

*Case Study:
Teton County, Idaho
Source Water Protection Plan*





Friends of the Teton River



Working together for clean water, healthy streams and resilient fisheries

Water Quality Challenges



- High nitrate levels in streams
- Portion of county in Nitrate Priority area
- Rapid transition of land from agriculture to development
- Most residents on individual wells, septic
- Multiple jurisdictions
- Need for infrastructure improvement
- Pendulum politics

Project Timeline

2011

- Friends of the Teton River awarded IDEQ Source Water Protection Grant

2012

- Drinking water protection incorporated into Teton County Comprehensive Plan revision

2013

- Planning Team formed; creates Source Water Protection Plan for Teton County

2014

- Complementary plans finalized for Driggs, Victor, Tetonia (Idaho Rural Water)

Comprehensive Plan – A Vision and Framework for Teton County, Idaho 2012-2030

Where Are We Now?

Where Do We Want to Go?

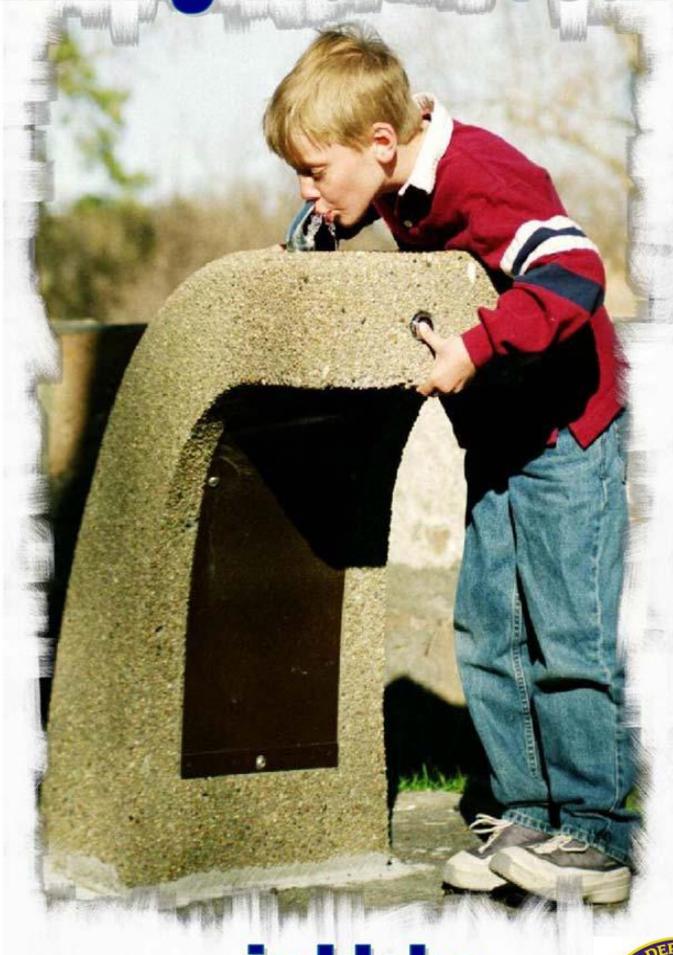
Tools

Water quality and quantity concerns

Good water quality & quantity for human consumption, recreation, fisheries habitat

Develop a source water protection plan

Protecting Drinking Water Sources



in Idaho

August 2000
Revised April 2007



Required Elements of a Certified Source Water Protection Plan

- 1) Description of Planning Team
Participant Roles and Duties
- 2) Delineation of the Source Water
Protection Area
- 3) Inventory of Potential Sources of
Contamination
- 4) Tools and Protection Measures to
Manage Potential Sources of
Contamination
- 5) Contingency Plan
- 6) Plan for future drinking water
sources
- 7) Public Participation and Education
- 8) Implementation Strategy



Teton County Planning Team

- County Representatives
 - Teton County, ID County Commissioner, Planning & Zoning
 - Teton County, WY County Commissioner
- Public Water System Operators
 - Cities of Driggs, Victor, Teton, Alta
 - Resort, community/subdivision water systems
- Eastern Idaho Public Health District
- Forest Hydrologist, Caribou-Targhee National Forest
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Concerned Citizens
- IDEQ
- Agricultural Producer Groups
 - Teton Soil Conservation District
 - Farm Bureau Board Member
 - Representatives from each major canal company
- Rural Water Association Source Water Specialists
 - Idaho Rural Water, Wyoming Rural Water

Plan Timeline

- Meeting 1: February, 2013
 - Agree upon Planning Team roles, responsibilities, logistics, identify additional Planning Team members
 - Identify strengths, weaknesses, threats, opportunities of current drinking water protection in Teton County & its cities
 - Identify and assign Planning Team action steps

Plan Timeline

- Meeting 2: March, 2013
 - Review public water system delineations
 - Discuss contaminant inventory action steps
 - Review and discuss current management tools, changes needed
 - Identify and assign action steps

Plan Timeline

- Meeting 3: April, 2013
 - Develop Protection Tools and Strategy
 - Discuss current contingency plan strengths and gaps
 - Discuss outreach plan and means for gaining additional public input
 - Discuss timeline for creating and reviewing written Source Water Protection Plans

Plan Timeline

- Summer 2013
 - 1-on-1 meetings as needed for follow up
 - Public outreach and nitrate testing
 - Write SWPP
- Fall 2013
 - Planning team re-convenes to review/revise draft plan
 - Intended presentation to/approval by County Commissioners in December 2013
- 2014
 - Idaho Rural Water to finalize complementary plans for Teton, Driggs, Victor

Planning Team Recommendations

- **Primarily non-regulatory management strategies, at least until data suggests otherwise**
 - Coordinated community education & nitrate testing
 - Incentives for testing wells and pumping septic tanks
 - Increase hazardous waste & agricultural chemical collection
 - Storm water standards for cities
- **Increased enforcement & inspection**
- **Each PWS will do enhanced contaminant inventory**
- **Increased coordination between jurisdictions**
 - Work with USFS on fire, grazing, fuels, timber management
 - Work with cities to develop storm water standards
 - Work with irrigators to develop recharge standards
 - Better coordination of emergency response
- **More research to identify trends, cause of elevated nitrate levels**

Summary of Lessons Learned

- Process of creating plan is as important as plan itself
- Be intentional about choosing planning team members
- Make sure schedule accommodates planning team members
- Some things best discussed in large group; some better in 1-on-1 meetings
- County-wide plan works well, but large public water systems likely need their own complimentary plan
- 3rd party assistance (watershed group, Idaho Rural Water, etc) very helpful
- It's important to accept the plan the community creates, even if it's not exactly how you would do it



Questions/Discussion