Basin Environmental Improvement Project Commission Summary Minutes

March 11, 2026 9:30 AM – 3:30 PM
Idaho Fish and Game Office
2885 W. Kathleen Avenue, CDA ID 83815

These minutes are summary notes of the reports and presentations provided at the March 11, 2026 meeting, focusing on the key topics and issues, conclusions, and next steps that were discussed.

Attendees

Basin Environmental Improvement Project Commission (BEIPC)

Sharon Bosley (Executive Director), Gail Yost (Assistant to Executive Director; Notetaker)

Commissioners and Alternates

Leslie Duncan (Chair, Kootenai County), Brook Beeler (Washington State), Jess Byrne (DEQ), Dan McCracken (DEQ), Dave Dose (Shoshone County), Mark Reynolds (Benewah County), Caj Matheson (Coeur d'Alene Tribe), Scott Fields (Coeur d'Alene Tribe), Calvin Terada (EPA)

Staff Support

Keri St. John (DEQ), Rebecca Stevens (Coeur d'Alene Tribe), Sandra Treccani (Washington State), Jocelyn Carver (EPA)

Call to Order

- Leslie Duncan, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:36 am.

Review and Approve Draft November Meeting Minutes – Sharon Bosley (Action Item)

- There were no edits to the November 5, 2025 Meeting Minutes.
- Caj Matheson made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; Dave Dose seconded the motion; all Commissioners approved the meeting minutes. **M/S/C**

Snow Water Equivalency – Peter Youngblood (NRCS)

- USDA National Research Conservation Service program has been around since 1930's, specifically measuring snowpack in the western United States.

- Remote mountainous weather stations (SNOTEL's) measure mountain water and snow depth and have been around since 1960's. Measured every month between January and sometimes June.
    - In Idaho Panhandle – 16 automated stations; 14 active Snow Courses.
- Since October 1st, we have received about 107% of normal water precipitation –
    - Normal until December then heavy precipitation, unusually warm, unprecedented snow melt and record stream flooding.
    - Dry January, lowest snowpack records – not much improvement for February.
    - Area is sitting at around 60% of typical snowpack for March - last normal snowpack year was 2023.
- NRCS water supply forecasts:
    - Published monthly between February – June.
    - Uncertainty includes future weather, model simplifications, and data limitations.
    - Due to uncertainty, forecasts are presented as a range of values, each with a specific probability of occurrence.
    - All forecasts values this year are below normal – 50% to 70% range.
- NOAA seasonal outlook for March – May:
    - Equal chances air temperature to be above normal or below normal.
    - Same outlook for Precipitation for same period -expecting drought conditions to persist due to low snowpack.
- Website for additional information and resources:
    - https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/idaho/snow-survey
    - Sign-up for Idaho Snow Survey Newsletter.

Questions/Comments

- Mark Getscher from the CDA Tribe asked for clarification on the snowpack – current Snotel sites are showing 60% of an average year at higher elevations and 40% at lower elevations.
    - Peter replied yes – he typically likes to use the first of the month values including the monthly snow courses which can provide more context and elevation bands.
- Caj Matheson said that Peter talked about sensors taking the temperature of the snow, can he describe the quality of the snowpack and how that interacts with melt off, is it both depth and temperature.
    - Peter explained that snow capture is hard to continuously measure, the snow sensors are still somewhat experimental but still accurate. This time of year, most of our sites are around 30%, but once you reach 40% snow density that is the point the snowpack wants to release its water; when the density is low, most of the water is retained within the snow. The December event had a dense snowpack with warm temperatures within the snow; if the snowpack is cold, it can withstand a rain event. Currently, the snow is becoming denser and will be ready to release and melt.

- Bob Steed of DEQ asked what year this is going to be close to in comparison.
    - Peter compared this year's projections to those of 2015.
- A question was asked if the Snotel site data is available in real time.
    - Yes, Peter suggested using the interactive map on their website as all the individual sites transmit every hour and provide valuable information.
- Sharon thanked Peter as he also volunteers for the TCP program and snow science that is conducted at Lookout Pass.

Lake Tributary Data – Craig Cooper (DEQ)

- Phosphorus loads – why monitor?
    - Phosphorus is an important factor that influences metal mobility in CDA Lake.
        - Nutrients promote algae growth.
        - Decomposition of algae lowers O2 and pH in the lake's deeper waters.
        - Lower O2, pH can promote release of metals from sediments.
    - Many sources of phosphorus to the lake.
    - Need good data to quantify loads and prioritize management actions.
- Why monitor the tributaries?
    - Significant source:
        - 12 – 28 tons/year (6-16%).
        - Proximity to lake.
        - Potential to have higher fraction bioavailable-pH.
    - Growing pressure from regional development.
    - Prior estimates were primarily from modeling.
    - Important data gap identified by National Academy of Science (NAS) study.
- Design challenges:
    - >40 watersheds.
    - Additional face drainages – not close in proximity but send water to the lake.
    - Access limitations.
    - Inclement weather.
    - Large extent of annual variability.
    - Cannot directly monitor all streams.
    - Select representative watersheds.
    - Extrapolate via modeling.
- Monitored Watersheds
    - Study plan:
        - Monitored 20 streams.
        - Representative dataset – land use and development, extra coverage of the lake along the North and West shores.
        - Monthly sampling.
        - Additional samples collected for runoff events.

