY 2012 SWCC PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

### DISTRICT SUPPORT SERVICES HIGHLIGHTS

One of SWCC’s primary duties is the distribution of appropriated Trustee and Benefit funds to Idaho’s 50 conservation districts. As noted in Table II, SWCC distributed state funding to districts in FY 2013 (\$8,500 per district in baseline funding and an additional allocation was made to each, recognizing the amount of matching funding each district was able to secure - up to a cap of \$50,000 per district) as prescribed by statute. In

addition, 40 districts were also awarded modest capacity building grants of approximately \$1,000 each (10 districts didn't apply and several districts received slightly more for training and others up to \$1500 additional to go toward sponsoring regional outreach events such as the State Forestry Contest, grazing, and sustainable agriculture conferences, etc.).

In addition, SWCC utilized field-based experience to provide technical and engineering assistance to Idaho's conservation districts and private landowners to address local resource issues, and assist the State of Idaho in meeting statewide and national mandates. On the ground, the SWCC field staff worked to identify problems, determine the landowners' objectives, inventory resources, formulate alternatives, and assist with implementation activities. Many times SWCC technical assistance and assessment were leveraged with other state and federal funding to implement projects.

Attempting to balance SWCC's TMDL and other program responsibilities and workload, the reduced staffing level, and districts' reliance on SWCC staff for technical assistance, FY 2012's Strategic Plan called for the formation of a transparent and inclusive district and SWCC Technical Advisory Work Group (TAWG) to develop a technical assistance allocation process to ensure maximum satisfaction and efficacy. The TAWG met 10 times during FY 2012 and developed a recommendation for the allocation process including ranking criteria to be applied to all district requests for technical assistance. Regional review groups were elected by IASCD divisions and met to rank and recommend the awards of technical staff hours by project. The initial round of the process was implemented in March of 2013 largely as recommended by the TAWG. The initiation of the process had an impact on district satisfaction. While the process as recommended and adopted was not widely appreciated, SWCC committed to reconvene the TAWG and stakeholders in July 2013 to fine-tune the process for FY 2014.

Throughout, SWCC has continued to focus on transparency and cooperation with local districts as a top priority especially given the likelihood of contention over the technical assistance request process. To assess district satisfaction over time, two surveys were conducted in FY 2013: a voluntary baseline survey of district employees, assistants and other partners in January, and SWCC's regular formal annual district boards-only survey in July 2013. Questions were asked to identify changes of opinions resulting from the process implementation.

Inclusiveness: The following table shows that while 73% of districts still feel the SWCC is inclusive and shares information, more now "somewhat agree" with that statement than "strongly agree". Overall, a strong majority still agree, although the numbers do illustrate a general trend that SWCC will address in FY 2014.

Survey Date	# of respondents	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
FY 2012	47	45%	28%	23%	4%	0	0
FY 2013* (Jan.)	59	30.5%	45.8%	13.6%	5.1%	3.4%	1.7%
FY 2013 (Jun.)	40	25%	57.5%	12.5%	2.5%	2.5%	0

\*Included districts and other partners who self-selected to respond.



When surveyed about overall Board satisfaction with the Commission in formal surveys, the number of Boards who were strongly satisfied in FY 2012 decreased by about half, those somewhat satisfied remained relatively constant, and those who were neutral increased by 15, roughly the same number that were no longer strongly satisfied. Those who somewhat disagreed increased, as well.. Again, these changes are likely to be related to the initiation of the technical assistance allocation process that will be improved in FY 2014. The SWCC will take a more proactive approach to communication with districts in FY 2014 and continue to survey to ensure the numbers do not continue to drop.

Survey Date	# of respondents	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
FY 2012	47	34%	47%	15%	4%	0	0
FY 2013 (Jun.)	40	17.5%	45%	30%	7.5%	0	0

#### ANTIDEGRADATION PLANS (FIVE YEAR PLANS)

All 50 districts successfully completed the requirement to update their individual five-year plans this year. Districts considered their plans during regular public meetings and incorporated public feedback before submitting them to SWCC. SWCC technical field staff typically assists the local districts with requests to inventory and assess the resource concerns required in the plan.

### COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

#### RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND RANGELAND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (RCRDP)

This program provides long-term, low-interest loans to farmers and ranchers for conservation improvements. Loans were available in FY 2013 for up to \$200,000 with interest rates of 2% to 3.5%, and terms up to 15 years. Projects addressed environmental issues, including but not limited to: soil and water resource conservation; efficient and beneficial use of water resources; riparian area improvement; fish and wildlife habitat restoration and preservation; and the increased agricultural productivity of croplands, pasture and hay land, rangeland, and woodland.

**Table IV**

RCRDP Loan Program Statistics	FY2013 Totals	Program Totals
Loans Approved	4	593
Total Loan Commitments	\$128,100	\$30,914,188
Current Active RCRDP Loans	116	
Total RCRDP Principal Balance at FY 2012 Year End	\$4,378,994	

Loans approved during FY 2013 involve projects that reduced soil erosion and consumptive water use including:

- Improving irrigation efficiency by converting acres of flood irrigation to pipeline, pump, and sprinkler systems;
- Installation of pumping facilities to livestock watering troughs, improving riparian areas and reducing nonpoint source pollution in waterways; and
- Reconstructing animal feeding operations that reduced nutrient, waste, and sediment runoff into streams.

