

Swan Falls Implementation Group Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 26, 2026; 1:30 p.m.

IDWR Conference Room

Online Attendees: Jamie Neill, Jennifer Sukow, T.J. Budge, Hannah Adams, Michael Orr, Lara Herway, Jaxon Higgs, Joy Vega, Jeff Raybould, Ann Yribar, Scott King, Sophia Sigstedt

Megan confirmed she is not using an A.I. transcription.

In Person Attendees: Brian Patton, Matt Weaver, Kresta Davis, Scott Pugrud, Craig Saxton, Shilynn Novak, John Simpson, Derrick Baxter, Hannah Adams, Megan Jenkins, Darrin Hensley, Kelly Smith, Craig Tesh, Cynthia Bridge-Clark, Dan Narsavage, McKenzie Case, Kara Ferguson

Start with an update on trust water rights database: Shilynn Novak and Craig Saxton presented an update on the 2026 trust water rights database.

Scott Pugrud requested clarification regarding the rights. There were 27 rights from January 2025 to May 2026. How does that incorporate the 11 new rights. Shilynn confirmed those rights are part of the 27. Scott then asked if 16 were completely new. Shilynn said no, two claims are statutory claims in the system not added to the trust water list last year and one that was flagged for trust water but did not make it to the list. The brand-new ones are the 13 rights licensed.

Continuing discussion regarding SRBA and discussion related to rights with priority dates.

Scott questioned how the trust water rights interact with the moratorium. Some discussion ensued. Some were small enough to be processed under conditions set within the moratorium, e.g., *de minimis*, domestic, and some were located outside of the moratorium area.

Discussion regarding total volumes. There are volumes associated with the spreadsheet. The technical working group is working on components that would support a management plan and have done modeling regarding estimates of volume components. Might be more useful if looking at water budgeting.

Swan Falls Dashboard Tool. The dashboard has gone live. Currently in an upgrade so no changes made to website yet. Megan showed where the link would be on the website.

Update on Swan Falls Framing Questions. Letter sent to Attorney General will be handed out to everyone. Attorney General's office is working on the response.

AADF Update: Hannah Adams gave an update on the Swan Falls AADF calculation. The calculation is run weekly, but also doing daily runs this year. We dropped in March for a 6 day shortfall.

Update on Swan Falls Forecast Tool. Tool is used to forecast the reach gain for the Milner to Murphy reach during the low flow period in the summer. Winter and Spring forecasts run twice a year.

Discussion on the spring forecast and different impacts and the uncertainty involved.

John Simpson asked if IDWR has ever looked at relative contributions to the flows in the Snake River after the spring runoff comparing the spring discharge out of the ESPA as to the impact of these tributary surface flows because the earlier run off from the tributary basins is resulting in our relying more on the ESPA to meet the Swan Falls minimums. Box Canyon is going to be a real indicator of what is to come and there is some real uncertainty there.

Will note as an action item and will discuss more at the next meeting. Kresta also stated we need to look at return flows as well. Will note and will ask the technical working group to look at it.

Possible future presentation on how the forecast tool was developed and which data were used and how it was chosen. Was deemed a good idea.

Administration: preparations that IDWR is planning to administer water rights if it becomes necessary. Sending notice to all holders of trust water rights notifying them that they hold a trust water right and that they are subject to curtailment if there is a violation of the Swan Falls as per the conditions on their water right(s). The letter is to go out by the end of the week. Lists of the trust water rights along with the letter will go to the watermasters with instructions on what is expected in terms of curtailment along with reporting after the fact.

The draft letter is currently with legal for review but will be shared with the group once available in final.

John asked if the letter would go out to all trust water rights, surface and ground water. The answer was yes. John asked about those trust water rights not in an organized district? Actively creating water districts across the state to bring those into administration.

Discussion regarding creating water districts so all trust water rights are in a district so they can be administered and how many are there and where are they. Discussion on resources provided to trust water right holders, and what options are available if they have to curtail may be a later topic for the SFIG.

The next meeting will be set for the week of July 7 at 1:30 p.m.

Adjourn

