

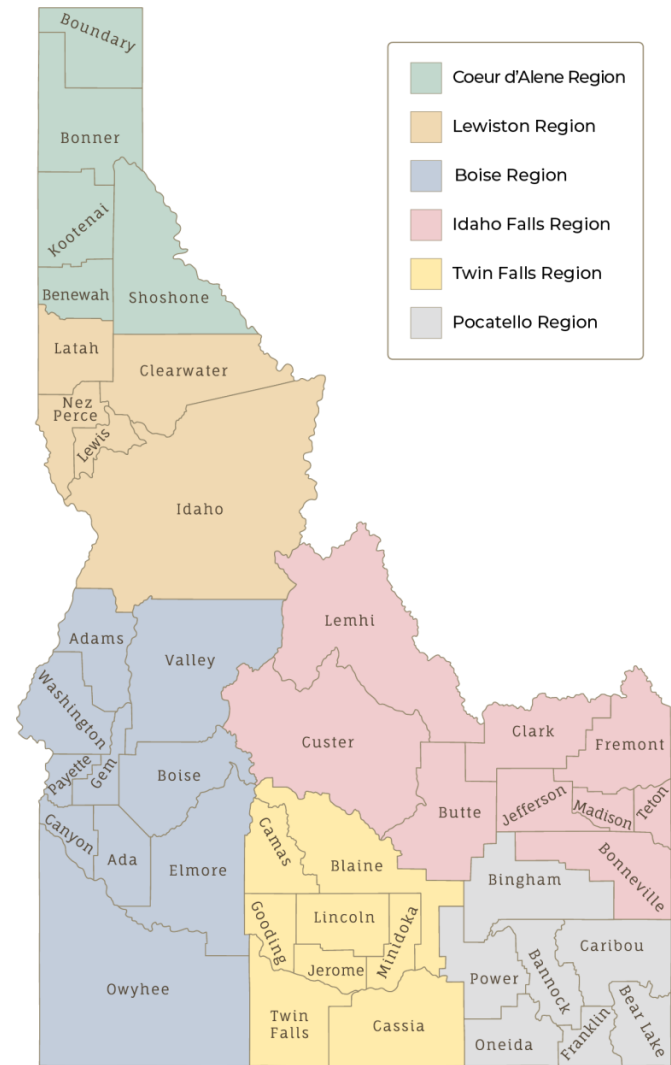
Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