After operating several years on reduced budgets and decreased loan staff hours, loan activity slowed in the RCRDP Program. To increase volume, the loan officer and loan assistant positions (which had been reduced to part time) were restored to full time positions at the end of FY 2012. This action combined with extensive outreach and marketing, was expected to increase the volume of applications and loan approvals for the implementation of conservation activities in FY 2013. However, a strong agricultural market, the availability of low industry financing rates, and borrower uncertainty were likely responsible for a continued downturn in approved loans and early payoffs in FY 2013.

#### CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is designed to address water shortages within the Eastern Snake River Plain. The Program area extends from King Hill to Ashton and is approximately 250 miles long and 70 miles wide. (See *Appendix A, Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program Map FY 2012.*) Idaho's CREP goal is to retire up to 100,000 acres of groundwater-irrigated land. This reduction is forecast to provide a water savings of approximately 200,000 acre-feet annually. Challenges to meeting that FY 2013 goal included the following:

- Economics and value of commodities compared to the offered annual rental rates.
- A continued sense of security of ample available ground water; minimal curtailment threat.
- Risk of loss of income due to making 15 year commitment to the Program in light of the potential for ongoing high commodity values
- Producer ineligibility due to USDA limits on average adjusted gross income (AGI).

The CREP area includes 26 local soil conservation districts, 20 Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees, and seven groundwater districts. The SWCC staff works closely with FSA, Idaho Department of Water Resources, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Pheasants Forever, and Idaho Ground Water Users. Fifty-three of the 159 total CREP contracts include wildlife enhancement plantings, covering 9,243 acres.

The SWCC is the technical lead for CREP. Staff checks all enrolled fields at least once per year; however many fields are actually checked multiple times. Enrolled acres are seeded to a cover of native grasses and legumes and work towards the goal of "establishment," i.e. permanent establishment of this vegetative cover (heavily dependent on weather patterns and other vegetative growth). To date, a total of 6,043 acres on 49 contracts have been certified established.

Based on acreage enrolled in FY 2013, CREP produces an estimated water savings of 34,473 acre feet per year, equivalent to average annual water consumption of 308,000 people or the amount of water used by 144 pivots covering 120 acres each for 15 years. The estimated annual power savings is 68,084,175 kilowatt hours. In addition, an estimated 137,892 tons of soil were saved due to decreased wind and water erosion. Table V shows

the CREP acres enrolled by administering county as of June 30, 2013. The number and acreages of contracts certified established are also shown.

**TABLE V: CREP ACRES ENROLLED BY ADMINISTERING COUNTY**

<b>Administering County</b>	<b>No. of Active Contracts (FSA)</b>	<b>Acres Approved (FSA)</b>	<b>No. of Certified Contracts</b>	<b>No. of Certified Acres</b>
Bingham	59	6,911	22	3,215
Bonneville	3	200	1	154
Cassia	5	2,223	1	627
Gooding	1	73		
Jefferson/Clark	20	1,774	2	597
Jerome	7	572	2	266
Lincoln	3	238		
Minidoka	58	4,605	20	1,141
Power	2	598		
Twin Falls	1	43	1	43
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>17,237</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>6,043</b>

#### IDAHO GROUND WATER QUALITY PLAN

The SWCC encourages and facilitates voluntary implementation and outreach activities to benefit groundwater. Implementation efforts in FY 2013 were focused on Idaho's Nitrate Priority Areas (NPAs) as designated in 2008 by the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality.

In addition to SWCC's work on the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs), several soil conservation districts and SWCC conducted public outreach in various locations throughout the state in the form of grower workshops, county fair displays, and school activities. The SWCC worked with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and six soil conservation districts located within the Twin Falls, Cassia, and Minidoka NPAs to secure funding for nutrient management (including precision agriculture) and irrigation water management through the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative (CCPI). Implementation of this program began in March 2012. The total amount of acres currently enrolled in this program is 4,774, with up to 2000 additional acres expected to be enrolled during the next sign-up period. *(See Appendix B for a map of Groundwater and Nitrate Priority Areas within the state.)*

## IDAHO ONEPLAN

Idaho OnePlan provides data and software to help growers develop a single conservation farm plan that can be pre-endorsed by the various agencies, streamlining and simplifying the regulatory process that farmers face. Idaho One Plan is a multi-agency project to combine government regulations and current best management practices for agriculture into a single plan, integrating federal, state, and local regulations for: nutrient, pest and waste management, water quality and wetlands, air quality, financial assistance, endangered species, and petroleum storage tanks. SWCC is responsible to “encourage and promote” OnePlan and convenes an annual Executive Committee meeting of agencies involved.

OnePlan’s consultant continued to work with Montana Extension and customized OnePlan components for their use. Ongoing operational funding for OnePlan remains an issue, although participating landowners (and agencies) find it useful (due to OnePlan’s protection of landowner-related statistics, quantitative data on usage cannot be reported).

## TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS (TMDL) PROGRAM

The Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) requires that states restore and maintain the integrity of the nation’s waters. Pursuant to section 303 of the CWA, states are to adopt water quality standards necessary to protect fish, shellfish, and wildlife while providing for recreation in and on the waters whenever possible. Section 303(d) of the CWA establishes the requirements for states to identify and prioritize water bodies that do not meet beneficial uses. For impaired waters identified on this list, states must establish a total maximum daily load (TMDL) for the pollutants, the maximum level of pollutants that can exist in a water body and still meet water quality standards. (*See Appendix C – Idaho TMDL Agricultural Implementation Plan Map FY 2013.*)

A settlement agreement was reached in 2002 between the EPA, the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and several environmental groups that had filed a Complaint against EPA alleging that EPA and DEQ failed to undertake nondiscretionary duties imposed by section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act (“CWA”), 33 U.S.C. § 1313(d). The environmental groups claimed that the EPA failed to comply with CWA § 303(d), which relates to the establishment of Total Maximum Daily Loads (“TMDLs”) for water quality limited segments identified pursuant to the CWA, for the State of Idaho. As a result of the settlement agreement, the DEQ was required to address 303(d) listed waterbodies pursuant to the schedule outlined in the agreement.

