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BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE CENTER U.S. EPA REGION 10 1997 ANNUAL REPORT

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**U.S. EPA REGION 10
ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE CENTER
AT
BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY
1997 ANNUAL REPORT**

Executive Overview:

The Region 10 Environmental Finance Center at Boise State University was created in 1995 and first received funding in the fall of 1996. The EFC at BSU is contained within the Department of Public Policy and Administration of the College of Social Sciences and Public Affairs. It serves the communities in the Pacific Northwest and Intermountain states of Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Alaska.

The mission of the Region 10 EFC is to help communities and the states with the "how to pay" issues of environmental protection. The EFC is taking the lead nationally in designing and testing drinking water system capacity assessment methodologies required by the 1996 Amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act. The Center at BSU is also assisting the states in improving institutional capacity and in formulating and implementing drinking water program capacity development strategies required by SDWA. Addressing the needs of public water systems and wastewater systems to improve financial and managerial capacity is also an important component of the Center's services.

Prior to the establishment of the EFC, the Department of Public Policy and Administration had been an important partner to state and local governments in addressing the infrastructure financing issues relative to unfunded and "underfunded" mandates. BSU faculty, along with Idaho's state drinking water program staff, provided important information from applied research projects that encouraged the inclusion of the multivariate capacity assessment and the strategic planning components in the SDWA Amendments of 1996. The EFC is making information available on the World WideWeb at <http://www.idbsu.edu/sspa/efc>

Introduction:

The Environmental Finance Center at Boise State University focuses on the following tasks and activities:

- Developing and delivering educational programs including workshops, conferences, training seminars and formal education programs to improve the ability of public and private sector leaders and managers in addressing and resolving environmental finance dilemmas.
- Preparing and disseminating practical guides, handbooks and reports on financial and management issues relative to the public sector and environmental system needs.
- Assisting local and tribal governments and other public water and wastewater systems to increase their use of alternative and innovative approaches to financing environmental protection; particularly approaches that provide alternatives to traditional taxation methods.
- Offering training, education, facilitation and policy initiatives that will improve the ability of regional, state and local officials in meeting the challenges of the capacity development requirements relative to the SDWA Amendments of 1996.
- Providing federal and state policy makers with information about the particular needs of small communities for financing assistance and financial tools necessary for meeting regulatory compliance standards. The

EFC informs the policy debate regarding the financing of environmental infrastructure projects and the utility of conventional infrastructure financing mechanisms. The EFC also tests and then suggests new tools and assistance mechanisms that could be utilized at the local, state and federal government levels.

Organizational Setting: The Region 10 EFC and the BSU Department of Public Policy and Administration.

The Region 10 Environmental Finance Center is similar to its sister EFCs in being closely affiliated with other on-campus and off-campus programs that provide service and technical assistance to public and private organizations. At Boise State University the EFC is contained within the Department of Public Policy and Administration of the College of Social Sciences and Public Affairs. The Department cooperates with Idaho State University and the University of Idaho through the *Idaho Universities Policy Group (IUPG)*. These three academic institutions provide excellent opportunities for linking academic and research expertise to the Center. On the BSU campus, the EFC has established important working linkages with the *College of Business and Economics, the College of Engineering, and the Small Business Development Center*.

The Department of Public Policy and Administration at Boise State University. The programs and services of the Department of Public Policy and Administration reflect the nature of the discipline of public administration, a mixture of theory and practice. The Department offers a professional degree, the Master of Public Administration (MPA), and is involved in a wide range of applied research services for the public sector. Members of the Department are affiliated with the Idaho Universities Policy Group; an inter-university, multidisciplinary network of faculty from the University of Idaho, Idaho State University and Boise State University working on public policy issues affecting the citizens of Idaho and the Northwest region. IUPG Projects have included the following: Health District funding allocation formula; analysis of the 1% property taxation limitation initiative on governments in Idaho; tax policy perceptions and preferences of citizens in Idaho; and the Idaho Communities Mandates Assistance Project. The latter project provided important information to USEPA and state policy makers that contributed to the creation of EPA's *Policy on Flexible State Enforcement Responses to Small Community Violations*.

The Master's degree in Public Administration (MPA), under the administration of the Department of Public Policy and Administration, provides an important academic nucleus of the University's designated area of emphasis in public affairs. As an urban university located in Idaho's capital city, BSU has been given the mandate to provide educational activities related to public affairs education. The Department offers the master's degree in public administration to help fulfill that mandate. Graduate students in the MPA program are given exposure to the emerging issues of financing environmental infrastructure through the Environmental Finance Center's education and training programs.

In keeping with the University's role and mission in public affairs, the Department is involved in a number of important training and applied research activities that have major statewide impact. In addition to specialized projects funded by grants and contracts, the Department sponsors the Local Government Training Institute for county officials throughout the state. The Institute is cosponsored with the Idaho Association of Counties and is held jointly with the Associated Taxpayers of Idaho's Annual Conference in election years. The Mountain West Institute for Municipal Clerks and Treasurers annually attracts city officials from Idaho, Wyoming, California, Oregon and Nevada and is officially recognized by both the International Institute of Municipal Clerks and Treasurers Association of the United States and Canada. *The Environmental Finance Center participated in the 1997 Institutes mentioned above.*

The Department also produces in cooperation with the city and county association, handbooks that are widely used by local government officials in Idaho: the *Idaho Municipal Handbook and the Handbook for Elected County Officials*.

EFC Program Administration and Project Management

James B. Weatherby, Ph.D., is the Chairman of the Department of Public Policy and Administration at Boise State. Dr. Weatherby administers the education, research and training activities and teaches in the Master of

Public Administration program at Boise State University.

Mr. Bill Jarocki is the Director of the Region 10 Environmental Finance Center and is responsible for the programs and activities of the Center. Mr. Jarocki has worked closely with Region 10 staff on several community-based capacity development projects as the Chief of the Idaho Division of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) Research and Analysis Bureau. He also served as the state's Drinking Water Program Manager, administering the PWSS program grant activities. Prior to joining the Idaho DEQ, Jarocki was the Executive Director of the Association of Idaho Cities.