Water Quality Program Updates
Alex Bell – Water Quality manager



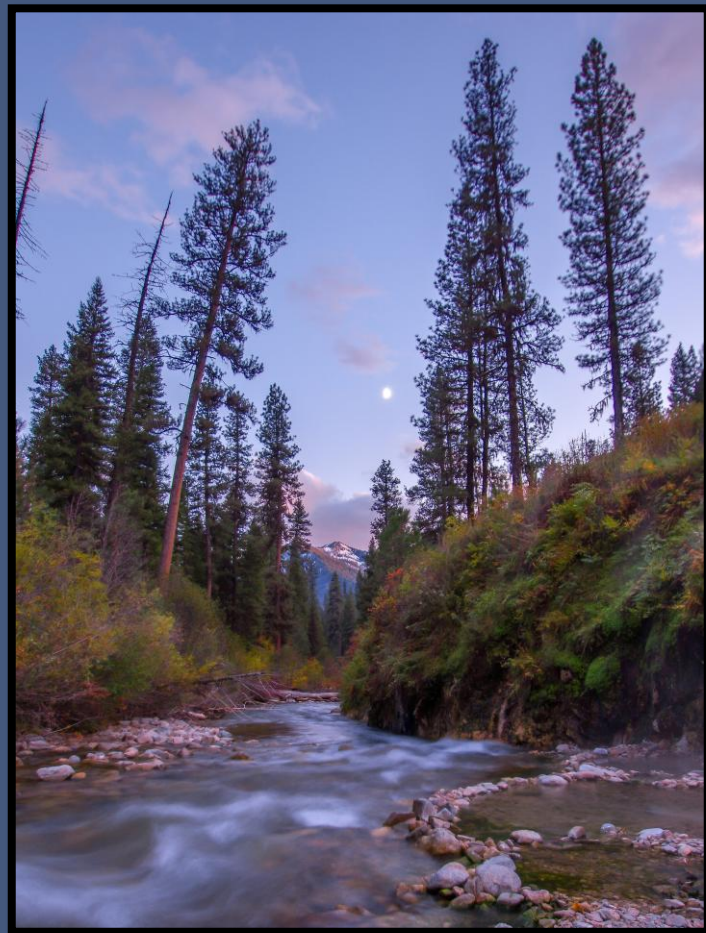
The DEQ Mission

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

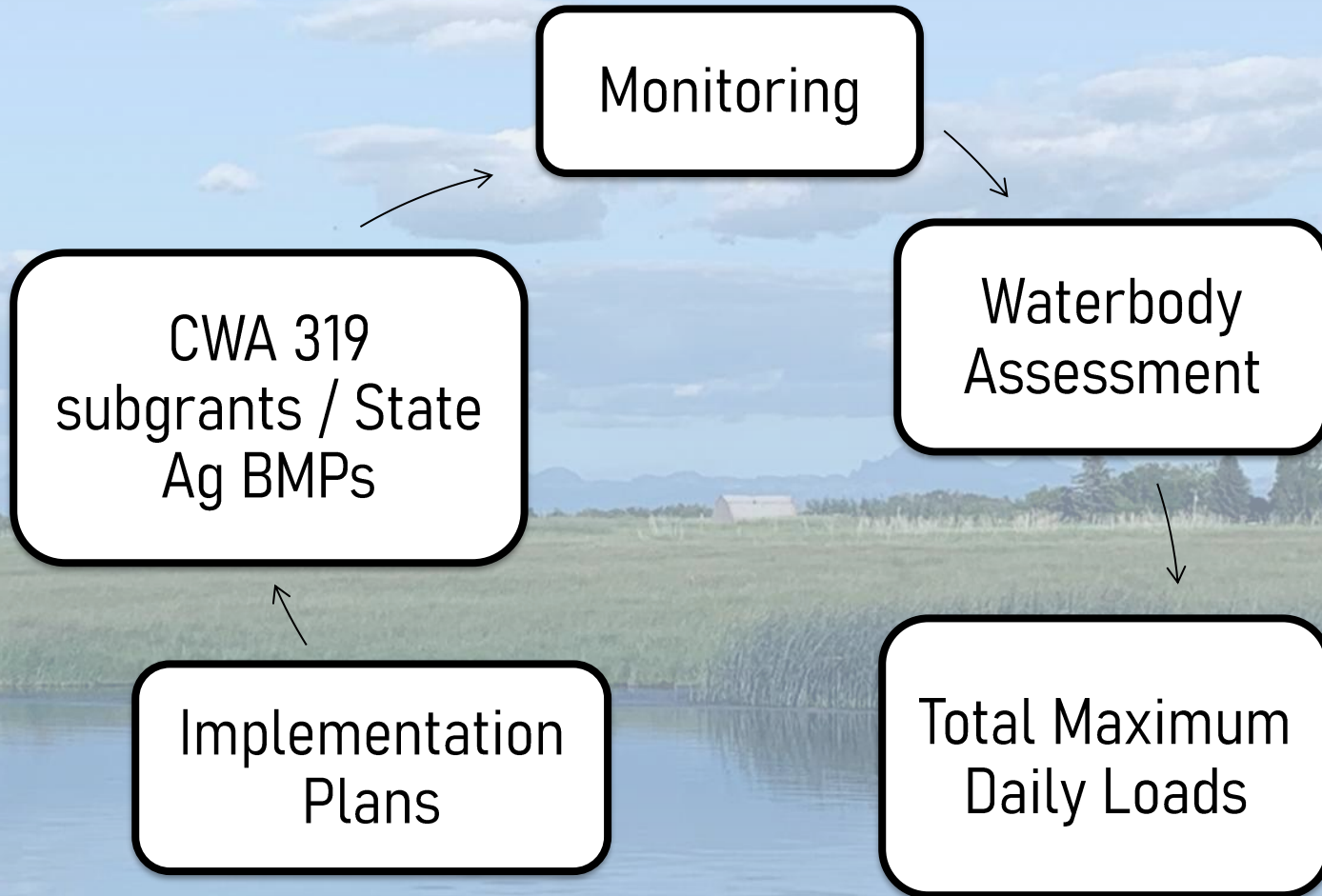


Presentation Overview

1. Water Quality Monitoring
2. Water Body Assessment
3. Pollution Clean Up Plans
4. Water quality funding
5. Permits and certifications
6. Regional projects



