

# FY 2022-2025 Strategic Plan

*Conservation the Idaho Way: sowing seeds of stewardship*



**IDAHO SOIL & WATER**

## **CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

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Private forest, range, and croplands account for 71% of all land in the lower 48 states, including 82% of wetlands and 80% of endangered species habitat. They support urban areas and agricultural production, provide energy and transportation corridors, and habitat for fish and wildlife. Conservation the Idaho Way is voluntary, locally led stewardship of private lands. It includes projects that improve water quality and restore forests, range, and cropland health. It balances our economic health with that of our natural resources and helps satisfy environmental laws and regulations.

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# FY 2022-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

## MISSION

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

## SLOGAN

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## 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 Conservation Commission and local Conservation Districts are the primary entities to lead coordinated conservation efforts with partners to provide landowners and land-users with assistance and solutions for natural resource concerns and issues.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Address 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 Commission's ability to serve and meet statutory authorities
- Promote fiscal responsibility
- Strengthen existing and build new conservation partnerships
- Incorporate valid scientific data and practices
- Benefit conservation work on natural resource priority issue areas
- Promote established and innovative conservation measures

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## CORE FUNCTIONS

The Conservation Commission focuses on core functions and responds to Executive Orders outlining other Strategic Plan Requirements:

1. Providing support to Idaho's 50 locally led Conservation Districts
2. Providing incentive-based and general voluntary conservation programs and services
3. Conducting outreach and communications to educate and inform the public, decision makers, partners, and other stakeholders



## KEY EXTERNAL FACTORS

There are key external factors that could affect the agency's ability to meet the goals and objectives contained in this Strategic Plan.

They include:

- Availability of funding
- Changing demographics and land use designations
- State and federal regulatory pressure and mandates that could shift priorities and resources away from current activities
- Changing economics and pressures of agricultural and natural resource dependent industries which could result in significant increases or decreases in conservation program participation
- Changing economics of local, state, and federal budgets, which could result in reductions in agency personnel, services, or funding available for voluntary conservation.

# FY 2022-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

## CORE FUNCTIONS & KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

FY 2022 GOALS	FY 2022 OBJECTIVES	FY 2022 KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY 2022 PERFORMANCE TARGETS/BENCHMARKS
1. <b>Support Districts' Voluntary Conservation Efforts</b>	<b>Build Support in State &amp; Local Partnerships</b> Work to develop strong partnerships with Conservation Districts and facilitate implementation of conservation projects throughout the state; provide Conservation Districts technical guidance and capacity building assistance	Percentage of Conservation Districts satisfied with services & programs provided <sup>1</sup>	Satisfy 90% of Conservation Districts <sup>2</sup> with Commission services and programs
		Percentage of Conservation Districts satisfied with the effectiveness of the communications received from the Commission <sup>3</sup>	Satisfy 90% of Conservation Districts <sup>4</sup> with communication effectiveness
		Percentage of requests submitted by Conservation Districts through the Technical Assistance Allocation Process (TAAP) that receive the requested assistance <sup>5</sup>	Provide 90% of Conservation District <sup>6</sup> requests for technical assistance in whole or in part
2. <b>Provide Conservation Programs &amp; Services</b>	<b>Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)</b> Provide technical leadership and guidance to private landowners in coordination with Federal, State, and other partners to reduce ground water consumption on cropland within the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer	Number of CREP-enrolled acres over which technical leadership and guidance is provided <sup>7</sup>	Provide technical leadership and guidance for 20,000 acres enrolled in CREP

<sup>1</sup> Developed in collaboration with key legislators, partners in 2012

<sup>2</sup> Of those responding

<sup>3</sup> Targeted to determine achievement of IC 22-2218(4)(b)

<sup>4</sup> Of those responding

<sup>5</sup> Established by Board to track delivery of Technical Assistance hours to Districts

<sup>6</sup> Of those responding

<sup>7</sup> Developed to determine progress toward meeting state goals per Memorandum of Agreement between ISWCC and the Idaho Ground Water Appropriators, October 23, 2006, and subsequent agreements

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FY 2022 GOALS	FY 2022 OBJECTIVES	FY 2022 KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY 2022 PERFORMANCE TARGETS/BENCHMARKS
<b>2. Provide Conservation Programs &amp; Services</b> (continued)	<b>Resource Conservation &amp; Rangeland Development Program (RCRDP)</b> Encourage farmers and ranchers to improve water quality and conserve natural resources by providing low-interest conservation loans	Acres improved with implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) and facilitated by RCRDP funding <sup>8</sup>	Implement BMPs on 600 acres facilitated by RCRDP funding
	<b>Ground Water Quality/Nitrate Priority Areas</b> Provide technical assistance in developing Ground Water Quality Improvement Plans within Nitrate Priority Areas; Maintain and improve ground water quality by promoting and supporting conservation projects through implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs)	Number of acres with BMPs implemented to maintain and improve ground water quality <sup>5</sup>	Facilitate BMP implementation on 54,000 acres of cropland
	<b>Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Planning Program</b> Write plans to provide a framework for Conservation Districts, landowners, and other partners to use to reach Idaho's non-point source water quality goals	Percentage of TMDL implementation plans completed within 18 months of the TMDL having been approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) <sup>9</sup>	Complete 100% of TMDL implementation p within 18 months of EPA approval and DEQ assignment to the Commission

<sup>8</sup> As defined in Idaho Agricultural Best Management Practices Field Guide for Evaluating BMP Effectiveness (rev. April 2013)

<sup>9</sup> Established in Idaho Nonpoint Source Management Plan 1999



# FY 2022-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

FY 2021 GOALS	FY 2021 OBJECTIVES	FY 2021 KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY 2021 PERFORMANCE TARGETS/BENCHMARKS
<b>3. Conduct Outreach &amp; Communication</b>	<b>Conduct Outreach &amp; Communication</b> Keep the public, decision makers, Conservation Districts and others informed of the activities and experiences of partners participating in Conservation the Idaho Way	Increase the number of <b>newsletter</b> subscribers <sup>10</sup>	Increase subscriptions by 20 annually
		Increase annual percentage of <b>social media</b> reach, likes, and follows <sup>7</sup>	Increase social media reach, likes and follows by 10% annually
		Increase number of additional partner projects to <b>Tracker</b> <sup>11</sup>	Train and enable partners to add 6 additional partner projects to Tracker

<sup>10</sup> Established by ISWCC Board

<sup>11</sup> Established to drive expansion of reporting on nonpoint source voluntary conservation projects in Idaho

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## Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission

Brad Little, Governor

### Board

H. Norman Wright, Chairman

Cathy Roemer, Vice Chair

Erik Olson, Secretary

Wendy Pratt, Member

Delwyne Trefz, Administrator

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