



AGENDA

IDAHO WATER RESOURCE BOARD Water Resource Planning Committee Meeting No. 1-16 March 16, 2016 begin @ adjournment of Streamflow Comm. Meeting

C.L. "Butch" Otter
Governor

Idaho Water Center
Conference Room 602 D
322 East Front Street, Boise, Idaho 83720

Roger W. Chase
Chairman
Pocatello
District 4

Jeff Raybould
Vice-Chairman
St. Anthony
At Large

Vince Alberdi
Secretary
Kimberly
At Large

Peter Van Der Meulen
Hailey
At Large

**Charles "Chuck"
Cuddy**
Orofino
At Large

Albert Barker
Boise
District 2

John "Bert" Stevenson
Rupert
District 3

Dale Van Stone
Hope
District 1

-
1. Roll Call
 2. Sustainability Policy
 3. Other Items for Discussion
 4. Adjourn

Committee Members: Jeff Raybould, Chair
 Al Barker
 Chuck Cuddy
 Bert Stevenson
 Peter Van Der Meulen

Americans with Disabilities

The meeting will be held in facilities that meet the accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you require special accommodations to attend, participate in, or understand the meeting, please make advance arrangements by contacting Department staff by email jennifer.strange@idwr.idaho.gov or by phone at (208) 287-4800.

1. SUSTAINABILITY

The Sustainability policy focuses on the overall stewardship of the State's water resources for the good of the people of the State of Idaho.

1A - SUSTAINABILITY OF IDAHO'S WATER RESOURCES

Sustainability is the active stewardship of Idaho's water resources to satisfy current uses and assure future use of this renewable resource in accordance with State law and policy.

Discussion:

Water is the foundation of Idaho's economy and culture; the lives and livelihoods of Idahoans depend on a reliable supply of water. Stewardship of Idaho's water resources begins with the realization that the water resources of the State are not inexhaustible and therefore it is necessary to manage, administer, and take action to sustain, maintain and enhance the resource. Stewardship, by necessity, also includes taking affirmative steps to address declining trends in the resource where those trends exist and to establish policies that will prevent future unsustainable declines. The goal must be overall stewardship of the State's water resources for the good of the people of the State of Idaho.

The State of Idaho encompasses some of the most diverse and awe inspiring physical and geological features in the country. From the depths of Hells Canyon to the peak of Mount Borah, from sage brush deserts, to the extensive agricultural farm and ranch land, to alpine forests and meadows, to the cities and towns, the ecosystems of each of these varied areas all rely on the water resources of the State. The people of the State interact with and depend upon the water resources in these different landscapes in many different ways. Therefore, the water sustainability policy of the state of Idaho must embrace the diversity of the State, while recognizing the potential for a use or activity in one place to affect the water resources in another part of the State.

Sustainable water management strategies to meet current and future needs must be based on adequate knowledge regarding available supplies, existing use, competing economic and social demands, and future needs. Planning and management actions to promote water sustainability must be designed and implemented to ensure that existing water rights are protected and the economic vitality of Idaho is optimized.

The goal of sustainable use of water resources of the State must recognize that the goals of sustainable economic growth and protection of existing rights must coexist and are enhanced by measures that protect and maintain surface and ground water resources and the aquatic, riparian and human resources that depend on these water resources. Recognizing these needs will

promote economic and environmental security and enhance the quality of life for the people of the State of Idaho.

Implementation Strategies:

- Ensure that all actions taken toward a sustainable water future protect and respect private property rights, both in the land and water rights
- Inventory Idaho's water supply, current uses, and future water supply needs
- Evaluate long-term and short-term trends in water availability for present and future uses
- Identify areas where present water supplies are either inadequate for present uses or not sustainable, and develop management plans to address supply in an appropriate timeframe respecting private property rights
- Identify management alternatives and projects that optimize existing and future water supplies without compromising water quality
- Prioritize and implement management alternatives and projects where competing demands and future needs are most critical
- Enhance water transfer mechanisms in Idaho law, policy and regulations to allow future economic opportunities to utilize existing water supplies, while protecting existing uses
- Utilize the Idaho Water Resource Board's Funding Program and prioritize allocation of funds for projects that ensure water sustainability across the state
- Identify water conservation measures that water users, municipalities, governmental agencies and other entities can undertake to help protect the water resources of the State and provide guidance to those entities on best practices to implement those conservation measures
- Recognize that conservation measures may reduce water supplies utilized by others in other parts of the resource
- Identify and provide funding for aquifer stabilization strategies throughout the state with due regard to the priorities of basin specific Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plans
- Pursue enhancement of surface water storage supply as a mechanism for meeting Idaho's future water needs
- Use a grassroots approach to identify problems and developing optimal solutions. The needs of individual basins must be taken into consideration in how the resource should be managed while recognizing the potential for decisions in one basin to affect the resources of another basin. An integrated and collaborative approach to water resource management is critical for the sound and efficient use of Idaho's water resources. The State of Idaho when appropriate should work together with, water users, tribes, local communities, neighboring states, and the federal government to resolve water issues

- Protection of the quality of existing water supplies, particularly those ground water resources that are used for drinking water supplies, to ensure the vitality of local communities. This goal requires other state and local agencies to exercise their appropriate authorities to protect the water resources and to assist in meeting the goal of sustainable economic growth