    - Outcome:
        - 35% of lake watershed.
        - 40-50 samples per major stream (core watersheds) – helped calculate the lows better for accuracy.
        - Wolf Lodge creek did have some data from 1991-92.
        - Fernan watershed very complex – blends data from two studies.
- Monitoring Plan:
    - All monitoring sites:
        - Manual grab samples.
        - Staff gage equipment or equivalent.
        - HOBO press temperature loggers to capture stream height.
    - Additional at Wolf Lodge:
        - Autosampler & bubbler – allows us to capture nutrient concentrations at rising and falling stream stages.
        - Hydrolab stream sonde – for turbidity and productivity.
    - Water Chemistry:
        - Total phosphorus and ortho-phosphorus.
        - Total nitrogen, nitrate, sulfate and chloride.
        - Turbidity
        - Conductivity pH for water quality.
        - FORTRAN Program for estimating loads in streams and rivers.
        - Good comparison between model and measured data.
- Total Phosphorus – core watersheds:
    - Highest priorities – load:
        - Fernan Creek upstream
        - Wolf Lodge Creek
        - Mica Creek
        - With Cougar, Neachen and Fernan Creek Outlet following.
    - Highest priorities – yield:
        - Bennett Creek
        - Neachen Creek
        - French Gulch
    - Micro watersheds – contrast with core watersheds:
        - All have low range load.
        - Have mid-to-low range yield.
        - Low yield on north-shore developed watersheds.
- Seasonality:
    - Link the timing of tributary's nutrient load to timing of lake productivity.
    - Helps ID nutrient sources.
    - Sets the sampling schedule.
    - Establish comparability with other datasets.

    - Highest average loads from tributaries January-March, elevated for April-June, with large extent of annual variability.
    - Total phosphorus higher lbs/million gallon during runoff, lower during base flow.
- Human influences:
    - Assume similar soils, geology, background load for all streams.
    - Compare each stream to natural background site.
    - Account for the differences in discharge.
    - Estimate average excess phosphorus relative to the background site.
    - Rough estimate:
        - 3-year averages.
        - Total load from monitored streams 9,580 lbs/year.
        - Excess vs Beauty Creek over all streams – 5,300 lbs/year.
        - Up to 50% of total phosphorus could be coming from human influences.
        - Multiple factors contribute – need a more comprehensive analysis.
        - Possibly 30-60% higher loads than in the 1990's.
    - Current estimates for total load over all streams are consistent with prior modeling estimates.
- Trends:
    - Likely seeing an influence of development on phosphorus loads.
    - Timing coincides with elevated chlorophyll-a in northern lake.
    - Phosphorus loads are highly variable.
- Path forward:
    - Technical Work:
        - Better understand drivers of P-loading, influences of development.
        - Evaluate results from recent stream network modeling.
        - Better utilize flow-normalization of nutrient loads to identify, evaluate trends.
    - Nutrient Management:
        - Incorporate findings into prioritization process.
        - Evaluate benefits of recently completed projects (Cougar, Mica, Wolf Lodge Creeks).

Questions/Comments

- Sharon Bosley wanted to know how we could utilize this data, could we prioritize using 319 grants for those more impacted water sources.
    - Criag stated the challenge with the 319 grants is finding landowners who want to do the projects and help fund them. This information may help us find those landowners and focus our follow-up monitoring studies and the piece of information to help us form the overall process.
    - Rebecca Stevens added there has been 319 monies spent in the Wolf Lodge and Mica Creek watershed. It would also be helpful to see a map of the landownership over the watersheds.

- Rebecca asked why they used Beauty Creek watershed as their baseline.
    - Craig replied because it is dominantly undeveloped national forest land and our least developed watershed.
- Question from the audience – is there a way to determine if potential sources are influenced by agriculture versus wastewater; and are inputs from the shoreline factored in.
    - Craig answered that these tributary influences will be from non-point sources, runoff, potential septic and storm water influences but no point discharges into the stream network. The data was measured as close to the mouth of the stream and not close to the shoreline.
- Comment from the audience – amazing work that has been done over the years, what is the long-term prognosis for funding to expand and narrow their focus on the continuation of this work.
    - Craig said they make really good use of the funding they have and are innovative with it. Maybe the next step in this work would be going back to these same sites in a few years and comparing the data.
- Sandy Treccani wanted to know now that they have gathered some information, could they determine if development is having an impact, and are those impacts from septic, exposure of soils erosion, chemicals or fertilizers; would future plans potentially differentiate the phosphorus source and drive actions to remedy those sources.
    - Craig responded with yes – some of this would depend on long-term funding. We could try to dive into detail by placing monitoring stations along different locations and watersheds with different types of landscape forms in hopes of obtaining watershed details.
- Caj Matheson appreciates all the work they are doing, the Tribe is doing similar work on the South end of the lake. One frustration from the Tribe is that studies lead to more studies, what are we doing to protect the lake. We could easily take a step and assign staff to conduct a GIS analysis to come up with information rather than wait for more funding.
    - Craig replied that it would be a great step to do.
- Mary Rehnborg was curious why he didn't have the CDA River or St. Joe basins in this analysis, is that because they are different and diverse or did we not have the data there.
    - Craig said they did a study that looked at the entire basin a few years ago and that study had a lot of data on the CDA River basin. This helped prioritize recent projects and work completed in Idaho. It also helped the excellent work the Tribe is conducting collecting phosphorus data on the St. Joe and St. Mary Rivers. One thing that came out of this and the NAS Academy study was that the tributaries are a big data gap and today's talk focused on that gap.