New staff positions: In 1997, three important staff positions were created at the EFC10. These positions, which were filled in mid-1997, added significant capacity to the EFC's ability to provide services to the Region 10 states and communities.

Ms. Sharon Burke is the EFC's Project Associate. Ms. Burke is involved in the capacity reviews of public water systems applying for state revolving loan financing (SRF) for drinking water systems improvements [the EFC provides this assistance under contract for the Idaho Division of Environmental Quality]. She is also involved in the Region 10 Lower Boise River Watershed demonstration project for water pollution trading. Burke also coordinates and facilitates utility rate setting training events for small communities in the Northwest.

Ms. Symantha Zeimet is the Center's Research Assistant. Ms. Zeimet is a first year graduate student in the MPA program and provides half-time assistance to the Center. Her duties include assisting in the system capacity reviews of Drinking Water State Revolving Fund loan applicants. Zeimet also assists in technical research activities under the direction of Jarocki and Burke.

The EFC's newest employee is Ms. Carrie Applegate. Ms. Applegate is the EFC's part-time Secretary. She is currently completing undergraduate studies at Boise State University, majoring in marketing. In addition to keeping the EFC office under control, Applegate has recently overhauled the Environmental Finance Center's Internet Web Site <http://www.idbsu.edu/sspa/efc>. Applegate's marketing and artistic talents have also been put to good use in fashioning EFC promotional documents and training materials.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

Building Capacity for Sustainable Systems -- Utility Rate Setting Training

One of the key factors in managing water and wastewater systems is ensuring that financial resources are sufficient to sustain operations that will comply with state and federal requirements. Systems with adequate financial resources are more likely to remain in compliance with public health and environmental protection requirements. Financial capacity -- the ability to both obtain the resources necessary for sustainable infrastructure systems *and* to manage those resources well -- is one of the three capacity components required under the 1996 Amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act.

The Environmental Finance Center at Boise State University has placed significant emphasis in 1997 on training activities related to utility rate setting and alternative methods for financing water and wastewater system improvements. The Center has focused on delivering tools to local government and other community water and wastewater system officials for creating sustainable environmental infrastructure operations. This activity occurred in the form of demonstration workshops for rate setting technical assistance and training in each of the four states in Region 10, and post-demonstration workshops in the Region.

One of the important side benefits of the EFC10's investment in utility rate design training has been the development of staff capability within the EFC network to share information about the use of this important tool. Additionally, the EFC10 is now positioned to provide technical assistance and training to staff at the other Environmental Finance Centers.

All of the training workshops incorporated RateMod Pro v.3.0. RateMod Pro is a sophisticated, yet user-friendly

computer model for water or wastewater utility financial analysis and rate setting. RateMod Pro was developed by Mr. Michael Siegel of RateMod Associates, Washington, D.C., under contract to the EPA and the Government Finance Officers Association. The model was developed in response to local government officials who participated in EFC sponsored infrastructure finance charrettes in the early 1990s.

Early in 1997, the EFC Director made several initial contacts with representatives of the statewide associations of local governments and state environmental protection agency personnel to solicit interest and assistance in conducting demonstration Utility Rate Model Workshops in the states of Washington, Oregon, and Alaska. Officials in Alaska expressed the most significant interest. Officials at the University of Alaska - Southeast (Sitka) and the Alaska Municipal League expressed a strong interest in promoting the workshops among municipal utilities and city managers.

Idaho Utility Rate Setting Demonstration Workshop Boise State University (March 27, 1997)

The first of four demonstration events, Idaho demonstration workshop for utility rate model training, was presented on March 27, 1997. The project subcontractor and RateMod Pro developer, Mr. Michael Siegel, participated in the delivery of the workshop. Fifteen people participated in this full-day workshop. The participants represented eight Idaho communities, the City of Burns, Oregon, the Idaho Rural Development Council, the Public Affairs Program at BSU and the EFC10.

Alaska Utility Rate Setting Demonstration Workshop [Co-sponsored by the Alaska Municipal League] Juneau, Alaska (April 2, 1997)

The Alaska demonstration workshop for utility rate model training was presented on April 2, 1997. The project subcontractor, Mr. Siegel participated in the delivery of the workshop. Thirteen people participated in this full-day workshop. The participants represented nine Alaska communities, the Alaska Department of Community and Regional Affairs and the Alaska Municipal League. One important outcome of the demonstration/training event was the strong interest of the Alaska Municipal Managers Association to incorporate the EFC's utility rate-setting training into the Alaska Certified City Manager Program.

Washington Utility Rate Setting Demonstration Workshop [Co-sponsored by the Washington Department of Ecology] Spokane, Washington (July 25, 1997)

The Washington demonstration workshop for utility rate model training was presented on July 25, 1997 in Spokane, Washington. The Washington Department of Ecology's Spokane Regional Office participated in soliciting communities for the workshop. On the basis of this demonstration workshop, the Washington Department of Ecology has asked the EFC10 to present a series of additional quarterly rate setting training events throughout the state, beginning in 1998.

Oregon Utility Rate Setting Demonstration Workshop [Co-sponsored by the Oregon Association of Clean Water Agencies] Portland, Oregon (September 26, 1997)

The final demonstration workshop was presented on September 26, 1997 in Portland, Oregon. This workshop was co-sponsored by the Association of Oregon Clean Water Agencies (ACWA). The workshop was well attended and participants included ten wastewater utility entities, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality representatives, EPA Region 10 (Oregon Operations Office) and ACWA staff. The Guidebook of Financing Tools was distributed to all workshop participants at both the Washington and Oregon demonstration workshop sessions.

Other Demonstration/Informational Training Sessions:

The Idaho Rural Water Association (IRWA) sponsored a full-day rate-setting training event with EFC10 staff as the trainer on July 17 at Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. The IRWA has asked the EFC10 to present another workshop at Lewiston, Idaho on January 6, 1998. It is expected that IRWA and EFC10 will continue to work together to provide this training in future years.