Non-Point Source Pollution Management



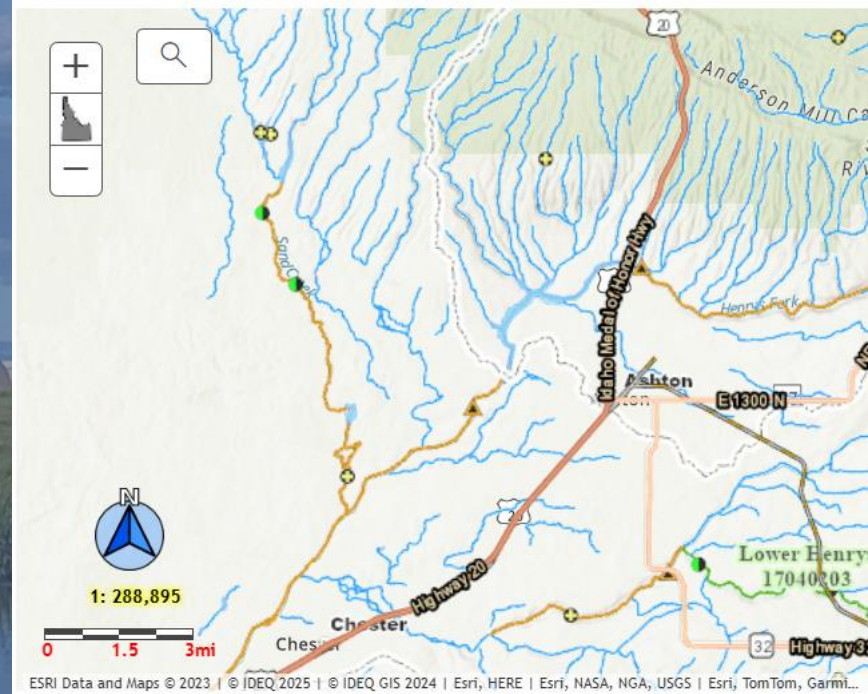
Beneficial Use Reconnaissance Program

cancelled for 2026 season

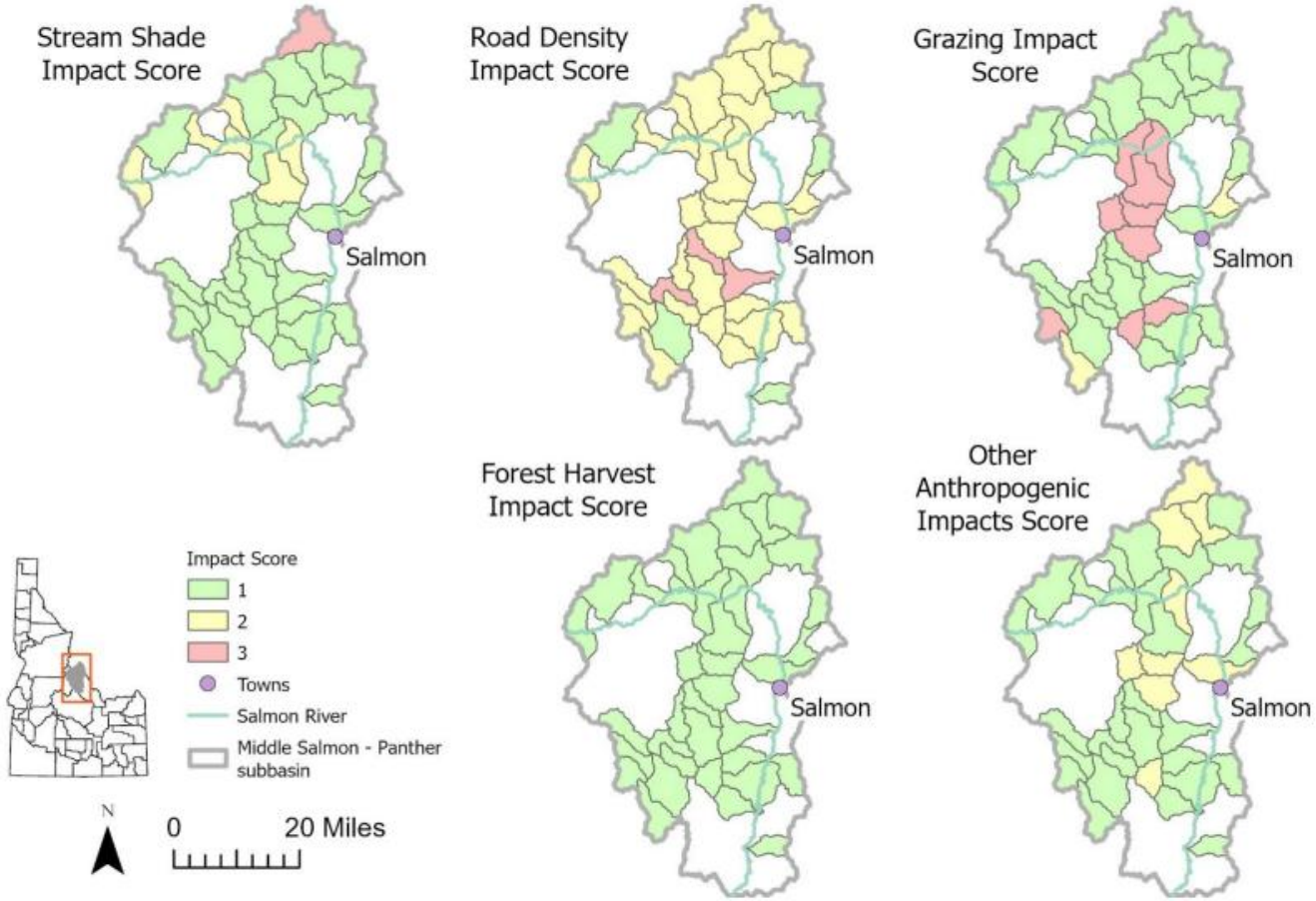


2026 Draft Integrated Report: Waterbody assessments

- Statewide water quality report
 - Monitor, assess, track WQ
- Clean Water Act Requirement
- List of Impaired Waters
- Public Comment



What are 'background conditions'?

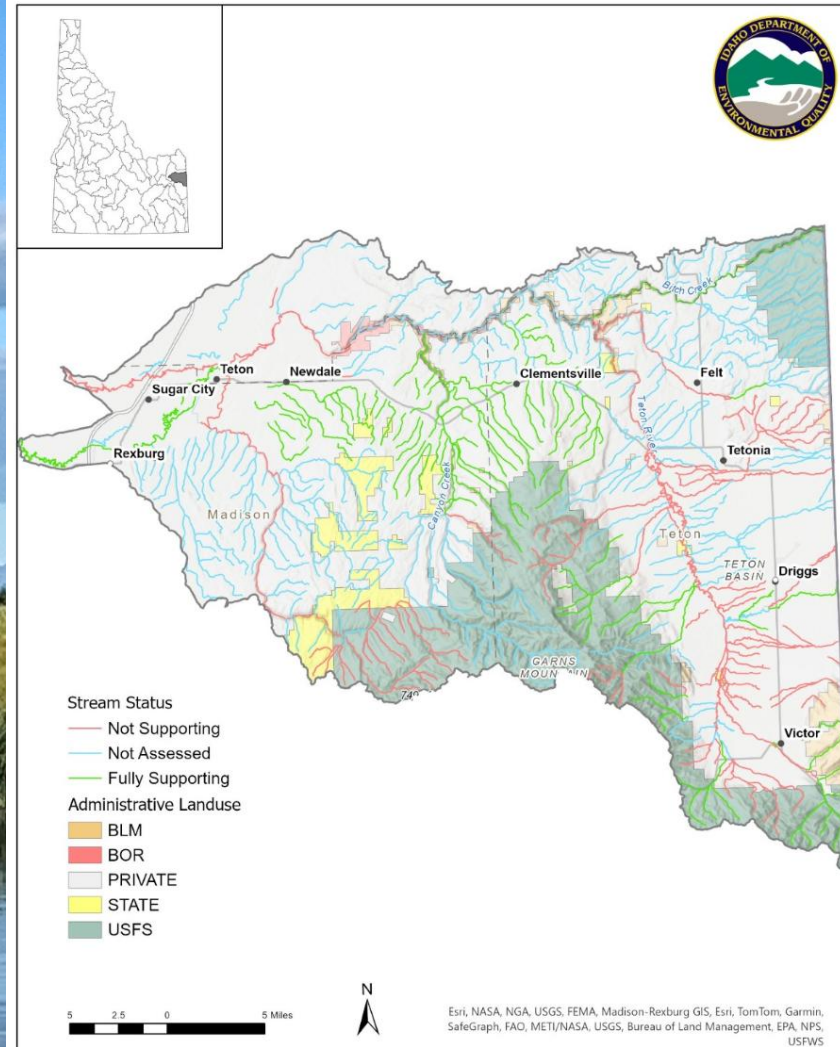


Pollution Clean up Plans

Total Maximum Daily Loads = How pollution can be in river or stream and still provide all beneficial uses?