The SWCC is the designated agency responsible for developing implementation plans relative to grazing and agricultural activities. It generates Agricultural TMDL Implementation Plans for 303(d) listed water bodies as an ongoing process in cooperation with the DEQ. SWCC also contributes updated data for 5-year reviews of Subbasin Assessments (SBA) and TMDLs. Technical field staff provides assistance to local conservation districts on implementation projects and activities, and facilitate an interagency coordination and planning committee.

In early FY 2013 the average amount of time required to complete a TMDL implementation plan from start to finish was approximately a year and a half. This included the time needed to review and provide comments on DEQ’s draft SBA-TMDL, conduct field inventories and stream assessments, write the implementation plan, and present and modify the plan with input from local soil conservation districts. SWCC reviewed its internal and stakeholder processes and determined that the process could be streamlined and scheduled to take an average of nine months. Close review of the existing backlog of Ag and grazing implementation plans determined that SWCC’s backlog of uncompleted plans is four. All four will be completed by the end of the next fiscal year.

#### WATER QUALITY PROGRAM FOR AGRICULTURE (WQPA)

The WQPA was created to protect and enhance the quality and value of Idaho's waters by controlling and abating water pollution from agricultural nonpoint sources. WQPA was a valuable financing mechanism for implementation projects under the TMDL Program. The SWCC selected projects for funding, evaluated program effectiveness in reducing agricultural nonpoint source pollution, provided technical assistance, and supported conservation districts in further planning and implementation. (See *Appendix D – Water Quality Program for Agriculture Map*).

This program provided cost-share assistance to conservation districts implementing water quality projects with local cooperators, but was unfortunately inactivated in FY 2012 due to lack of funding,

Over the past 12 years, WQPA implementation projects have generated impressive results: the conservation partnership (state, local, and federal partners) has treated over 638,457 acres or 997 square miles in the state. The financial partnership and matching effort has been huge, as well: landowners have contributed \$9,537,388, the state has matched \$8,726,408, and the federal government has contributed \$5,774,183. The total of combined funding dedicated to WQPA projects over the last 12 years is over \$25,000,000!

#### ADMINISTRATION HIGHLIGHTS

##### STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE (FY 2013-2016)

SWCC worked with an ad hoc advisory committee in FY 2013 to review staff recommended updates and any proposed additional updates for consideration. Most changes were minor and the only change suggested by the advisory committee members was a slight redefinition of the types of services provided under the capacity building category and to add a goal for administration. Commissioners ultimately determined not to add that section and did make changes to the definition.

## PART II – PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS

New Performance Measures were established with the adoption of the FY 2012-2015 Strategic Plan and updated in the FY 2013-2016 Strategic Plan.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	Benchmarks 2014
Number of Surveys Received	51 of 51	49 of 50	47 of 50	40 of 50*	50 of 50
Survey Results	22%	22%	32%	17.5%	35%
- Satisfied	37%	57%	44%	45%	47%
- Somewhat Satisfied	20%	10%	14%	30%	13%
- Neutral	20%	8%	4 %	7.5%	5%
- Somewhat Dissatisfied	2%	2%	0%	0%	0%
- Dissatisfied					
Assist with five-year plans	51	50	50	50	50
Technical Assistance <sup>1</sup> :					
- # of districts w/projects	37	31	35	31	39
- # of new projects	59	42	47	24	58
- # of ongoing projects	62	50	45	41	65
- # of landowners served	942	812	271	246	300
CREP					
- Total Contracts	158	161	157	159	160
- Total Acres	17,422	17,457	17,210	17,236	17,500
- Certified Contracts	23	10	11	0	7
- Certified Acres	4,239	725	327	0	1,500
Ground Water Quality/Nitrate Priority Areas	39,855	49,320	40,606	35,685	37,700
- Acres Treated	115,910	254,105	151,020	114,797	132,100
- Nitrates Reduced (lbs.)	20,167	24,200	28,677	24,473	26,500
- Phosphorus Reduced (lbs.)	121,865	128,367	144,482	137,414	142,600
- Sediment Reduced (tons)					
RCRDP Loan Program					
- # of new loans	12	17	12	4	12
- Total \$ conservation projects	\$790,864	\$1,116,908	\$664,193	128,100	350,000

TMDL Ag Implementation Plans (subject to DEQ priorities)	10 Completed 15 in Progress 35 Pending	4 Completed 16 In Progress 38 Pending	3 Completed 23 in progress 30 pending	5 Completed 19 In Progress 31 Pending	7 Completed 12 In Progress 24 Pending
WQPA - Ongoing Priority Areas - Completed Priority Areas - Acres Treated	19 3 18,337	13 5 6,400	13 13 29,672	N/A	N/A
Communications - Website (Total Visitors) - Facebook - Twitter (# of tweets)	N/A	321,588  8,387 N/A*	320,000  10,00075	383,964  49***  29	

\* Process established to allocate SWCC technical field staff time. Drop in satisfaction correlates with implementation of that process. Planned evaluation and retooling with districts of process based on lessons learned scheduled in 7/2013.

