



AGENDA

IDAHO WATER RESOURCE BOARD AND



IDAHO SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Brad Little
Governor

Jeff Raybould
Chairman
St. Anthony
At Large

Jo Ann Cole-Hansen
Vice Chair
Lewiston
At Large

Dean Stevenson
Secretary
Paul
District 3

Dale Van Stone
Hope
District 1

Albert Barker
Boise
District 2

Brian Olmstead
Twin Falls
At Large

Marcus Gibbs
Grace
District 4

Patrick McMahon
Sun Valley
At Large

Joint Board Meeting No. 10-26

WORK SESSION

Thursday, September 17, 2026

8:30 a.m. (MT) / 7:30 a.m. (PT)

Water Center
Conference Rooms 602 B – D
322 E. Front Street
Boise

Livestream available at <https://www.youtube.com/@iwrbc>

Erik Olson
Chairman
Division I

Wendy Pratt
Vice Chair
Division V

Blake Hollingsworth
Treasurer/Secretary
At Large

Mitch Silvers
Division II

Joan Cloonan
Division III

Karen Sharpnack
Division IV

Richard Savage
Division VI

1. Roll Call
2. Idaho Department of Water Resources/Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission Merger
3. Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission Water Quality Program for Agriculture (WQPA)
4. Idaho Water Resource Board Grant Program Survey Summary
5. Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Update
6. Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer Groundwater Model (ESPAM) Background
7. Lemhi River – L-6/L-7 Rehabilitation Project
8. Cattle Grazing Contributions to Watershed Management
9. Flood District 10 Improvement Projects
10. Adjourn

The Board/Commission will break for lunch at approximately noon.

Upon adjournment, the Board and Commission will attend a field trip tour of Flood District 10 Projects. Transportation will be provided for board/ commission members and invited guests only.

* Action Item: A vote regarding this item may be made this meeting. Identifying an item as an action item on the agenda does not require a vote to be taken on the item. **Americans with Disabilities:** If you require special accommodations to attend, participate in, or understand the meeting, please make advance arrangements by contacting Department staff by email: mlin.ream@idwr.idaho.gov or by phone at (208) 287-4800.

MEMO



To: Idaho Water Resource Board/Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission

From: Mathew Weaver, Idaho Department of Water Resources, Director
Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission, Acting Administrator

Date: September 11, 2026

Subject: Idaho Department of Water Resources/Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission Merger

INFORMATIONAL ITEM

Staff will provide an informational update on the merger between the Idaho Department of Water Resources and the Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission.

Attachments:

- *Memorandum of Understanding*
- *Statement of Purpose*
- *Strategic Plan – Fiscal Years 2027-2030*

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN THE IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES AND
THE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is made and entered into this ____ day of _____, 2026, by and between the Idaho Department of Water Resources (“Department” or “IDWR”), and the Idaho State Soil and Water Conservation Commission (“Commission” or “SWC”), collectively referred to herein as the “Parties” or individually as “Party.”

RECITALS

- A. The laws of the State of Idaho establish the Department and the position of Director to administer and oversee its operations. The powers, duties, and responsibilities of the Department are primarily set forth in Idaho Code, Title 42, with the powers and duties of the Director set forth principally in Chapters 17 and 18.
- B. The laws of the State of Idaho establish the Commission. The powers, duties, and responsibilities of the Commission are set forth in Idaho Code, Title 22, Chapter 27.
- C. During the 2026 legislative session, the Idaho Legislature enacted House Bill 503, which was signed into law by the Governor and established the Commission within the Department.
- D. During the 2026 legislative session, the Idaho Legislature adopted Senate Concurrent Resolution 115 ("SCR 115"). SCR 115 supports consolidating the Department and the Commission to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of state government. The resolution further encourages the Governor, the Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts, the Legislature, and the Director to collaborate to ensure that: (1) the core missions of the Department and the Commission remain intact; and (2) the consolidation preserves the Commission's voluntary, non-regulatory mission and its partnership-based support of Idaho's conservation districts.
- E. Idaho Code §§ 67-2332 and 67-2333 authorize public agencies to enter into agreements for the joint exercise of powers and the performance of governmental services, activities, or undertakings that each agency is otherwise authorized by law to perform.
- F. Consistent with applicable law and the State of Idaho's policy objective of improving governmental efficiency through the integration of the Department and the Commission staff and operations, the purpose of this MOU is to establish a framework for coordination and collaboration between the Parties in furtherance of their individual and shared missions and objectives.
- G. This MOU cannot supersede state law nor transfer or modify the statutorily defined authorities of the Department or the Commission.