Beneficial uses = recreation, aquatic life, salmonid spawning

Pollutants = Sediment, nutrients, temperature, bacteria, metals, toxins, etc



Upper Snake Pollution Clean Up Plans

Teton River Watershed

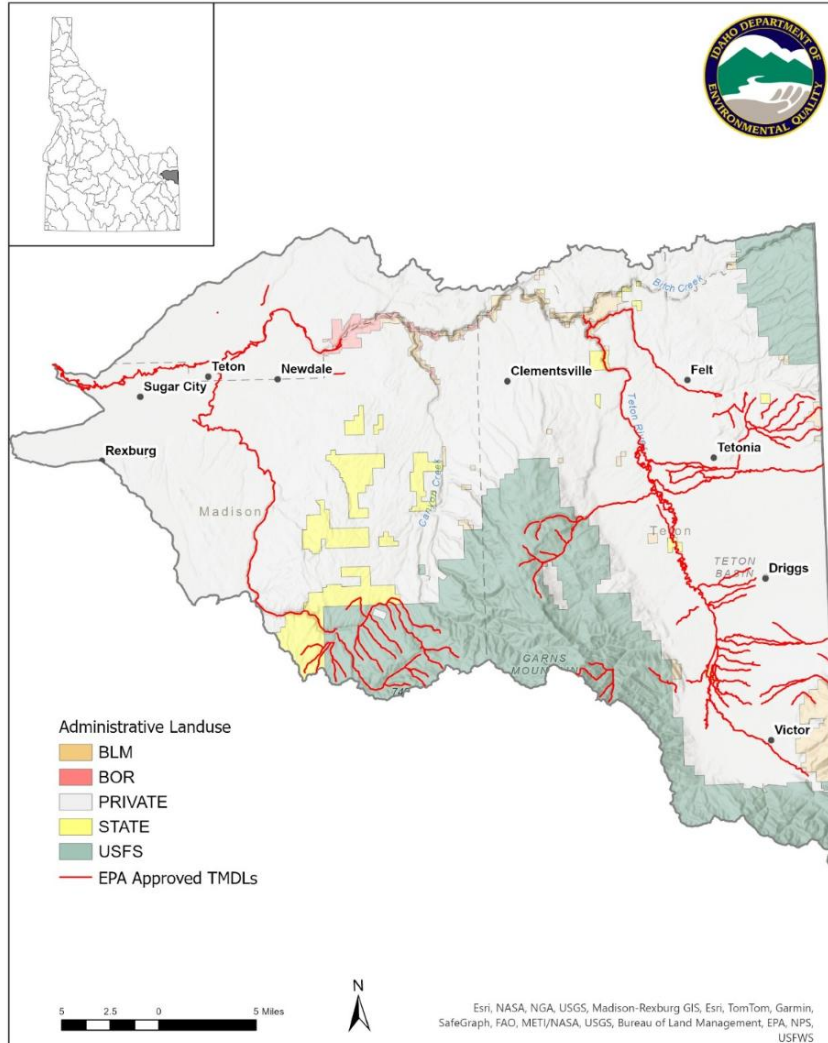
2024-2025 - Collected updated Water Quality Data