\*\* From FY 2014 on, SWCC will allocate technical assistance in hours, vs. projects.

\*\*\*FY 2011- FY 2012 counted total impressions, a statistic that may not represent the number of people who actually read the post). From FY 2013 on, # of posts will be reported.

### PART III: ADDITIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## GOAL #1: DISTRICT SUPPORT SERVICES

### OBJECTIVE # 1.1: PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO DISTRICTS

Conducted hearing to consider unmet needs of participating districts based on district budgets, budget requests, programs and work plans. Prioritized Unmet Needs for funding were valued by the districts at \$4,679,334. Priority 1 funding needs totaled \$2,168,686, Priority 2 funding needs totaled \$1,262,250, and Priority 3 needs totaled \$1,248,398. Staffed process (regional technical advisory groups) to rank and prioritize district applications for technical assistance. Detailed analysis of unmet district needs indicates that providing each of the 50 districts with \$4,180 of additional project funding in FY 2015 would assist districts to implement conservation projects such as installing rock-lined ditches to reduce sediment loading, installing grade control structures and hydro-seeding to control runoff, provide cost-share to encourage landowners to use cover crops and sediment basins, complete comprehensive watershed assessment to guide restoration and remediation plans, and demonstrate benefits of using precision ag principles to decrease nutrient loading of surface waters by reducing soil acidification through lime applications.

### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Provide technical assistance and engineering services as capacity and resources allow.
  - Benchmark: Inventory and award available field staff hours to provide technical and engineering assistance based on ranking criteria adopted by Conservation Commission to assist districts with new and existing project and maximize number of landowners

- served. Comprehensive inventory conducted and available staff hours identified. Staff time awarded based on technical assistance work group recommendations and staff availability. Completed March 2013.
- Benchmark: field staff presence at district Board meetings as resources allow. Staff attended a minimum of one meeting per quarter, and many times more.
  - Initiate Conservation Commission, district, region, IASCD, and partner technical assistance needs assessment and capacity inventories.
    - Benchmark: Oversee planning for Conservation Commission staffing, preparation of annual agency work plan, maintain technical assistance capacity inventory. Leadership Team assigned available staff to district requests for assistance, TMDL planning workload. Completed
  - Convene ad hoc stakeholder workgroup(s) to rank and recommend provision of technical assistance to districts.
    - Benchmark: Utilize workgroup to annually compile list of recommended ranked and prioritized district requests for technical assistance. Six regional groups formed (elected by Divisions) and recommended technical assistance awards. Regional work groups chosen by division, groups met to review and recommend awards. Commissioners reviewed final recommended allocations June 2013.
    - Benchmark: Document provision of district technical assistance in annual performance measures report. See above.

#### OBJECTIVE # 1.2: DISTRICT ALLOCATIONS

##### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Distribute base allocations to districts in compliance with reporting requirements set forth in IDAPA 60.05.04.
  - Benchmark: Distribute base allocations by July 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. Base allocations to districts distributed in July 2012. Match allocations distributed to districts in November 2012.
- Convene workgroup annually to review Financial & Match Reports and make recommendation to Conservation Commission.
  - Benchmark: Receive recommendations for district allocations from workgroup by October 15<sup>th</sup> annually. Work group convened and recommended allocations to Commission. Recommendations adopted by Commission. Convened workgroup in October 2013 to review Financial & Match Reports and make recommendation to SWCC.
- Distribute match allocations to districts in compliance with reporting requirements set forth in IDAPA 60.05.04.
  - Benchmark: Distribute 90% of match allocations no later than October 31<sup>st</sup> annually. Distribute remaining 10% by April 1<sup>st</sup> annually. 100% of allocations distributed in November 2012.
- Provide assistance to districts to support the development and submission of materials required under IDAPA 60.05.04.
  - Benchmark: As needed, assist with or provide training to districts. Two trainings conducted for Idaho District Employees Association (IDEA) in FY 2012 (at Division meeting and Annual Conference).



**OBJECTIVE # 1.3: DISTRICT CAPACITY BUILDING****PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

- Identify and document unmet district project and program funding needs as identified and prioritized in 5-year and other district plans.
  - Benchmark: Conduct district budget hearing by June 15<sup>th</sup> annually. Annual district budget hearing conducted in June 2012.
- Provide capacity building services and/or funding to districts as resources allow.
  - Benchmark: If funds are available, by June 15<sup>th</sup> of each year solicit district requests for funding for capacity building activities. Awarded capacity building funding in July 2012 to 40 districts for outreach activities and to four Northern Idaho districts to attend grant training and train other districts at IASCD convention or other regional venues.