- Brook Beeler asked if we now understand proportionately the tributaries load versus the two larger river systems or have we not completed that analysis yet.
    - Craig answered we do have more information and the proportionate amounts of the tributaries loads versus the river loads. About 12-15% come from the tributaries, 80% from the CDA/St. Joe rivers together, and the other 5% to direct deposition from immediate groundwater influences.
- Question from the audience – we know a lot about how much phosphorus is coming into the lake, do we know what the lake's capacity is to handle the phosphorus load and stay within water quality parameters.
    - Craig replied that internal cycling of phosphorus in the lake is a difficult problem to handle, once phosphorus gets into the lake its permanent. We want to keep the lake as inert as possible. What we do next to understand this cycling process is a big challenge.
    - Caj Matheson added that the southern end of the lake is already not meeting water quality standards. We are starting to see these impacts in a negative sense and the potential for spreading. This is a very important issue.
    - Scott Fields stated we are already seeing anoxia from both river systems. The northern two-thirds of the lake is blessed with more volume, so it reacts slower, the southern end has less volume, higher sediment to surface water ratio and basically reacts faster. The Tribe has great concerns that the trend will continue as hypoxia was found last summer all the way past the mouth of the CDA River.
    - Mark Getscher from the CDA Tribe added that they are conducting that study right now and looking at phosphorus and nitrogen coming down the St. Joe and St. Mary's rivers. The data has not yet been published but should be by the end of summer and have data to compare with what Craig has done.
- Val Wade had a question on-line – is there actual data gathered on permitted and unpermitted wastewater systems along the rivers and lake.
    - Craig stated yes, they did look at wastewater influences along the CDA River back in 2020. It measured less than 10% of total phosphorus coming into the lake, but it was also some of the highest priority sources to go after wastewater systems.
    - Scott Fields added that the Governor's CLAC funding did a lot of good work towards reducing some of those point sources. It is really challenging to find sources of funding to tackle wastewater, so when we do find funding, great progress is being made.

Blood Lead Screening Update – Mary Rehnborg (PHD)

- Not a study; ongoing public health service.
- Primary focus on children 6 months to 6 years.
- Others affected – Occupational (mining), pregnant women, recreational activities.

- Normal levels in the 1950's were 60 µg/dL. CDC now recommends children under age 18 be at 3.5 µg/dL or below, adults under 10 µg/dL.
- LHIP Active since 1974 (Box) and 1996 (Basin).
- Free testing year-round, with incentives for resident participants 6 months to 6 years.

2025 LHIP Approach:

- Informed consent program by parent/guardian.
- Blood collected via venous or capillary (fingerstick).
- Confirmatory venous test for levels ≥3.5 µg/dL.
- Follow-up and consultations offered.

2025 Results:

- **Box:**
    - Children (105): Avg. 2.3 µg/dL, Geometric Mean 1.9
    - Others >6 (54): Avg. 2.7, Geometric Mean 1.8
- **Basin:**
    - Children (126): Avg. 2.1 µg/dL, Geometric Mean 1.7
    - Others >6 (68): Avg. 2.3, Geometric Mean 1.7
- **Follow-up actions:**
    - 4 in-home visits, 8 phone consultations, 20 info letters.
    - Identified sources:
        - Recreating in un-remediated areas including child's own yard.
            - Delivered clean soil or gravel for cap.
            - Additional outreach & follow-up safety tips to reduce exposure.
        - Occupational related – PHD will attempt to work with industries to provide education and provide tips on how to reduce exposure and tracking.
        - Lead based paint – provide guidance on safely sealing lead-based paints or removing objects from home.
    - Estimated 2025 LHIP Participants:
        - 25% in the Basin
        - 27% in the Box
        - Biggest goal is to increase numbers.

Questions/Comments

- Calvin Terada thanked Mary and was happy that the trends were still going down. He asked about the family or families that had tested high for lead in their yard, was their residence part of our yard clean-up program.
    - Mary replied that no action was taken in yards until the soil sample was at least 1000 parts per million (ppm). There were a few of these families where

ground cover was poor and kids were playing in 500-700 ppm soil. In these cases, clean soil was provided, grass seed if necessary to re-establish the vegetation. The other instance had a full 12-inch barrier, but their dogs had dug through the barrier.

- Caj Matheson stated they are doing incredible work. Going back to the objectives in the ROD, what would be the process so that the objectives are maintained, but that we change as science evolves.
    - Mary answered that just because those objectives are what is established, they are always aiming for better. They have taken the most recent recommendations from the CDC for provider interventions and follow-ups. Our decisions use the most current numbers, but we measure our objectives against those originally set standards.
- Rebecca Stevens asked if the mobile unit they talked about for the Lower Basin had any updates.
    - Mary did say they had a mobile unit lined up that fell through, other options were explored just haven't come up with anything that would be set up to handle the screenings.
    - Rebecca also asked if the clean topsoil was still coming from the Rathdrum Prairie, and were they worried about the reduction in clean sources.
    - Mary told her they stockpile clean soil for distribution at the Page Repository. The last load of soil came from the Sandpoint area. They do manage the stockpile continually so there is always some on hand.
- Sand Treccani wanted to know if the mining companies offer free blood testing to their employees, have they taken advantage of the offer.
    - Mary stated most mining companies do offer free blood testing. They also focus on the employees who work in higher risk areas like the mill or high lead stopes. Educational opportunities with Bunker Hill came up recently where they were able to educate and answer questions. Her hope is to continue these types of partnerships as miners seem to be the highest population of elevated blood levels.
- Question from the audience – how quickly do blood lead levels change.
    - Mary replied 60 days is the half life of lead depending on a person's metabolism, diet, how hydrated they are and continued exposures. Children usually take longer.
- Jess Byrne thought at one point there was consideration to raise the incentive per child, is that still being discussed.
    - Mary said yes, they did have discussions and may discuss it again next budget year - maybe include other ways to offer incentive. Right now, $50 seems to be a nice balance.

