



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 10
1200 Sixth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98101

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03 AUG 2004

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Department of Environmental Quality
State Water Quality Programs

Reply To
Attn Of: OWW-134

Toni Hardesty, Administrator
Department of Environmental Quality
1410 North Hilton
Boise, ID 83706-1255

Re: Approval of the Big Lost River Subbasin Assessment and Total Maximum Daily Loads
(HUC #17040218)

Dear Ms. Hardesty:

I am pleased to inform you that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) hereby approves the Big Lost River Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) submitted to us on May 14, 2004. This TMDL addresses sediment on 12 stream segments and temperature on 11 segments in HUC 17040218.

During the development of the subbasin assessment and TMDLs, IDEQ determined that some of the waterbody/pollutant pairs listed below were not meeting water quality standards and had not been previously included on Idaho's 303(d) list. EPA understands that these waterbodies would have been included on the list had the state been aware, at the time the list was compiled, that these waterbodies, were not meeting water quality standards. The information contained in this TMDL document demonstrates that these non-listed waterbodies are in fact water quality limited. Because EPA has approved the TMDLs for these stream segments, the state need not include them on the next 303(d) list.

The TMDLs addressed in this letter include the following:

Source	Boundaries and AUs	Pollutant	Existing Load	Allocation	Reduction (%)
East Fork Big Lost River	17040218-SK039	Sediment & Temperature	1218 tons/yr	172 tons/yr	85.9%
			Max Daily 21.3°C	13°C	39.0%
			Daily Ave 15.2°C	9°C	40.8%
Corral Creek	17040218-SK041	Sediment & Temperature	250 tons/yr	39 tons/yr	84.4%
			Max Daily 21.7°C	13°C	40.1%
			Daily Ave 14.4°C	9°C	37.5%
Star Hope Creek	17040218-SK035	Sediment & Temperature	249 tons/yr	69 tons/yr	72.3%
			Max Daily 20.6°C	13°C	36.9%
			Daily Ave 13.6°C	9°C	33.8%

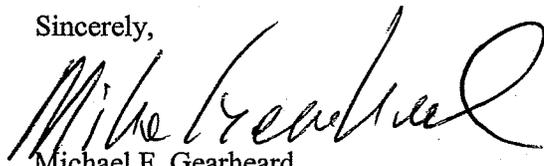
Source	Boundaries and AUs	Pollutant	Existing Load	Allocation	Reduction (%)
Wild Horse Creek	17040218-SK030	Sediment & Temperature	103 tons/yr	28.5 tons/yr	72.3%
			Max Daily 16.7°C	13°C	22.2%
			Daily Ave 11.3°C	9°C	20.6%
North Fork Big Lost River	17040218-SK027	Sediment & Temperature	285 tons/yr	54.3 tons/yr	80.9%
			Max Daily 19°C	13°C	31.6%
			Daily Ave 12.9°C	9°C	30.3%
Summit Creek	17040218-SK028	Sediment & Temperature	45 tons/yr	14 tons/yr	68.9%
			Max Daily 17.8°C	13°C	27.0%
			Daily Ave 11.6°C	9°C	22.4%
Twin Bridges Creek	17040218-SK026_03	Sediment	536 tons/yr	33.1 tons/yr	93.8%
Thousand Springs Creek	17040218-SK016	Sediment	13 tons/yr	3.5 tons/yr	73.1%
Warm Springs Creek	17040218-SK043	Temperature	Max Daily 20.9°C	13°C	37.8%
			Daily Ave 14.5°C	9°C	37.9%
Antelope Creek at Forest Boundary	17040218-SK047	Sediment & Temperature	1218 tons/yr	888 tons/yr	86.7%
			Max Daily 19°C	13°C	31.6%
			Daily Ave 13.8°C	9°C	35.1%
Antelope Creek at Diversion	17040218-SK046	Sediment & Temperature	included above	included above	included above
			Max Daily 23.2°C	13°C	44.0%
			Daily Ave 15.1°C	9°C	40.4%
Bear Creek	17040218-SK053	Sediment & Temperature	52 tons/yr	17 tons/yr	67.3%
			Max Daily 19.4°C	13°C	33.0%
			Daily Ave 14.1°C	9°C	36.4%
Cherry Creek	17040218-SK049	Sediment & Temperature	156 tons/yr	53.2 tons/yr	65.9%
			Max Daily 18.6°C	13°C	30.4%
			Daily Ave 16.4°C	9°C	45.4%

The Big Lost River Subbasin TMDL includes a list of recommended changes to Idaho's 303(d) list for the next listing cycle. We understand that Idaho will submit these proposed listing changes as a part of the next 303(d) list. EPA appreciates the opportunity to review the basis for the proposed listing changes prior to their official submittal. At the time the 303(d) list is submitted, EPA will review the proposed changes and make a final agency determination under a separate administrative process.

In addition to the TMDLs for the Big Lost Subbasin, Idaho DEQ has also developed summary implementation strategies which are included in Section 5.5 of the TMDL document. The strategies were developed and submitted pursuant to the TMDL Settlement Agreement of July 2002. While EPA is not taking formal action on the strategies, we support the state in including them in the TMDL. We believe implementation is the critical next step for realizing improvements in water quality called for in the TMDL and encourage IDEQ to continue their work with appropriate parties and agencies to ensure that necessary actions are taken to achieve the reductions called for in the TMDL. Towards that end, we suggest that future TMDLs include temperature surrogates, such as levels of shade necessary to meet the temperature targets. We have found that expressing the TMDL targets in this manner can help explain to the public the nature of the problem that is resulting in impairment (i.e., absence of shade and degraded riparian habitat) and provide a description of what is needed to restore the stream. It also provides a measurable indicator that landowners can use to assess the current condition of their land, and evaluate progress over time as a result of restoration.

We appreciate the commitment shown by your staff and other individuals who helped develop this TMDL. We hope that continued collaboration will bring about effective implementation of the TMDL and restoration of water quality in the Big Lost River Subbasin. By EPA's approval, the TMDL for these waterbodies is now incorporated into the State's Water Quality Management Plan under §303(e) of the Clean Water Act. This action is for approval of the completed TMDLs contained in the document. If you have any comments or questions, please feel free to call me at (206)553-1261, or Bill Stewart of my staff at (208)378-5753.

Sincerely,



Michael F. Gearheard
Director
Office of Water

cc: Jim Johnston, IDEQ Idaho Falls Regional Administrator
Troy Saffle, IDEQ Idaho Falls Regional Water Quality Manager
Tom Herron, IDEQ LRO TMDL Project Manager
Mike McIntyre, IDEQ Surface Water Program Manager
Marti Bridges, IDEQ TMDL Program Manager

