



**IDAHO SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

REGULAR MEETING NOTICE & AGENDA

Idaho Soil & Water Conservation
Commission

August 22, 2024, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. MT

Location: Idaho Water Center, 322 E Front St, Suite 560, Conference
Room, Boise Zoom Call In # 1-253-205-0468

[ZOOM Meeting Link](#)

Zoom Meeting ID: **871 7582 6192** Zoom Passcode: **287754**

Members of the public may address any item on the Agenda during consideration of that item. Copies of agenda items, staff reports and/or written documentation relating to items of business on the agenda are on file in the office of the Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission in Boise. Upon request, copies can be emailed and will also be available for review at the meeting.

The Commission will occasionally convene in Executive Session, pursuant to Idaho Code § 74-206(1). Executive Session is closed to the public.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT COMPLIANCE

The meeting will be held in facilities that meet the accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you require special accommodations to attend, participate in, or understand the meeting, please contact the Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission at (208) 332-1790 or Info@swc.idaho.gov so advance arrangements can be made.

1.	WELCOME, SELF-INTRODUCTIONS, AND ROLL CALL	Chairman Olson
2.	AGENDA REVIEW (<u>potential action item</u>) The Agenda may be amended by formal Board action, if necessary, at the meeting. If so, a motion that states the reason for the amendment and the good faith reason the item was not included in the original agenda will be made and approved by the Board.	Chairman Olson
3.	PARTNER REPORTS (information only)	
4.	REPORTS – COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF ONLY <u>ACTION:</u> For information only.	Chairman Olson
5.	MINUTES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> July 18, 2024 Minutes <u>ACTION:</u> Approve/disapprove minutes as presented or as revised by board	Chairman Olson
6.	ENGINEERING REPORT <u>ACTION:</u> For information only.	Lillibridge

7.	<p>DISTRICT SUPPORT SERVICES REPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Survey Results • District Funds Allocation Update <p><u>ACTION:</u> Delegate a Commissioner to serve on the District Allocations Work Group</p>	Hitz
8..	<p>FISCAL REPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postponed until Special Commission meeting for FY 2026 Budget Approval next week. <p><u>ACTION:</u> Approve convening a Special Commission meeting at a date and time set by Commissioners but prior to August 30, 2024, for the purpose of approving our FY 2026 budget request.</p>	Ziegler
9.	<p>PERFORMANCE MEASURES REPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of FY 2024 Performance Measures Report • Approval by Board is required but must be postponed until after the required financial data is available. The Board will be asked to review and act on the PMR, along with our FY 2026 budget request, during a Special Commission meeting during the week of August 26, 2024. <p><u>ACTION:</u> For information only</p>	Trefz
10.	<p>ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing update • New WQPA video • CREP activities • RCRDP report schedule • Upcoming meeting schedule <p><u>ACTION:</u> For information only.</p>	Trefz
<p>ADJOURN <i>The next Regular Commission Meeting will be on September 19, 2024, at 10:00 AM MT in Boise,</i></p>		



Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission

322 E Front St, Suite 560 • Boise Idaho 83702
Telephone: 208-332-1790 • Fax: 208-332-1799

IDAHO SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION PUBLIC MEETING & TELECONFERENCE

Date and Time:

Thursday, July 18, 2024
10:08 am – 10:56 am MST

Location:

322 E. Front St., Suite 560
Boise, Idaho 83702

MINUTES

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

Erik Olson (Chair) (Zoom)	Joan Cloonan
Wendy Pratt (Vice Chair) (Zoom)	Richard Savage (Zoom)
Karen Sharpnack (Secretary) (Zoom)	Mitch Silvers (Zoom)

COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT:

Delwyne Trefz	Brenda Charles
Melonie Ziegler (Zoom)	Meghan Brooksher (Zoom)
Corri Parsley	Bill Lillibridge (Zoom)
George Hitz (Zoom)	Rob Sharpnack (Zoom)
Jake Connelley (Zoom)	Loretta Strickland (Zoom)
Sarah Quidgeon	

PARTNERS AND GUESTS PRESENT:

Marshall Toryanski, OAG
Karma Bragg, Custer County SWD

ITEM #1: WELCOME, SELF-INTRODUCTIONS AND ROLL CALL**PRESENTED BY: CHAIRMAN OLSON**

Chairman Olson called the meeting to order at 10:07 am.

Roll call: Chairman Erik Olson, Commissioners Joan Cloonan, Richard Savage, Wendy Pratt, Mitch Silvers, and Karen Sharpnack were present. Commissioner Blake Hollingsworth was absent.