CDA Lake Science Coordination Team Update (SCT) – Craig Cooper, DEQ

- Established in 2023 to provide technical leadership for scientific study of CDA Lake.
- 2022 NAS report concern about the lake's health and suggested a strengthening of collaboration between agencies:
    - CDA Tribe
    - DEQ
    - University of Idaho
    - EPA
    - USGS
    - Alta Science and Engineering
- Facilitation was funded by Idaho DEQ through the Leading Idaho Initiative.
- Purpose – to generate actionable scientific knowledge to support resource managers in protecting public health, attaining cultural and beneficial uses, and recovering ecosystem health.
    - Objectives:
        - Advance scientific understanding.
            - Develop science priorities for lake and watershed health.
        - Support public health and ecosystem recovery.
            - Use adaptive management framework.
        - Coordinate research and monitoring.
            - Hold regular meetings, collaborative process.
        - Document progress.
            - Document priorities and progress, facilitate reviews.
        - Review technical studies.
- Provide a Science Priorities Document:
    - Main work over the past year.
    - Simplify main science directions.
    - Collate science questions & example projects.
    - Strategic roadmap – align science and provide guidance for funding agencies.
- Coordinated Scientific Efforts:
    - Collaborative Scientific Coordination – provide forum to support collective research goals.
    - Multi-agency planning – promote effective monitoring & data-sharing.
    - Review and Feedback process – SCT can review studies & provide feedback.
    - Adaptive Management – science informs management, management informs science.
- Key Outputs and Reporting:
    - Science Priorities Document – updated after 4 years.
    - Annual Work Plan and Achievements.

    - Methods and Planning document – framework for evaluating status and trends.
    - Transparency and Decision Support – increase transparency, aid strategic planning & support informed environmental decision-making.
- Opportunities for Engagement:
    - Open technical input – SCT invites experts to provide input.
    - Facilitates Reviews, not approvals – can facilitate technical reviews but does not require approval.
    - Encourages Collaboration – promote collaboration through joint science priorities.
    - Recognize Scope Limits – SCT does not coordinate all technical work affecting the lake.

Questions/Comments

- Dave Fortier asked if the state budget cuts would affect the SCT.
    - Craig stated that any cuts to science would have an impact.
    - Jess Byrne added that the reductions as part of the legislative budget would reduce the general fund by 5%, which is just short of $1.5 million. It also eliminates eight positions, none of which impact the Lake Management Plan or the CDA Regional office. The big impact is operating dollars specifically for water quality monitoring and other monitoring programs.
    - Dan McCracken from DEQ said they did lose some general fund support for Lake Management and its water quality monitoring, at this point we are still collecting all data. Other funding through Avista will help with this upcoming fiscal year.
    - Jess stated the Lake Management Plan and CDA lake will always be a priority for him and the Governor.
- Bob Steed from DEQ appreciates the time given by all the participants of the SCT.

Review and Approve Annual Accomplishment Report – Sharon Bosley, BEIPC (Action Item)

- Public Outreach & Citizen Involvement:
    - BEIPC Community Involvement Activities:
        - Updated website with new logo.
        - Created new newsletters to share information with stakeholders.
        - Shared important information with partners and attended outreach events.
        - Presented at 10 different stakeholder meetings and conferences reaching over 460 people.
        - BEIPC provided over 26 articles for the Dirt Collaborative.

    - EPA Community Involvement Activities:
        - Produced documents providing updates on work, sampling results, Basin tour, restoration work, Basin Bulletin and more.
        - Provided staff support and regular participation at meetings of the BEIPC, CCC, and TLG.
        - Project managers met as requested with local officials, interest groups, and others to provide updates and answer questions.
    - DEQ and Panhandle Health District Community Involvement Activities:
        - Conducted annual blood lead screening for 352 people.
        - Hosted a lead safety poster contest for area third through fifth grade students.
        - Conducted 6 in-home follow-ups for individuals with high blood-lead levels or elevated house dust.
- Lead Health Intervention Program (LHIP):
    - Mary presented numbers in today's LHIP presentation.
- Basin Property Remediation Program (BPRP):
    - Box:
        - No new BPRP properties - 9 properties still require remediation.
        - 3,236 Total to date.
    - Basin:
        - Maintained 6 reverse osmosis filtration systems.
        - Collected 142 soil samples from 4 residential properties.
        - Collected 11 private drinking water samples from 3 properties.
        - 3 properties remediated.
        - 197 properties need to be sampled.
        - 37 properties still need to be remediated.
        - 3,938 Total to date.
- Updated Residential Soil Lead Directive:
    - Residential soil lead screening 200 PPM.
    - Residential removal management level 600 PPM.
    - Children's blood lead level target 5 µg/dl.
    - Evaluating cleanup options under the updated directive to ensure continued protection.
    - Updated 10/20/25 – replaces 1/17/24 update.
- Waste Disposal and Management:
    - Built to accommodate disposal of contaminated waste and are engineered to reliably contain materials and prevent contaminants to be released in concentrations that exceed state/federal standards.
        - Stormwater management:
            - Erosion prevention measures in place.
            - Slopes stabilized through track walking.
            - Waste areas are crowned to direct runoff to collection areas.

