

Part I – Agency Profile

Agency Overview

The Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission (ISWCC) was created in 1939 under Idaho Code § 22-2716, et. seq.) to form local conservation districts to work on reducing soil erosion generated by agricultural land management practices. ISWCC is now also the lead agency for a number of voluntary conservation programs that address water quality and other natural resource issues. ISWCC has no regulatory authority.

The ISWCC was led in FY 2016 by five Commissioners appointed by the Governor: Chairman H. Norman Wright, Vice Chairman Gerald Trebesch, Secretary Leon Slichter, and members Dave Radford and Glen Gier. The administrator was Teri Murrison. In FY 2016, the agency had 17.75 administrative and technical staff located in Boise and in offices around the State.

Core Functions/Idaho Code

1. **District Support and Services:** provides technical, financial, and other assistance to Idaho's 50 local conservation districts.
2. **Comprehensive Conservation Services:** provides/promotes non-regulatory incentive and science-based programs to support voluntary conservation activities enhancing the environmental quality and economic productivity of the state.
3. **Administration:** ensures continuity of operations and establishes protocols to support Commissioners and staff.
4. **Outreach:** engages local, state, and federal partners, non-governmental organizations, and resource and agricultural production groups to coordinate, collaborate, and cooperate on voluntary conservation efforts.

Revenue and Expenditures

Revenue	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016
General Fund	\$2,306,400	\$2,364,100*	\$2,531,000	\$2,590,700
Receipts	6,700	5,600	6,800	29,600
RCRDP Loan Program	1,793,900	1,447,600	1,033,700	960,800
SRF Loan Program	147,270	31,900	84,300	99,300
Federal Grant Funds	<u>80,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	\$4,334,270*	\$3,849,200*	\$3,655,800	\$3,680,400
Expenditures	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016
Personnel Costs	\$1,137,421	\$1,151,400	\$1,149,700	\$1,239,400
Operating Expenditures	421,341	286,200	346,400	257,500
Capital Outlay	10,526	0	71,400	80,100
Trustee/Benefit Payments	1,103,198	1,169,200	1,203,200	1,253,200
RCRDP Loan Disbursements	232,623	794,100	352,400	415,200
DEQ Loan	<u>116,322</u>	<u>44,300</u>	<u>71,700</u>	<u>86,700</u>
Total	\$3,021,431*	\$3,445,200	\$3,194,800	\$3,332,100

* indicates where numbers have been updated in FY 2016 to correct prior year errors.

Profile of Cases Managed and/or Key Services Provided

Cases Managed and/or Key Services Provided	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016
Conservation systems implemented on all cropland (acres)	133,625	186,076	97,432	133,586
Conservation implemented on other land uses (acres)	107,090	78,925	83,255	6,348
Grazing/pasture management systems implemented (acres)	539,007	531,613	486,449	506,625

Riparian acres implemented with protection, restoration, enhancement or creation (acres)	487	289	1,201	3,399
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) – Private agricultural land removed from tillage-induced erosion through financial incentive for a contractual time period.	349,617	589,484	583,135	568,839

Numbers above include conservation statistics from federal and local partners: NRCS and districts. The reason “other land uses” declined so significantly was unknown, although it may have dropped due to a policy, funding, or programmatic change. While an analysis by partners has not been conducted, it is likely that overall acres in conservation systems on all cropland and grazing/pasture management systems in FY 2015 were down due to the fact that the amount of land treated by NRCS in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) went down. There were also several large projects still in the middle of construction in other programs - those acres affected data are reported in FY 2016.

Performance Highlights

- **District Support and Services** In FY 2016 districts received Trustee and Benefit funding that included the usual base funding (\$8,500), local matching funds (capped at \$50,000 per district), \$2,000 in operating funds per district, and capacity building awards that ranged from \$800 to \$2,300 per district. District satisfaction with Commission services continues to strengthen.
- **Comprehensive Conservation Programs and Services** New loan volume in the RCRDP fund increased from 7 loans made for \$392,517 in FY 2015, to 12 loans made totaling \$875,049 in FY 2016. This is an increase of 223% from FY2015. The number of loan inquiries increased to 63, yet the number of loan applications decreased to 15. Approval rates increased from 70% to 80% of applications received. The average loan increased to \$72,921. Commercial lender rates are still low, making the additional paperwork required for a public funds loan less attractive. The impact of much lower commodity prices may also be a factor in fewer loan applications received.
- **Outreach** The Commission published monthly issues of our newsletter *Conservation the Idaho Way* in FY 2016 to a distribution list of 591 subscribers (list was updated in FY 2016). Stories covered included: district efforts to benefit water quality on the Snake River, Snake and Pole Creeks, and key tributaries of Lake Cascade, fires in Southern and Northern Idaho, brush thinning and fire restoration efforts around the state, reduction of nitrate levels in ground water, online conservation resources for landowners, no-till, direct-seed, and cover crops, this year’s youth Envirothon competition, and more. Newsletter articles have been reprinted by newspapers and other agencies, including the Farm Bureau. *Conservation the Idaho Way* received an award from the Idaho Press Club in 2016.