ITEM #2: AGENDA REVIEW**PRESENTED BY: CHAIRMAN OLSON**

Action: None taken

ITEM #3: PARTNER REPORTS

Action: None taken

ITEM #4: REPORTS COMMISSIONERS & STAFF ONLY

Action: None taken

ITEM #5: DISTRICT BUDGET HEARING

Delwyne Trefz presented on the requested for Conservation District Funding for FY2026.

Action: A: No motion needed since we already distributed \$8,500/District Base and \$6,000/District Operations allocation to all Districts on July 8th.

B: Motion to distribute District match allocation in November per statue and rule, 1st by Commissioner Cloonan and 2nd by Commissioner Savage, motion passes by all.

ITEM #6: MINUTES

Action: Motion to approve Meeting Minutes for June 2024 Commission Meeting, made 1st by Commissioner Cloonan and 2nd by Commissioner Sharpnack, motion passes by all.

ITEM #7: STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Delwyne Trefz presented the FY 2025-2028 Strategic Plan update, this document serves as a guidance for our agency over the next four years.

Action: Motion to approve FY 2025-2028 draft strategic plan as presented or revised by board made 1st by Commissioner Pratt and 2nd by Commissioner Sharpnack, motion passes by all.

ITEM #8: FISCAL REPORT

Melonie Ziegler presented information on completing the FY 2024 Fiscal Year-End checklist, deadlines, and processes. Next on fiscal’s focus is FY 2024 Closing Packages, FY 2025 Spending Plan Development, and FY 2026 Budget Request.

Action: None taken

ITEM #9: ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

Delwyne Trefz announced that George Hitz has been promoted to the position of Operations Manager/ Deputy Administrator. CREP is still working with partners at FSA to resolve the issue of us having received inadequate appropriations to cover our estimated FY 2025 financial commitment to our program participants. Loretta is working with all field staff and conservation districts to execute WQPA grant agreements and contracts that were approved in our June meeting. Finally, the schedule of our Commissioner Meetings through June 2025 along with the date for the IASCD Conference being held in Idaho Falls November 12th -14th.

Action: None taken

ADJOURN:

The meeting was moved to adjourn by 1st Commissioner Cloonan and 2nd by Commissioner Silvers, motion approved at 10:56 AM. The next Regular Commission Meeting will be on Thursday August 22nd, at 10:00 AM MT in Boise, Idaho.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Sharpnack



SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION
COMMISSION

Chairman

Erik Olson
Vice Chairman

Wendy Pratt
Secretary

Joan Cloonan
Commissioner

Karen Sharpnack
Commissioner

Richard Savage
Commissioner

Mitch Silvers
Commissioner

Blake
Hollingsworth
Commissioner

Delwyne Trefz
Administrator

MEMO

**TO: COMMISSIONERS OLSON, PRATT, CLOONAN, SHARPBACK,
SAVAGE, SILVERS, AND HOLLINGSWORTH**
FROM: BILL LILLIBRIDGE, LEAD ENGINEER
DATE: AUGUST 22, 2024
RE: ENGINEERING REPORT – SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

One the following table, I am tracking new and ongoing projects, along with completed projects this past fiscal year and new designs I have taken on. The table is solely for projects that require SWC engineering support.

This spring I was focused on working with our Natural Resources Conservationists on grant writing – both for our own WQPA program and for other programs including 319. This included new field visits, draft design work, and cost estimating.

Construction season will be starting soon on a few projects related to road culverts and surfacing. With the extreme heat lately, we are holding off on any bank work that requires planting until later in the fall once temperatures cool to improve planting survival.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: For information only

ATTACHMENT: Table of FY 2024 Engineering Accomplishments

Division	District	New 319	New Other	Ongoing 319	Ongoing Other	2024 WQPA/ Ag BMP	Unfunded	Total	Comp. 319 FY2024	Comp. Other FY2024	Comp. WQPA 2024	New Design
1	Benevah			2			2	4	1			
1	Bonner	2				1		3			1	
1	Boundary						2	2				
1	Kootenai - Shoshone	2		2		1	7	12	1	4	1	2
2	Clearwater			1				1				1
2	Idaho	2			1	1	5	9		1	1	1
2	Latah						1					
2	Lewis						3	3				2
2	Nez Perce				3					2		2
3	Adams	1					7	8				2
3	Squaw Creek				2	1		3		1	0	
3	Valley			2	1		1	4				
3	Weiser River					2	2	4	3		0	
4	Camas						1	1				1
5	Bear Lake	1		3			1	5				3
5	Caribou							0				
6	Custer				1			1				
6	Teton	1						1				
	Totals	9	0	10		6	32	61	5	8	3	14



**SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION
COMMISSION**

Erik Olson
Chair

Wendy Pratt
Vice Chair

Karen Sharpnack
Secretary

Blake Hollingsworth
Treasurer

Joan Cloonan, PhD, JD
Commissioner

Richard Savage
Commissioner

Mitch Silvers
Commissioner

Delwyne Trefz
Administrator

**TO: CHAIRMAN OLSON AND COMMISSIONERS CLOONAN,
HOLLINGSWORTH, PRATT, SAVAGE, SHARPBACK, and SILVERS**
FROM: GEORGE HITZ, DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR
DATE: AUGUST 22, 2024
RE: DISTRICT SUPPORT SERVICES

District Survey Summary and Update

The FY24 District Survey, due July 31st each year and included as Attachment #1, was sent out to District staff and supervisors on May 7th. We have used the same concise survey format consisting of two questions for the last four years. Districts were asked to submit one response per District and to note the date of board approval on the survey. District participation was at 80%, with 40 districts submitting completed surveys. Several Districts also took the time to provide both comments and feedback which is appreciated.

Table 1. FY24 Survey Results

Survey Statement	Response Options	Responses	Percentage of Responses
1. Our Board is satisfied with the services and programs provided by the Commission over the past fiscal year.	Agree	39	97.5%
	Neutral	1	2.5%
	Disagree	0	0.0%
2. Our Board is satisfied with the effectiveness of the communication received from the Commission over the past fiscal year.	Agree	38	95.0%
	Neutral	2	5.0%
	Disagree	0	0.0%

Using the same survey format for the last four years allows us to track our progress and performance, based on surveys completed.

Table 2. 4-year Comparison

FY	# of Surveys Returned	% of Responses That Agree	
		Question 1	Question 2
2021	37	78%	89%
2022	38	82%	87%
2023	41	95%	97.5%
2024	40	97.5%	95%

District Funds Allocation Update

\$725,000 of Trustee and Benefit funds were processed for distribution to Districts in late July. The per District breakdown is as follows:

\$8,500 for District Base

\$6,000 for District Operations

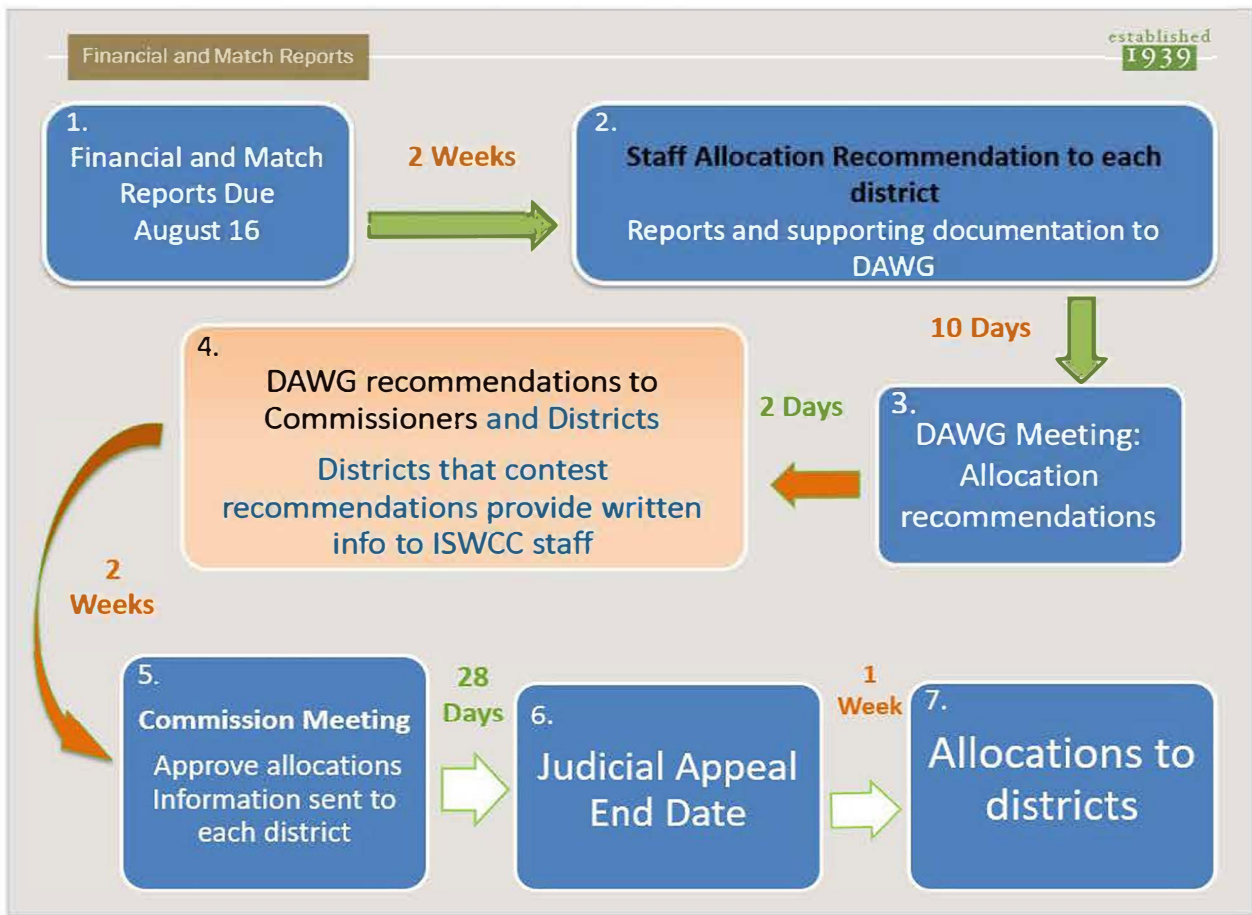
A total of \$858,800 (\$1,583,800- \$725,000) is available for distribution to Districts as match allocations in November. Senate Bill 1373 increased the money available for match by \$75,400 over the amount available in FY 2024. District financial and match reports were due August 16th. Staff will review the reports, make recommendations regarding which local support is eligible for match and communicate that recommendation to each District no later than August 30th. A District Allocations Work Group (DAWG) meeting will be scheduled in September.