AGREEMENT

The Department and the Commission agree as follows:

1. Definitions

- a. **SWC Bureau Chief.** The non-classified position within the Department that will lead the Soil and Water Conservation Bureau. The SWC Bureau Chief will be a member of the Department's Senior Management Team and serves as the Commission's Executive Director.
- b. **Chairman.** The Chairman of the Soil and Water Conservation Commission.
- c. **Classified Employee.** A position in state agencies subject to Title 67, Chapter 53, Idaho Code, as defined therein, excluding temporary and nonclassified appointments.
- d. **Commission and SWC.** The Idaho State Soil and Water Conservation Commission, as defined in Section 22-2718, Idaho Code.
- e. **Department and IDWR.** The Idaho Department of Water Resources.
- f. **Director.** The director of the Idaho Department of Water Resources.
- g. **DHR.** The Idaho Division of Human Resources ("DHR") is a separate state agency, not part of the Department or the Commission.
- h. **Executive Director.** The senior-most manager for the Commission, and the person chiefly responsible for ensuring the Commission achieves its goals and fulfills its mission.
- i. **Non-classified Employee.** A position in state agencies subject to Title 67, Chapter 53, Idaho Code, as defined therein, exempt from classified service that is responsible for "executive functions" within state agencies.
- j. **OITS.** The Office of Information Technology Services ("OITS") is a separate state agency, not part of the Department or the Commission.
- k. **SWC Bureau.** The Soil and Water Conservation Bureau, created by the Department within its agency organization, with programmatic direction by the Commission, consisting of Department employees assigned to support the Commission in carrying out its statutory obligations.

2. Department

The Department agrees to provide the following services to the Commission:

- a. Consistent with Idaho Code, § 67-2402, the Department shall establish within its organizational structure a SWC Bureau. The Bureau shall comprise Department employees assigned to support the Commission in carrying out its statutory duties and responsibilities, and shall implement the Commission's programmatic direction.
- b. The Department will assign an employee to be the SWC Bureau Chief to lead the SWC Bureau, and that employee will serve as the Executive Director of the Commission. The SWC Bureau Chief will be responsible for delivering Commission programs and services, managing the day-to-day operations of the SWC Bureau, and managing all employees within the SWC Bureau.
- c. In addition to the SWC Bureau Chief, the Department will assign such additional part-time or full-time classified employees as are necessary to support the technical and programmatic functions of the Commission.
- d. The Department agrees to deliver the following combined support services: Payroll and timekeeping management, financial accounting and reporting, procurement and contracting support, and Geographical Information System (GIS) support.
- e. The Department will provide office space as necessary for SWC Bureau employees to support the Commission.
- f. The Department will provide Department vehicles for use by SWC Bureau employees to support the Commission
- g. The Department will provide all necessary equipment and facilities for SWC Bureau employees to support the Commission.

3. Commission

The Commission agrees as follows:

- a. To retain exclusive authority for its priorities, policies, and programs.
- b. To provide clear directions and guidance to the Director as necessary to ensure the efficient support of the Commission by the Department. Guidance shall be provided for the following Commission programs: all conservation, loan, and cost-share programs, including the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program and the Water Quality Program for Agriculture; all Total Maximum Daily Load responsibilities; the Idaho Agricultural Pollution Abatement Plan; the Antidegradation Plan; all conservation district support functions; determination of funding priorities; and all other existing statutorily authorized duties and contractual responsibilities.

- c. To establish any necessary work plans, program policies, strategic objectives, and performance metrics.
- d. To identify budget enhancements needed to support the Commission's priorities, programs, statutory duties, and contractual responsibilities, including funding and full-time equivalent positions. In coordination with the Director, the Commission shall provide justification for such requests and support the Department's presentation of those requests to the Governor's Office, the Division of Financial Management, the Legislature, and other appropriate policymakers.
- e. To collaborate with the Director in hiring the SWC Bureau Chief.

