

# **Environmental Finance Center Network Boise State University - Region 10 1998 Annual Report**

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## **ANNUAL REPORT 1998**

**Environmental Finance Center  
Boise State University  
U.S. EPA Region 10**

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**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. The EFC is making information available on the World Wide Web at <http://sspa.boisestate.edu/efc>

### [Facilities and Expertise](#)

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 "under funded" 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 multi variate capacity assessment and the strategic planning components in the SDWA Amendments of 1996.

### [Introduction](#)

The Environmental Finance Center at Boise State University concentrates its resources in performing 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.
- Developing new tools to improve the financial management and management capabilities of small public, private and private not-for-profit water systems.
- 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.

## **CORE 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.

Since its establishment in 1995, The Environmental Finance Center at Boise State University has placed significant emphasis 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.

In 1998 the EFC staff conducted six utility rate design workshops within Region 10. The workshops were organized based upon local demand for assistance. Fifty officials from communities in Oregon, Washington and Idaho participated in the EFC's full-day training sessions.

- January 8, at Lewiston, Idaho - sponsored by the Idaho Rural Water Association
- March 20, at Boise State University - sponsored by the EFC10
- March 25, at Edmonds, Washington - sponsored by the Washington Department of Ecology
- March 26, at Ellensburg, Washington - sponsored by the Washington Department of Ecology
- April 7, at Portland, Oregon - sponsored by the American Water Works Association, Pacific Northwest Section
- August 18, at Soda Springs, Idaho - sponsored by the City of Soda Springs

EFC staff also provided utility rate setting and financial management training at several workshops, conferences and training seminars during 1998.

- February 28, at Pocatello, Idaho - Meeting of the Idaho Rural Partnership
- April 21-23, at Anchorage, Alaska - Meeting of the Alaska Water and Wastewater Management Association
- June 16, at Idaho Falls, Idaho - Meeting of the Idaho Association of Municipal Engineers
- July 31, at Sun Valley, Idaho - Meeting of the Consulting Engineers of Idaho
- August 13, at Portland, Oregon - Meeting of Seattle Northwest Securities Corporation
- August 25, at Park City, Utah - Meeting of the Utah Rural Water Association

- November 6, at Jerome, Idaho - Meeting with the City of Jerome

### **Developing EFC Network Capabilities for Delivering Utility Rate Setting Training**

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. In 1998, EFC10's Director Bill Jarocki provided technical assistance and training to staff at three sister Environmental Finance Centers; EFC2 at Syracuse University, EFC3 at the University of Maryland and EFC5 at the University of New Mexico.

In helping to develop network capability to deliver this important training service to communities across the country, in 1998 EFC10 negotiated a licensing agreement on behalf of the network of Environmental Finance Centers ensuring access to RateMod Pro 4.1 software and technical support.

### **Safe Drinking Water Act Capacity Development**

On August 6, 1996, S. 1316 was signed into law 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.

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.

In 1998, with significant financial support from the EPA Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water, EFC10 joined the Environmental Finance Center at the University of New Mexico (EFC6) to continue assisting state drinking water programs in USEPA Regions 2, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10; and Native American Tribal Governments located within USEPA 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 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 assisted the states of Oregon and Idaho in facilitating the citizen/stakeholder process of fashioning findings of fact that will contribute to establishing state capacity development strategies. The EFC has advised the State of Alaska in the formulation of rules setting technical, financial and management standards for new public water systems.

California's Drinking Water Program received assistance in developing a tool for assessing financial capability, as well as specific training for the program's field staff on financial and management capacity. Approximately two hundred officials attended a two-week series of training workshops in Sacramento, Berkeley, Santa Ana and Madera.

At the end of 1998, the EFC began assisting two states in Region 7; Missouri and Iowa. Both states requested the EFC's help in facilitating the citizen/stakeholder advisory processes. Missouri asked for additional help in drafting rules establishing technical, financial and management standards for new public water systems.

### **SDWA Capability Analysis and DWSRF Loan Application Technical Assistance.**

As mentioned earlier, 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.

Assistance to the State of Idaho: Since the establishment of the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF), the EFC10 has assisted the Idaho State Drinking Water Program in developing a capability screening mechanism for DWSRF 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 since 1997. 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 continue to analyze and rate the worthiness of SRF loan applications utilizing the Capability Assessment Methodology developed by the EFC in 1997.

Assistance to the State of Alaska: The EFC at Boise State University provides ongoing assistance to DWSRF administrators in the State of Alaska on SRF issues. For example, the EFC produced a white paper on the issue of depreciation.