The financial and match funding process is shown in Attachment #2.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Delegate a Commissioner to serve on the District Allocations Work Group

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 2024 District survey blank
2. Financial and Match Funding Process Timeline



established
1939

AUGUST	16								
1. Financial and Match Reports Due									
AUGUST	30		SEPTEMBER						
2. Reports and supporting documentation to DAWG, Staff allocation recommendations to districts									
			SEPTEMBER	9		SEPTEMBER	11		
			3. DAWG Meeting: Allocation Recommendations			4. DAWG recommendations to Commissioners and districts; Districts provide written info to ISWCC staff			
						SEPTEMBER	25		
						5. COMMISSION MEETING. Approved allocations information sent to each district. Judicial Appeal Start Date			
						OCTOBER	24		
						6. Judicial Appeal End Date			
						NOVEMBER	1		
						7. Allocations sent to districts			

IDAHO

Conservation the Idaho Way: Sowing the Seeds of Stewardship



**SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION
COMMISSION**

Erik Olson
Chair

Wendy Pratt
Vice Chair

Karen Sharpnack
Secretary

Blake Hollingsworth
Treasurer

Joan Cloonan PhD, JD
Commissioner

Richard Savage
Commissioner

Mitch Silvers
Commissioner

Delwyne Trefz
Administrator

**TO: CHAIRMAN OLSON AND COMMISSIONERS CLOONAN,
HOLLINGSWORTH, PRATT, SAVAGE, SHARPNACK, and SILVERS**
FROM: DELWYNE TREFZ, ADMINISTRATOR
DATE: AUGUST 22, 2024
RE: PERFORMANCE MEASURES REPORT

FY 2024 PERFORMANCE MEASURES REPORT

Agency FY 2024 Performance Measures Reports (PMR) must be submitted to the Division of Financial Management (DFM) no later than August 30, 2024. The attached draft report shows our target and actual accomplishments relative to each performance measure for FY 2024 as well as the FY 2025 targets for each. What isn't shown in this draft is a summary of the financial information which will populate the FY 2024 column of the "Revenue and Expenditures" table on the first page of the report. This information must be extracted from Luma and, as with the financial data our Financial Manager spoke of in her report, we don't yet have access to that information. Believing that the data will be available prior to next week's special meeting, you will have opportunity to review and approve this report at that time.

Today, I want to walk you through the various performance measures included in our report and explain how these measures were arrived at. Please refer to the attached FY 2024 Performance Report and FY 2024-2027 Strategic Plan.

As reported during your July 18th meeting, our DFM analyst and I have committed to reviewing and updating our Strategic Plan and PMR this fall. Please draw my attention to any revisions you'd like to discuss, either as we're going through these documents today, or at any other time that an idea comes to you. Prior to implementing any changes, I'll bring the revised documents to your board for approval.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

ATTACHMENTS:

- 1. FY 2024 Performance Report
- 2. FY 2024-2027 Strategic Plan

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 assist local conservation districts in their efforts to reduce 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 2024 by seven Commissioners appointed by the Governor: Chairman Erik Olson, Vice Chair Wendy Pratt, Secretary Karen Sharpnack, Treasurer Blake Hollingsworth, and members Mitchell Silvers, Joan Cloonan, and Richard Savage. The administrator was Delwyne Trefz. In FY 2024, the agency had 17.75 administrative and technical FTPs located in offices around the state.