                - Weekly winter inspections at BCR, EMF, and Page.
                - Haul routes maintained for snow removal as needed.
            - Water Quality Monitoring:
                - Semiannual groundwater monitoring at all repositories (except LBCR).
                - Year-round visual surface water monitoring at LBCR.
                - Results show no impact to nearby water quality from disposal activities.
    - Repositories:
        - Page
        - Big Creek Repository & Annex
        - Lower Burke Canyon
        - Canyon Complex
        - East Mission Flats
    - Waste Consolidation Areas (WCA):
        - East Fork Ninemile – began final cover system construction.
            - 480,000 sq.ft. geosynthetic installed over appx. 80% of the uncovered WCA footprint.
        - Lower Basin WCA – design will proceed in 2026 at Dredge Road.
- Box Remedial Actions:
    - CIA sludge pond closure:
        - Crews capped and seeded.
    - Pinehurst Elementary School:
        - Removal of deteriorating barriers and installed clean caps to protect from contaminated soils.
    - East Smelterville Flats:
        - Re-graded to improve drainage.
        - Installed 77,250 sq.yd. of barrier fabric & 46,550 cu.yd. of clean fill.
        - Installed concrete oasis pads along with ADA parking access.
    - Kellogg sidewalks replacement:
        - Removed & replaced 2,200 linear feet of sidewalks.
    - Government Gulch:
        - Collected water quality data to characterize the surface water/groundwater interactions, groundwater flow conditions, and metals migration.
    - Central Treatment Plant and groundwater collection system:
        - Treated 1.074 billion gallons of water.
            - 52.4% mine water.
            - 47.6% ground water.
- Upper Basin Remedial Actions:
    - Ninemile Creek Basin:
        - O&M continued as well as remedial action effectiveness monitoring.

    - Pine Creek Drainage:
        - Completed remedial action at the Douglas Complex.
        - 26,000 CY mine waste removed.
        - Installed 14,700 sq.ft. of geosynthetic liner system and cover materials over the consolidated mine wastes.
    - South Fork CDA River:
        - Conducted initial site characterization and sampling along the Upper and Middle South Fork CDA River (Wallace to the Box).
    - Canyon Creek:
        - Star Complex:
            - 48,000 CY mine waste was removed.
            - 850 feet stream channel reconstructed.
        - Tamarack #7:
            - 111,000 CY of mine waste was removed.
            - 2,020 feet of stream channel reconstructed.
        - Investigation & Design:
            - Continued investigation of Lower Canyon Creek Riparian area.
            - Started design for Standard Mammoth & Frisco Black Bear.
            - Flynn Black Bear was prepped for pre-construction.
- Lower Basin River Channel Data Collection & Design:
    - Cataldo Reach riverbank 2 investigation:
        - Collected soil samples for metals at 10 sites in the Cataldo Reach and along the SFCDA River from the Box to the North Fork confluence.
    - Cataldo Riverbank pilot project at river mile 165.9 – 167.1:
        - Completion of the 30% design.
        - Riverbank erosion pin monitoring - 63 locations monitored:
            - Cataldo Reach 36
            - Dudley Reach 12
            - Killarney Reach 10
            - Springston 5
- Lower Basin Floodplain projects:
    - Grays Meadow:
        - Completed construction.
        - Over 1 million CY excavated.
        - Seeded over 635 acres in Cave Lake and Lamb Peak wetlands.
    - Gleason Wetland remediation & restoration:
        - Characterized the 270-acre property for ag-to-wetland conversion.
        - Soil samples and geotechnical data collected to understand soil material across the site.

- Other projects:
    - State of Washington:
        - Department of Ecology continued to monitor the Spokane River beaches. No unexpected trends or cap damage was observed.
    - Recreational Sites program:
        - Box:
            - Sampled one recreation site.
            - Maintained wood chip barrier at playground in Wardner.
        - Basin:
            - Installed access controls at rec site near Medimont.
            - Sampled two rec sites after December flooding.
            - Update Basin recreation brochures.
            - Design complete for informal rec area at Killarney Lake.
- Basin Environmental Monitoring Program (BEMP):
    - Goal – verify remedy effectiveness and monitor Basin wide actions.
    - Site specific remedial action effectiveness and performance monitoring – example Dayrock.
    - Area-wide monitoring – example Ninemile Basin.
    - Site-wide monitoring – entire BHSS.
    - Technical staff from DEQ, USGS, USFWS, CDA Tribe, CDA Trust and EPA meet annually to share and review basin-wide environmental monitoring results.
    - Surface water – 20 sites sampled for nutrients, trace metals and ions, suspended sediments, and mercury.
    - Groundwater:
        - May high flow: 56 monitoring wells, 3 piezometers, 9 extraction wells.
        - October base flow: 72 monitoring wells, 3 piezometers, 9 extraction wells.
        - Sampled for metals, phosphorus, and other parameters.
    - Biological resources:
        - Annual waterfowl survey in Lower Basin – February to late April.
        - Monitored wood ducks and tundra swans.
        - Provides tools for monitoring ecological health and remedial action effectiveness.
- Other Activities:
    - DEQ Lake Management:
        - Science Core Team
            - Develop Science Priorities Document.
            - Continue CDA Lake core monitoring.
            - Wave/wake study to assess impacts on nutrients and metals.
            - Ongoing analysis of hydrography, DEQ sonde data, wind patterns, AEM_3D modeling, and stable isotope data.