4. **Department and Commission**

The Parties mutually agree:

- a. To collaborate in good faith, as appropriate when roles or goals align, to support and enhance each agency's respective missions.
- b. To work collaboratively towards producing annual Strategic Plans and Performance Reports, a combined agency budget, agency representation to the Legislature, and other executive functions of State Government.
- c. To hold regular coordination meetings between the Commission, the Director, and the Executive Director. Such regular meetings may occur as part of a formal Commission Meeting or independently.
- d. Each agency may retain its respective branding, logos, websites, and email addresses.
- e. The number of full-time equivalent ("FTE") positions provided to the Commission by the Department is contingent on the Department's budget, as authorized and funded by the Idaho Legislature. Department non-classified or classified state employees assigned to support the Commission under this MOU shall be compensated consistently with the laws of the State of Idaho, the rules of the DHR, and the Department's compensation policies. Furthermore, such employees shall receive an annual change in employee compensation ("CEC") to their base salary, including any conditional merit increase, when approved by the Idaho Legislature and enacted into law, consistent with DHR rules and compensation policy, as well as the Department's compensation policies.
- f. To cooperate in the development, preparation, and submission of budget requests in accordance with applicable law, guidance issued by the Governor's Office, the Division of Financial Management, and other authorized entities, and all legislative requirements. The Parties further agree to cooperate in implementing enacted budgets in a manner consistent with legislative intent, applicable laws, and administrative

requirements.

- g. The Department shall not be required to provide funding, personnel, FTE positions, or services beyond the level supported by legislative appropriation. If any funding reduction by the Legislature reduces the resources available to the Department for performance under this MOU, the level of personnel, services, and support provided to the Commission may be reduced, consistent with legislative direction reflecting the reduction in available funding. The Director and the Commission will work collaboratively to implement reductions within the agency that affect the Commission's programs and services.
- h. Department non-classified or classified state employees, assigned to the SWC Bureau, will primarily perform duties necessary to fulfill Commission duties and responsibilities. Such employees shall not support Department activities that enforce compliance with Title 42, Idaho Code.
- i. DHR is responsible for Human Resource support functions as detailed in the DHR-IDWR Service Level Agreement.
- j. OITS is responsible for IT support functions as detailed in the OITS-IDWR Master Level Agreement.
- k. Employees of the Department are protected by and must adhere to all Department policies and procedures and the rules and laws of the state of Idaho.
- l. To support the Commission's preference to co-locate state employees within the United States Department of Agriculture – Natural Resources Conservation Service ("USDA-NRCS") or conservation district facilities, when such co-location comes at no cost to the Department, or at a low cost that can be met within the existing budget, and is established in mutual agreements between the Department, the USDA-NRCS, or a conservation district.
- m. Nothing in this MOU will act to change, modify, or release either Party of any obligation or responsibility otherwise provided by contract or by law.

5. Selection and Hiring of the SWC Bureau Chief

The Parties agree to the following provisions regarding the selection, hiring, and direction of the SWC Bureau Chief:

- a. The Department will coordinate with DHR and perform all administrative services necessary for job advertisement, recruitment, and hiring processes.
- b. Upon completion of the recruitment process, the Director shall provide the Commission with the qualified applicant pool. The Commission shall identify

applicants for interview.

- c. The Director, the Commissioners of the Commission, and other members of the hiring team will conduct interviews. Interview participants will confer and jointly identify a mutually acceptable candidate from among those interviewed to serve as the SWC Bureau Chief.
- d. The Director will make the final hiring in accordance with state laws, personnel policies, and hiring requirements.
- e. In conducting annual performance evaluations and other supervisory responsibilities required by state law, the Director shall consult with the Commission.
- f. Before implementing a formal improvement plan or taking disciplinary action involving the SWC Bureau Chief, the Director shall consult with the Commission except when immediate action is required by law or policy.
- g. In the event dismissal of the SWC Bureau Chief is necessary, the Director will provide the Commission with as much notice as the circumstances surrounding dismissal allow.

6. Records, Confidentiality, and Information Sharing

- a. The Parties acknowledge that certain programs, records, and information maintained by either Party may contain confidential, exempt, privileged, or otherwise sensitive information, including personal information protected by federal or state law. Consistent with applicable law and best business practices, access to such records and information shall be limited to employees and agents whose official duties require such access for a legitimate business purpose.
- b. The Parties agree to implement and maintain administrative, technical, and physical safeguards, to ensure that access to electronic and physical records is granted only to personnel with a demonstrated business need. Employees who do not have a direct business need to access specific records, files, databases, or information systems should not be granted access privileges to such records or systems.

7. Term and Termination

- a. This MOU shall become effective when the Idaho Legislature enacts all statutory changes necessary to implement it. The MOU will continue each fiscal year thereafter and can be terminated upon at least one year's prior written notice by either Party following consultation with the Governor's Office.
- b. This MOU may be amended by mutual agreement and authorized signature of the Parties.

The parties have executed this MOU, which shall be effective on the Effective Date defined above.