Core Functions/Idaho Code

1. **District Support and Services:** provides technical, financial, and other assistance to Idaho's 50 conservation districts.
2. **Comprehensive Conservation Services:** provides and 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 fiscally responsible operations to support Commissioners, programs, and staff.
4. **Outreach:** engages local, state, and federal partners, non-governmental organizations, and resource and agricultural production groups to promote agricultural stewardship and voluntary conservation.

Revenue and Expenditures

Revenue	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
General Fund	2,695,800	2,967,200	3,370,200	
Receipts (Idle Fund Interest)	2,006	10,939	2,200	
RCRDP Loan Program	745,910	554,314	715,500	
SRF Loan Program	78,408	139,356	0	
Federal Grant Funds	*(12,149)	12,149	0	
Total	3,522,124	3,683,958	4,087,900	
Expenditures	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Personnel Costs	1,255,777	1,267,957	1,453,900	
Operating Expenditures	252,924	294,862	252,400	
Capital Outlay	0	0	20,500	
Trustee/Benefit Districts	1,166,700	1,428,100	1,508,400	
Trustee/Benefit CREP			190,000	
Trustee/Benefit WQPA FY 2023 Supplemental			4,729,900	
RCRDP Loan Disbursements	349,169	785,344	2,057,800	
DEQ Loan	79,147	93,450	0	
Federal Grant Funds	0	0	0	
Total	3,103,717	3,869,713	10,212,900	

*Adjust to FY - Federal Grant Funds Billed in FY 2021 – Revenue Received in FY 2022

Profile of Cases Managed and/or Key Services Provided *

Cases Managed and/or Key Services Provided	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Landowners assisted in their conservation efforts (number) §22-2718 IC; ISWCC FY2024-2027 Strategic Plan, pg. 2-3.	328	973	1,053	1,031
Administrative, technical & engineering assistance provided to Conservation Districts (staff hours) §22-2718 IC.	10,860	11,697	10,476	11,986
Technical assistance provided to landowners enrolled in the USDA Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (staff hours) §22-2718 IC; ISWCC FY2024-2027 Strategic Plan, pg. 2-3.	3,230	4,279	2,923	2,771
Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Agricultural Implementation Plans developed (number) ² §39-3601 et. seq. IC; Federal Clean Water Act (PL 92-500); ISWCC FY2024-2027 Strategic Plan, pg. 2-3.	7	5	2	2

¹ For the FY 2022 Performance Report, the key services summarized in earlier versions of this table were revised to more accurately reflect services provided directly by ISWCC.

² The number of Implementation Plans ISWCC completes each year depends in part upon the number of Total Maximum Daily Loads completed and approved by IDEQ and EPA.

FY 2024 Performance Highlights

During FY 2024 ISWCC field staff expended 10,476 hours in support of conservation projects administered by the 50 Conservation Districts across the state. Staff provided a wide range of administrative, technical, and engineering services as requested by Districts. The Commission published monthly issues of our newsletter **Conservation the Idaho Way** to a distribution list of 676 subscribers. Each newsletter includes an in-depth story which highlights either the activities of one Conservation District or an issue of interest to the conservation community.

The 2022 Legislature provided a \$5M supplemental appropriation for ISWCC's Water Quality Program for Agriculture (WQPA), to be expended before the end of FY 2024. WQPA funds were available to conservation districts and others in need of financial assistance to implement projects designed to conserve water quality and water quantity. ISWCC approved 47 projects sponsored by 32 different conservation districts. Of the \$5M appropriation, \$4,729,900 was disbursed in FY 2024 and \$156,092 was encumbered into FY 2025. These funds, when leveraged with landowner and other funds, enabled implementation of conservation projects with a total cost of \$17.3M. The balance of the appropriation, \$114,008 reverted to the general fund.

Following on the success of the FY 2023/2023 WPA program, the 2023 Legislature appropriated an additional \$5M supplemental to fund WQPA through the end of FY 2025.

Part II – Performance Measures

Note: ISWCC has reworked its Strategic Plan and Performance Measures Report to more closely reflect DFM requirements. These new performance measures were implemented beginning in FY 2021.

