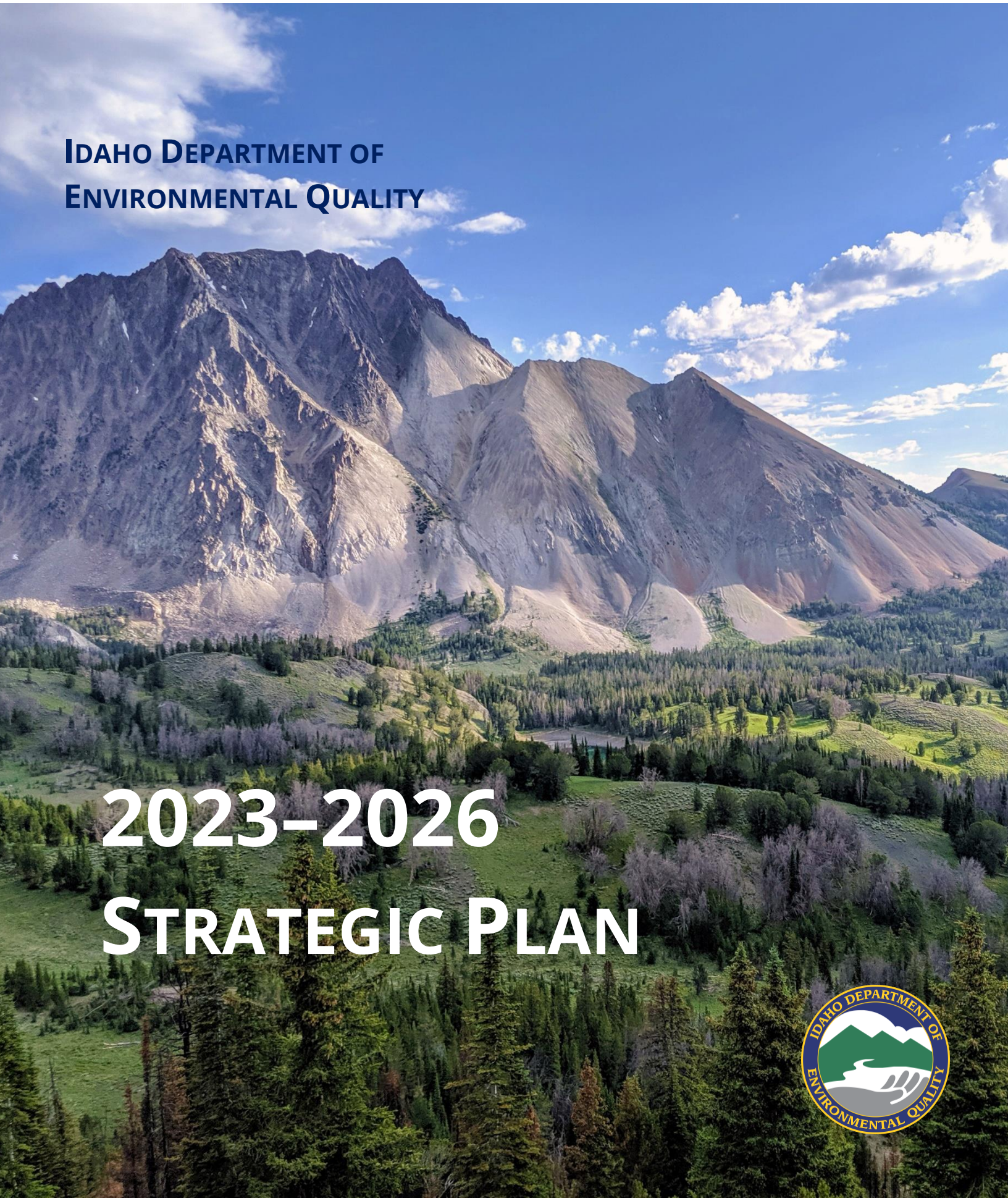


IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

2023–2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

Vision for the Future

Director's Message

I am pleased to present the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ's) strategic plan for fiscal years 2023–2026. This plan details our core functions and services, our significant accomplishments this year, and our focus for the next 4 years. It also outlines how we intend to use our financial resources to ensure that the services we provide meet the needs of the state and the citizens we serve.

Core Services

Our core services underpin every element of our strategic plan and drive how we respond to fiscal, regulatory, and environmental realities. These services span our air, water, and waste management programs and our compliance assistance and outreach efforts:

- Manage air quality to ensure compliance with federal health-based standards.
- Protect soil and water from hazardous, solid, and mining wastes and petroleum contamination.
- Manage, mitigate, and remediate contaminated areas.
- Protect public health and the environment at and around the Idaho National Laboratory.
- Maintain and improve surface and ground water quality.
- Ensure delivery of safe and reliable drinking water from public water systems.
- Prevent, prepare for, and respond to public health emergencies.
- Encourage and empower Idaho citizens, businesses, and communities to be environmentally responsible.

Accomplishments

One of DEQ's strategic goals is to "foster a culture of continuous improvement," and employee engagement continues to be central to that effort. This year we offered staff the Clifton Strengths assessment, which helps people identify their strengths and see how they can contribute to the organization. Data has proven people are more engaged and satisfied with their work if they apply the skills in which they are strong. At DEQ, we are using Clifton Strengths to improve employee engagement by incorporating strengths into our daily work, building well-rounded teams, and providing opportunities for staff to learn and grow at work.

Mission

To protect human health and the quality of Idaho's air, land, and water.

Vision

An Idaho where the quality of our environment enhances healthy living and supports thriving communities

Also central to our engagement effort is the inclusion of more staff in our strategic planning process. In the past, DEQ's senior management has largely driven our strategic planning efforts. This year our strategic plan was crafted with input from staff at all levels of the agency representing a variety of programs and regional offices. Staff engagement in the strategic planning process is an important component to ensure the priorities we identify align with our key services and obligations.