Idaho Department of Water Resources

Mathew Weaver, Director

Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission

Erik Olson, Chairman

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

2026-215-003

The purpose of this legislation is to formalize the consolidation of the Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission within the Idaho Department of Water Resources that was initiated in the 2026 legislative session with H0503 and guided by SCR115. This consolidation is expected to maximize government efficiencies and deliver improved services to the citizens of Idaho because it will streamline administrative functions, consolidate overlapping responsibilities, and reduce redundant expenditures.

DRAFT BILL

LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF IDAHO
Sixty-ninth Legislature First Regular Session - 2027

IN THE _____
BILL NO. _____
BY _____ COMMITTEE

[LSO WILL WRITE TITLE]

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

SECTION 1. That Section 22-2717, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby amended to read as follows:

22-2717. DEFINITIONS. Whenever used or referred to in this chapter, unless a different meaning clearly appears from the context:

~~(1) "Administrator" means the administrator for the Idaho state soil and water conservation commission.~~

~~(2)~~ (1) "Agency" includes the government of this state and any subdivision, agency, or instrumentality, corporate or otherwise, of the government of this state.

~~(3)~~ (2) "Agricultural pollution abatement plan" or "ag plan" means the document developed by the state soil and water conservation commission and approved by the commission and the department of environmental quality, that provides appropriate technical, programmatic, informational and educational processes, guidelines and policies for addressing agricultural pollution.

~~(4)~~ (3) "Best management practices" or "BMPs" means practices, techniques, or measures developed or identified by the designated agency and identified in the state water quality management plan which are determined to be a cost-effective and practicable means

of preventing or reducing pollutants generated from nonpoint sources to a level compatible with water quality goals.

~~(5)~~(4) "Commission" or "state soil and water conservation commission" means the agency created in section 22-2718, Idaho Code.

~~(6)~~(5) "Conservation plan" means a description of identified natural resource issues and a specific schedule of implementation of component practices necessary to resolve those specific resource issues as agreed upon by the landowner.

~~(7)~~(6) "Designated agency" is as defined in section 39-3602, Idaho Code.

~~(8)~~(7) "District," "conservation district," "soil conservation district," or "soil and water conservation district" means a governmental subdivision(s) of this state, and a public body corporate and politic, organized in accordance with the provisions of this chapter, for the purposes, with the powers and subject to the restrictions hereinafter set forth.

~~(9)~~(8) "Due notice" means notice published at least twice, with an interval of at least seven (7) days between the two (2) publication dates, in a newspaper or other publication of general circulation within the appropriate area, or if no such publication of general circulation be available, by posting at a reasonable number of conspicuous places within the appropriate area, such posting to include, where possible, posting at public places where it may be customary to post notices concerning county or municipal affairs generally. At any hearing held pursuant to such notice, at the time and place designated in such notice, adjournment may be made from time to time without the necessity of renewing such notice for such adjournment dates.

~~(10)~~(9) "Eligible applicant" means an individual agricultural owner, operator, partnership, corporation, conservation district, irrigation district, canal company or other agricultural or grazing interest.

(10) "Executive Director" means the executive director for the Idaho state soil and water conservation commission.

(11) "Government" or "governmental" includes the government of this state, the government of the United States, and any subdivisions, agency, or instrumentality, corporate or otherwise, of either of them.

(12) "Landowner" or "owner" includes any person, firm, or corporation who shall hold title to any lands lying within a district organized under the provisions of this chapter. A buyer on contract, who is the occupier of land, shall be construed as landowner.

(13) "Land user" means any entity with a lease, permit or similar business agreement with a landowner to implement, manage or utilize such land for activities related to use of the land.

(14) "Natural resources conservation service" or "NRCS" means the agency governed by the provisions of 16 U.S.C. sections 590a through 590d and 590f.

(15) "Nominating petition" means a petition filed under the provisions of section 22-2721, Idaho Code, to nominate candidates for the office of supervisor of a soil conservation district.

(16) "Participant" means an individual agricultural owner, operator, partnership, private corporation, conservation district, irrigation district, canal company, or other agricultural or grazing interest approved by the commission or an individual agricultural owner, operator, partnership, or private corporation approved for implementation of conservation improvements, projects, or the water quality program for agriculture.

(17) "Project sponsor" means a conservation district, irrigation district, canal company, or other agricultural or grazing interest, as determined appropriate by the commission, that enters into a conservation improvement or water quality project agreement with the commission.

(18) "Qualified elector" means any person who is qualified to vote pursuant to the requirements of section 34-104, Idaho Code.