### **Region 10 Lower Boise River 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 is focusing 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 has created 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. The EFC is providing key staff support to address the following project needs:

- Coordinating discussions among various pollution trading participants.
- Recruiting candidates that would be interested in participating in the pollution trading market. This includes municipalities and other point-source dischargers, as well as indirect dischargers such as smaller communities and local industries.
- Developing tools that will allow point source dischargers to manage the risk of nonpoint source trade failures if effluent limits are exceeded following the establishment of pollution trading agreements.

## NEW PROJECTS

### **Charrettes**

In 1998 the EFC at Boise State University took its first steps in emulating the success of the EFC at the University of Maryland by conducting four charrette events. Based on this experience and the establishment of staff capabilities for conducting these events, it is expected that charrettes will be a standard service offering of the EFC in the future.

Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians Charrette: In the spring of 1998 the EFC assisted the Confederated Tribe of Siletz Indians by conducting a charrette at the Tribe's offices in western Oregon. The goal of the charrette was to attract resources for conducting a phase II assessment of contaminated property owned by the Tribe. The Siletz wished to have the property remediated and made available for local economic development purposes. The EFC was successful in attracting the participation of several state, federal and local officials who assembled to address the problem. The outcome of the meeting was a renewed commitment of potential funders to find the means for conducting the site assessment and to move toward final clean up of the property in question.

South Lake Water and Sewer District Charrette: The EFC was asked by the Central District Health Department (Southwest Idaho) to assist the South Lake Water and Sewer District in finding an affordable option in meeting wastewater challenges in Cascade, Idaho. The EFC facilitated discussions among the District's consulting engineers, Cascade City Officers, Valley County officials, the Health District and the Idaho Division of Environmental Quality which led to a more reasonable cost option for meeting sewerage capital investment needs.

City of McCall Water System Financing Charrette: In April 1998, the EFC conducted a water system financing charrette for the City of McCall, Idaho, population 2,500. The charrette was requested by the City of McCall following meetings with the Idaho staff of the Office of U.S. Senator Dirk Kempthorne. The city is struggling to implement improvements to its drinking water system in order to comply with the Surface Water Treatment Rule. The EFC assembled a team of twenty-five municipal finance specialists, regulators, water system purveyors (both private and public), consulting engineers, representatives of funding agencies and technical service providers; to recommend capital financing strategies for the City to consider. The charrette panelists

concluded that the City's preference for forgiving existing debt was not a viable strategy for meeting future capital financing needs. The charrette panelists offered twelve options for reducing the cost of expected water projects.

City of Pocatello Brownfields Project Charrette: The City of Pocatello (population 50,000), in order to enhance its redevelopment project through community participation and sound planning, asked the Environmental Finance Center at Boise State University to aid in the initial phases of its planning process. The EFC at Boise State agreed to help Pocatello gather information and community support for its grant application process by conducting a charrette. This event brought community stakeholders and various interests together to discuss the needs of the community and to determine a parcel of land that would be most financially and socially viable to redevelop using the EPA grant. The EFC agreed to help organize and conduct the charrette for the City of Pocatello. The EFC at Boise State University was greatly assisted by Kirstin Toth of the Great Lakes Environmental Finance Center at Cleveland State University (EFC5).

To enhance community involvement and awareness of the project, the City of Pocatello invited the Environmental Finance Center at Boise State University to conduct a mini-conference to introduce community members to the concepts of Brownfields redevelopment. A charrette was held the following day, granting community stakeholders the opportunity to be involved with the process of choosing the most viable property for this redevelopment grant.

The Brownfields Mini-Conference on October 20, 1998 granted all interested and concerned parties the opportunity to express their visions and concerns for the Pocatello Brownfields project. On October 21, 1998, the Environmental Finance Center at Boise State University conducted a charrette to help Pocatello further its Brownfields redevelopment goals. The objective of the process was to determine a property within the community of Pocatello that would be the subject of an EPA Brownfields Redevelopment grant.

The goal of this charrette was to help Pocatello with its EPA Brownfields Grant application. The group wanted to know how a redevelopment program could fit all objectives of different groups in the area, as well as how much redevelopment activity should be attempted simultaneously. The group established that they would determine which properties would be likely candidates while keeping in mind the community's goals in terms of fostering or encouraging redevelopment of Brownfields. They agreed that they would then plan further action to finish the grant and create an implementation calendar.

### [AWWA PNS Financial Management Practices Survey](#)

In 1997, the Finance Committee of the Pacific Northwest Section of AWWA (AWWA PNS) collected data from a selected sample of member water systems in Oregon as part of a two-stage effort to develop detailed information regarding water system financial practices. AWWA PNS asked the EFC to submit a project proposal addressing the completion of the second stage of this survey research effort; a survey of AWWA member water systems in Washington and Idaho. Additionally, this stage includes a compilation of the survey data and a detailed analysis and report of findings.