**GOAL #2: COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION SERVICES****OBJECTIVE # 2.1: INCENTIVE PROGRAMS****2.1.1 RESOURCE CONSERVATION AND RANGELAND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (RCRDP).****PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

- Administer and further develop the loan program to meet statewide conservation efforts.
  - Benchmark: Maintain or improve annual levels of funding. Appropriation remained constant. Loan volume and associated generation of interest down. Will monitor for several years to see if volume picks up. If not, will adjust budget request accordingly.
- Monitor and evaluate loan policies on ongoing basis to ensure continued accountability and recommend improvements, if necessary.
  - Benchmark: Annual evaluation of loan policies by RCRDP Loan Committee. Committee reviewed policies on payment of district incentives.
- Monitor timeliness of loan review process as established by Conservation Commission.
  - Benchmark: Conduct bi-annual tracking of two loan applications and report results to Conservation Commission. Low loan volume resulted in just four applications being approved; all but one was approved under adopted policy to encourage quick turnaround of loans under \$50,000. Reviews not conducted due to lack of volume.
- Promote RCRDP program.
  - Benchmark: Develop and update marketing plan annually. Marketing plan updated in summer of 2012. Conducted significant marketing and outreach including participation in Western, Fairfield Spring, and Twin Falls fairs, multiple irrigation and crop conferences, attended soil conservation district meetings, Conducted loan committee meetings to consider possible district participation incentives, met with stakeholders on proposed funding for variable frequency drive (VFD) projects in Eastern Idaho, attended and presented at soil health conferences, district division meetings, and annual conferences. Despite considerable outreach, loan volume remained down likely due to the good Ag market, readily available loan rates, etc.
  - Benchmark: Provide training to all field staff and districts as identified in Marketing Plan. RCRDP training conducted in April 2013 at All Staff meeting. Also at district meetings and conference.

- Implement district compensation process and payments for services provided to loan programs
- Benchmark: Present recommendation for district compensation to participate in the loan program. Legal review of the compensation process determined that districts can't be compensated for duties they are responsible to perform by statute.

#### 2.1.2 STATE REVOLVING FUND

- Administered one existing loan.

##### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Administer existing and/or future loans.
  - Benchmark: Service and track one loan. Accomplished.
- Determine potential to administer additional loans under SRF. N/A at present time.
  - Benchmark: Report to Conservation Commission on potential for future program funding, and pursue if appropriate. N/A

#### 2.1.3 WATER QUALITY PROGRAM FOR AGRICULTURE (WQPA)

##### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Evaluate future funding and operation and actively pursue, if appropriate.
  - Benchmark: Report on potential for future program funding, and pursue if appropriate. N/a

#### 2.1.4 CONSERVATION IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

##### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Evaluate future funding and operation and actively pursue, if appropriate.
  - Benchmark: Report to Conservation Commission on potential for future funding and operation and actively pursue, if appropriate. N/A

#### 2.1.5 WORKING LANDSCAPES CONSERVATION PROGRAM

##### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Evaluate feasibility of establishing a Working Landscapes Conservation Program.
  - Benchmark: Report on status of similar projects and identify possible funding sources. N/A

### OBJECTIVE # 2.2: CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

#### 2.2.1 CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (CREP)

In FY2013 no contracts were certified because of the extreme hot, dry conditions. However, in addition to the 6,043 acres on 49 contracts that have been certified to date, portions of other contracts (covering an estimated 4000 acres) are eligible for certification. A contract cannot be certified until all of the acreage in the contract is considered "established."

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Serve as lead agency for statewide CREP program.
  - Benchmark: Achieve goals and objectives for the CREP program as outlined in the 2006 agreement with the USDA Farm Service Agency. Goals unable to be met due to conditions noted above.
  - Benchmark: Meet increased program goals as outlined in CREP 2011 annual report. Goals unable to be met due to conditions noted above.
  - Benchmark: Update agency's CREP goals and create implementation plan. Due to focus on district technical support allocation process, this benchmark was delayed.
  - Benchmark: Investigate feasibility of enhancing Idaho OnePlan for interagency CREP data sharing and reporting. No opportunities identified.
  - Benchmark: Submit annual report to Farm Service Agency and other partners. Submitted in December 2012.
  - Benchmark: Conduct annual leadership and regular interagency meetings. Completed.

## 2.2.2 TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS (TMDL)

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- In coordination with the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), complete existing TMDL Agricultural Implementation Plans, initiate new plans or addendums, and assist with five-year reviews on existing DEQ Sub-basin Assessment (SBA) TMDLs.
  - Benchmark: Complete TMDL Agricultural Implementation Plans within 18 months of TMDL approval. Completed 5 TMDL Ag Plans (total 91 to date), 12 plans or addendums are in progress. Provided data and assistance for one 5-year review.
  - Initiated TMDL deliverables schedule update for delivery in August 2012 to incorporate into annual Overall Work Plan (OWP).
  - Backlog of 4 plans will be retired at end of FY 2014.
  - Benchmark: Provide technical assistance to districts with demonstrated need for implementation of BMPs outlined in TMDL agricultural implementation plans, as resources allow. Completed. Initiated work on 47 new and 45 ongoing projects.
  - Benchmark: Support partner priorities and funding initiatives as resources allow. Assisted several districts to prepare and submit 319 grant applications for BMP implementation.
  - Benchmark: Conduct annual meetings with six DEQ regional offices to coordinate TMDL activities. Completed. Field staff conducted annual meetings with six DEQ regional offices to coordinate TMDL activities.

## 2.2.3 IDAHO GROUND WATER QUALITY PLAN

## PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Assist districts with demonstrated need in planning and implementation efforts in Nitrate Priority Areas to reduce nitrate contamination, as resources allow.
- Benchmark: Conduct planning and implementation to meet responsibilities as outlined in the Cooperative Agreement and in coordination with the Idaho Agricultural Pollution Abatement Plan. SWCC was directly involved in treating 35,685 acres with best management practices (BMPs) including nutrient management, irrigation water management, sprinkler and drip

irrigation systems, sediment ponds, and direct seed that will directly benefit ground water quality and surface water quality. DEQ's §319 non-point source grant program and the NRCS CCPI program helped fund implementation. The estimated total reductions to pollutants were:

- 114,797 pounds of nitrates eliminated
- 24,473 pounds of phosphorus eliminated
- 137,414 tons of sediment erosion reduced
- Benchmark: Deliver quarterly reports to NRCS on progress. Completed.