Additional rate-setting training workshops were conducted at Boise (Boise State University) on August 28 and October 30, 1997. Finally, a second demonstration workshop -- co-sponsored by the Washington Department of Ecology -- was presented at Olympia, Washington on December 5, 1997.

**EFC10 Utility Rate Setting Training Workshop
Boise State University, Boise (August 28, 1997)**

**EFC10 Utility Rate Setting Training Workshop
Boise State University, Boise (October 30, 1997)**

**Washington Utility Rate Setting Training Workshop
[Co-sponsored by the Washington Department of Ecology]
Olympia, Washington (December 5, 1997)**

EFC10 staff also presented informational workshops about the utility rate setting training services of the Center at the following events during 1997:

March 11 -- Idaho Rural Water Association Annual Conference, Boise, Idaho (20 persons).

May 5 -- Meeting of the Washington Department of Ecology Spokane Regional Office, Spokane, Washington (6 persons).

May 14 -- International Institute of Municipal Clerks and Treasurers, Intermountain Chapter, Boise, Idaho (100 persons).

May 15 -- Idaho Department of Commerce Annual Community Development Leadership Conference, Boise, Idaho (60 persons).

May 18 -- Timber and Salmon Communities Symposium [Governor's Rural Community Assistance Team] at Ellensburg, Washington (80 persons).

May 22 -- Alaska Department of Community and Regional Affairs, Native Health Service, and the Alaska Village Safe Water Program, Anchorage, Alaska (10 persons).

May 28 -- RateMod Demonstration workshop, City of Medical Lake [with the Washington Department of Ecology (Spokane Office)] at Medical Lake, Washington (6 persons).

May 29 -- Eagle Sewer District and J.U.B. Engineers, Boise, Idaho (6 persons).

June 6 -- 50th Annual Conference of the Association of Idaho Cities, Sun Valley, Idaho (100 persons).

June 25 -- RateMod Pro Demonstration for staff of the Utah Drinking Water Program at Salt Lake City, Utah (5 persons).

June 30 -- Meeting of Infrastructure Financing Agencies [USDA Rural Development, Idaho Department of Commerce, Association of Idaho Cities] at Boise, Idaho (6 persons).

July 2 -- at Raymond, Washington for the cities of Raymond and Seaside and the Washington Department of Ecology (4 persons).

July 15 -- Demonstration/informational workshop, in conjunction with the meeting of the Oregon Drinking Water Advisory Committee, at Salem, Oregon (6 persons).

July 30 -- at Boise, Idaho for the Water Utilities Division of the Idaho Public Utilities Commission (8 persons).

July 30 -- RateMod Pro demonstration for the City of Meridian, Idaho at Boise (3 persons).

November 19-20 -- Utility Rate Setting Workshops, Oregon Finance Officers Association at Portland, Oregon (50 persons).

Environmental Finance Program *Guidebook of Financial Tools*

The EFC10 has been active in distributing copies of the Environmental Finance Program's new publication, the *Guidebook of Financial Tools*. The Guidebook is the most comprehensive document available today detailing the variety of infrastructure financing techniques implemented by communities. Copies of the Guidebook are usually made available at all training workshops of the EFC and at other workshops and technology transfer events. The Center has distributed over 200 copies of the Guidebook; reproduced on two 3.5-inch computer diskettes. EFC10 also makes the Guidebook available through the EFC10 Internet Web Site and provides "hard" copies of the document upon request.

The following are specific meetings and workshops conducted in 1997 showcasing the *Guidebook of Financial Tools*:

May 18 -- Timber and Salmon Communities Symposium [Governor's Rural Community Assistance Team] at Ellensburg, Washington (80 persons).

August 18 -- Oregon Association of Water Utilities, Alternative Financing Workshop, at Seaside, Oregon (30 persons).

September 11 -- Meeting of the Finance Committee of the Pacific Northwest Section of the American Water Works Association, at Chehalis, Washington (20 persons).

September 19 -- Annual Institute of the Idaho City Clerks, treasurers and Finance Officers Association, at McCall, Idaho (100 persons).

November 11 -- Alaska Municipal management Association, Alternative Financing Workshop, at Kechikan, Alaska (30 persons).

November 19-20 -- Oregon Finance Officers Association, Alternative Financing Workshops (2), at Portland, Oregon (40 persons).

Safe Drinking Water Act Capacity Development

On August 6, 1996, President Clinton signed S. 1316 to reauthorize and amend Title XIV of the Public Health Service Act, commonly known as the Safe Drinking Water Act. In part, S. 1316 seeks to improve the capacity of regulated public water systems in meeting compliance standards and the general standards of operational efficiency and effectiveness.

A central goal of each of the EFCs is to help create sustainable environmental systems in the public and private sectors. Sustainable systems have the financial, managerial, and technical capabilities to operate in compliance with federal and state environmental protection and health protection requirements. Since 1992, the EFC network has provided training, educational, and analytical services designed to address the "how to pay" issues of environmental compliance. Due to the experience and expertise of its staff, the Region 10 EFC set out in 1997 to assist the EPA, the states, and the regulated community with the challenges of accurately measuring capacity and fashioning solutions to capacity deficiencies. The activities described in the previous two sections of this report

stress the goal of improving the financial and management capabilities of public water systems.

With the limits of financial resources available at the local, state and federal levels, it is important to leverage the best institutional, policy, and financial management options to address the problems of insufficient capacity. This is why the 1996 Amendments to SDWA direct the states to develop capacity development strategies. It is intended that state capacity development strategies will, over time, build the capacity of public water systems to be sustainable and meet long-term compliance requirements while serving safe drinking water to the public. Since the Region 10 states are facing multiple SDWA implementation responsibilities (and in some cases without being able to add staff), state drinking water administrators will benefit from having the EFC share its expertise to help them meet the Section 119 deadlines.