Another of DEQ's strategic goals is to "make recognizable and measurable environmental improvements." To that end, DEQ capped off a multiyear air quality improvement effort in Idaho's Cache Valley and West Silver Valley, and both communities are now meeting health-based standards under the Clean Air Act. DEQ worked closely with partner agencies, community groups, and the public to address pollution sources and move the areas back into attainment.

Jess Byrne, Director

DEQ also took over operations and maintenance of the newly upgraded Central Treatment Plant in Kellogg, Idaho, located within the Bunker Hill Superfund Site. The $50 million project, which took more than 4.5 years to complete, will remove metals in mine water discharge from the Bunker Hill Mine and contaminated ground water from beneath the central tailings impoundment. This project will significantly improve water quality in the area and reduce the amount of toxic metals flowing into the South Fork Coeur d'Alene River.

Our third strategic goal is to "provide first class customer service as a trusted source in environmental leadership." In August 2021, Governor Brad Little established the Coeur d'Alene Lake Advisory Committee with the goal of reducing phosphorus pollution in North Idaho's iconic water body. The committee was tasked with soliciting nutrient-reduction proposals from the community and prioritizing projects that are eligible for funding under Governor Little's Leading Idaho initiative.

The committee received 40 individual project proposals. Each proposal underwent a technical review by DEQ staff and then the committee provided a final ranking of 22 pollutant-reduction projects that are eligible for funding. DEQ has issued $2 million in grants and is now working with project sponsors to implement 11 projects that reduce phosphorus pollution in the Coeur d'Alene Basin.

Looking Forward

During the 2022 Legislative session, DEQ was awarded nearly $400 million of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to complete projects related to drinking water infrastructure and contaminated site cleanups. DEQ will focus on distributing the funding to communities that need financial help to meet our mission of protecting Idaho's human health and the environment.

In the coming year, we will continue to carry out core functions for the citizens of Idaho while expanding compliance assistance efforts to the regulated community. Each element of our strategic plan—our goals, objectives, and performance measures—will help guide our work over the next 4 years to ensure we continue to protect public health and the quality of Idaho's air, land, and water.

YOUR DEQ

PROTECTING HUMAN HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), established by the Idaho Environmental Protection and Health Act (Idaho Code § 39-101 et seq.), protects human health and the environment.

DEQ implements and enforces delegated federal programs under the Clean Air, Clean Water, Safe Drinking Water, and Resource Conservation and Recovery Acts, and state environmental laws and rules. This regulatory responsibility covers activities that ensure Idaho's air, land, water, and citizens are protected from the adverse impacts of pollution.

- Environmental monitoring assesses conditions and ensures health-based standards are met.
- Permits are issued to facilities that manage wastes or release pollutants to limit the amounts to safe levels.
- Inspections of pollution sources and responses to complaints ensure compliance with environmental regulations and standards.
- Remediation removes or neutralizes contaminants in soil, ground water, and surface waters. Compliance is voluntary or enforcement action may be taken.
- Oversight includes cleanup, pollution reduction, and drinking water and wastewater infrastructure improvements.
- Outreach and education facilitate compliance with environmental requirements.

"Protecting our natural resources and the wellbeing of our citizens will always be our top priority."

Jess Byrne, Director

AGENCY PERFORMANCE—ACCOUNTABILITY AND COMMITMENT

Our strategic plan establishes performance commitments and assesses progress toward achieving agency goals as required by Idaho Code § 67-1903.

- Our goals describe the broad environmental human health conditions the agency tries to achieve and how we want to serve Idaho's citizens.
- Our objectives are the incremental steps taken to achieve each goal.
- Our performance measures tell us how we know we are making progress.

This plan provides Idaho's legislature with planning and performance commitments and accounts for the statutory authority granted to the agency and its appropriated annual budget.