2026 - Developed New TMDLs; Draft Report of Existing

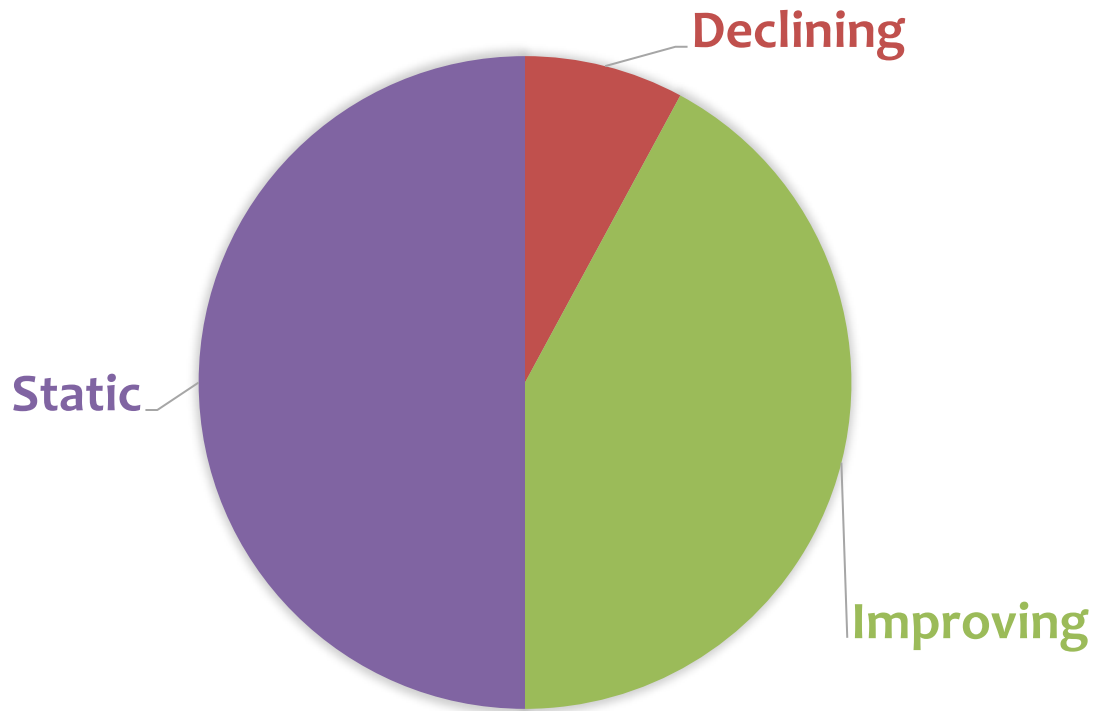
Medicine Lodge

2025- 2026 - Collected updated Water Quality

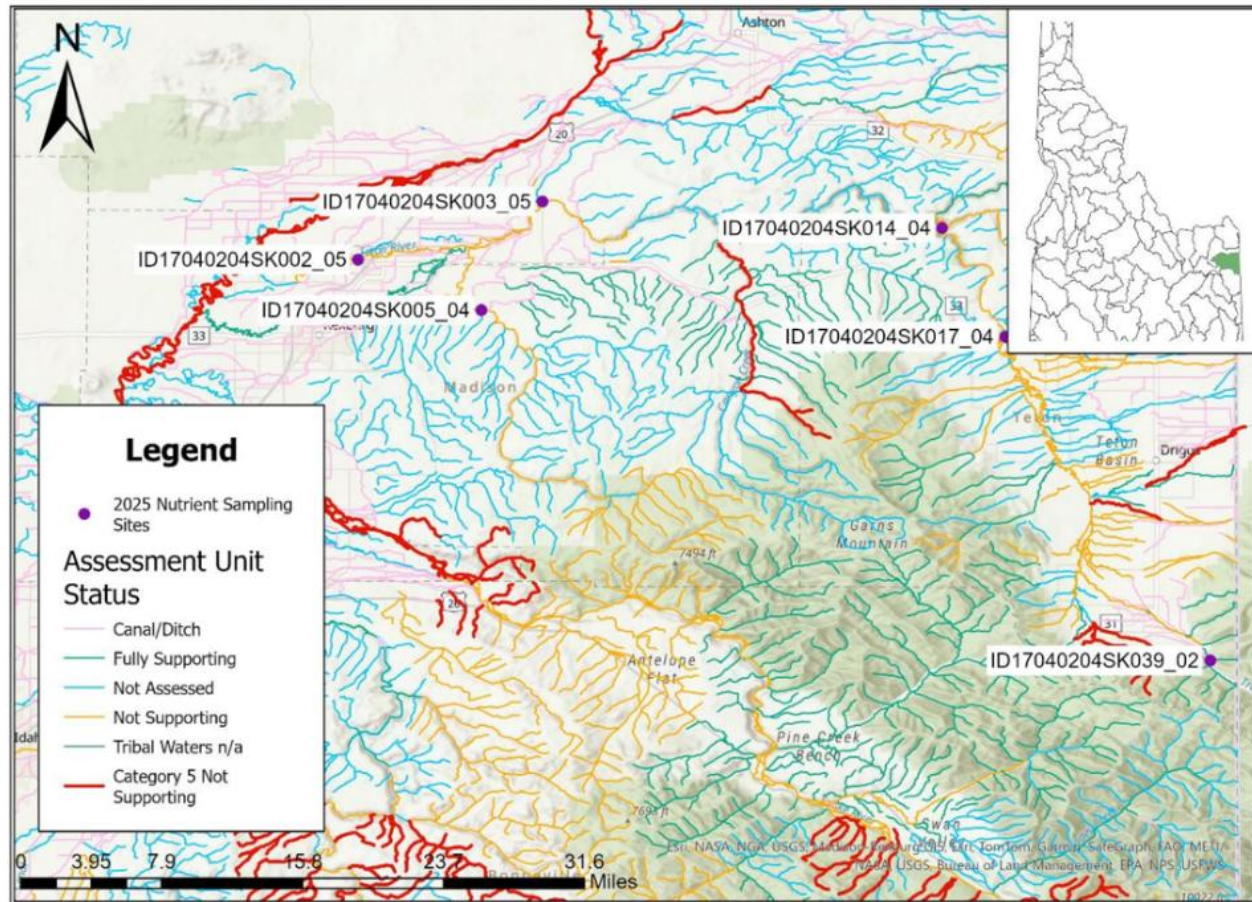
2026 - Draft of New TMDLs, Draft of Review Existing TMDLs - 2026