With significant financial support from the EPA Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water, the EFC10 has joined the Environmental Finance Center at the University of New Mexico (EFC6) to assist state drinking water programs in Region 10 and Region 6 in fashioning capacity development strategies required by the 1996 Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) Amendments [Section 1420(c)]. Through this work -- begun in the summer of 1997 -- the EFCs are adding capacity to the states of Alaska, Arkansas, Idaho, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, and Utah to either assist in the development of new capacity development strategies, or to make a major contribution to capacity development strategic work already under way.

In general, the goals of this project are to:

- Add capacity to the states and tribal governments so that capacity development strategies are fashioned in time to meet the statutory deadlines.
- Have the EFCs serve as clearinghouses to the specific states being assisted, as well as to provide information to other states beginning to take on the capacity development requirements of the SDWA.
- Provide information to the EPA program staff about the particular capacity development challenges of the western states.
- Make significant progress toward the completion of the strategic planning processes that will yield the capacity development strategies.

To date, the EFC10 has conducted several meetings with key drinking water program staff in the states of Utah, Idaho, Oregon and Alaska to lay the groundwork for the development of the capacity development strategies. Significant progress toward the completion of the individual state strategies is expected by the third quarter of 1998.

SDWA Capability Analysis and DWSRF Loan Application Technical Assistance.

As mentioned above, significant amendments were made to the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) in 1996; notably in regard to the responsibility of the primacy agencies to improve the capacity of public water systems (PWSs) to comply with safe drinking water standards. For the first time, Congress also ensured that states would receive financial resources in the form of capitalization grants for Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (DWSRFs). These funds are to be made available in the form of loans to public water systems, both privately and publicly owned, to both help assure long-term compliance with SDWA and provide safe drinking water to the public.

It is the intent of Congress that DWSRF resources be used to improve PWS capability for delivering safe drinking water. Congress requires that these DWSRF resources be extended to systems that have the technical, financial, and managerial capability to comply with SDWA requirements. The DWSRF may also be used to improve systems that are not in compliance with SDWA if the state can show that DWSRF financial assistance will enable those systems to return to compliance status. SRF moneys may also be used to restructure PWSs that have insufficient managerial, financial and technical capabilities.

Congressional intent for the use of DWSRF resources have been fully reflected in the U.S. EPA's *Drinking Water State Revolving fund: Interim Guidance* document (October 4, 1996). This guidance describes projects that will not be eligible for SRF funding (C(1)):

"DWSRF Fund may not provide assistance to a system that lacks the technical, managerial or financial capability to maintain SDWA compliance, unless the State determines that the financial assistance from the DWSRF will allow the system to maintain long-term capability to stay in compliance (section 1452(a)(3)(B)(I))."

It is essential, then, for each of the states to develop and implement an assessment methodology that will yield a determination of public water system (PWS) capability. This methodology would encompass the criteria that would help determine whether or not a (PWS) -- applying for DWSRF assistance -- possesses necessary capability to "stay in compliance". This methodology could also be used by a state drinking water program to determine what other assistance, aside from DWSRF funding, could be found to improve operational capabilities of public water systems.

Assistance to the State of Idaho: The EFC10 has assisted the Idaho State Drinking Water Program in developing a capability screening mechanism for State Revolving Fund loan applications as well as providing technical review of loan applications based on that screening mechanism. This work has been conducted through a sole-source contract in 1997 and has been conducted in two phases:

Phase 1. The Environmental Finance Center created and delivered to the Division of Environmental Quality the *DEQ Water System Capacity Assessment Tool for SRF Loans*. This assessment tool provides the DEQ Drinking Water Program with a tool that will be used to assess PWS technical, managerial, and financial capability. The methodology meets EPA's expectation that the State establish criteria or guidelines to assess water system capability to meet SDWA compliance requirements.

The capability assessment methodology has been designed to consider the variety of public water systems in Idaho. This is important because states will be extending financial assistance to a variety of publicly and privately owned water systems. Valid assessment of capability will not only meet EPA's SRF requirements, but will help ensure that state financial resources are not exposed to undue risk of loan default.

Phase 2. The Center at BSU has been providing information and technical assistance to regulated water systems interested in receiving DWSRF loans from the State and will (in calendar 1998) analyze and rate the worthiness of SRF loan applications applying the Capability Assessment Methodology described in "Phase 1."

Assistance to the State of Oregon: At the request of the manager of the Oregon Drinking Water Program and the Oregon Drinking Water Advisory Committee (ODWAC), the EFC10 provided technical assistance and staff support to the ODWAC as it developed Oregon's capacity assessment tool for Safe Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund assistance to public water systems. The Oregon assessment tool followed the pattern set by the Idaho model. Future validity testing of the indicators of capacity developed for both states will be enhanced by the analysis of loan application data compiled by Idaho and Oregon and reviewed by the EFC10. [Other states interested in incorporating the EFC10-developed assessment tool in their drinking water SRF programs include Alaska, Hawaii, Nevada, Montana, Texas and Utah.]

1996 Water and Wastewater Resource Directory.

The Environmental Finance Center at Boise State University assisted the Idaho Department of Commerce in producing the *1996 Water and Wastewater Resource Directory for Idaho City Leaders*. This publication is produced every two to three years and contains comparative information about the financing of municipal water and wastewater systems. Water and sewer districts and associations also contribute survey information for this publication.

The Region 10 EFC was an important partner in designing and updating the survey instrument, reviewing the

layout and presentation of the data and summary graphics, and in providing editorial assistance in the production of the report. In November 1997, the *Resource Directory* was distributed to all Idaho municipalities, water and sewer districts and associations, and to other stakeholders and service providers involved in the operation and management of water and sewer systems in the state.

[NEW AND EMERGING ISSUES FOR 1998](#)

Native American Tribal Issues

The Environmental Finance Center in Region 10 is currently working with EPA's Operations Office in Idaho to provide services to tribal governments in the region. A meeting between EFC staff and Doug Cole, EPA Tribal Liaison for Eastern Washington, Eastern Oregon and Idaho, identified many issues related to the economic development and environmental sustainability of the Native American communities in the region that would benefit from EFC Network expertise. The EPA Liaison is currently scheduling meetings to introduce EFC10 Director to tribal leaders to discuss the potential of this relationship.