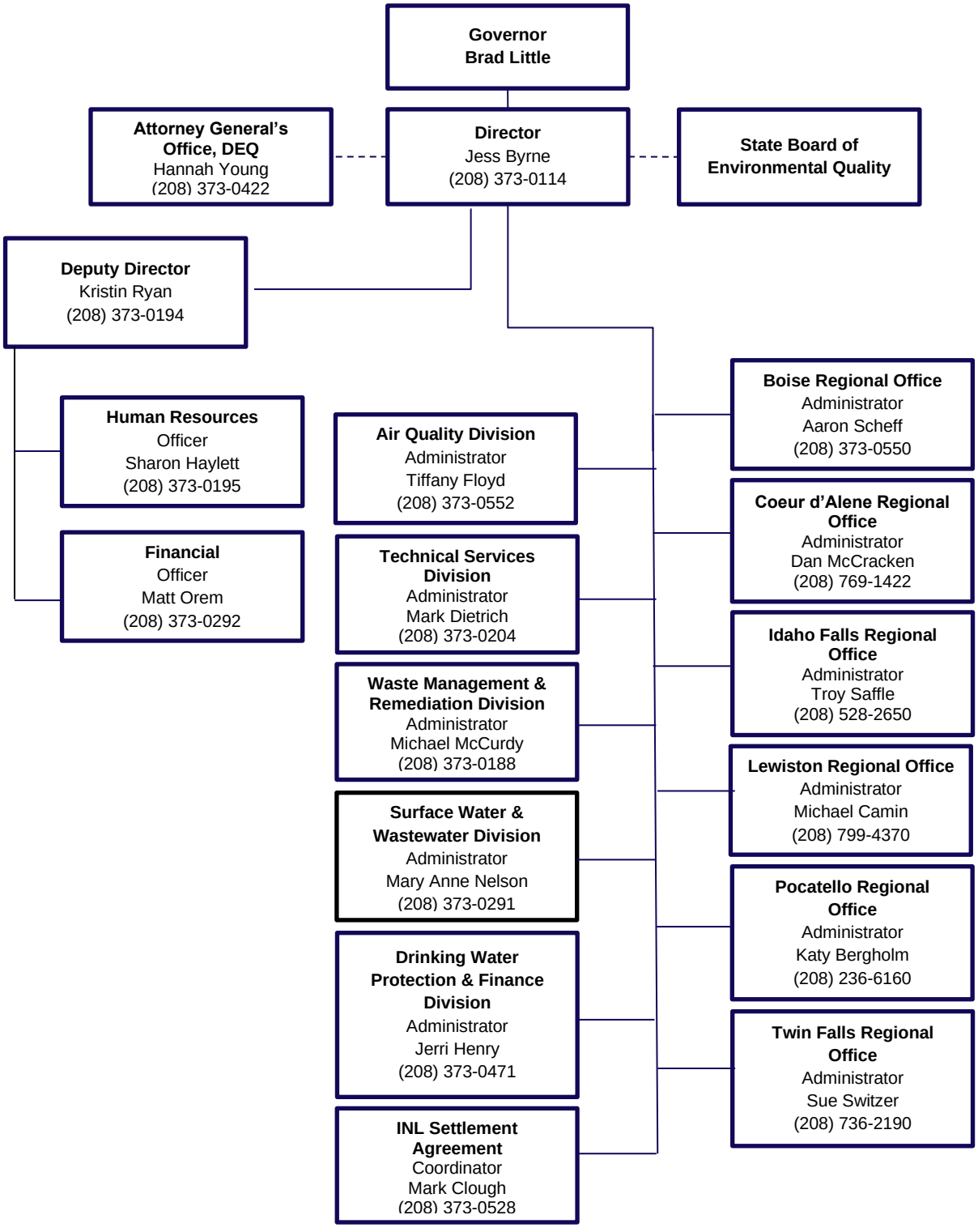
Using specific goals, objectives, and performance measures, we successfully completed several objectives this year. Air Quality implemented strategies to voluntarily address air pollution in Salmon. Surface Water completed the Integrated Report, documenting whether water bodies meet water quality standards and support beneficial uses. The agency as a whole increased participation in the strategic planning process and took steps to increase overall employee engagement. In the coming year, DEQ will continue to make action-based progress with updated objectives and performance measures.

DEQ's fiscal year 2022 performance commitments

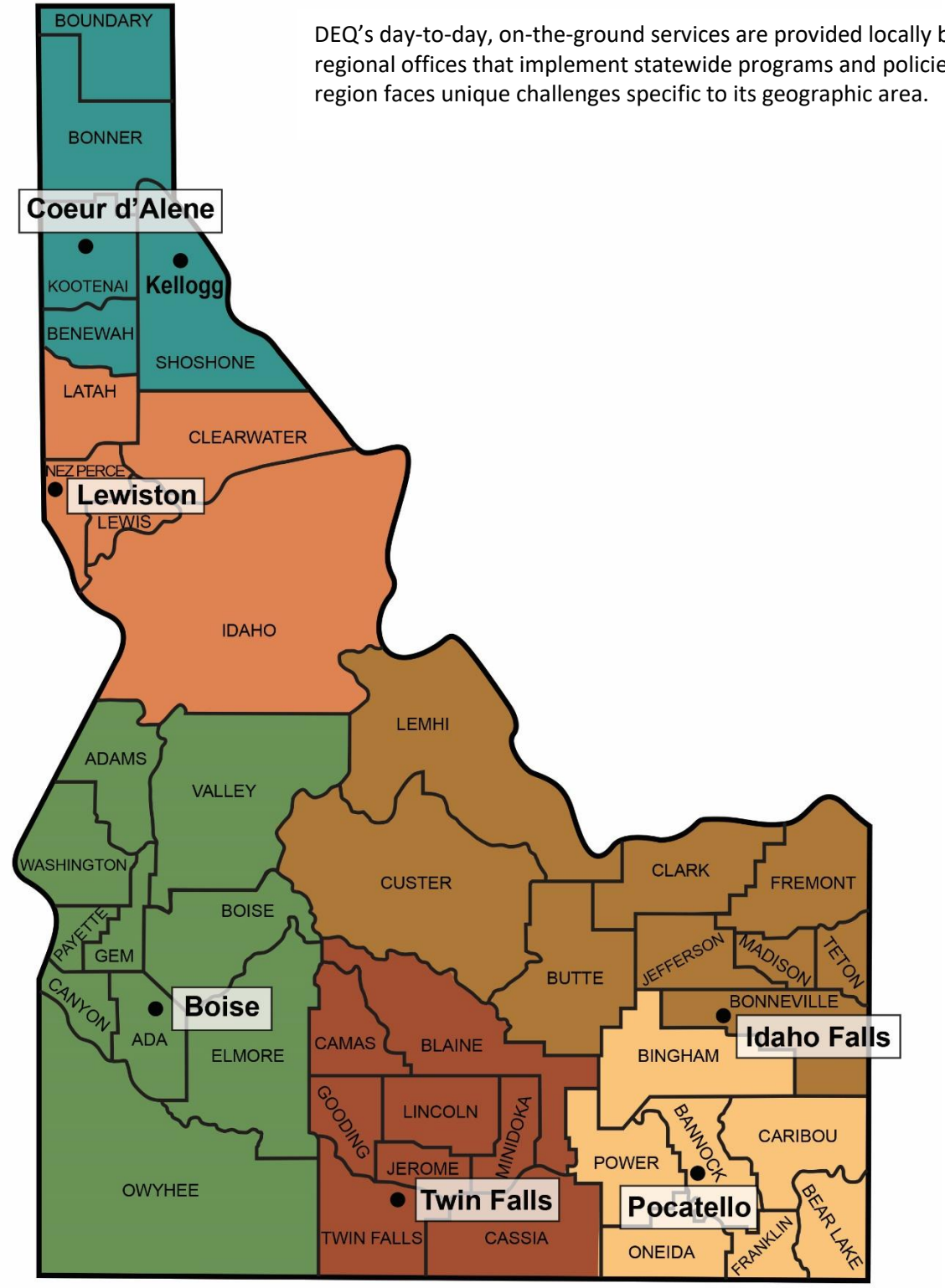
Benchmark Performance Measure	FY 2023 Target
Reduce number of unhealthy days based on the Air Quality Index throughout the state.	0 days
Increase the percentage of assessed rivers and streams supporting beneficial uses.	35%
Reduce the number of known contaminated sites.	204 sites (10% reduction from 227 current sites)
Increase the percentage of complete permit applications and engineering submittal packages on initial submittal.	82%
Increase the compliance rate of inspected facilities.	82%
Increase the percentage of permits issued before deadline.	81%
Conduct 50 lean improvement projects per year.	100%
Reduce the rate of elective, nonretirement turnover.	6.2%