The Environmental Finance Center agreed to leverage its existing resources to supplement project resources from the AWWA PNS to produce research documentation that will be beneficial to both organizations. In 1998 the EFC performed a Financial Operations Survey among 70 pre-selected water systems in Idaho and Washington. The information collected was used to develop a comprehensive profile of the financial structure of the Pacific Northwest water industry. In 1999 the results of the survey will be published in a report format that will profile the financial management characteristics of regional water systems. The report will be delivered at the 1999 annual conference of the AWWA PNS in Tacoma, Washington.

### [City of Eagle - Sewer Consolidation Study](#)

In 1998 the City of Eagle, Idaho asked if the Environmental Finance Center at Boise State University could



assist the City of Eagle in evaluating the feasibility of consolidating the services provided by the Eagle Sewer District under the City. The City identified the crucial question to be, "Would the citizens of Eagle be better served, politically and financially, if the sewer district were to go under the jurisdiction of the city of Eagle". A list of questions was provided to the EFC by the city of Eagle for consideration in development of a scope of work. The EFC agreed to conduct the study that will provide a list of advantages and disadvantages to consolidation for citizens of the city of Eagle, but will not recommend specifically a proposed action. The advantages and disadvantages will be described within the areas of finance, management and capacity.

### **Capital Improvement Planning and Financing Tool**

This year the EFC, in cooperation with the BSU College of Engineering, began the development of capital improvement planning and financing tool for small water and wastewater utilities. The goal is to offer a tool that will help small utilities assess their capital facilities and on the basis of that assessment, prepare a multi-year financing plan. This financial information will greatly aid small water and wastewater systems in meeting the full-cost pricing needs of their operations. Beta testing of the tool is planned for the summer of 1999. Multi-state testing of the model should occur in late 1999.

### **EFC Network Collaborations**

The EFC at Boise State University relies upon the partners in the EFC Network to offer assistance to communities, the states and the regional entities in Region 10 EPA. The following are some examples of collaborative efforts with EFC partners:

- Pocatello Brownfields Conference and Charrette. Great Lakes EFC's Kirstin Toth, a recognized expert in Brownfields redevelopment, joined Boise State EFC staff in conducting two Brownfields mini-conferences and a charrette in Region 10. Ms. Toth was a featured speaker on the topic of Brownfields at workshops in Pocatello and Boise. Her expertise was essential to the success of the Pocatello Brownfields charrette.
- The BSU EFC joined its network partners in Syracuse for the first annual EFC Forum organized by the EFC at Syracuse University. EFC Director Bill Jarocki conducted two workshops on financial capacity building and participated in a charrette addressing the financing challenges of the Hamlet of Long Eddy, New York.
- The EFCs at BSU and the University of New Mexico are partners in delivering assistance to states in the area of drinking water system capacity building strategies.
- The Boise State University EFC is providing assistance to the Great Lakes EFC at Cleveland State University relative to their work with Tribal governments in the Midwest.
- EFC Director Bill Jarocki assisted the EFC at the University of Maryland in conducting financial management training workshops for officials in Pennsylvania and Maryland.

### **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 profession 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, 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 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 1998 Institutes mentioned above.

### **EFC Program Administration, Project Management and Staffing**

The EFC is one of two important service centers established within the Department of Public Policy and Administration. James B. Weatherby, Ph.D., the Chairman of the Department, 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. Mr. Jarocki has received two National Performance Review "Hammer" awards and is a member of the American Water Works Association's Finance, Accounting and Management Controls Committee.

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Ms. Sharon Burke is the EFC's Project Associate. Ms. Burke is in the Region 10 Lower Boise River Watershed

demonstration project for water pollution trading.

Ms. Symantha Zeimet is an EFC Graduate Assistant. Ms. Zeimet will complete her MPA program in the spring of 1999. She provides half-time assistance to the Center. Her duties have focused on research projects regarding financial management and management practices of drinking water systems, fashioning state drinking water program capacity development strategies in Oregon and Idaho, and assisting in the system capacity reviews of Drinking Water State Revolving Fund loan applicants. Zeimet often represents the EFC at meetings of drinking water professionals and policy makers.

In 1998 the EFC created two additional graduate assistant positions. Mr. Paul Woods, P.E., a first year graduate student in the MPA program joined the EFC in September 1998. His duties include leading a joint project team with the BSU School of Engineering to develop a capital financing planning tool for small water and wastewater systems.

Ms. Lauren McLean, another first year graduate student filled the other graduate assistant position in September 1998. A graduate of Notre Dame University, Ms. McLean specializes in collaborative problem solving activities and comes to BSU from the University of Rochester. Her interests include building capacity of tribal governments to comply with environmental regulation. In 1998 McLean led the EFC's work in assisting the City of Pocatello in formulating a Brownfields redevelopment proposal.

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

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## **Boise State EFC Organization**

### **Management**

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