Region 10 Water Pollution Trading Demonstration Project.

In the fall of 1997, the State of Idaho was selected as the site of an experimental study on pollution trading by the Region 10 office of Innovation. Idaho's proposal to study the feasibility of pollution trading was selected from three state proposals offered by Region 10 states. The pollution trading feasibility project will focus on the potential for water pollution trading among point and non-point sources in the lower Boise River watershed area. This project, directed by the Region 10 Office of Innovation and the Idaho Division of Environmental Quality will provide needed information to states and communities as they strive to meet water pollution control targets or total maximum daily loading limits (TMDLs) of critical waterways. TMDLs are usually set in order to meet beneficial use conditions for those waterways.

The examination of water pollution trading creates excellent opportunities for the EFC10 to participate in the policy discussions as well as the financial analysis necessary to determine least cost financing options for meeting pollution control targets. This demonstration project -- which will continue into 1998 -- will require at least the following EFC10 services:

- Providing information about the national and state financial management and accounting standards and policies governing the use of municipal financial resources. This information will be important in determining the feasibility of municipal financing of non-point source pollution controls.
- Technical "before and after" analysis of the costs associated with pollution control technologies and the effect on utility ratepayers. The EFC10 will use the RateMod Pro rate-setting analysis tool in conducting studies on hypothetical infrastructure investments necessary to meet pollution control targets.

The EFC10 will provide these analyses and other services to Region 10 and the Idaho Division of Environmental Quality in order to inform the policy debate on water pollution trading and to assist Idaho, Region 10 and other interested states currently investigating pollution trading scenarios. At least twenty-seven states are facing the prospect of widespread implementation of TMDLs in order to meet their obligations under the Clean Water Act.

[EFC NETWORK COLLABORATIONS](#)

Capacity Development Strategies

The Centers at the University of New Mexico and Boise State University are currently working with states in Regions 6 and 10 in developing capacity development strategies required by the SDWA. This assistance project, funded by the USEPA Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water, brings EFC staff resources and expertise on capacity development to several western states that have begun work on meeting this SDWA requirement. The EFCs are working with the states of Alaska and Idaho in Region 10; Utah in Region 8; and Arkansas, Louisiana,

Oklahoma, New Mexico and Texas in Region 6.

Native American Tribal Issues

The Environmental Finance Center at Cleveland State University is currently working on an initiative to assist Native Americans in their efforts to create sustainable environmental communities. The proposed project will utilize three centers in the EFC Network and a ecological design institute to introduce the use of comprehensive community planning and ecological design techniques to help Native American Communities restore ecological balance.

Four primary entities will comprise the project team. The Environmental Finance Centers at Cleveland State University, the University of New Mexico and Boise State University will work with Ecosa Institute to assist six Native American Communities. The team will also work with EPA's national headquarters and regional offices to utilize their expertise in tribal issues.

Financial Capacity Building

The success of the SDWA depends on the effective operation of individual public water systems. A comprehensive understanding of rate design concepts for water systems is an essential element in operating and managing sustainable utilities. The Environmental Finance Center's training and education programs are designed to meet the need of utility managers to design equitable utility rates and to match financing mechanisms to capital projects.

The Environmental Finance Center at Boise State University is available to provide on-going assistance and training materials to those interested in offering this training to communities in their region. The Utility Rate Design training curriculum, materials and methods developed by EFC10 may be useful to the EFC Network in providing financial training and support to water and wastewater facilities in their region. EFC10 staff is also available to provide on-going support to the EFC Network and communities from their regions involved in this training.

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REGION 10 ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE CENTER AT BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY 1996 ANNUAL REPORT

[Overview:](#)

The Region 10 EFC at Boise State University was created in 1995 and received EPA funding for the first time in the fall of 1996. The Region 10 EFC is contained within the Public Affairs Program of the BSU College of Social Sciences and Public Affairs and serves the Pacific Northwest and Intermountain States of Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Alaska.

Prior to the establishment of the EFC, the Public Affairs Program had been an important partner to state and local government in addressing the infrastructure financing issues related to unfunded and "underfunded" mandates in small communities. Program faculty were also involved, along with key state drinking water program staff, in assisting Senator Dirk Kempthorne (R-ID) in developing the multivariate drinking water system capacity assessment and strategic planning components of the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996 (SDWA).

The primary mission of the Region 10 EFC is to take the lead nationally in designing and testing SDWA drinking water system capacity assessment methodologies. The EFC will also assist the states in improving institutional capacity and in formulating and implementing drinking water program capacity development strategies, as required by SDWA. The EFC will also be involved in addressing the needs of public water systems and wastewater treatment systems to improve financial and managerial capacity.

[Introduction:](#)

Generally, the Environmental Finance Center at Boise State University will provide the following services in 1997 and future years:

- Develop and deliver educational programs including workshops, conferences, training seminars and formal education programs to expand the capacity and ability of public and private sector leaders and managers to address and resolve environmental finance dilemmas.
- Prepare and disseminate practical guides, handbooks and reports on financial and management issues relative to the public sector and environmental system needs.
- Assist local and tribal governments and other public water and wastewater systems to increase their use of alternate approaches to environmental financing, particularly those that provide alternatives to traditional taxation methods.
- Continue its initiatives in becoming a leading regional center in developing improved public management and innovative environmental finance techniques.

The Region 10 EFC became fully operational in November, 1996 when it received its initial funding from EPA. This funding allowed BSU to hire one full-time staff member, Mr. Bill Jarocki, the EFC Project Manager. Additional staff is expected to be hired in 1997. The following report provides information on operations at the

end of 1996 and the expected activities of the EFC in 1997 and future years.

Organizational Setting: The Region 10 EFC and the BSU Public Affairs Program.

The Region 10 Environmental Finance Center is similar to its sister EFCs in being closely affiliated with other university programs that provide service and technical assistance to public and private organizations. At Boise State University the Region 10 EFC is housed within the Public Affairs Program in the College of Social Sciences and Public Affairs. The Public Affairs Program cooperates with Idaho State University and the University of Idaho through the *Idaho Universities Policy Group (IUPG)*. These three academic institutions then provide excellent opportunities for linking academic and research expertise to the Environmental Finance Center.