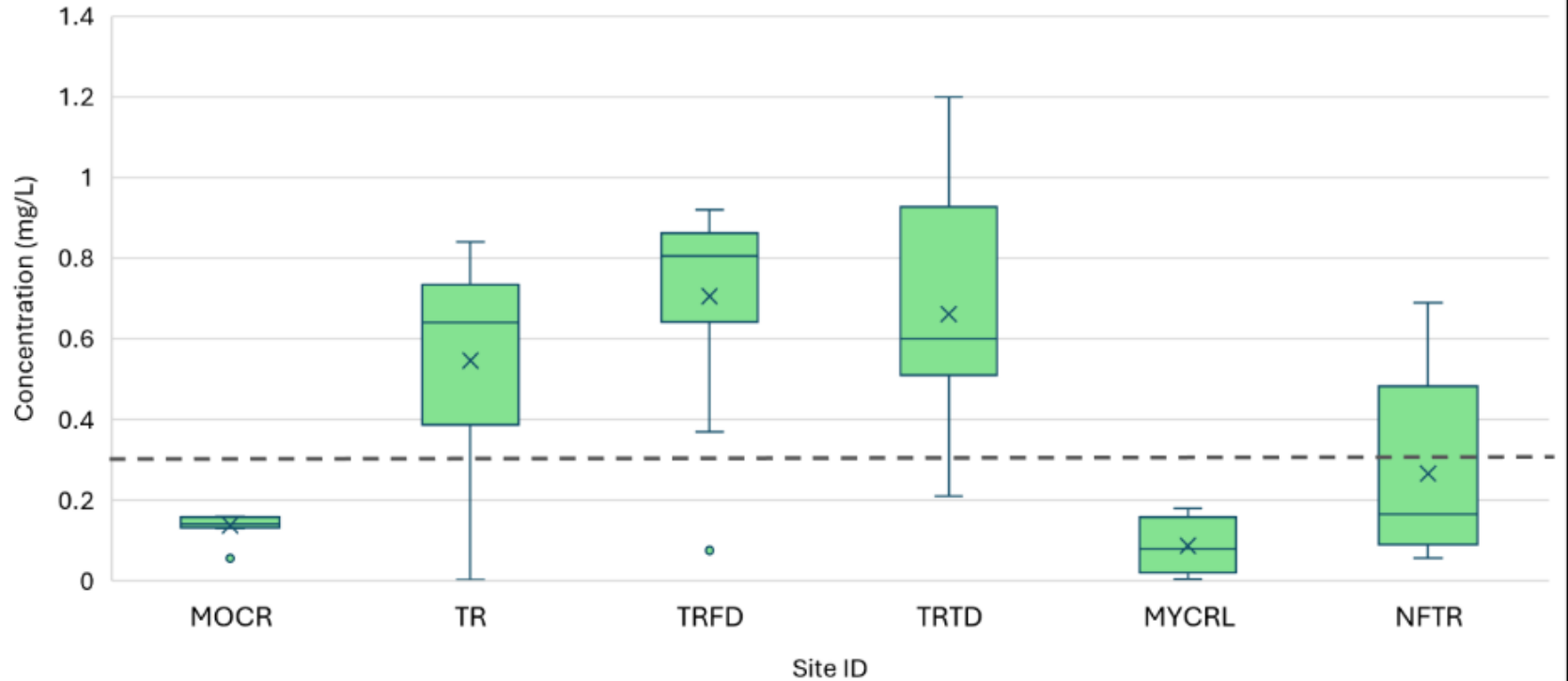
Teton Watershed – Water Quality Trends



Preliminary Nutrient Data

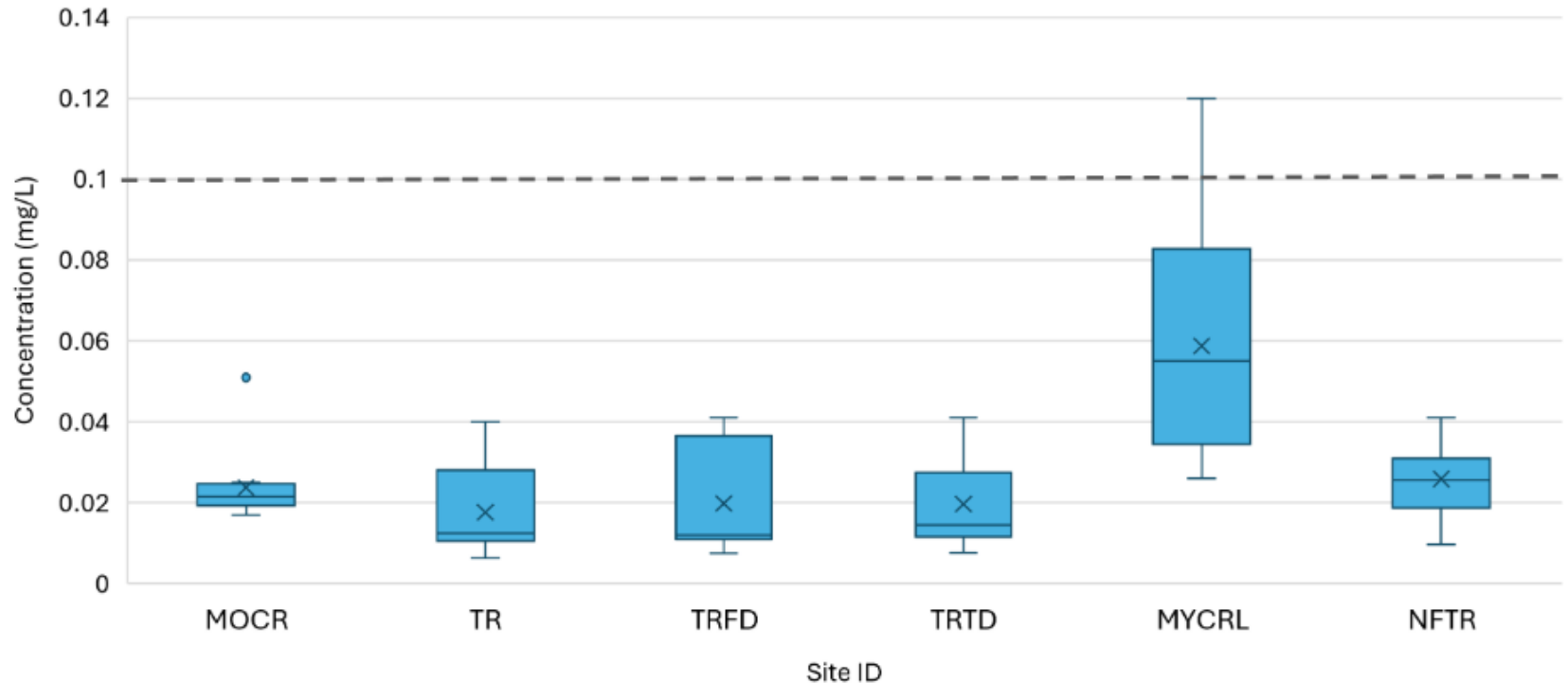


Nitrate Results – 2024-2025



MOCR = Moose Creek, **TR** – Teton @ Harrops; **TRFD** – Felt Dam; **MYCRL** – Moody Creek; **NFTR** – North Fork Teton

2024-2025 Total Phosphorus Concentrations



MOCR = Moose Creek, **TR** – Teton @ Harrops; **TRFD** – Felt Dam; **MYCRL** – Moody Creek; **NFTR** – North Fork Teton

Nonpoint Source Management Grants

State Funding

**2026 AGRICULTURAL BEST
MANAGEMENT PRACTICES
GRANT PROGRAM**

- ▶ Must address agricultural or ranching BMPs.
- ▶ Must match contributions equal to or exceeding 40% of the grant funds.

**APPLICATIONS
ACCEPTED FROM**
MAR 16 – APR 17



FOR MORE
INFORMATION, VISIT:
[DEQ.IDAHO.GOV/NPS](https://deq.idaho.gov/nps)



Federal Funding

**2026 NONPOINT SOURCE
MANAGEMENT \$ 319
GRANT APPLICATION**

Idaho prioritizes applications that emphasize water pollution cleanup and protection, involve multiple partners and funding sources, and include detailed 3-year work plans.