AGENCY SUPPORT—STATEWIDE

DEQ is headquartered in Boise and has five divisions and six regional offices focused on developing and administering programs and policies.



Regional Offices



DEQ's day-to-day, on-the-ground services are provided locally by six regional offices that implement statewide programs and policies. Each region faces unique challenges specific to its geographic area.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Goal 1—Make Recognizable and Measurable Environmental Improvements

Objectives—Air quality

1.1 By December 2024, implement a statewide targeted outreach campaign to reduce PM 2.5 emissions from woodstoves.

1.2 By September 2025, implement statewide prescribed fire smoke management plan.

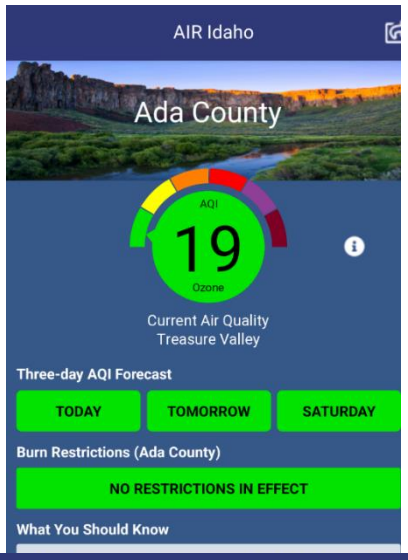
1.3 By 2026, engage 12 communities statewide to protect public health by implementing strategies aimed at improving air quality.

Performance Measure

Reduce number of unhealthy days based on the Air Quality Index throughout the state.

Benchmark—0 days

This performance measure is determined by any single air monitor reaching unhealthy (red) air quality levels statewide at any time during the year. If multiple air monitors reach unhealthy air quality levels on the same day, it is still counted as 1 day.



Air Quality—DEQ launched the Air Idaho app in 2021. It provides users with a 3-day Air Quality Index (AQI) forecast, real-time information on open burning restrictions, tips, and other resources.

Objectives—Water quality

1.4 By summer 2023, facilitate water quality improvement projects with a focus on reducing nonpoint source pollutants to contribute to meeting TMDL load allocations and restore beneficial uses.

1.5 By 2025, develop and implement water quality improvement programs including the CAFO Improvement Fund and water quality trading, to reduce point and nonpoint source loads on a watershed basis.

1.6 By 2026, make data and information available to the public and management agencies in order to facilitate decisions to improve water quality.

Performance Measure

Increase the percentage of assessed rivers and streams supporting beneficial uses.

Benchmark—35%

Derived from DEQ's 2018–2020 Integrated Report, this performance measure includes river miles from assessed rivers and streams that support beneficial uses.

Water Quality—Water quality improvement projects increase the percentage of rivers and streams that support beneficial uses. In April 2022, DEQ submitted its Integrated Report to EPA. Among other things, the report documents the beneficial use attainment status of Idaho's water bodies.

Objectives—Waste management and remediation

1.7 By June 2024, increase site owners' and operators' use or understanding of DEQ's assessment, cleanup, and remediation programs.

Performance Measure

Reduce the number of known contaminated sites.

Benchmark—204 sites

Based on 10% reduction of 227 known, open contaminated sites as of June 30, 2021. This performance measure includes leaking underground storage tanks (LUSTs) and general remediation sites. Contaminated site closure is complete when contaminant concentrations meet acceptable risk-based or other approved criteria through assessment or remediation activities. From July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021 there were 144 total new and 124 closed contaminated sites (LUST 11 closures/10 new; general remediation 113 closures /134 new).

This performance measure excludes sites under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (Superfund), including mega sites, such as the Idaho National Laboratory and Bunker Hill; Department of Defense cleanup sites; hazardous waste sites; and solid waste facilities.

Cleanup at the Idaho National Laboratory achieved a major milestone in March 2022, completing 17 years of waste exhuming and packaging approximately 10,300 cubic meters of transuranic waste from unlined disposal pits and trenches within the Subsurface Disposal Area at the Radioactive Waste Management Complex.

Goal 2—Provide First-Class Customer Service as a Trusted Source for Environmental Leadership

Objectives—Permit applications and plans and specifications complete

2.1 By March 2023, provide assistance to facilities and/or consultants on how to submit a complete air quality permit to construct application.

2.2 By December 2023, provide assistance to the regulated community on how to submit an approvable engineering study and plan and specification documents to DEQ.

2.3 By December 2031, modernize the permit application processes.

Performance Measure

Increase the percentage of complete permit applications and facility plan and specification submittal packages on initial submittal.