The Public Affairs Program at Boise State University. The programs and services of the Public Affairs Program reflect the nature of the discipline of public administration, a mixture of theory and practice. The Program offers a professional graduate degree, the Master of Public Administration (MPA), and is involved in a wide range of applied research services for the public sector. Members of the Public Affairs Program at BSU are affiliated with the Idaho Universities Policy Group. This group is an inter-university, multi-disciplinary network of faculty from the University of Idaho, Idaho State University and Boise State University working on public policy issues affecting the citizens of Idaho and the Northwest Region. IUPG Projects have included the following: Health District funding allocation formula; Analysis of the 1% Tax Limitation Initiative on government in Idaho; Tax policy perceptions and preferences of citizens in Idaho; and the Idaho Community Mandates Assistance Project.

The master's degree in public administration (MPA), under the administration of the Public Affairs Program, provides an important academic nucleus of the University's designated area of emphasis in public affairs. As the urban university in Idaho, located in the capital city, BSU has been given the mandate to provide educational opportunities related to public affairs education. The Public Affairs Program offers the master's degree in public administration to help fulfill that mandate. It is the only MPA accredited by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration in Idaho and one of only six in the six states surrounding Idaho.

Also in keeping with the University's role and mission in public affairs, the Public Affairs Program is involved in a number of important training and applied research activities that have major statewide impact. In addition to a number of specialized projects funded by grants and contracts, the Program annually sponsors the Local Government Training Institute for county officials throughout the state. The Institute is cosponsored with the Idaho Association of Counties and is held jointly with the Associated Taxpayers of Idaho's Annual Conference in election years. The Mountain West Institute for Municipal Clerks and Treasurers annually attracts city officials from Idaho, Wyoming, California, Oregon and Nevada and is officially recognized by both the International Institute of Municipal Clerks and the Municipal Treasurers Association of the United States and Canada. The Program also produces in cooperation with the city and county associations handbooks that are widely used by officials throughout the state: Idaho Municipal Sourcebook and the Handbook for Elected County Officials.

EFC Program Administration and Project Management

James B. Weatherby, Ph.D., Director of the Public Affairs Program at Boise State University and Director of the Environmental Finance Center for Region 10. Dr. Weatherby administers the education, research and training activities and teaches in the master of public administration program at Boise State University.

The individual responsible for the activities described herein is Bill Jarocki, Project Manager of the Region 10 Environmental Finance Center. Mr. Jarocki has worked closely with Region 10 staff on several community-based capacity development projects as the Chief of the Idaho Division of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) Research and Analysis Bureau. He also served as the state's Drinking Water Program Manager, administering the PWSS program grant activities. Prior to joining the Idaho DEQ, Jarocki was the Executive Director of the Association of Idaho Cities.

1996-1997 PROJECTS

1. Safe Drinking Water Act Capacity Development

On August 6, 1996, President Clinton signed S. 1316 to reauthorize and amend Title XIV of the Public Health Service Act, commonly known as the Safe Drinking Water Act. In part, S. 1316 seeks to improve the capacity of regulated public water systems (municipal, not-for-profit, and privately-owned) in meeting compliance standards and the general standards of operational efficiency and effectiveness.

A central goal of each of the EFCs is to help create sustainable environmental systems in the public and private sectors. Sustainable systems have the financial, managerial, and technical capabilities to operate in compliance with federal and state environmental protection and health protection requirements. Since 1992, the EFC network has provided training, educational, and analytical services designed to address the "how to pay" issues of environmental compliance. Due to the experience and expertise of its staff, the Region 10 EFC is well-positioned and ready to assist the EPA, the states, and the regulated community with the challenges of accurately measuring capacity and fashioning solutions to capacity deficiencies. With the limits of financial resources available at the local, state and federal levels, it is important to leverage the best institutional, policy, and financial management options to address the problems of insufficient capacity.

Section 119; Capacity Development. The idea that the ability of small drinking water systems to comply with the requirements of SDWA is *not limited* to infrastructure capacity or technical viability, but rather encompasses technical, financial and managerial viability, is the essence of Section 119 of the 1996 SDWA reauthorization. This section of SDWA requires the states to develop comprehensive approaches to determining the broad range of variables that determines if new and existing public water systems will be viable for the long term. Improving a system's overall viability is termed "capacity development" in this section of SDWA and includes three fundamental factors: technical, financial and managerial capacity. It also includes a fourth component, institutional capacity, which considers the specific state regulatory and statutory framework that small water systems operate within.

A key role of the Region 10 EFC will be to lead the work of synthesizing these separate capacity components to determine how all four contribute to the ability of drinking water systems to meet SDWA requirements. State drinking water protection program administrators are currently analyzing S. 1316 to determine what programmatic changes will be needed to comply with the new SDWA requirements. Capacity development is one important provision of the Act that will require significant program adjustments.

Since the Region 10 states are facing multiple SDWA implementation responsibilities (and in some cases without being able to add staff), state drinking water administrators will benefit from having the EFC share its expertise in developing, testing, and delivering capacity development tools that will help them meet the Section 119 deadlines.

In 1996, following the passage of S. 1316, the EFC at BSU began working with Region 10 EPA and state drinking water program managers to determine how the Center can best assist the states in meeting the capacity assessment and development requirements of SDWA. Strategy discussions with EPA and state officials will continue in early 1997 with an EFC capacity development workplan expected in the Spring of 1997. The EFC Project Director has met extensively with Idaho officials (including the Idaho Drinking Water Advisory Committee) and will meet with the Governor's Rural Sanitation Advisory Committee and other state and local officials in Alaska in January to discuss how the EFC can assist capacity development efforts there.

2. SDWA Capability Analysis and Idaho DWSRF Loan Application Technical Assistance.

As mentioned above, significant amendments were made to the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) in 1996; notably in regard to the responsibility of primacy agency to improve the capacity of public water systems (PWSs) to comply with safe drinking water standards. For the first time, Congress also ensured that states would receive financial resources in the form of capitalization grants for Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (DWSRFs). These funds are to be made available in the form of loans to public water systems, both privately and publicly owned, to both help assure long-term compliance with SDWA and provide safe drinking water to the public.

