



Administrator Pruitt Signs Delegation Memorandum Approving Idaho's Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

System will help Idaho build environmental infrastructure needed for the growing economy

Boise, Idaho (June 5, 2018) - Today, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Scott Pruitt signed a delegation memorandum that will allow the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) to begin issuing and enforcing discharge permits for businesses and municipalities across the state. Starting July 1, 2018, IDEQ will begin administering the Idaho Pollutant Discharge Elimination System in place of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). Administrator Pruitt also attended a business roundtable with Idaho Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter and toured the National Interagency Fire Center.

"EPA's approval of Idaho's Pollutant Discharge Elimination System exemplifies cooperative federalism," said EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt. **"The State of Idaho has worked closely with EPA and local stakeholders to develop a program that will protect Idaho's water resources and ensure permitting decisions are made in a safe and timely manner."**

Following the signing ceremony, Administrator Pruitt, along with Governor Otter and nearly 30 local business leaders held a roundtable discussion on various environmental challenges facing Idaho, including the Agency's proposal to rescind and replace the "Waters of the U.S." rule and an in-depth discussion on the impact of the signed agreement between the state and EPA.

Prior to the signing ceremony and roundtable, Administrator Pruitt toured the National Interagency Fire Center in Boise, where he got a firsthand briefing on the work being done at the center and discussed EPA's role in helping state and federal partners to achieve clean air and address the air quality impacts of fires across the country.

"I appreciate all the people who have worked hard for several years to get us to this point. And I'm grateful to the Trump Administration for moving forward so efficiently on this decision," said Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter (R-ID). **"Idaho citizens are usually best served by other Idahoans, and I'm pleased to have the State of Idaho assume administration of this important program for protecting and improving the quality of Idaho's water."**

"DEQ is excited and ready to begin implementing the IPDES Program. We are confident that we have the necessary processes, resources, and especially the right people to administer an effective program," said IDEQ Director John Tippetts.

“This is an important day for the state of Idaho,” said EPA Region 10 Administrator Chris Hladick. “They worked very hard, engaged their stakeholders and built a comprehensive program. We applaud them for this work and look forward to working with them as they phase in the program.”

“We appreciate Administrator Pruitt’s interest in the National Interagency Fire Center and especially his taking time from an otherwise busy schedule in Boise to visit with us and learn what we do,” said John F. Ruhs, BLM Assistant Director for Fire and Aviation and the top manager at NIFC. “Our capabilities extend beyond fire to include other disaster response, and collaborating across agencies with communication, technology and coordination benefits everyone.”

Background:

IDEQ received final approval today from EPA after building their program over several years to ensure dischargers protect water quality and meet the state’s water quality standards. NPDES is a fundamental building block of the federal Clean Water Act that regulates pollution discharged to the nation’s streams, rivers, and marine environments. Under the Clean Water Act, EPA may authorize states to implement all or parts of the NPDES system. Prior to today’s approval, EPA issued and enforced water discharge permits in Idaho.

To build their program, IDEQ worked with the legislature to secure dependable funding, hired and trained permit-writers and enforcement staff, held public and stakeholder meetings, and developed a four-year sector phase-in schedule. With today’s approval, Idaho now joins 46 other states across the country running their own water discharge permitting program, protecting their most precious natural resource: safe, clean water. Idaho’s program will be called the Idaho Pollutant Discharge Elimination System.

Under its approval, EPA retains oversight of Idaho’s program including federal enforcement authority. For more about EPA’s role, as well as more details on EPA’s continuing water quality work in Indian Country in Idaho, please see: <https://www.epa.gov/npdes-permits/idaho-npdes-program-authorization>.

Idaho plans to phase-in the permit program as follows:

- Phase I (July 1, 2018): Domestic Wastewater Facilities and the Pretreatment Program
- Phase II (July 1, 2019): Industrial Wastewater Facilities
- Phase III (July 1, 2020): General Permit (non-Storm water)
- Phase IV (July 1, 2021): All storm water permits and the Biosolids Program

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