(19) "Riparian land" means the beds of streams, the adjacent vegetation communities and the land thereunder, which are predominately influenced by their association with water and are privately owned.

(20) "Specifications" means the materials, operations and procedures necessary to obtain the desired standards of construction and installation.

(21) "Standards" means the minimum limits of technical excellence of a component practice for its planning, design and construction.

(22) "State" means the state of Idaho.

(23) "Supervisor" means one (1) of the members of the governing body of a district elected or appointed in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.

(24) "Total maximum daily load" is as defined in section 39-3602, Idaho Code.

(25) "United States" or "agencies of the United States" includes the United States of America, the natural resources conservation service of the United States department of agriculture, and any other agency or instrumentality, corporate or otherwise, of the United States of America.

SECTION 2. That Section 22-2718, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby amended to read as follows:

22-2718. IDAHO STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION.

(1) There is hereby established and created in the department of water resources of the state of Idaho the Idaho state soil and water conservation commission which shall perform all functions conferred upon it by this chapter and shall be a nonregulatory agency.

(a) The commission shall consist of seven (7) members appointed by the governor from divisions of the Idaho association of soil conservation districts as follows: one (1) member from division I, one (1) member from division II, one (1) member from division III, one (1) member from division IV, one (1) member from division V, one (1) member from division VI, and one (1) at-large member appointed at the governor's discretion.

(b) Commission members shall be chosen with due regard to their demonstrated expertise, including knowledge of conservation districts and their functions, knowledge of production agriculture, knowledge of banking or other similar financial experience, or experience as a county commissioner.

(c) Commissioners serving on July 1, 2022, will be assigned to the divisions that they would represent. On July 1, 2022, current commissioners, at the will of the governor, will be reappointed to the position representing the divisions in which they live.

(d) For divisions that have vacant positions, or divisions with no current commissioner residing there, the division shall submit a list of up to three (3) names for each open commission position. The governor shall appoint commission seats from the list submitted.

(e) The term of each commissioner shall be for five (5) years, with the ability to serve two (2) terms; except that on July 1, 2022, the terms of each commission position will be reset: The term of the commissioners from districts I and IV will be set for two (2) years. The term of the commissioners from districts II and V will be set for three (3) years. The term of the commissioners from districts III and VI and the at-large commissioner will be set for four (4) years. From and after the initial appointment or reappointment, commissioners may serve two (2) full terms of five (5) years, in addition to their initial appointment. From and after the initial appointment, the corresponding division shall provide the list of three (3) names to the governor to choose from on or before July 1 of each year with a vacancy.

(f) Each vacancy on the commission shall be filled by appointment by the governor following the guidelines set forth in this subsection. A vacancy that occurs in an unexpired term shall also be filled for its remainder by the

governor's appointment following the guidelines set forth in this subsection. Each commissioner appointed to fill an unexpired term may serve the length of the unexpired term and be eligible to be reappointed for an additional two (2) full terms.

(g) All appointments shall be confirmed by the senate. Commission members shall serve at the pleasure of the governor. The commission may invite the state conservationist of the United States department of agriculture natural resources conservation service, the dean of the university of Idaho college of agricultural and life sciences or his designated representative, the director of the department of water resources, or any other person or entities the commission deems appropriate to serve as nonvoting advisory members of the commission. The commission shall keep a record of its official actions, shall adopt a seal, which seal shall be judicially noticed, and may perform such acts, hold such public hearings, and promulgate such rules as may be necessary for the execution of its functions under this chapter.

~~(2) The state soil and water conservation commission shall appoint the administrator of the state soil and water conservation commission. The state soil and water conservation commission may employ such technical experts and such other agents and employees, permanent and temporary, as it may require, and shall determine their qualifications, duties and compensation. The director of the department of water resources shall, upon the advice of the state soil and water conservation commission, hire an employee to serve as executive director of the state soil and water conservation commission. The executive director shall be an employee of the department of water resources and be qualified by reason of education, training, knowledge, and demonstrated ability or experience in natural resource conservation of agricultural lands. The executive director shall work full-time for the administration of Chapter 27, Soil Conservation Districts, and support the commission in the performance of its duties.~~

(3) Upon the advice of the director of the department of water resources, the executive director may hire such technical experts and such other agents and employees, permanent and temporary, as required to support the commission in the performance of its duties, and shall determine their qualifications, duties and compensation. The commission may call upon the attorney general of the state for such legal services as it may require. It shall have authority to delegate to its chairman, to one (1) or more of its members, or to one (1) or more agents or employees, such powers and duties as it may deem proper. The commission may establish offices, incur expenses, enter into contracts and acquire services and personal property as may be reasonable for the proper

administration and enforcement of this chapter. Upon request of the commission, for the purpose of carrying out any of its functions, the supervising officer of any state agency, or of any state institution of learning, shall insofar as may be possible under available appropriation, and having due regard to the needs of the agency to which the request is directed, assign or detail to the commission members of the staff or personnel of such agency or institution of learning, and make such special reports, surveys or studies as the commission may request.