Performance Measure		FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
District Support & Services						
Percentage of those Conservation Districts who responded to the ISWCC annual survey and expressed satisfaction with the services & programs provided §22-2718(4-5) IC; ISWCC FY2024-2027 Strategic Plan, pg. 4.	actual	78	82	95	97.5	
	target	90	90	90	95	95
Percentage of those Conservation Districts who responded to the ISWCC annual survey and expressed satisfaction with the effectiveness of the communications received from the Commission §22-2718(4-5) IC; ISWCC FY2024-2027 Strategic Plan, pg. 4.	actual	89	87	97.5	95	
	target	90	90	90	95	95
Percentage of requests submitted by Conservation Districts through the Technical Assistance Allocation Process (TAAP) that receive the requested assistance §22-2718(4-5) IC; ISWCC FY2024-2027 Strategic Plan, pg. 4.	actual	93	90	92	96	
	target	90	90	90	90	90
Conservation Programs & Services						
Number of acres enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) over which technical leadership and guidance is provided. §22-2715 et. seq. IC; Revised CREP Agreement of 2021 between Idaho and USDA CCC; Federal: 16 U.S.C. § 3830, et. seq.; ISWCC FY2024-2027 Strategic Plan, pg. 4.	actual	18,432	18,262	11,442*	9,705	
	target	20,000	15,000	11,288	12,000	12,000

Acres improved with implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) and facilitated by Resource Conservation & Rangeland Development Program (RCRDP) funding. §§22-2730 through 22-2732 IC; IDAPA 60.05.01 Subchapter A; ISWCC FY2024-2027 Strategic Plan, pg. 5.	actual	331	1,482	2,853**	8,221	
	target	600	600	1,000	1,000	2,000
Number of acres with Best Management Practices (BMPs) implemented to maintain and improve Ground Water Quality §22-2716, et. seq. IC; §39-3601, et. seq. IC; ISWCC FY2024-2027 Strategic Plan, pg. 5.	actual	47,264	48,813	55,029	63,075	
	target	54,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Percentage of Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) implementation plans completed within 18 months of the TMDL having been approved by the Environmental Protection Agency §39-3602 IC; Federal Clean Water Act (PL 92-500); ISWCC FY2024-2027 Strategic Plan, pg. 5.	actual	90	90	0	33	
	target	100	100	100	100	100
Performance Measure		FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Communication & Outreach						
Increase the number of newsletter subscribers §22-2718(4-5) IC; ISWCC FY2024-2027 Strategic Plan, pg. 6.	actual	22	25	26	33	
	target	20	20	25	25	25
Increase annual percentage of social media reach, likes, and follows §22-2718(4-5) IC; ISWCC FY2024-2027 Strategic Plan, pg. 6.	actual	6	9.5	2.7***	6.8	
	target	10%	10%	10%	10	10
Increase number of additional partner projects in Tracker §22-2718(4-5) IC; ISWCC FY2024-2027 Strategic Plan, pg. 6.	actual	7	5	0****	0	
	target	6	6	6	0	0

Performance Measure Explanatory Notes

* The decrease in CREP acreage is due to contracts expiring and not being renewed, largely driven by high commodity prices.

** The increase in the number of acres that were improved with assistance of RCRDP loan funds is largely due to two individual loans which together accounted for greater than 50% of the total acreage treated using the program.

*** The decrease in the growth of our social media reach is due to a change in the methodology used to estimate this metric.

**** The decrease in number of additional partner projects created in Tracker is due to partners placing low priority on creating and entering records of their projects in Tracker, prioritizing instead the development of implementation projects funded by our Water Quality Program for Agriculture and other programs.

For More Information Contact

Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission
322 East Front Street, Suite 560
Boise, ID 83702
Phone: (208) 332-1790
Fax: (208) 332-1799
E-mail: info@swc.idaho.gov

MISSION

To assist Conservation District supervisors in the carrying out of their non-regulatory and voluntarily initiated natural resources conservation programs and to coordinate with local, state, and federal partners the implementation of conservation systems to sustain, improve, and enhance Idaho's soil, water, air, plant, and animal resources.

VISION

Natural resources conservation in Idaho is driven by local 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 provide assistance to private landowners and land users in the conservation, sustainment, improvement and enhancement of Idaho's natural resources.

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

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 and/or fewer conservation dollars.

FY 2024-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN

CORE FUNCTIONS & KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

FY 2023 GOALS	FY 2023 OBJECTIVES	FY 2023 KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY 2023 PERFORMANCE TARGETS/BENCHMARKS
1. Support Districts' Voluntary Conservation Efforts	Build Support in State & Local Partnerships 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 ¹	Satisfy 90% of Conservation Districts with Commission services and programs
		Percentage of Conservation Districts satisfied with the effectiveness of the communications received from the Commission ²	Satisfy 90% of Conservation Districts with communication effectiveness
		Percentage of requests submitted by Conservation Districts through the Technical Assistance Allocation Process (TAAP) that receive the requested assistance ³	Provide 90% of Conservation District requests for technical assistance in whole or in part
Provide Conservation Programs & Services	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) 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 ⁴	Provide technical leadership and guidance for 20,000 acres enrolled in CREP

¹ Developed in collaboration with legislators and partners in 2012.

