



NEWS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Idaho Water Resource Board contact: Brian Patton, Chief, Planning Bureau, 208-287-4800

Idaho Water Resource Board approves \$115,460 flood-management grant to Nez Perce County and Nez Perce SWCD to prevent damage to rural road

SALMON – (Sept. 20, 2018) – The Idaho Water Resource Board voted to approve \$232,930 in flood-management grants to four different entities statewide, including a \$115,460 grant to the Nez Perce Soil & Water Conservation District and Nez Perce County to address erosion and flooding on Big Canyon Creek Road, near Peck.

Grant applicants were required to provide at least a 50 percent match and begin work by November 2018. The Idaho Legislature set aside \$1 million for a new flood-management grant program in 2018, administered by the Idaho Water Resource Board. After awarding 10 flood-management grants statewide for \$767,000 in July, the board had about \$233,000 left over for a second round of applications. The three other grants were awarded to: Twin Falls Canal Company \$85,340; the City of Pocatello, \$26,105; and Riverside Village in Garden City, \$6,025.

“We’d like to thank the Idaho Water Resource Board for the grant,” said Steve Becker, chairman of the Nez Perce SWCD. “This project will help immensely to address the flooding effects of the undersized bridge and streambank issues on Bear Creek. Peck is a small community that’s been affected by this issue for a long time. I’m really pleased that we can help take care of our neighbors in Peck with this project.”

The Nez Perce SWCD originally requested \$200,000 from the board’s flood-management grant program for the Bear Creek Flood-Reduction Project. The total cost of the project is estimated to be in the range of \$557,000, district officials said. The district also has secured funds from Nez Perce County for the project, and the Nez Perce SWCD will provide \$91,861 in in-kind services to make the project possible.

The project will repair a 500-foot section of stream channel along Bear Creek to reduce annual flooding, install two rock weirs, and replace the Bear Creek Bridge. This site requires annual gravel removal and

channel repairs to prevent damage to the Big Canyon Creek Road, which provides the only public access to the community of Peck.

District officials said the Bear Creek Bridge was installed at least 50 years ago, and it was not properly designed to handle the quantity of sediment and water flows that move through the area during high-water periods in the spring. The narrow channel by the bridge creates a bottleneck for sediment and water flows, officials said.

Peck Mayor Nancy Green said she is pleased to hear about the grant award. "It's definitely been a matter of concern for our community," she said. "Folks will be really excited that something is being done about this problem. We've had high water right up to the bottom of the bridge in recent years, and everyone remembers the disastrous flooding we had in 1996."

"That bridge is functionally obsolete," added Doug Zenner, Nez Perce County Commissioner. "The county and the road department worked together with the district to put that grant application together. I'm looking forward to getting the project started and completed."

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