#### 2.2.4 IDAHO AGRICULTURAL POLLUTION ABATEMENT PLAN

##### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Maintain guidance documents in support of the control and abatement of agricultural non-point source pollution as resources allow.

- Benchmark: Research feasibility of updating the Ag Plan and related Best Management Practices (BMP) Effectiveness Guide and report findings. Working with stakeholders, updated and distributed Best Management Practices Guide for use in preparation of TMDL Ag and Grazing Implementation Plans. Developed scope of work and budget for updating the Ag Pollution Abatement Plan in FY 2015.
  - Benchmark: Provide training to staff on BMP Effectiveness Guide. Completed April 2013.
  - Benchmark: Convene BMP working group as needed. Completed.

#### 2.2.5 Idaho OnePlan

Conducted annual Executive Committee meeting with stakeholders in late summer of 2012. Ongoing activity in this program is limited by the lack of available funding.

##### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Encourage and promote the use of OnePlan within Idaho.
  - Benchmark: Conduct annual Executive Committee meeting. Held in late summer of 2012.
- Seek funding to create online enhancements.
  - Benchmark: Report on potential for enhancements, ongoing funding, and operation. No funds identified. Worked with representative of Montana Extension to customize OnePlan components for use in Montana. Additional funding secured to underwrite minimal maintenance for 3 years.
  - Benchmark: Propose update to statute for specific requirements for steering committee, etc. and ensure flexibility for continued participation and funding. This pending results of Dept. of Agriculture feasibility study of online enhancement to Nutrient Management component of OnePlan.

#### 2.2.6 Carbon Sequestration

##### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Seek to identify potential funding sources.
  - Benchmark: Monitor ongoing carbon issues and determine feasibility of and funding for re-activating program. No sources identified.

- Benchmark: Evaluate and consider proposing changes to Idaho Code to delete specific requirements for committee meetings and membership or reconvene planning group upon securing funding for program. Due to staffing constraints, will possibly pursue in FY 2014.

## 2.2.7 WATERSHED IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS

### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Oversee creation and discontinuance of watershed improvement districts as provided for in statute.
  - Benchmark: As necessary, perform duties specified in statute for formation and dissolution of districts. Received no requests to oversee creation and discontinuance of watershed improvement districts as provided for in statute. Met with Board member of watershed improvement district in Northern Idaho.

## GOAL #3: COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

### OBJECTIVE # 3.1: PARTNER PARTICIPATION

#### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Increase Conservation Commission transparency through greater public access.
  - Benchmark: Post online agendas, supporting documentation, and meeting minutes for Conservation Commission meetings. Held 9 regular Commission meetings. Posted online agendas, minutes and supporting documents for all meetings.
  - Benchmark: Where feasible, utilize live online video streaming and interactive stakeholder participation to increase district and public participation in meetings and processes. Conducted various live online video and audio streaming meetings with work groups and stakeholders. Circulated updates to the FY 2013-2017 Strategic Plan to advisory group. Commissioners approved Plan with minor modifications and submitted to DFM in FY 2013.
- Disseminate information to encourage partner participation in planning processes.
  - Benchmark: Distribute meeting and activities announcements to our audience using Commission website, distribution lists, and social media accounts. Website, distribution lists, Facebook, and Twitter accounts utilized to advise partners of opportunities to participate in meetings and work groups.
- OBJECTIVE # 3.2: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

#### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Update Legislature and Executive Branch
  - Benchmark: Deliver annual reports to legislature germane committees, JFAC. Delivered annual reports to Senate and House Agriculture, Environment, and Natural Resources Committees during January – March, 2012. Attended and made presentation before JFAC Fall Tour to the Hagerman area.
  - Benchmark: Deliver annual reports (performance measures, etc.) to Governor. FY 2012 Performance Measures Report submitted on September 1, 2012.

- Develop strategy for educating the public and other stakeholders about Conservation Commission activities.
  - Benchmark: Prepare and implement communication plan. Conducted Communication Tools Update Project which included delivery by June 30, 2012 of :
    - Background research and development of SWCC message
    - Electronic newsletter
    - Brochure(s)
    - Redesigned website
    - Blog
    - PowerPoint presentation(s)
    - Portable education display
    - Improved Facebook and Twitter accounts
    - Graphics including logo, photography
  - Benchmark: Conduct district and partner survey. Distributed baseline survey to districts and partners in Jan. 2013 and annual district survey in June 2013.
  - Benchmark: Maintain frequently weekly updated Facebook pages and posts on Twitter. Posted 49 times on Facebook, 29 Tweets on Twitter.
- Facilitate flow of information and communication with staff.
  - Benchmark: Distribute monthly activities summary/talking points to staff. Distributed 8 monthly activities summaries to staff for dissemination to districts.
  - Benchmark: Hold annual All Staff meeting. Held All Staff meetings and trainings at Fall IASCD conference and again in April for water quality and planning.