Benchmark—82%

This performance measure is based on wastewater reuse applications, IPDES applications, drinking water and wastewater plan and specification submittals, air quality permit applications, and hazardous waste permit applications.

DEQ staff use a number of assistance strategies to help facilities improve their compliance rate. During noninspection site visits, staff work with facilities to evaluate their operations and ensure they clearly understand and are following applicable requirements.

Objectives—Compliance of inspected facilities

2.4 Establish relationships with permittees by conducting permit handoff meetings
2.5 By June 2023, develop a plan to address and remove barriers to compliance.
2.6 By March 2024, leverage data-driven resources to improve compliance and inspection strategies.

Performance Measure

Increase the compliance rate of inspected facilities.

Benchmark—82%

This performance measure is based on 5-year averages across programs. Each program measures compliance differently. Annual updates will be made to the benchmark.

Goal 3—Foster a Culture of Continuous Improvement

Objectives—Permits issued before deadline

3.1 Reduce barriers to issuing permits in a timely manner.
3.2 By June 2023, increase the efficiency of processing and approving general permit coverages.
3.3 By December 2024, increase available resources for reuse permit writers.
3.4 By 2025, identify barriers to improve the timely issuance of permits to construct.

Performance Measure

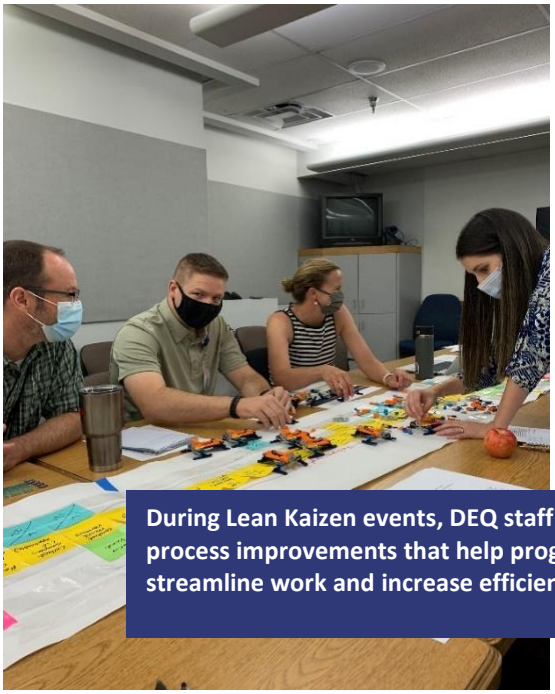
Increase the percentage of permits issued before deadline.

Benchmark—81%

This performance measure includes air quality permits to construct, water quality reuse and IPDES permits, and hazardous waste permits. The IPDES Program inherited a permit backlog that will require 1-to-2 permit cycles (5–10 years) to meet the national goal of 90% current permits.

Objectives—Lean improvement projects

3.5 By March 2023, streamline data and performance measure tracking efforts.
3.6 By June 2023, create agency-wide awareness about continuous improvement projects.
3.7 By June 2023, increase staff capacity to carry out continuous improvement.



During Lean Kaizen events, DEQ staff identify process improvements that help programs streamline work and increase efficiency.

Performance Measure

Conduct 50 Lean improvement projects per year.

Benchmark—100%

Continuous improvement is a long-term approach to systematically target and incrementally change processes to improve efficiency and quality within the agency. Using the kaizen philosophy and a lean process focus, DEQ will continue to examine our processes in detail and determine output improvements. All staff are encouraged to suggest and implement changes that create continuous improvement within the regions and across the agency.

Objectives—Employee engagement

3.8 By March 2023, develop a visual dashboard that tracks major agency performance measures.
3.9 By April 2023, increase employee engagement.
3.10 By June 2023, reduce agency elective turnover.
3.11 On an annual basis, implement a participation process that increases staff awareness, engagement, and leadership in developing and implementing the DEQ strategic plan.

Performance Measure

Reduce the rate of elective, nonretirement turnover in the agency.

Benchmark—6.2%

This benchmark is based on a 10% reduction in the FY21 elective, nonretirement turnover rate. This effort will measure employee engagement and retention over time. As an organization, DEQ wants to ensure employees feel connected to the agency, our mission, and the strategic plan. If employees are engaged, they are happier and more productive, which results in less turnover, an expensive issue for DEQ. Assessing engagement and turnover will help us determine if we are achieving this goal.

Emerging Issues and Opportunities

On a 4-year horizon, issues may arise that are short-term or may lead to a shift in the agency's focus and priorities. By anticipating future challenges, DEQ will be better positioned to adjust if needed, while continuing to support our core functions and services. Emerging issues and opportunities are identified below.

Smoke from wildfires and prescribed fires

Smoke from wildfires and prescribed fire use will continue to present a challenge for protecting air quality, safeguarding human health, and ensuring the ongoing vitality of Idaho communities through 2026 and beyond.

Changes in climate and the buildup of dead and dying material in our forests are combining to increase the amount of wildfire smoke Idahoans experience each year. Estimates from federal land management agencies with lands in Idaho suggest Idaho could see a tripling in the number of acres treated annually with prescribed fire for forest health and wildfire protection over the next decade. Timber harvest rates are also expected to rise in Idaho over the coming years resulting in an increase of woody debris, or slash, that will be burned annually. The combination of increased wildfire smoke and prescribed fire smoke will add to the pressures that state, federal, and local programs face to manage smoke and proactively communicate with affected groups and communities.

Smoke, whether from wildfire or prescribed fire, is a public health concern. Community-based engagement efforts will be essential for DEQ to support individuals and communities who wish to implement Smoke-Ready concepts to protect their health. DEQ anticipates working directly with the public to help limit exposure to smoke using proactive measures. We will also continue to work directly with prescribed fire practitioners to limit smoke impacts when fire is used for forest and slash management.