Part II – Performance Measures

Performance Measure		FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	Current Year
District Support & Services						
1. # of District Surveys on Commission Satisfaction - Strongly agree - Somewhat agree - Neutral - Somewhat Disagree - Disagree N/A		40 of 50	36 of 50	35 of 50	34 of 50	
	actual	18%	17%	28.6%	29%	-----
		45%	25%	45.7%	62%	
		30%	33%	8.6%	3%	
		8%	17%	14.3%	3%	
		0%	3%	2.9%	3%	
	0%	0%	0%	0%		
benchmark	50 of 50					
	36%	25%	25%	34%	36%	
	49%	47%	47%	47%	46%	
	10%	23%	23%	7%	8%	

Performance Measure		FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	Current Year
		5%	5%	5%	10%	8%
		0%	0%	0%	2%	2%
		0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
2. District five-year plans updated	actual	50	50	50	50	-----
	benchmark	50	50	50	50	50
3. Technical Assistance Provided to districts						
# of districts w/projects	actual	31	38	40	38	-----
	benchmark	35	39	39	39	40
# of new projects	actual	24	57	81	34	-----
	benchmark	47	58	58	50	50
# of ongoing projects	actual	41	103	106	101	-----
	benchmark	45	65	115	100	75
# of landowners served	actual	246	386	229	241	-----
	benchmark	271	300	400	300	245
Comprehensive Conservation Programs						
4. CREP Program Deliverables						
Total Contracts	actual	159	156	155	155	-----
	benchmark	175	160	160	175	160
Total Acres	actual	17,236	16,792	16,729	16,526	-----
	benchmark	18,500	17,500	17,500	21,000	22,000
Certified Contracts	actual	0	28	7 (82 total acres)	6 (88 total acres)	-----
	benchmark	9	7	15	15	10
Certified Acres	actual	0	2,537	300 (8,880 total acres)	647 (9,527 total acres)	-----
	benchmark	1,000	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
5. Ground Water Quality/Nitrate Priority Areas						
Acres Treated	actual	35,685	27,918	39,863	42,594	-----
	benchmark	36,400	37,700	37,700	37,700	42,000
Nitrates Reduced (lbs.)	actual	114,797	141,779	138,247	145,370	-----
	benchmark	114,650	132,100	132,100	132,100	140,000
Phosphorus Reduced (lbs.)	actual	24,473	32,084	27,745	29,575	-----
	benchmark	24,450	26,500	26,500	26,500	28,000
Sediment Reduced (tons)	actual	137,414	54,618	143,670	150,170	-----
	benchmark	140,900	142,600	142,600	142,600	150,000
6. RCRDP Loan Program						
# of new loans	actual	4	12	7	12	-----
	benchmark	21	12	15	12	15
Total \$ conservation projects	actual	\$128,100	\$841,624	\$392,517	\$875,049	-----
	benchmark	\$1,300,000	\$350,000	\$950,000	\$850,000	\$900,000
Inquiries received	actual	-----	-----	48	63	-----
	benchmark	-----	-----	-----	50	65
Applications submitted	actual	-----	-----	20	15	-----

Performance Measure		FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	Current Year
	<i>benchmark</i>	-----	-----	-----	25	28
Pending @ end of FY	<i>actual</i>	-----	-----	5	0	-----
	<i>benchmark</i>	-----	-----	-----	2	2
Applications denied or withdrawn	<i>actual</i>	-----	-----	6	3	-----
	<i>benchmark</i>	-----	-----	-----	5	5
7. TMDL Ag Implementation Plans (subject to DEQ priorities)						
Completed	<i>actual</i>	5	6	8	7	-----
	<i>benchmark</i>	7	7	6	6	7
In Progress	<i>actual</i>	19	15	16	17	-----
	<i>benchmark</i>	13	12	12	12	15
Pending	<i>actual</i>	31	19	18	18	-----
	<i>benchmark</i>	5	24	19	19	18
Outreach						
8. Communications						
Website (Total Visitors)	<i>actual</i>	383,964	-----	71,822	-----	-----
	<i>benchmark</i>	320,000	-----	-----	-----	-----
(Ave. Page Views)*	<i>actual</i>	-----	-----	-----	26	-----
	<i>benchmark</i>	-----	-----	-----	-----	26
(Ave. Hits/Day)	<i>actual</i>	-----	-----	-----	31,936	-----
	<i>benchmark</i>	-----	-----	-----	-----	33,000
(Total Hits)	<i>actual</i>	-----	-----	-----	1,018,241	-----
	<i>benchmark</i>	-----	-----	-----	-----	1,100,000
Facebook (impressions/# of posts)**	<i>actual</i>	49	220	153	230	-----
	<i>benchmark</i>	10,000	-----	275	275	275
(Post Reach)	<i>actual</i>	-----	-----	-----	48,046	-----
	<i>benchmark</i>	-----	-----	-----	-----	50,000
(New Page Likes)	<i>actual</i>	-----	-----	-----	170	-----
	<i>benchmark</i>	-----	-----	-----	-----	200
Twitter (# of tweets)	<i>actual</i>	29	89	36	40	-----
	<i>benchmark</i>	75	-----	150	150	75
(Twitter Impressions)	<i>actual</i>	-----	-----	-----	11,144	-----
	<i>benchmark</i>	-----	-----	-----	-----	12,000
(Profile Views)	<i>actual</i>	-----	-----	-----	762	-----
	<i>benchmark</i>	-----	-----	-----	-----	800
(New Followers)	<i>actual</i>	-----	-----	-----	111	-----
	<i>benchmark</i>	-----	-----	-----	-----	200
Newsletter subscriptions***	<i>actual</i>	-----	505	725	591	-----
	<i>benchmark</i>	-----	-----	750	750	675

Performance Measure Explanatory Notes

*Average page views is per visitor.

**From FY 2013 on, # of posts are reported. In FY 2016 new analytics for different metrics were captured to provide a better picture of readership and growth.

***FY 2016 reduction in distribution list due to a cleanup and consolidation of subscription list.

For More Information Contact

Teri Murrison, Administrator
Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission
650 West State Street, Room 145
Boise, ID 83702
Phone: (208) 332-1790
Fax: (208) 332-1799
E-mail: Teri.Murrison@swc.idaho.gov