                - Partnered with Alta Science on risk-based evaluation of recreational areas around CDA Lake and Spokane River.
            - Education and Outreach:
                - TCP, Our Gem, NRC, Bay Watchers, SEEP, Living Lake.
            - Partnerships:
                - Alta Science, Avista, CDA Chamber, BAG, WAGs.
            - Nutrient Inventory:
                - Completed tributary data report to address gaps in the basin-wide nutrient inventory.
                - Continued coordination with recipients of Leading Idaho Initiative funding.
    - CDA Tribe Lake Activities:
        - Monitor water quality for metals, nutrients, and physical parameters.
        - Model data collected from the lake, meteorological stations and USGS stations.
        - Monitor and treat invasive aquatics.
        - Work with EPA to identify opportunities to align nutrient reduction and remedial efforts in the lower basin.
        - Support TCT, Our Gem, Bay Watchers.
        - St. Joe Watershed Nutrient Assessment.
        - Paleolimnological study of CDA Lake sediments.
        - Provided lake updates to the Benewah County Realtors.
        - Hosted boat tour for BEIPC board.
    - Restoration Partnership:
        - Wetlands and habitat restoration.
        - Fish passage improvements and stream restoration.
        - Native plant and culturally significant species management.
        - Watershed monitoring, modeling, and conservative planning.
        - Conservation easements and corridor protection.

Questions/Comments

- Dave Fortier asked about the BEMP program, is there a written plan available and how is the data being compiled of all the different efforts being made.
    - Sharon stated that they are working to bring all the data together. Jen Crawford from EPA would be a good contact for that information. There is a group that meets to talk about all the data they collect and how they are ensuring there is not an overlap.
    - Rebecca added it is an adaptive management plan, and they are working on some modifications with the waterfowl surveys, EPA is uploading some of the biological data from FWS and the lake data will be available. When it is ready, she will let Dave know.

- Jess Byrne made a motion to approve the Annual Accomplishment Report as presented; Brook Beeler seconded the motion; all Commissioners approved the 2025 Accomplishment Report. **M/S/C**

Restoration Partnership 2025 Accomplishment Report – Rebecca Stevens (CDA Tribe)

- Restoration Partnership & Trustee Council:
    - US Dept of the Interior (FWS, BLM)
    - US Dept of Agriculture (US Forest Service)
    - State of Idaho (DEQ, Idaho F&G)
    - CDA Tribe
- Restore, rehabilitate and/or acquire the equivalent of natural resources or associated services that were injured by the release of hazardous substances.
- Restoration planning area – similar to Superfund site, also includes North Fork CDA River and St. Joe.
- FY25 Accomplishments:
    - Continued support for ongoing O&M for wetlands at the Schlepp Ag to wetland conversion project.
    - Trustees coordinated quarterly reporting and site visits with project sponsors and project leads as appropriate.
- Cougar Bay stream & wetland restoration – BLM sponsor:
    - Culvert replacement and 800 native riparian plantings were installed.
    - Noxious weed & absinth wormwood treatments in the floodplain & riparian areas.
    - Excavator work to repair bank erosion that had occurred around a vehicle stream crossing.
- Guł Hnch'mchinmsh - Native Willow Nursery for support of restoration actions – CDA Tribe sponsor:
    - Monitored growth and harvest of 7 native willow species to support restoration actions.
    - Mowed RGC to keep the rows open for pole and whip availability for RP projects.
    - Coordination of harvest times was ongoing.
- *uł qhesu'lumkhw* (land is good again): Culturally significant plants in Hangman Creek – CDA Tribe sponsor:
    - New Tribal horticulturalists to establish a greenhouse and nursery to support plants of cultural significance.

    - Worked with IPNF/USFS nursery on identifying sources or propagules.
    - Conducted beaver surveys and dam reinforcements/installed plant protectors.
- Chdelm Khwa Chat'Q'el'et Monitoring and modeling CDA Lake's response to restoration – CDA Tribe sponsor:
    - Collected and analyzed water quality samples.
    - Continued data and trend analysis and writing the synthesis.
    - Worked with EPA RPM's on building a lake database under the BEMP.
- Gray's Meadow wetland conversion/restoration – IDFG sponsor:
    - Habitat shaping and revegetation.
    - Dust-control operations to support excavation and construction of loafing islands, embankments, and other habitat features.
    - Native vegetation and weed management.
    - CDA Trust conducts O&M until 2030.
- Gene Day Pond fishing access – IDFG sponsor:
    - Placed gravel to raise and repair the entire road and parking area to address drainage issues, provides a safety buffer from I90.
    - Stabilized the hillside to prevent soil from washing onto the pad.
    - Concrete pours will be revisited in 2026 during warmer weather.
- North Fork CDA River conservation easement – IDFG sponsor:
    - INLC and Avista are partners – letter of intent moving the easement forward.
    - Conservation easement will provide permanent protection of the natural floodplain communities and cold water hyporheic flow.
- Canyon Marsh Ag to Wetland – USFWS sponsor:
    - Collection of topographic, hydrologic, and soil agronomic data.
    - INLC reports on the baseline conditions of the properties prior to when remedial and restoration actions occur.
- Gleason's Marsh Ag to Wetland – USFWS sponsor:
    - USFWS worked with EPA on remedial investigations with remediation planned for 2026.
    - An interdisciplinary team was established.
- Lake Creek Watershed restoration – CDA Tribe sponsor:
    - Native plants to increase species and functional diversity.
    - Worked with Worley Highway District to replace aging, undersized culverts to improve fish passage.
    - Stream crossings restored for native west slope cutthroat trout, improved channel stability, and reduced stream bank erosion.