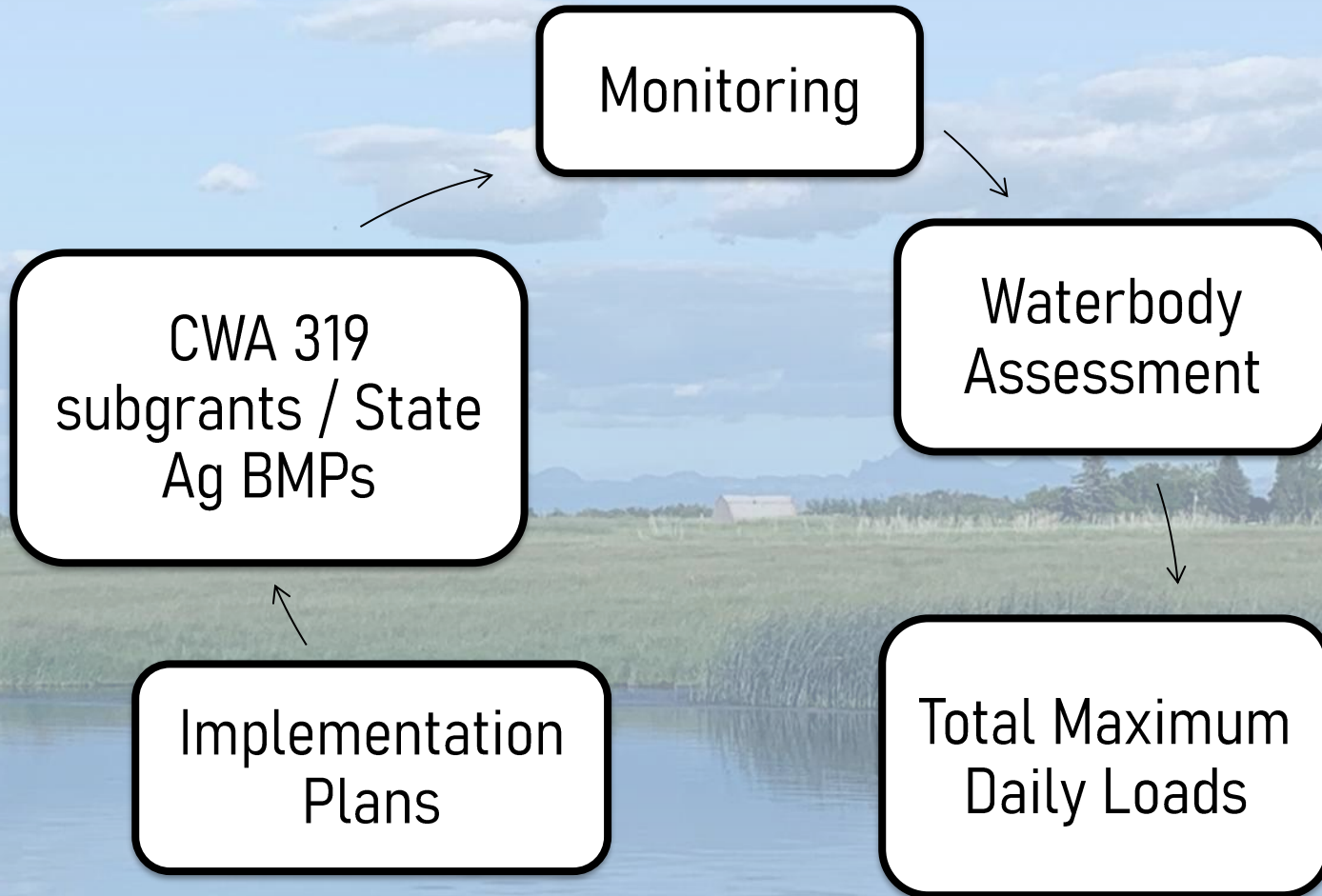
**APPLICATIONS
ACCEPTED FROM**
APR 20 – JUL 17



FOR MORE
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Non-Point Source Pollution Management



Point Source Pollution Management – DEQ Permits

Idaho Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (IPDES)

Individual Permits

- Wastewater Treatment Plants
- Mines
- Industrial Facilities

General Permits

- Aquaculture
- Drinking water
- Suction dredging
- Storm water



Regional IPDES Updates



Wastewater Compliance and Enforcement

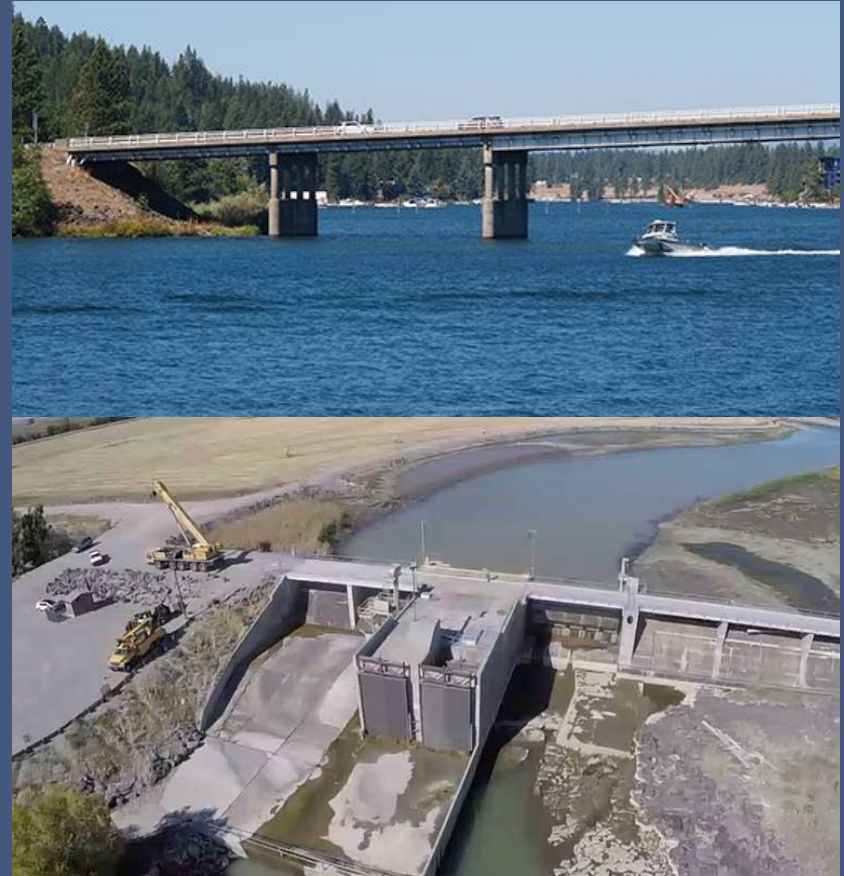
- City of Driggs – Consent Decree
 - Discharge Location: Woods Creek, Tributary of the Teton River
 - Status: 60% Design of Water Reclamation Facility Expansion and Upgrade
- City of Rexburg – Consent Judgment
 - Discharge Location: South Fork of the Teton River
 - Status: DEQ / City working together on compliance schedule