Each year DEQ helps people prepare for wildfire season with a "Smoke Ready Week" in June. DEQ also provides daily smoke forecasts, coordinated messaging with Idaho Health and Welfare, tribes, and others, and keeps an updated blog and social media accounts so concerned people know how smoke is likely to affect their day.
Photo credit: Inciweb National Wildfire Coordination Group

National Ambient Air Quality Standards update

In 2022, EPA began its review of the national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS) along with the health studies supporting them as required by the Clean Air Act.

EPA collaborates with a committee identified as the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee to review the science on health impacts and determine if the current NAAQS is sufficient to provide adequate health and environmental protection.

Two pollutants of most concern to Idaho are particulate matter (PM2.5) and ozone. Both of which are part of this federal review process. EPA expects to issue a proposal on the PM2.5 standard in summer 2022 for public review and comment with a final decision by early 2023.

Ozone is on a later track with a proposal of the standard in spring 2023 for public review and comment with a final decision by the end of 2023.

In advance of the potentially changing standards, DEQ continues to collaborate with Idaho communities to ensure areas remain in compliance with the ambient air quality standards.

For example, DEQ has been working with the communities of Salmon and St. Maries for the past few years, where air quality has improved. Air quality improvement has stemmed from changing out old uncertified woodstoves, a source of PM2.5 pollution. As funding becomes available, DEQ sponsors woodstove changeout programs that provide rebates for homeowners to replace older, more polluting stoves with cleaner-burning EPA-certified woodstoves, inserts, pellet stoves, or natural gas or propane units.

Low-cost air quality sensors

Low-cost air quality monitoring sensors, ranging from hundreds to several thousand dollars, are hitting the market for public consumption. Many people are taking this opportunity nationwide to use these sensors to assess air quality in their specific locations. In doing so, they are asking why government agencies have not established broader scale monitoring networks to include these sensors. Reasons are many, but accuracy and dependability are the primary considerations. The high-quality government monitors that comprise the statewide networks are upwards of $20,000 dollars per monitor. These monitors come at a high cost because they are dependable and accurate. The low-cost sensors are not nearly as accurate and must undergo rigorous testing by agencies alongside their own monitors to ensure greater accuracy as well as many unknowns about life expectancy and dependability. These unknowns can lend some doubt into fully relying on the instrument readings, especially over an extended period of time. As more people purchase these sensors, government agencies like DEQ will receive questions. DEQ will communicate to the public the expectations of low-cost sensors versus regulatory agency monitors and continue to find opportunities to use these sensors to supplement applicable monitoring objectives and research.

Example of a purple sensor that can be used in specific locations.

Bunker Hill Superfund Site— Central Treatment Plant

In October 2021, DEQ assumed responsibility for operating the newly upgraded Central Treatment Plant (CTP) at the Bunker Hill Superfund Site in Kellogg, Idaho. DEQ worked with EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers and their contractors during construction of the upgraded CTP, which was completed in October 2020. The plant removes metals in mine water discharge from the Bunker Hill Mine and contaminated ground water from beneath the historic Bunker Hill central tailings

Bunker Hill Central Treatment Plant— DEQ assumed responsibility for operating the newly upgraded Central Treatment Plant in 2021. The facility treats mine water and ground water to remove metals such as lead, zinc, and cadmium, providing significant improvement to water quality in the South Fork Coeur d'Alene River.

impoundment. The system can treat up to 5,000 gallons per minute of contaminated water and has shown high metals removal efficiency. Operations are continually being optimized to reduce costs of operating and maintaining the CTP while continuing to produce a clean effluent to provide significant water quality improvement in the South Fork Coeur d'Alene River.

Funding for CTP operations was provided via EPA settlement dollars with Hecla. The Bunker Hill Water Treatment Endowment was established in 2014 with a deposit of $52.3 million. These settlement funds are managed by the Idaho Endowment Fund Investment Board. Annual operations are anticipated to cost up to $2 million per year. DEQ is operating the CTP with contractor support, staff expertise to oversee the plant, and will continue to optimize the operations of the new system. The operations data from the first years of running the new system will be used to evaluate future contracting alternatives to make the most efficient use of resources to ensure sustainability of the operations funding.

Bunker Hill Superfund Site—recreational use along the South Fork Coeur d'Alene River

Over 80 years of mine waste and sewer discharge into the South Fork Coeur d'Alene River made it hard for people to imagine that someday this area would provide recreational opportunities. As Bunker Hill Superfund cleanup progresses, environmental and ecological improvements are leading to significant increases in recreational uses. Property owned by DEQ along the South Fork Coeur d'Alene River that was previously cleaned up is being developed into an area for recreational use with a newly developed trail system. Signage will be installed along the trails to educate people about the area's mining history and the continued presence of lead and other heavy metals in the soil, sediment, and water. The signs help recreationists understand how to *Play Clean* and reduce their exposures to contamination.

DEQ partnered with Panhandle Health District to place signage along trails along the South Fork Coeur d'Alene River and created a children's guidebook to educate the public about mining and heavy metal contamination.

Get the Lead Out

EPA finalized the lead-copper rule revisions with an effective date of December 16, 2021, and a compliance date of October 16, 2024. The final rule is intended to better protect children and communities through improving sampling procedures, establishing a trigger level of 10 micrograms per liter to jumpstart mitigation efforts, requiring full lead service line replacements when systems exceed the action levels, requiring sampling in elementary and childcare facilities, and requiring lead service line inventories. EPA announced that they will make improvements to the new revisions before the compliance date, although public water systems will be required to develop lead service line inventories by October 16, 2024. A lead service line is any portion of the pipe that is lead that connects the water main to the building's inlet, regardless of ownership. Idaho, along with other states, awaits important

guidance from EPA on documenting inventories. Specific lead service line funding is provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. DEQ is working on an application process for this funding.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law—Drinking Water

DEQ has significant new federal funding to assist communities in Idaho. One funding source is the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and the second source is the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). Both sources provide an infusion of funding to states, including Idaho, to address water and wastewater projects.