- Prichard Creek Planning and Phase 1 – DEQ Sponsor:
    - Phase 2 design contractor hired.
    - Draft Risk Assessment with additional field work.
    - Monitoring Phase 1 will be completed in fiscal year 2026.
    - Communication & field trips with project partners.
- Upper Little North Fork CDA River Restoration – USFS sponsored:
    - Bridge design work 95% review.
    - Design completed for the placement of large wood debris for riparian restoration and stream habitat improvement.
    - Trout Unlimited will administer the contracts for fish habitat improvement, floodplain stability, micro-site planting, and the reshaping of the floodplain.
    - Implementation in the Summer of 2026.
- Upper St. Joe Bull Trout Habitat Restoration – USFS sponsor:
    - Trout Unlimited is a partner for the habitat improvement of bull trout and west slope cutthroat trout in Red Ives Creek.
    - 180 logs placed in Red Ives Creek up stream of previous log placement efforts.
    - Replacing the undersized bridge that spans Red Ives Creek.
    - NEPA process was delayed due to loss of personnel.
    - Implementation in 2026 target.
- Beaver Creek Watershed Enhancement – USFS sponsor:
    - Road drainage improvements & closed road 429B to place into long-term storage.
    - 12 acres of the Prospect Gulch riparian area planted, 4.2M road decommissioning.
    - Task order for survey and design work on Dudley Creek and Carpenter Gulch to replace existing crossings w/aquatic organism passage (AOP) structures.
    - Planting plan for Carpenter Gulch, Prospect Gulch, and Hutchins Gulch which were burned over in the Character Complex fire.
- Miesen Creek Fish Passage – IDFG sponsor:
    - Landowner approval was received on 60% designs & sent to Benewah County for review and permitting.
    - Engineering designs for the culvert replacement and stream restoration have been progressing towards completion in early 2026.
- Benewah Creek Stream & Wetland Restoration in Drought – CDA Tribe sponsor:
    - Hydrologic Engineering Center-River Analysis System (HEC-RAS) model was developed to illustrate the area of active floodplain within 5-year flood.

    - Drone flight during high flows, 60% restoration design, & CWA Section 404 permit approved.
    - Wetland restoration w/large woody debris, in-channel structures, rebuilding of streambanks & planting of floodplain wetlands.
- Paleolimnology of CDA Lake from Pre-Disturbance to Mining Impacts and Present Day was Awarded – CDA Tribe sponsor:
    - The funds for this project were just released in December 2025, therefore no work to report.
    - Cores collected in September 2024 to obtain chemistry & biology and look at sediment for possible restoration targets.
    - Avista provides matching funds for this work.
- Lake Creek Corridor Protection & Enhancement – CDA Tribe sponsor:
    - Baseline report and forest management plan completed.
    - INLC and the Tribe worked through the draft conservation easements and finalized them.
    - Easements to be lodged with Kootenai County.
- Big Creek Fish Passage Barrier Removal – CDA Tribe sponsor:
    - 1 of 2 largest watersheds in Shoshone County free of mine waste contamination, and cold water refugia.
    - All permits were secured, sheet pile and concrete structure removed, and stream barbs installed.
    - Dry wells installed.
    - Planting with BLM Spring 2026.
- Aquatic Organism Passage Surveys at Stream Crossings:
    - Completed QA/QC plan.
    - Contracted with Trout Unlimited for field surveys.
    - Fish passage barrier data uploaded to:
        - https://interagency-bil-fish-passage-project-1-fws.hub.arcgis.com
- 21 Projects underway, long-term O&M planning.
- Total Expenditures in FY25: $2,117,139.19
- Hopefully the Trustees will be ready to go out for future project idea solicitation in 2026-27.

Questions/Comments – there were no questions.

Big Creek Dam Removal – Rebecca Stevens (CDA Tribe) & Wade Jerome (FS)

- Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR)
    - Goal: to restore, rehabilitate, replace and/or acquire the equivalent of injured natural resources.
    - Injured resources – water, soils and sediment; migratory waterfowl; and fish and aquatic life.
    - Settlements, Bankruptcy, etc.
        - 1995 – Gulf Pintlar
        - 2000 – UPRR
        - 2001 – Sunshine Mine (bankruptcy, NSR's)
        - 2001 – Coeur Callahan
        - 2003 & 2007 – Asarco
        - 2011 – Hecla
    - Restoration Plan:
        - Restoration needs.
        - Approach and values.
        - Geographic prioritization – identify locations on the ground.
        - Ecological prioritization – identify goals, major actions, strategies and techniques.
        - Project selection.
        - Restoration
- Sunshine Mining Company proposal – CDA Tribe sponsor:
    - Permits – 2-year acquisition:
        - NEPA/ESD-BLM
        - Survey and design.
        - 401 Water Quality Certification, ESA.
        - Section 106 NHPA.
        - FEMA No-rise.
        - USACE, in stream and Shoshone County floodplain approval.
        - CDA Tribe tracked progress/notes/contracts.
    - Big Creek is the second largest tributary to the SFK CDA River (Pine Creek being larger).
    - Clean and connected.
    - West Slope Cutthroat Trout – other species benefited as well.

