

ABSTRACT

STRATEGY FOR SUCCESSFUL TMDL IMPLEMENTATION

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In 1995, the Idaho legislature passed Idaho Code § 39-3601 which restructured the administration of water quality laws in the State of Idaho. This important legislation made two significant impacts on the Idaho Soil Conservation Commission (ISCC) and the 51 Soil Conservation Districts it serves.

First, the ISCC was defined as the designated agency for agriculture and grazing. Second, community-based citizen advisory committees Basin Advisory Groups (BAGs) and Watershed Advisory Groups (WAGs) were established. These groups were established to make recommendations to the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality regarding the proper management of impaired watersheds, prioritization of impaired waters, development of total maximum daily loads (TMDLs) and pollution control strategies.

This presentation highlighted challenges encountered and solutions developed by the ISCC and the Soil Conservation Districts. As the new roles and responsibilities of the Commission were defined, water quality goals and objectives were reprioritized and implementation programs were realigned. The Commission worked to strengthen existing partnerships and build working relationships with BAGs and WAGs.

Emphasizing the work of the interagency TMDL Technical Committee, this presentation will outline the 2003 Agricultural Action Plan along with a summary progress report of current TMDL watershed planning and implementation status.