It is the intent of Congress that DWSRF resources be used to improve PWS capability for delivering safe drinking water. Congress requires that these DWSRF resources be extended to systems that have the technical, financial, and managerial capability to comply with SDWA requirements. The DWSRF may also be used to improve systems that are not in compliance with SDWA if the state can show that DWSRF financial assistance will enable those systems to return to compliance status. SRF moneys may also be used to restructure PWSs that have insufficient managerial, financial and technical capabilities.

Congressional intent for the use of DWSRF resources have been fully reflected in the U.S. EPA's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund: Interim Guidance document (October 4, 1996). This guidance describes projects that will not be eligible for SRF funding (C(1)):

"A DWSRF Fund may not provide assistance to a system that lacks the technical, managerial or financial capability to maintain SDWA compliance, unless the State determines that the financial assistance from the DWSRF will allow the system to maintain long-term capability to stay in compliance (section 1452(a)(3)(B)(I))."

It is essential, then, for each of the states to develop and implement an assessment methodology that will yield a determination of PWS capability. This methodology would encompass the criteria that would help determine whether or not a PWS -- applying for DWSRF assistance -- possesses necessary capability to "stay in compliance." This methodology could also be used by a State Drinking Water Program to determine what other assistance, aside from DWSRF funding, could be found to improve operational capabilities of public water systems.

The capability assessment methodology should be designed to consider the variety of public water systems in Idaho. This is important because states will be extending financial assistance to a variety of publicly and privately owned water systems. Valid assessment of capability will not only meet EPA's SRF requirements, but will help ensure that state financial resources are not exposed to undue risk of loan default.

The Region 10 EFC at Boise State University will be assisting the Idaho State Drinking Water Program in developing a capability screening mechanism for State Revolving Fund loan applications as well as providing technical review of loan applications based on that screening mechanism. This work will be conducted through a sole-source contract between the Idaho Division of Environmental Quality and the EFC at Boise State University and will be conducted in two phases:

Phase 1. The Environmental Finance Center will create and deliver to the Division of Environmental Quality a Capability Assessment Methodology. This methodology will provide the DEQ Drinking Water Program with a tool that can be used to assess PWS technical, managerial, and financial capability. The methodology will incorporate variations in categorical types of PWSs. The methodology will meet EPA's expectation that the State establish criteria or guidelines to assess water system capability to meet SDWA compliance requirements.

The EFC will provide education and or training assistance services for the DEQ regarding the capability assessment methodology during the DWSRF Intended Use Plan (IUP) public review process. The EFC will also refine and amend the capability assessment methodology tool as needed following the public review process and prior to IUP submittal to U.S. EPA.

Phase 2. The EFC will provide technical assistance to regulated water systems interested in receiving DWSRF loans from the State and will analyze and rate the worthiness of SRF loan applications applying the Capability Assessment Methodology described in "Phase 1."

3. Financial Capacity Building: Approaches to Alternate Financing Methods.

One of the key factors in managing water and wastewater systems is ensuring that financial resources are sufficient to sustain operations that will comply with state and federal requirements. Systems with adequate financial resources are more likely to remain in compliance with public health and environmental protection

requirements. This Financial Capacity Building project focuses delivering two important tools for creating sustainable public water and wastewater systems. Initial planning for this training and technical assistance was done in 1996. The project training workshops will be completed in 1997.

1. Utility Rate Model. The first tool, the Utility Rate Model, will be used to assist system managers and directors in maximizing their ability to finance their operations with user fees and other operational revenues. The Utility Rate Model was developed as a result of a cooperative effort between the USEPA and the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). Their objective was to develop rate-setting and financial planning software for use by small and medium size water and waste-water utilities. The development and testing of this software has been completed and is now available in a Windows based computer model. Testing was conducted by retained software consultants and the Environmental Finance Centers at Syracuse University and the University of New Mexico. Fourteen communities and other utility systems in New York and New Mexico volunteered to test the model in their applications, and final modifications were made during the past year.

The Utility Rate Model is now available for broader implementation, and requires an introduction of the application and operation of the model for small and medium size users. The model is useful to governmental officials at the state, local, tribal, region and agency levels and has applications both for operational use and policy/project planning activities. This computer-based model was recently demonstrated at the annual meeting of the International City-County Management Association and received favorable reviews. The EFC will maximize the transfer of the Utility Rate Model in the region by conducting direct training to utility employees and managers and "train-the-trainer" workshops for other technical assistance providers.

2. "A Guidebook of Financial Tools" Manual. The second approach leverages the services of the EFC in training state and local technical assistance staff, and water and wastewater system operators and directors, in the use of alternative financing mechanisms for capital improvements. Even where utilities have implemented sound fiscal management systems, capital financing can be improved. The EFC will provide training and technical assistance in the selection and use of alternative financing mechanisms, using the *Financial Tools* Manual. Again, the EFC will maximize the transfer of the *Financial Tools* Manual in the region by conducting direct training to utility employees and managers and "train-the-trainer" workshops for other technical assistance providers.

4. Idaho Community Mandates Assistance Project: Negotiated Rulemaking.

The faculty and staff of the Public Affairs Program and the Region 10 EFC at Boise State University have been involved in the Idaho Community Mandates Assistance Pilot Project since its creation in 1993. This project was designed to examine the cumulative effect of mandates on small communities and to offer alternatives to current regulatory compliance schedules for state and federal mandates based upon community prioritization. This prioritization would consider risks to public health and the environment, as well as consider the financial limitations of the community. The community mandates assistance method requires that regulations be reviewed for their cumulative effect and that compliance schedules be designed that prioritize compliance actions. This method increases public involvement and participation in the decision process and a better use of information in prioritizing compliance requirements.