~~(3)~~(4) The commission shall designate its chairman, and may from time to time, change such designation. A majority of the commission shall constitute a quorum and the concurrency of a majority in any matter within their duties shall be required for its determination. The chairman and members of the commission shall be compensated as provided by section 59-509(h), Idaho Code. The commission shall provide for the execution of surety bonds for all employees and officers who shall be entrusted with funds or property; shall provide for the keeping of a full and accurate record of all proceedings and of all resolutions, and orders issued or adopted; and shall provide for a periodic management review of the accounts of receipts and disbursements as determined by the legislative auditor pursuant to section 67-702, Idaho Code.

~~(4)~~(5) In addition to the duties and powers hereinafter conferred upon the state soil and water conservation commission, it shall have the following responsibilities:

- (a) To offer such assistance as may be appropriate to the supervisors of soil conservation districts in the carrying out of any of their powers and programs.
- (b) To keep the supervisors of each of the several soil conservation districts informed of the activities and experience of all other soil conservation districts and to facilitate an interchange of advice and experience between such districts and cooperation between them.
- (c) To coordinate the progress of the several soil conservation districts so far as this may be done by advice and consultation.
- (d) To secure the cooperation and assistance of the United States and any of its agencies, and of agencies of this state, in the work of such districts.
- (e) To disseminate information throughout the state concerning the activities and programs of the soil conservation districts in areas where their organization is desirable.

~~(5)~~(6) In addition to other powers, functions and duties of soil conservation districts and the state soil and water conservation commission provided in this chapter, the commission shall have the following additional powers, functions and duties:

- (a) The commission shall conduct, in cooperation with appropriate federal and state agencies and the owners and operators of

privately owned forest lands, rangelands and agricultural lands in this state, conservation improvements on or in respect to these lands for the purposes of implementing conservation systems to conserve and improve natural resource conditions;

(b) The commission shall assist and advise soil conservation districts and other entities in implementing the conservation improvements, projects and the water quality program for agriculture. To the extent that there are available general funds, the commission shall provide for grants and cost-share opportunities and, as legislatively designated, utilize the resource conservation and rangeland development fund for loans for conservation improvements. Provided however, that the commission shall determine whether general or resource conservation and rangeland development funds are available before approving any conservation improvements, projects and cost-share opportunities and, after having made such determination, shall enter into the necessary contracts for implementation;

(c) The commission shall be the agency responsible for the administration of funds accruing to the resource conservation and rangeland development fund ~~and for all general funds appropriated as a separate and distinct action of the legislature to implement the powers, functions and duties of soil conservation districts and the commission;~~

(d) On or before March 1 of each year, the commission shall report to the senate agricultural affairs committee and the house agricultural affairs committee; and

(e) The commission shall promulgate such rules as are necessary to carry out the purposes of this chapter.

SECTION 3. That Section 22-2727, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby amended to read as follows:

22-2727. ALLOCATION OF FUNDS TO DISTRICTS. (1) A public hearing shall be held by the state soil and water conservation commission on or before June 15 of each year and twenty (20) days' written notice of such hearing shall be given to each soil conservation district and to all other persons requesting notice of such hearing. At the hearing the state soil and water conservation commission shall consider the needs of each soil conservation district and shall base its request for state funds for the soil conservation districts upon the budgets, budget requests, district programs and work plans, and work load analysis of the various soil conservation districts.

(2) All funds appropriated by the state for the various soil conservation districts shall be appropriated to the ~~Idaho state soil and water conservation commission~~ Idaho department of water

resources and shall be allocated by the state soil and water conservation commission equally to the various soil conservation districts on the basis of the criteria established in subsection (1) of this section.

(3) Funds appropriated to the state soil and water conservation commission for distribution to soil conservation districts shall be allocated by the commission equally to the various soil conservation districts in a sum not to exceed eight thousand five hundred dollars (\$8,500) per district. All funds appropriated to the state soil and water conservation commission for distribution to soil conservation districts in excess of eight thousand five hundred dollars (\$8,500) per district shall be allocated by the commission to the various soil conservation districts in a sum not to exceed twice the amount of funds or services allocated to each district by the county commissioners in the previous fiscal year and funds or services allocated to each district by authorized officials or other local units of government or organizations in the previous fiscal year, provided that any such allocation by the commission shall not exceed fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) to any one (1) district in a fiscal year.