### Objective # 3.3: INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

#### PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Work with partners
  - Benchmark: Attend district meetings as resources allow. Staff continued to attend as many district meetings as logistically possible. Attended NRCS meetings including Quarterly Partnership (April 2013) meeting and meeting with USDA Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack.
  - Benchmark: Coordinate with NRCS State Engineer on approval authority issues; propose changes to Standards and Specifications. Statewide engineer met several times with NRCS State Engineer.
  - Benchmark: Work with other state agencies regarding technical assistance and engineering on TMDLs, WQPA, RCRDP, Ground Water Priority Areas, etc. Staff conducted 6 regional coordination meetings with DEQ on TMDL issues and also met with various stakeholders on RCRDP, and Ground Water Priority Areas.
- Participate in natural resource groups and processes to focus attention on the roles, policies, and plans of the Conservation Commission and districts to attract partners and resources.
  - Benchmark: Attend Environmental Forum and other similar meetings monthly. Attended several Environmental Forum meetings (not held every month).
- Review federal, state, and local policies that are determined to impact the Conservation Commission and/or districts; review proposed and adopted plans, programs, environmental documents, activities and initiatives affecting conservation efforts.

- Benchmark: Convene advisory group as needed. Not needed.
- Benchmark: Develop policies as needed. None needed.

**OBJECTIVE # 3.4: COLLABORATION****PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

- Collaborate with stakeholders including the Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts (IASCD), the Idaho District Employees Association (IDEA) to advance on the ground conservation in Idaho.
- Benchmark: Attend IASCD meetings including: annual conference, spring and fall division meetings, and Board meetings, as requested. Attended the Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts (IASCD) Board meetings, fall and Spring Division meetings around the state, the Idaho District Employees Association (IDEA) Board meetings, and others to advance on the ground conservation in Idaho. Collaborated with non-governmental organizations. Attended multiple district tours, events, and visited projects with districts and field staff all staff attended annual IASCD Conference in November 2011, selected staff attended all six Division meetings around the state in October 2011 and April 2012, staff regularly assigned to attend all district meetings.
- Benchmark: Conduct annual district listening session to solicit input from partners. Conducted listening session at IASCD Annual Conference in November in Twin Falls.
- Collaborate with IDEA to advance and promote district employee training opportunities.
  - Benchmark: Assist IDEA with employee training opportunities, as requested. Worked with IDEA to co-sponsor report training at IASCD annual Conference and at regional training in Idaho Falls.
- Collaborate with resource and agricultural production groups to disseminate information on Conservation Commission activities and conservation planning and implementation activities.
  - Benchmark: Attend other association meetings including Food Producers meetings weekly during legislative session. Attended Food Producers meetings regularly. Met with representatives of Idaho Farm Bureau regarding Strategic Plan, presented RCRDP program information to industry groups. Participated in natural resource groups and processes including Idaho Environmental Forum to focus attention on the roles, policies, and plans of the SWCC and districts to attract partners and resources.
- Participate in, speak at, and attend field trips and tours, annual conferences, attend meetings, conferences, and other functions to represent the Conservation Commission and promote good stewardship of Idaho's natural resources.
  - Benchmark: Attend events as appropriate and present as requested. Attended numerous district tours, meetings and conferences.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

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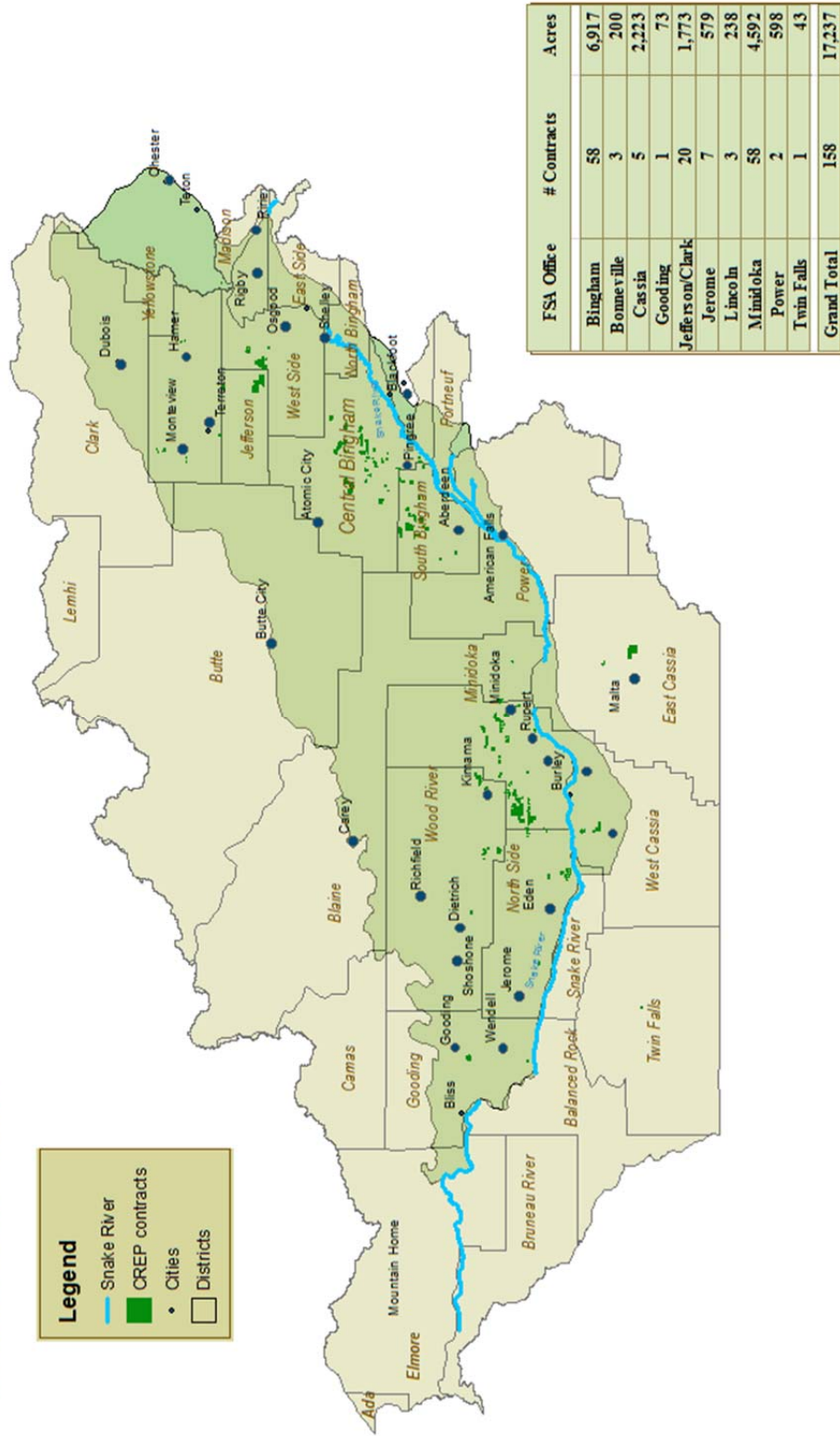