The community mandates assistance decision method has several steps: First, an evaluation of the environmental protection responsibilities of the community is performed. Second, an assessment is made of the cost of compliance, the ability of the community to pay, the availability of grants and loans, the administrative capability of the community, the economic development potential of the community, and the willingness of citizens to address compliance standards. Third, compliance actions are prioritized based on strict criteria, such as human health and environmental risk. These first three steps comprise an "urgency analysis." Fourth, a compliance order is developed to protect the community from immediate fines and to detail specific steps to satisfy regulatory requirements.

Noncompliance is not an option. But, flexibility in scheduling when certain standards are met could give communities the ability to address environmental compliance actions sequentially, based on strict criteria. Instead of paying for two or more infrastructure projects at once, the highest priority would begin and end before the

second highest priority begins, and so on. For small communities, a holistic approach to mandates makes sense in the current climate of taxpayer (and rate-payer) revolts, and where the public and environmental health standards of the government are so severely questioned.

In response to the Idaho pilot project and the significant community assistance efforts in Oregon and Nebraska, the EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assistance issued a policy guidance document in November, 1995, endorsing the negotiation of multi-media compliance agreements between state media program managers and small (less than 2,500 population) communities.

Currently, the Idaho Division of Environmental Quality is proceeding through a negotiated rulemaking process in order to produce proposed rules for public review in the summer of 1997. The proposed rule would implement the Idaho Legislature's 1994 directive that the community mandates method be fully investigated through the pilot project and then extended to other needy communities.

The EFC Project Manager is a member of the Negotiated Rulemaking Committee and also serves on its Technical Review Subcommittee. The proposed rule is expected to be completed in early 1997. In their committee discussions to date, members have indicated an interest in having the Region 10 EFC provide future technical assistance services to communities seeking relief through the community mandates assistance approach.

5. 1996 Water and Wastewater Resource Directory for Idaho City Leaders.

The Environmental Finance Center at Boise State University assisted the Idaho Department of Commerce in producing the *1996 Water and Wastewater Resource Directory for Idaho City Leaders*. This publication is produced every two to three years and contains comparative information about municipal water and wastewater systems. Water and sewer districts and associations also contribute survey information for this publication.

The Region 10 EFC was an important partner in designing and updating the survey instrument, reviewing the layout and presentation of the data and summary graphics, and in providing editorial assistance in the production of the report. The Resource Directory will be distributed to all Idaho municipalities, water and sewer districts and associations, and to other stakeholders and service providers involved in the operation and management of water and sewer systems in the state.

EFC Presentations in 1996

1. October 16, 1996, Association of State Drinking Water Administrators (ASDWA), Small Systems Committee, at the 1996 ASDWA Annual Conference, San Diego. *The EFC Project Manager presented the EFC network's proposal for assisting the states in designing and implementing capacity development strategies per the 1996 SDWA Amendments.*
 2. December 4, 1996, Idaho Environmental Health Directors Annual Meeting, Boise. *The Project Manager introduced the Health District Environmental Directors to the EFC at BSU and to the EFC network generally. An overview of the SDWA amendments and the new requirements for capacity development was also presented.*
 3. December 6, 1996, Idaho Rural Development Council, Annual Meeting, Boise. *The Project Manager was invited to make a presentation introducing the BSU Environmental Finance Center to members of the Idaho Rural Development Council during a workshop entitled; "Resources: Lost and Found."*
 4. December 11, 1996, Idaho Department of Commerce, Infrastructure Financing Advisory Committee (a.k.a. "Advantage Club"), Boise. *The Project Manager was invited to present an introduction of the BSU Environmental Finance Center to members of the Infrastructure Financing Advisory Committee of the Idaho Department of Commerce. This group meets quarterly and is comprised of representatives of federal and state agencies involved in providing financial and technical assistance on infrastructure finance.*
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Recently created at Boise State University in Boise, Idaho in late 1995 but without EPA funding, the Idaho EFC has defined system viability issues that are addressed in the 104th Congress Senate bill reauthorizing the Safe Drinking Water Act. This EFC's focus is on coordinating analysis, training and outreach activities relative to the viability assessment of drinking water systems. Idaho EFC will focus on developing and testing a variety of methods by which system viability can be determined. In addition, the Idaho EFC is providing information on a home page which is available on the World Wide Web. The address is "<http://sspa.boisestate.edu/efc/>".

Summary of Projects and Activities Related to Capacity Development:

The Environmental Protection Agency's Region 10 designated the Idaho Policies Group as an Environmental Finance Center in 1995. The group consists of Boise State University, the University of Idaho, and Idaho State University. The background of their request to be designated an EFC is grounded in a concern with the fiscal consequences of unfunded mandates on small communities and their capability to comply with environmental mandates. In a landmark effort, the Idaho Division of Environmental Quality initiated the nationally recognized "Idaho Cumulative Mandates Pilot Project." The project examined the role of risk in local decision making affecting environmental protection and evaluated an alternative that could help build the capacity of small communities to comply with mandates in a rational way.

The results of this project and other important university and state initiatives contributed significantly to development of the Senate bill (S.1316) reauthorizing the Safe Drinking Water Act. The Act assigns the Environmental Finance Centers the important task of providing training and technical assistance "in developing capacity of public water systems" (section 15). Although no federal funding has yet been available to carry out technical assistance, the Idaho Policies Group EFC has already begun planning how the network of EFCs can best meet the challenge using the experience and expertise that the EFCs individually and collectively have acquired the past three years.

Home Page - Region 10 EFC on World Wide Web

The Region 10 EFC's World Wide Web home page is designed to be an information resource for local communities and administrators. The home page <http://sspa.boisestate.edu/efc/> addresses the "System Viability" of water and wastewater treatment systems. In the future, the site will provide access to technical documents addressing how to enhance the administrative, infrastructure, and financial capacities of local communities in meeting federal standards for safe drinking water and clean wastewater. Along with these, documents from a project recently conducted by the Idaho Division of Environmental Quality Entitled, *The Idaho Community Mandates Pilot Project*, will be provided as model examples of past experiences with such issues. The site will also provide hyperlinks to sites maintained by other EFCs and the EPA.

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