

Water quality status and implementation of the Clean Water Act in the North Fork Coeur d'Alene River Subbasin, Idaho

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MONITORING

Idaho DEQ conducts many types of monitoring, and compiles available data to determine the water quality status of surface waters.

The Idaho DEQ Beneficial Use Reconnaissance Program (BURP) gathers data annually through field surveys of wadeable streams and is the primary source of information for water body assessments.

Monitoring data for the North Fork Coeur d'Alene River has been obtained from the BURP program, specific Idaho DEQ monitoring, and multiple agencies including the USDA Forest Service, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, the US Geological Survey and others.



Above, Monitoring is conducted by IDEQ and coordinated with partners using electrofishing and other techniques. Most streams in the North Fork Coeur d'Alene Subbasin are wadeable.

FIVE-YEAR REVIEW



Idaho code requires a review of all subbasin assessments, TMDLs, and implementation plans at least once every five years. This ensures adaptive management and a full feedback loop of monitoring, assessment, goal-setting, implementation and evaluation. A five-year review of the North Fork Coeur d'Alene Subbasin Sediment TMDL is underway.

Left, Road obliteration and stream restoration on Yellow Dog Creek by the US Forest Service may achieve sediment TMDL targets.

IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS

Once the group has assessed water quality, identified pollutant sources, established pollutant load reduction targets, and planned a water quality improvement strategy, implementation projects are underway on the ground.



Above, Touring restoration projects with USFS staff.

In the North Fork Coeur d'Alene Subbasin, this includes forestry, agriculture, mining and other projects.

IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS

TMDL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

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TMDL Implementation Plans are typically developed soon after EPA approval of TMDLs and outline the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders as well as inventory projects and priorities for habitat and water quality improvements.

A comprehensive TMDL implementation plan is being developed for the North Fork Coeur d'Alene Subbasin.



Above, Historic mining by floating dredge has left large piles of dredged material in the floodplain of Prichard Creek.

TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS (TMDLs)

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Using the information gathered during subbasin monitoring and assessment, Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) are developed or each pollutant. These are daily targets or maximum allowable levels for pollutants in the water body.

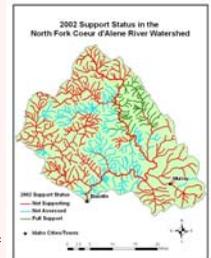
A subbasin-wide sediment TMDL was developed for the North Fork Coeur d'Alene River in 2001. Temperature and metals TMDLs are in development for all impaired streams in the subbasin.



Above, Abandoned mine lands are common in the subbasin's mining district like this site in upper Beaver Creek. These sites are being addressed by IDEQ, BLM, USFS and others.

SUBBASIN ASSESSMENT

Utilizing best available data and methods described in *Idaho Water Body Assessment Guidance (WBAG)*, Idaho DEQ determines if water bodies meet water quality standards and support beneficial uses.



The water quality status of Idaho waters is reported to the Environmental Protection Agency in an Integrated Report. The most recent EPA-approved Integrated Report was produced in 2002. Streams in the North Fork Coeur d'Alene River were considered impaired by sediment, temperature, and metals (copper, cadmium, lead, nickel, and zinc). A 2008 updated Integrated Report is currently being finalized.

When water quality impairments are found, DEQ determines the causes and sources of pollutants and develops a Subbasin Assessment report. In 2001, DEQ prepared a Subbasin Assessment for sediment in the North Fork Coeur d'Alene Subbasin. A comprehensive update is underway in 2008.