For ARPA, the Governor's Office recommended, and the Idaho Legislature appropriated, approximately $300 million over the next 5 years to DEQ's Grants and Loans Bureau for investing in drinking water and wastewater infrastructure. DEQ's appropriation language focuses on smaller communities with the greatest need and least ability to pay. ARPA funding is required to be obligated by December 31, 2024, and expended by December 31, 2026. DEQ plans to obligate all the ARPA funds in state fiscal year 2023. Letters of interest for the State Revolving Funds (SRFs) and ARPA were combined and DEQ received over $1.4 billion in requests.

For BIL, millions of dollars in additional funding will be provided over the next 5 years for the clean water and drinking water state revolving funds (SRFs) that will increase the annual capitalization grants used for low-interest loans, add funding for lead service line replacement for drinking water, and provide funding to address emerging contaminant for drinking water and wastewater. Additional subsidies for communities will be provided. Because BIL was passed in November 2021, it was too late for DEQ to plan and incorporate the emerging contaminants and lead funding into the annual letter of interest application cycle beginning in October and ending in January for fiscal year 2023. DEQ will delay using some of the funding for fiscal year 2024 as EPA requires the funding to be obligated within 1 year of the grant payment from EPA.

DEQ is working diligently to meet the needs of the state in an equitable and efficient manner.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)—Contaminated Sites

Per the governor's recommendation and as appropriated by the legislature, DEQ will use a total of $70 million of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to support a variety of cleanup projects consistent with the intent of ARPA and using the broad range of project eligibilities as described in EPA's *Overview of Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Eligibilities* as a guide for remediation efforts where contamination is impacting surface water or ground water, or potentially impacting waters of the state. The goal of these projects is to take steps to manage potential sources of pollution and prevent these sources from reaching sources of drinking water, or otherwise potentially impacting ground water and surface water. The underlying premise is to fund a variety of water quality protection efforts to support access to clean drinking water and support making necessary investments in water and sewer infrastructure.

Coeur d'Alene Lake Nutrient Reduction Projects. As part of the "Leading Idaho" plan, Governor Little recommended $2,000,000 in state funding for DEQ to implement nutrient reduction projects in the Coeur d'Alene Basin in 2021. These projects will improve and protect water quality in Coeur d'Alene Lake. ARPA will provide additional funding to select more nutrient reduction projects using the process developed for selecting the initial projects. Completing additional projects will result in

more progress towards improving and protecting water quality in Coeur d'Alene Lake. Water quality data collected by DEQ and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe through the Lake Management Plan indicate that phosphorus concentrations in the lake north of the Coeur d'Alene River are increasing. Excess nutrients in Coeur d'Alene Lake pose a significant threat to long-term water quality due to the potential for heavy metals from legacy mining wastes being released from the lake sediments in low oxygen conditions. Nutrient reduction projects may include those that address both point source and nonpoint source nutrient loading to Coeur d'Alene Lake. Funding will be made available to cities, counties, utility districts, conservation districts, and other project sponsors in the Coeur d'Alene Basin.

Triumph Mine Site. Under the 1994 Memorandum of Agreement with EPA, the state took the lead for the cleanup of the Triumph Mine Site in Blaine County and is following the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act process for the cleanup. Cleanup actions are implemented following the 1998 Record of Decision for the Triumph Mine Site. Since the 2005 bankruptcy of ASARCO, Idaho is responsible for maintaining the mine water portion of the remedy, completing additional mine closure work, and for the soils component of the cleanup. ARPA funding will be used to address issues, recommendations, and follow-up actions identified in the 2019 Five-Year Review and to respond to requests from local residents and government. The funding will be used for a long-term solution for Triumph Tunnel, a long-term operations and maintenance program for the site, and managing mining impacted water and contaminated soils.

Solid waste sites. ARPA funding will be used for activities associated with closing certain municipal and nonmunicipal solid waste landfills throughout the state. Activities include design and construction of final cover systems, and where applicable, postclosure ground water monitoring. Some previously closed landfills require assessments to determine potential impact to ground water and evaluate previously installed cover systems

Contaminated sites. This is a broad category of sites where ground water has been or may be impacted by chemical releases. ARPA funds will be used to conduct site assessments to better characterize the extent of contamination, conduct risk evaluations, and clean-up hazardous substances in soil and ground water. Activities may include sampling and installing ground water monitoring wells; excavation, transportation, and disposal of any contamination encountered during cleanup activities; and the set-up and operation of cleanup systems.

Triumph Tunnel—The original materials used to stabilize the tunnel exceeded their design life, creating unstable conditions. DEQ will work to find a long-term solution to stabilize the tunnel.

Hazardous waste

Nicotine Waste Management. Waste from e-cigarettes (vapes or vaping devices) often contains nicotine and batteries that can pose a

threat to human health and the environment. Nicotine is a listed, acutely toxic hazardous waste. Vaping devices often contain lithium-ion batteries. Batteries can be a source of toxic metals. Some batteries, particularly rechargeable lithium-ion batteries, also have a documented history of starting fires. Idaho adopted the federal hazardous waste regulations (40 CFR 124, 260–266, 268, 270, 273, and 279) into state rules (IDAPA 58.01.05). These regulations require facilities that generate waste to determine whether wastes are hazardous and manage them accordingly. School staff find themselves in the position of confiscating e-cigarettes from students. The waste e-cigarettes may be accumulated for indefinite periods in a drawer or other inappropriate storage in the administrative area or nurse's station in schools. Liquid nicotine could be improperly disposed down a sink drain; this is not an appropriate or environmentally sound disposal method. Given the hazards of e-cigarette components, they must be managed in a safe manner. DEQ's Hazardous Waste Bureau staff met with staff from the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare's Project Filter program to discuss possible coordination on outreach efforts to schools. The Hazardous Waste Bureau will develop school-specific guidance to help schools properly manage vaping devices and liquids.