² Targeted to determine achievement of IC 2217(4)(b).

³ Established by Board to track delivery of Technical Assistance hours to Districts.

⁴ 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.

FY 2024-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN

FY 2023 GOALS	FY 2023 OBJECTIVES	FY 2023 KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY 2023 PERFORMANCE TARGETS/BENCHMARKS
2. Provide Conservation Programs & Services (continued)	Resource Conservation & Rangeland Development Program (RCRDP) 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 ⁵	Implement BMPs on 600 acres facilitated by RCRDP funding
	Ground Water Quality/Nitrate Priority Areas 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 ⁵	Facilitate BMP implementation on 54,000 acres of cropland
	Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Planning Program 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) ⁶	Complete 100% of TMDL implementation plans within 18 months of EPA approval and DEQ assignment to the Commission

⁵ As defined in Idaho Agricultural Best Management Practices Field Guide for Evaluating BMP Effectiveness (rev. April 2013).

⁶ Established in Idaho Nonpoint Source Management Plan 1999.



FY 2024-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN

FY 2023 GOALS	FY 2023 OBJECTIVES	FY 2023 KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES	FY 2023 PERFORMANCE TARGETS/BENCHMARKS
3. Conduct Outreach & Communication	Conduct Outreach & Communication 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 newsletter subscribers ⁷	Increase subscriptions by 20 annually
		Increase annual percentage of social media reach, likes, and follows ⁷	Increase social media reach, likes, and follows by 10% annually
4. Other Strategic Plan Requirements	Executive Order 2017-02 , adopt the NIST Cybersecurity Framework and implement CIS Critical Security Controls 1-5 (updated 05/26/2020)	As a technology customer of the Office of Information Technology Services (ITS) in the Governor’s Office, we are using the cybersecurity systems and technical expertise in ITS to fulfill requirements related to Executive Order 2017-02. Staff from ITS were briefed on the NIST Core Framework, CIS Controls 1-5, and their plan for adoption of the NIST Cybersecurity Framework. We participate in DHR and ITS administered cybersecurity training, as awareness is a critical component of an effective cybersecurity program. As briefed by ITS staff, implementation of the CIS Controls 1-5 will be their responsibility for the systems they operate and, as technological tools applied to the computer systems, largely invisible to us as a customer. ITS, working through the multi-agency Incident Response Task Force, has developed an Incident Response Program in support of our agency.	

⁷ Established by ISWCC Board.

⁸ Established to drive expansion of reporting on voluntary conservation projects in Idaho.



**SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION
COMMISSION**

Erik Olson
Chair

Wendy Pratt
Vice Chair

Karen Sharpnack
Secretary

Blake Hollingsworth
Treasurer

Joan Cloonan PhD, JD
Commissioner

Richard Savage
Commissioner

Mitch Silvers
Commissioner

Delwyne Trefz
Administrator

**TO: CHAIRMAN OLSON AND COMMISSIONERS CLOONAN,
HOLLINGSWORTH, PRATT, SAVAGE, SHARPNACK, and SILVERS**
FROM: DELWYNE TREFZ, ADMINISTRATOR
DATE: AUGUST 22, 2024
RE: ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

STAFFING UPDATE

Since our July Board meeting, Natural Resource Conservationist (NRC) Brent Ure has left us to accept a position with NRCS. For the past year Brent has done a fine job serving the Portneuf, Oneida, Franklin, Bear Lake, and Caribou conservation districts in Division 5, and we'll miss him. The position Brent vacated has been advertised, 15 individuals applied, we are interviewing the top candidates now and hope to have the position filled by an outstanding new NRC before the middle of September.

WATER QUALITY PROGRAM FOR AGRICULTURE (WQPA) VIDEO

Steve Stuebner has produced a very nice 9-minute-long video which provides information about and promotes our WQPA program. The video highlights a couple of great WQPA projects and features clips of Governor Little and JFAC member Representative Miller emphasizing how important water quality and quantity are to Idaho, and attesting to the important role WQPA plays in addressing water issues throughout the state. Thank you, Governor Little and Representative Miller, for your support.

There are links to the full video as well to a 1 ½ minute teaser version on the home page of our web site (swc.idaho.gov) and on our Facebook page (Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission). The full video and teaser are also available on our YouTube channel and can be accessed using the QR code in this month's newsletter or by navigating to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a3hsRGd1ekM>.

Huge thanks to Steve for creating this great video and to the Portneuf and Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Districts and commission staff, Eileen, Bill, and George, who worked with him!

CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (CREP) ACTIVITY

You'll recall that during your May 23rd meeting I reported that, in response to projections which indicated that our FY 2025 appropriation was not adequate to provide landowners participating in CREP with the full cash payments the Revised CREP Agreement commits us to provide, USDA sent us a draft amendment to the CREP agreement suspending enrollment of additional acreage until we had adequate money to honor our commitment. During your June and July meetings CREP Manager Rob Sharpnack and I reported that, due to a decline in the acreage

enrolled in the program we now believe we have adequate funds for FY 2025.

July 2nd, Rob sent an email to the state and federal USDA-FSA staff responsible for administration of our CREP informing them that, based on their numbers and ours, our appropriation for FY 2025 is adequate to meet the state's commitment to provide cash payments to participating landowners, and asking them to notify us in writing that the impending suspension has been lifted. We received no response from USDA-FSA until Sunday, August 11, when Kimberly Martin, CREP Program Manager with the USDA-FSA, emailed us revised versions of the CREP amendments she had sent us in June. In her email, Kimberly stated "It is important that we act on both documents immediately and once finalized, get Amendments 1 and 2 signed before September 30, 2024."

Rob forwarded the draft amendments and Kimberly's email to DAG David Perkins and arranged for the three of us to meet on August 14th to review the amendments and chart a course forward. Our action plan includes scheduling a meeting with Kimberly and her USDA-FSA colleagues to clarify certain aspects of their amendment which appear not to be practical, functionally. We don't intend to sign any amendment until we're certain that all parties—USDA-FSA, IDWR, and us—understand every nuance and agree the amendment is functionally sound.

Another CREP issue has emerged which involves \$25,201.59 worth of landowner payments we believe we should not have made. What happened is that, per established CREP procedures, FSA provided Rob with a list of CREP contracts which included the annual rental rate for each, and we calculated and paid the amount of state money due each contract holder based on this information. For 2022 and 2023, the list provided us by FSA included two contracts which in fact were not contracts. We learned subsequently that the contracts in question involved landowners who had applied to enroll land in CREP but were denied by FSA because the landowner's Adjusted Gross Income was above that allowed by the program. Somehow, in the information USDA-FSA provided to us, the acreage these landowners had wanted to enroll in the program was recorded as being under contract, and so we paid the landowners as if their acreage was enrolled.

After consulting with Mr. Perkins, we are proceeding with a plan to recover the money mistakenly disbursed, beginning with a friendly letter from Rob to the recipients of those funds. The problem of FSA providing us with inaccurate information appears to be the consequence of communications problems within USDA-FSA. Rob has brought this matter to the attention of USDA-FSA staff who have committed to doing a better job of making certain the information they provide us is accurate.

RESOURCE CONSERVATION & RANGELAND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (RCRDP) REPORT SCHEDULE

Historically, Loan Officer Terry Hoebelheinrich presents his annual RCRDP report, marketing plan, and recommended rate adjustments during your August board meeting. This year we agreed to put Terry's report off until your September 19th meeting so he can factor into his

recommendations any adjustments to the federal funds rate that may be made by the Fed during their next meeting, scheduled for the September 17th and 18th.

UPCOMING COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE

Please note that all meetings listed as Regular Meetings will be held in person and/or via video conference and teleconference. If necessary, additional Special Meetings can be added within the proper public meeting noticing requirements.

Also note that although the table shows Board meetings scheduled for October 2024 and March 2025, your Board typically doesn't meet in October or March as Commissioners and staff participate in IASCD Fall Division meetings those months.

2024 SWCC Meeting Schedule

Date & Time	Location	Meeting Type
Aug XX, 2024	322 E. Front Street, Suite 560, Boise	Special
Sep 19, 2024, 10-3 MT	322 E. Front Street, Suite 560, Boise	Regular
Oct 17, 2024, 10-3 MT	322 E. Front Street, Suite 560, Boise	Regular
Nov 12, 2024, 4-5 MT	Idaho Falls, ID	IASCD/ISWCC Joint Directors & Commissioners Meeting
Dec 19, 2024, 10-3 MT	322 E. Front Street, Suite 560, Boise	Regular
Jan 2025, Time TBD	Will be scheduled to coincide with the IASCD Legislative Social	Regular
Feb 17, 2025, Time TBD	322 E. Front Street, Suite 560, Boise Scheduled to coincide with the Larry Branen Idaho Ag Summit	Regular
Mar 20, 2025, 10-3 MT	322 E. Front Street, Suite 560, Boise	Regular
Apr 17, 2025, 10-3 MT	322 E. Front Street, Suite 560, Boise	Regular
May 22, 2025, 10-3 MT	322 E. Front Street, Suite 560, Boise	Regular
Jun 19, 2025, 10-3 MT	322 E. Front Street, Suite 560, Boise	Regular

RECOMMENDED ACTION: For information only