Point Source Pollution Management – Federal Permits

Clean Water Act – Section 401 – Water Quality Certifications

US Army Corps 404 Dredge and Fill
Permits

FERC Hydropower Licenses



Water Quality Certification Updates

Section 404 Permits

- 2026 Nationwide Permits Issued March 15, 2026

WOTUS

- Supplemental Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on the Updated Definition of 'Waters of the United States'



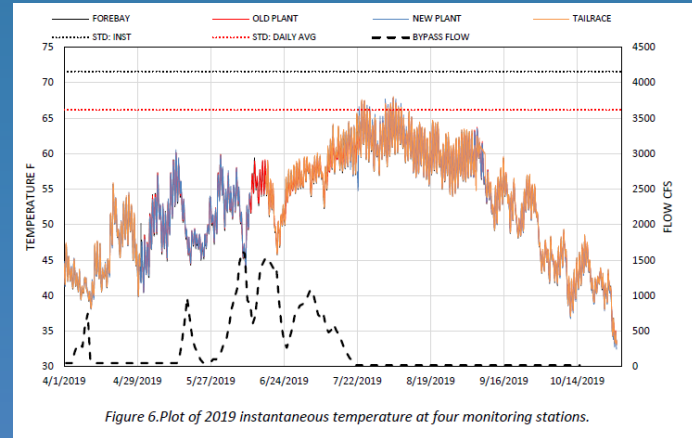
Regional FERC 401 Certifications

Felt Hydropower Project

- Teton River
- Draft WQC Completed
- Public Comments / Public Hearing
- Final Certification by December 5, 2026

Ashton Hydropower Project

- Henry's Fork
- Draft WQC Completed
- Public Comment Period
- Final Certification by January 15, 2027



Cyanobacterial Blooms

- Island Park Reservoir:
Health advisory
- Reduced cyanobacteria
monitoring budget



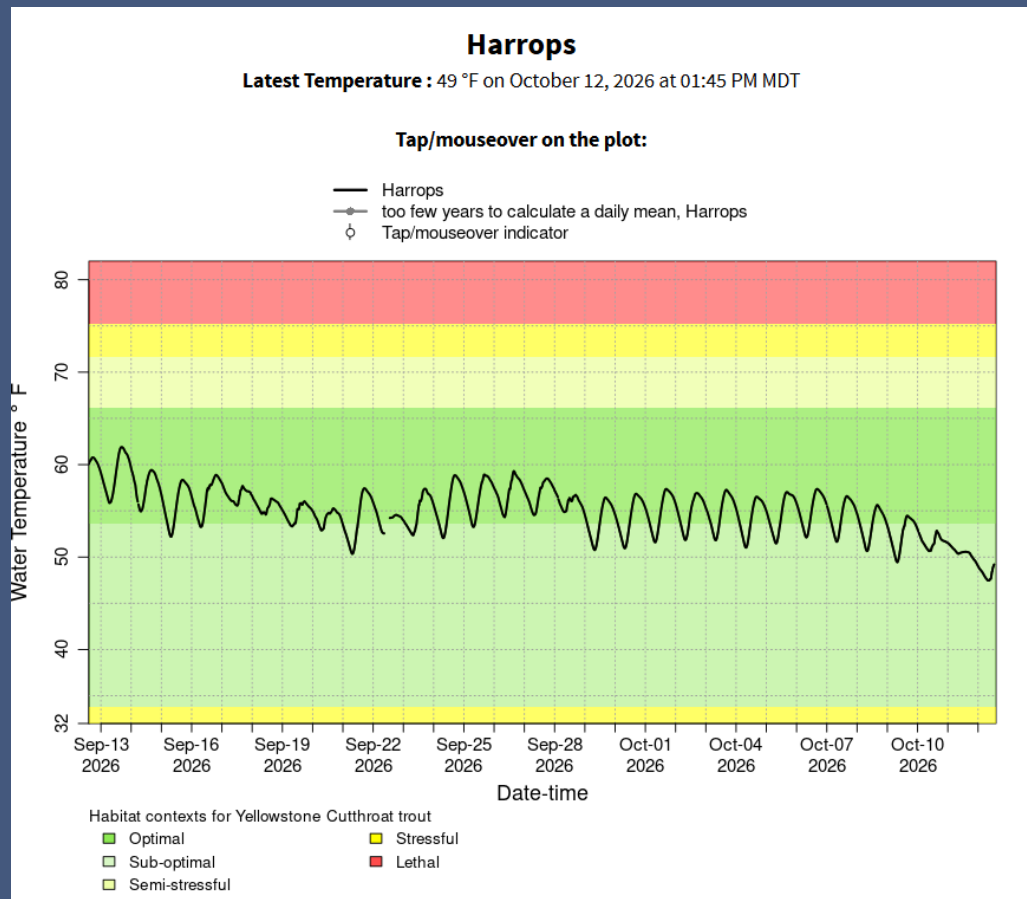
Mercury in Fish Tissue



- Collaboration with IDF&G
 - 4 sites – more to come
- Do Hg concentrations exceed criteria (0.3 mg/kg)?
- Preliminary data
 - Snake River below Gem Hydro Project exceeds criteria

Monitoring Support

- HFF Island Park Reservoir sonde
- Real-time Teton River monitoring station
- Henry's Lake monitoring with IDFG / HFF
- Future collaboration to come!



Questions?