# APPENDIX A: CREP MAP 2013

## Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)



SOIL & WATER  
CONSERVATION COMMISSION



\*The CREP contracts displayed on this map are only approximate locations of contracts and are not intended to be used to identify specific locations of CREP enrolled fields.



## APPENDIX B –STATEWIDE NITRATE PRIORITY AREAS

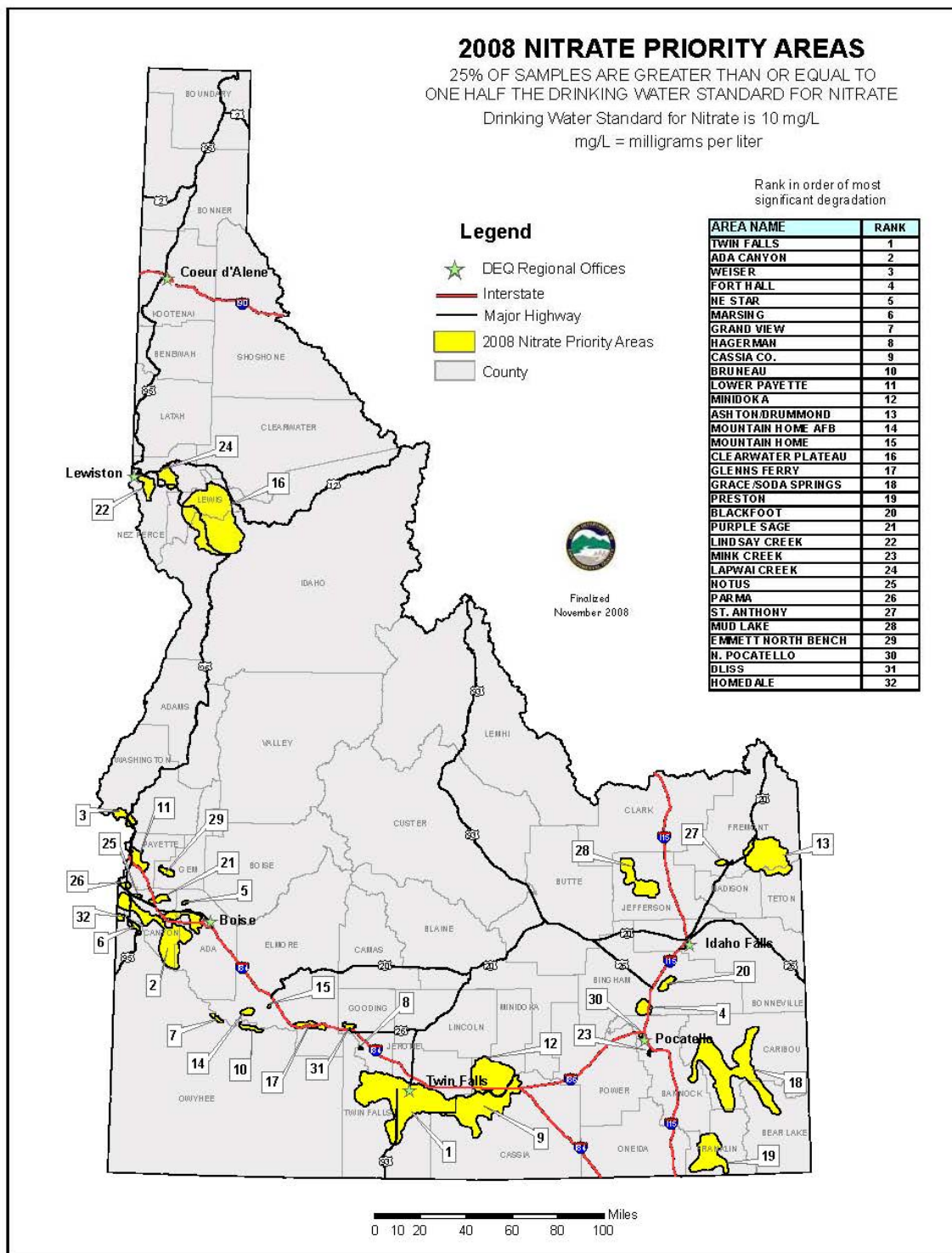


Figure 2. 2008 Nitrate Priority Areas statewide with the ranked list.