Milestones:

- Respect for private property rights in accordance with State law and policy
- Identify number of basins where water supply and demand have been inventoried
- Identify number of basins where management alternatives have been identified and implemented to optimize existing and future water supplies, including surface water storage, ground water recharge, conservation measures and weather modification
- Obtain more accurate water supply, water measurement, and forecasting information
- Disseminate water supply forecasts to water users in cooperation with other federal and state agencies
- Measure utilization of water bank and transfer procedures to allow sustainable use of the resource
- Determination and implementation of measures and policies to enhance the utility of the water bank and transfer procedures
- Financial programs and funding strategies that meet the future water resource needs of the State of Idaho. Secure funding and resources in cooperation with the Governor and legislature. Reliable on-going, long-term funding will be needed to enable and support active stewardship of Idaho's water resources.
- Basin aquifer stabilization - stabilization of ground water levels in basins where declines are occurring to restore and maintain sustainable aquifer levels
- Initiate and facilitate construction of additional surface water storage to meet current and future needs
- Use of adaptive management to identify and address uncertainties for success, including those related to data, modeling, and impacts of climate variability
- Balance water supply and demand – supply and demand must be in balance to support current and future use within a particular basin
- Improve data management – accurate and abundant data is necessary to assist with ensuring stewardship of Idaho's water resources to satisfy current and future uses
- Coordination with State and local entities on measures to protect and enhance ground water and surface water resources so that these resources are available for use by the people of the State of Idaho

TO: Idaho Water Resource Board (IWRB)
FROM: Neeley Miller, Planning & Projects Bureau
DATE: March 15, 2016
RE: Proposed Sustainability Policy and Section of the SWP



Background

Governor Otter discussed the development of a Sustainability Policy for the Idaho State Water Plan (SWP) in his recent State-of-the-State address. The Governor indicated that the Idaho Water Resource Board (“IWRB” or “Board”) will be conducting public meetings throughout Idaho in the coming year to gather comments and suggestions on incorporating the Sustainability Policy into the SWP.

The current SWP was adopted in 2012. It was the fifth revision since the original SWP policies were adopted in 1976. The current plan includes the several policy sections:

1. Optimum Use (14 policies)
2. Conservation (9 policies)
3. Management (7 policies)
4. Snake River Basin (10 policies)
5. Basin Bear River Basin (4 policies)
6. Salmon/Clearwater River Basins (2 policies)
7. Panhandle River Basins (3 policies)

Proposed New Sustainability Section of SWP

The Board’s Water Resource Planning Committee (“Committee”) met in October 2015 to consider the Sustainability Policy as requested by the Governor. The Committee has completed their effort and recommended that the Proposed Sustainability Policy be added to a newly Proposed Sustainability Section of the SWP as follows:

1. Sustainability (1 policy)
2. Optimum Use (14 policies)
3. Conservation (9 policies)
4. Management (7 policies)
5. Snake River Basin (10 policies)
6. Basin Bear River Basin (4 policies)
7. Salmon/Clearwater River Basins (2 policies)
8. Panhandle River Basins (3 policies)

The Proposed Sustainability Policy and Section are the result of a robust public involvement process that began in late 2012 by the Board.

Attached you will find the Proposed Sustainability Section of the SWP developed by staff in collaboration with the Committee.

Path Forward

The Board is required to obtain formal public comment before adopting any changes associated with SWP. Staff is proposing the Board hold seven (7) information meetings/hearings each in different areas of the state. The public hearings will include a brief informational presentation by staff immediately preceding each hearing. The following schedule is proposed by staff:

Hearing #	Proposed Dates	Time	Location	Proposed City
1	Tuesday June 7	Evening; 2 hours	TBD	Boise
2	Tuesday June 28	Evening; 2 hours	TBD	Twin Falls
3	Wednesday July 20	Evening; 2 hours	TBD	Lewiston
4	Thursday July 21	Evening; 2 hours	TBD	Coeur d'Alene or Sandpoint
5	Tuesday August 9	Evening; 2 hours	TBD	Hailey
6	Tuesday August 30	Evening; 2 hours	TBD	Idaho Falls
7	Thursday September 15	Evening; 2 hours	TBD	Soda Springs or Pocatello

In addition to holding hearings, the formal public comment process requires at least a 60-day public comment period during which written comments will be accepted. Board Staff proposes a public comment period that commences on May 20th and will close on September 16. Comments can be submitted at the hearings, via e-mail, or by standard mail. Upon completion of these information meetings/hearings and the close of the public comment period, the Committee will convene to consider the comments and testimony received. The Committee will submit a final recommendation to the Board for consideration and adoption at the November 2016 Board meeting. The intent is that the adopted Sustainability section will be submitted to the legislature in January 2017.

- May 2016 – IWRB will consider resolution to accept the for public comment the recommended Proposed Sustainability Section of the SWP
- June – Sept 2016 – allow for public comment period to be commenced on May 20th and close on September 16th
- June – Sept 2016 – IWRB will schedule and hold seven information meetings/hearings
- Oct 2016 – Water Resource Planning Committee will convene and consider comments and testimony received
- Oct 2016: IWRB Check-in with Interim Legislative Committees
- Nov 2016 – Board will consider for adoption and submission to the Idaho Legislature
- Submit Sustainability section to 2017 Legislature on 1st day of session.