



State of Idaho

**DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES**

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C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER  
Governor

GARY SPACKMAN  
Director

May 18, 2015

**Re: Public Meeting – Creation of New Water District or Modification of Existing Water Districts for Administration of Ground Water Rights in the Raft River Basin**

Dear Water User:

As part of the Idaho Department of Water Resources' ("Department") ongoing responsibility to administer water in the Raft River Basin as required by Idaho Code § 42-602, the Department is proposing to either create a new water district for ground water rights or include ground water rights in existing area surface water districts. Several factors affecting the Raft River drainage have focused the Department's attention on the need to create a water district for the administration of ground water rights and/or combine the administration of both ground water and surface water rights in one or more water districts. These factors include:

1. The Snake River Basin Adjudication ("SRBA") was completed on August 25, 2014.
2. Ground water rights in the Raft River drainage have not been included in water districts, and therefore, are not subject to any administration or regulation. Whereas many of the streams and other surface water sources in the basin have been subject to regulation by a water district watermaster for many years. Most ground water rights and diversions in the drainage are not measured or monitored and little data exists regarding ground water use.
3. Much of the Raft River drainage is included in the Raft River Critical Ground Water Area where specific water management programs or objectives may be necessary under Idaho law, including the measurement and reporting of ground water withdrawals.

The Department has scheduled a public information meeting as follows:

**Date:** Wednesday, June 3, 2015  
**Time:** 6:30 pm  
**Location:** Raft River High School Auditorium  
55 North 1<sup>st</sup> West, Malta, Idaho

The purpose of the meeting will be to inform water users of the requirements of water districts, the anticipated schedule for creation of any new water district or the modification of any existing water districts, and to gather feedback. The Department is considering the following options:

1. Create one separate water district in the Raft River basin for administration of ground water rights only;
2. Add ground water rights to existing surface water districts in the basin;

3. Merge the existing surface water districts in the basin into one single water district and add ground water rights to that single district; or
4. Some variation or combination of options 1 through 3.

The meeting will be conducted in a facility that meets the accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Should you require special accommodations in order to attend, participate in, or understand the meeting, please contact IDWR at least five days prior to the meeting.

A copy of this notice has been sent to all holders of water rights in the Raft River basin (IDWR Administrative Basin 43), except domestic and stockwater rights as defined under Idaho Code §§ 42-111 and 42-1401A(11), or in-stream stockwater rights as defined under Idaho Code § 42-113(1).

For further information regarding this meeting, please contact the IDWR State Office (Boise) at 208-287-4800, or the IDWR Twin Falls Regional Office at 208-736-3033.