



NEWS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Idaho Water Resource Board approves flood-management grants, moves ahead with 2nd phase of Priest Lake project

MOSCOW - (July 31, 2018) – The Idaho Water Resource Board voted to approve two flood-management grants for North Idaho entities and approved moving forward with Phase 2 of the Priest Lake Water Management Project, setting aside \$600,000 for preliminary engineering, design and permitting work to occur in the next year.

The two flood-management grants were awarded to the Clearwater Soil and Water Conservation District and the Twin Lakes Creek Flood Control District No. 17, among 10 flood-management grants awarded statewide at a cost of \$767,000.

The Clearwater District received \$155,220 in grant funds for a \$310,439 project to replace 18 undersized culverts on the Snake Creek Road to prevent future flooding issues on the road, which provides critical access to private, state and federal lands managed for timber and recreation.

The Twin Lakes Flood District, located near Rathdrum, received \$7,750 in funds for a \$15,500 flood-control and stream-flow monitoring equipment project. The flood district will provide the matching funds necessary to complete the project. The goal of the project is to install lake level and discharge monitoring equipment to provide real-time dam operations capacity to reduce or prevent flooding below the dam.

Phase 2 of the Priest Lake Water Management Project will involve data collection, preliminary engineering design, regulatory permitting, and public stakeholder involvement related to three core improvements planned for Priest Lake. Those improvements include upgrades to the Priest Lake dam outlet structure, replacing the existing porous breakwater with an impervious sediment-retention feature and dredging a portion of the Thorofare channel that connects Upper Priest Lake to Priest Lake. The board hopes to start construction on Priest Lake improvements in early 2020.

In other action, the board heard a presentation from the Palouse Basin Aquifer Committee (PBAC) about potential future water supply options for the cities of Moscow, Pullman, Wash., the University of Idaho campus, Washington State University campus and the Moscow-Pullman region as a whole. PBAC officials took the board on a tour of potential future water-supply sites to see those options at a field level.

The Palouse Basin Aquifer has been on a steady decline since the 1930s, but the rate of decline has decreased to .9 feet per year, compared to 1.5 feet per year, by following a ground water management plan starting in 1992, and subsequent conservation measures. The aquifer is the sole-source of water for 65,000 residents and water users in the region.

With \$100,000 provided by the Idaho Water Resource Board and local matching funds, PBAC is exploring four alternatives for future water supply. All of those alternatives will be refined in the coming year, along with community input, before a final proposal is developed with funding sources identified, officials said.

In other action, the board:

- Honored Charles “Chuck” Cuddy, who recently retired from the Idaho Water Resource Board after 10 years of service, at a special dinner in Orofino. Cuddy, a former state representative (1991 – 2005), received a plaque from the board, saying, *“In recognition of your exceptional commitment and contribution to the Idaho Water Resource Board for the State of Idaho.”* - July 2018.

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