Hazardous Waste Program Authorization.

The 1976 Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) is a federal statute that defines hazardous waste and regulates its generation, transportation, treatment, storage, and disposal. RCRA provides a mechanism for individual states to manage their own hazardous waste program in lieu of EPA. Idaho can manage its own hazardous waste program if it is at least as stringent as RCRA. State-run programs must be authorized by EPA. The 1983 Hazardous Waste Management Act, Idaho Code § 39-4401 et. seq., directs DEQ to maintain authorization for the RCRA program. The authorization process requires states to submit to EPA a detailed description of the state's RCRA program capabilities. The criteria EPA uses to evaluate a state's program includes statutory, regulatory, financial, and staffing adequacies. As new RCRA regulations are promulgated by EPA and adopted by states, the states are required to submit revised authorization packages to EPA that reflect the state's ability to implement these new regulations. The Hazardous Waste Bureau is currently preparing a revised authorization application to administer the RCRA program in Idaho instead of EPA for all federal regulations adopted as of July 1, 2021.

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances

In December 2021, EPA announced they will regulate two PFAS chemicals, perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctanesulfonic acid (PFOS), in public drinking water systems. EPA intends to propose a maximum contaminant level (MCL) for PFOA and PFOS in fall 2022, with a goal to finalize the MCL by fall 2023. EPA also announced they are reviewing the current health advisory for PFOA and PFOS, with the expectation that the current drinking water health advisory of 70 parts per thousand (ppt) combined will be reduced. EPA is also reviewing information and will likely introduce new drinking water health advisories for perfluorobutane sulfonic acid and GenX PFAS analytes in spring 2022.

In federal fiscal years 2020, 2021, and 2022, EPA provided DEQ with an additional $87,000 (2020) and $126,000 (2021 and 2022 each) in Public Water System Supervision grant funding, respectively. This additional funding will be used for activities that deal with emerging contaminants such as PFAS.

The Drinking Water Bureau developed a voluntary drinking water source sampling project to evaluate the presence of PFAS in Idaho's public drinking water. This monitoring complements the monitoring done under EPA's Third Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring

Rule, where 33 of Idaho's systems participated between 2013 and 2015 (none of these samples were over the method detection limit). Sampling under the Drinking Water Bureau's project began in April 2021 and will continue through 2022 or until funding is exhausted. On May 20, 2022, the bureau received permission to sample 249 public water system sources and has received sample results for 188 of those sources. Of the 188 samples received, there have been 23 detections of PFAS. All 23 detections have been below the current EPA health advisory for PFOA and PFOS of 70 ppt combined. The number of results received represent approximately 5.8% of all public water system sources in Idaho sampled over 1 year. If voluntary participation from Idaho's public water systems does not increase, the Drinking Water Bureau is setting up an alternative to sample from private water sources using DEQ's and the Idaho Department of Water Resources private well networks.

EPA will conduct further PFAS monitoring through the state's public drinking water systems under the Fifth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule. Monitoring under this effort will occur between 2023 and 2025.

Zero-based regulation

Per *Executive Order (EO) 2020-01*, Idaho agencies are required to review each of their rule chapters and engage in negotiated rulemaking on a 5-year cycle. The goal is to perform a critical and comprehensive review of rule chapters to reduce overall regulatory burden, streamline various provisions, and increase clarity and ease of use. The DEQ rule chapters going through this process in 2022 include the "Rules for the Control of Air Pollution in Idaho" (IDAPA 58.01.01) and "Recycled Water Rules" (IDAPA 58.01.17). The following rules will start the process in 2023; Water Quality Standards (IDAPA 58.01.02), Rules Regulating Underground Storage Tank Systems (IDAPA 58.01.07), Idaho Rules for Public Drinking Water Systems (IDAPA 58.01.08), and Rules Regulating the Idaho Pollution Discharge Elimination System Program (IDAPA 58.01.25).

CONCLUSION

DEQ reports performance accountability to the state legislature through benchmark performance measures. This year staff worked across state and regional offices to successfully reach many of our new objectives, further develop existing objectives, and create new objectives that bring us closer to achieving meaningful performance measures. Our commitment to protecting public health and Idaho's environment is reaffirmed through the work we do, our partnerships, and the communities we work with. Our agencywide benchmark performance measures reflect tangible, achievable public health and environmental outcomes for Idaho and drive us to continue to improve and serve as a trusted resource for Idahoans.

Your DEQ—Protect, Enhance, Support

While the core of DEQ's work is defined by our air quality, water quality, and waste and remediation management divisions, that work is sustained by support staff in the following areas:

- **INL Oversight—Independently evaluates the effectiveness of the Idaho National Laboratory's public health protection programs.**
- **Technical Services—Provides peer-reviewed scientific and engineering support to DEQ's air, water, and waste divisions and six regional offices.**
- **Pollution Prevention—Empowers businesses and citizens to engage in behaviors that protect public health and preserve Idaho's environment.**
- **Communications and Outreach—Raises awareness and understanding of health and environmental issues through social media and clear, concise documentation.**
- **Financial—Manages DEQ's budget and expenditures and facilitates grant applications and funds.**
- **Human Resources—Plans, develops, and implements a comprehensive human resource program for DEQ including recruitment, compensation, benefits, training, performance management, and employee relations.**
- **Facilities—Oversees buildings and communications systems and maintains vehicle fleet.**