(4) The state soil and water conservation commission shall adopt rules necessary to carry out the purposes of this section.

SECTION 4. That Section 22-2733, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby amended to read as follows:

22-2733. GRANTS FROM STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION GENERAL FUND -- APPLICATION -- APPROVAL -- GRANT AGREEMENT. (1) Eligible applicants or participants may file an application with the local soil conservation district or the state soil and water conservation commission for a grant from the ~~state soil and water conservation commission~~ department of water resources general fund for the purpose of financing conservation improvements, projects and implementation of the water quality program for agriculture. Grants shall be considered by the state soil and water conservation commission and, upon the advice of the director of the department of water resources, may be awarded from general funds dedicated to state soil and water conservation commission programs. Such application shall be filed in such a manner and shall be in such form, and be accompanied by such information as may be prescribed by the commission; provided however, any 19 such application filed with the district or the commission under the provisions of this section shall:

(a) Describe the nature and purpose of the improvements or conservation plan implementation project;

(b) Set forth or be accompanied by an improvement project plan approved by the local soil conservation district or the commission that identifies the practices to be applied, together with such technical and economic feasibility data and estimated costs as may be required by the commission;

(c) State whether money other than that for which application is made under this section will be used for improvement project or conservation plan implementation costs, and whether such money is available or has been sought for this purpose; and

(d) Show that the applicant or participant holds or can acquire title to all lands or has necessary easements and rights-of-way to implement the project plan.

(2) The commission and local soil conservation district will keep each other informed of grant applications received. Within thirty (30) days of receipt of an application, the local soil conservation district or the commission shall review and evaluate and, if deemed necessary, investigate all aspects of the proposed improvement, project or conservation plan. As part of such investigation, the district or the commission shall determine whether the project plan is satisfactory. If the district or the commission determines that the plan is unsatisfactory, it shall return the application to the applicant or participant and the district or the commission may make such recommendations to the applicant or participant as are considered necessary to make the plan satisfactory. If the commission determines either the plan or a plan revised pursuant to recommendation of the district or commission is satisfactory, it shall be considered for funding.

(3) The commission may approve a grant if after review, evaluation and investigation if necessary, it finds that:

(a) The applicant or participant is qualified and responsible;

(b) The improvement, project or conservation plan demonstrates public benefits; and

(c) That money in the state soil and water conservation commission general fund is available for the grant.

(4) If the commission approves a grant, the applicant or participant shall enter into an agreement covering the grant offer and acceptance of the grant for implementing the improvement, project or conservation plan. The agreement shall be improvement, project or conservation plan specific. The terms and conditions shall be those specified by the commission.

(5) Upon approval of the grant and securing all necessary documents, the commission will make available, in the approved form, project or contract funding.

SECTION 5. That Section 22-2734, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby amended to read as follows:

22-2734. COST-SHARE FROM STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION GENERAL FUND -- APPLICATION -- APPROVAL. (1) Eligible applicants or participants may file an application with the local soil conservation district or the state soil and water conservation commission for a cost-share contract or project from the ~~state soil and water conservation commission~~department of water resources general fund for the purpose of financing agricultural, grazing or other conservation improvements, projects or implementation of the water quality program for agriculture. Cost-share contracts or projects shall be considered by the state soil and water conservation commission and, upon the advice of the director of the department of water resources, may be awarded from general funds dedicated to state soil and water conservation commission programs. Such application shall be filed in such a manner and shall be in such form and be accompanied by such information as may be prescribed by the commission; provided however, any such application filed with the district or the commission under the provisions of this section shall:

(a) Describe the nature and purposes of the improvements and projects requiring cost-sharing;

(b) Set forth or be accompanied by a plan that identifies the conservation improvements or projects, together with such technical and economic feasibility data and estimated costs as may be required by the commission;

(c) State whether money other than that for which application is made under this section will be used for costs, and whether such money is available or has been sought for this purpose; and

(d) Show the proposed project is feasible from a technical standpoint and is economically justified.