- Flows through diversion in April.
- Main goal: provide 2 additional miles of spawning and rearing habitat.
- Install new water intake (dry wells) for Sunshine Mine needs.
- Instream barbs for infrastructure protection (i.e. road, dry wells, and fish habitat).
- Utilize locally sourced rock material.
- Add native seed and plantings for additional stabilization around the stream margins.
- Local contractor hired – needed crane for dam removal.
- Grade control structures and rock barbs were added after high flow in December to protect the infrastructure and roads.
- Lessons learned:
    - Cast a wide net for competitive bids.
    - Local contractors have a competitive edge considering mobilization.
    - Have a consistent presence of contract administration. Quality checks daily during construction "shoot elevations".
    - Onsight stream restoration professional, this case was the USFS representative, essential!
    - This process was different due to the private company nature of Sunshine and Tribal Admin which worked well during government shutdown.
    - No records of 'as builts' – discovered on the fly.
    - Good old fashion (Master Services Agreement).
    - 2 years planning, 2 weeks implementation.
    - Field modifications are a tool, minimize but use as necessary.
    - Common goals and objectives.
- Riparian plantings to take place in Spring 2026.
- Future upstream structure removal planned for 2026 with Central Shoshone Water District - for a total of 14 miles for fish habitat.

Questions/Comments

- Mary Rehnborg commented that even though the section that they were working in was clean material, further downstream in the residential section is contaminated.
    - Dave Fortier also commented that there was an old mine and mill area upstream that he thought dumped into Big Creek at one time.

Introduction to Living Lake & Love Our Gem Week – Jamie Brunner (DEQ)

- Love Our Gem Week – July 13-17, 2026
    - Our Gem CDA Lake Collaborative:
        - Monday – Breakfast/Coffee at McEuen Pavillion 9-11am.
            - Eutrophication & stormwater presentations.
        - Tuesday – trivia, Vantage Point Brewing 6-8pm.
        - Wednesday – Music at McEuen 5-8pm.
        - Thursday – Blackwell Island lunch and learn 11am–1pm.
            - BLM presentations.
            - Tribal Canoe.
            - Mobil AIS Unit – Ben Scofield
        - Friday – bring it all together at Harbor Center, call to action 9am–12pm.
- Living Lake Project – CDA Arts and Culture Alliance:
    - Idaho DEQ
    - CDA Tribe
    - BEIPC
    - University of Idaho/Idaho Water Resources Research Institute
    - Kootenai Environmental Alliance
    - Idaho Conservation League
    - Museum of North Idaho
    - Silver Valley Economic Development Corporation
    - Emerge CDA
    - Local artists – 44 applied

The Living Lake Project Artist Fellowship brings together artists, knowledge bearers, and community members to cultivate a network of watershed stewardship. Through creative collaboration across disciplines, we're building solidarity and inspiring collective action to protect the waters that sustain us all.

Questions/Comments

- Sandy Treccani asked if this project will result in some art specifically or just generic.
    - Jamie said they don't really know yet. There will be some art products, but also performance artists, poets, etc. She is not sure how this will take shape yet but have asked the artists to keep an open mind so they can develop project ideas.

Discussion and Comments with CCC – Greg Sletten, Chair

- Greg Sletten was unable to attend today's meeting.
- Sharon Bosley updated on two upcoming tours for the CCC:
    - Bike tour June 26th – on the Trail of the CDA's, Medimont to Gray's Meadow.
    - Paddle tour August 25th – Rose Lake to Dudley.

Discussion and Comments with TLG – Rebecca Stevens, Chair

- No TLG meeting since the last BEIPC meeting. Plan to meet in October 2026.
- Recreational Project Focus team to meet next month.
- Lower Basin Project Focus team to also meet next month.
- Restoration Partnership & CDA Trust annual meeting.
- Cultural resources meeting with CDA Trust and Tribal Historic Preservation officer to address potential cultural concerns moving forward with the cleanup.

Public Comments & Discussion

- Calvin Terada gave updates on changes within EPA:
    - Tyler Chatriand – current Mining advisor for Region 10, technical team lead duties, and acting Section 1 supervisor 120-day detail starting mid-May 2026.
    - Kira Lynch – Division deputy role until she retires next June.
    - Caleb Shaffer – acting Remedial Cleanup Branch manager, 120-day detail, stationed in the Portland office.
    - Calvin – will become Deputy Regional Administrator for Region 10.
    - Dan Opalski will become the Superfund and Emergency Management Division Director and will be the alternate BEIPC Commissioner for EPA.
- Leslie announced the next two BEIPC meetings:
    - May 13th in Kellogg.
    - July 29th – meeting/tour probably in the Lower Basin.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:22 pm