(2) The commission and the local soil conservation district will keep each other informed of cost-share applications received. Within thirty (30) days of receipt of an application, the local soil conservation district or the commission shall review and evaluate and, if deemed necessary, investigate all aspects of the proposed contract or project. As part of such investigation, the district or the commission shall determine whether the plan for development of the conservation improvements or projects is satisfactory. If the district or the commission determines the plan is unsatisfactory, it shall return the application to the applicant or participant and the district or the commission may make such recommendations to the applicant or participant as are considered necessary to make the application satisfactory. When the commission determines either the application or an application

revised pursuant to recommendation of the district or commission is satisfactory, it shall be considered for funding.

(3) The commission may approve a cost-share contract to an applicant or participant for conservation projects and improvements if, after review, evaluation and investigation, it finds that:

(a) The applicant or participant is qualified and responsible;

(b) The conservation improvement or project demonstrates public benefit;

(c) There is reasonable assurance that the applicant or participant will adhere to contract terms; and

(d) Money is available in the state soil and water conservation commission general fund for cost-share.

(4) Upon approval of the cost-share contract or cost-share grant, and securing of all necessary documents, the commission will make funding available.

SECTION 6. That Section 22-2735, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby amended to read as follows:

22-2735. PAYMENTS BY THE STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION -- RULES -- APPROVAL OF ATTORNEY GENERAL -- AUDIT OF PAYMENTS. (1) The commission may make payments not to exceed the estimated reasonable cost of an eligible improvement, project or plan.

(2) The commission may, in the name of the state of Idaho, enter into contracts with approved applicants, and any such approved applicants may enter into a contract with the commission concerning eligible improvements, projects or plans. Any such contract may include such provisions as may be agreed upon by the parties thereto, and shall include, in substance, the following provisions:

(a) An estimate of the reasonable cost of the improvements, projects or plans as determined by the commission;

(b) The terms under which the commission may unilaterally terminate the contract and/or seek repayment from the applicant of sums already paid pursuant to the contract for noncompliance by the applicant with the terms and conditions of the contract and the provisions of this chapter;

(c) An agreement by the applicant binding for the life of the eligible improvements, projects or plans:

(i) To develop water quality plans for landowners and provide payments to landowners for installation of best management practices;

- (ii) To determine payment rates in conjunction with the commission for best management practices;
- (iii) To establish a method for administration and provisions for technical assistance to landowners in conjunction with the commission;
- (iv) To allow the state to make payments up to the estimated reasonable cost for best management practices installation, technical assistance and project administration of an eligible project;
- (v) To develop and to secure the approval of the commission of plans for operation of the eligible project;
- (vi) To ensure that the local matching share of the cost is provided as applicable;
- (vii) To assure an adequate level of landowner participation and application of best management practices to ensure water quality goals are met.

(3) The commission may enter into contracts to provide technical assistance to applicants that have entered agreements pursuant to this chapter. Any such contract may include such provisions agreed upon by the parties thereto and shall include, in substance, the following provisions:

- (a) An estimate of the reasonable cost of technical assistance;
- (b) The terms under which the commission may unilaterally terminate the contract, and/or seek repayment of sums paid pursuant to the contract, for noncompliance by the applicants with the terms and conditions of the contract, the provisions of this chapter, or rules adopted pursuant thereto.

(4) The commission may enter into contracts and establish procedures to be followed in applying for eligible improvements, projects and plans herein authorized as shall be necessary for the effective administration of the water quality program for agriculture.

(5) All contracts entered into pursuant to this section shall be subject to approval by the attorney general as to form. All payments by the state pursuant to such contracts shall be made after audit and upon warrant as provided by law on vouchers approved by the chairman and the ~~administrator~~ executive director of the commission.

(6) All grant agreements and contracts previously entered into with the state board of health and welfare, soil conservation districts and the commission pursuant to section 39-3627, Idaho Code, for payments and administration are now to be administered and payments implemented solely by the commission.

SECTION 7. That Section 42-1701, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby amended to read as follows:

42-1701. CREATION OF DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES -- DIRECTOR -- QUALIFICATIONS -- DUTIES. (1) There is hereby created the department of water resources, which shall, for the purposes of section 20, article IV, of the constitution of the state of Idaho, be an executive department of the state government.

(2) The executive and administrative authority of the department, except such authority as is specifically assigned by law to the water resource board or the state soil and water conservation commission, shall be vested in a director of the department of water resources who shall be: a licensed civil or agricultural engineer with not less than five (5) years of experience in the active practice of such profession; a registered geologist with not less than five (5) years of experience in the active practice of hydrology; or a hydrologist holding a bachelor's or advanced degree in hydrology from a college or university accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting organization and with not less than five (5) years of experience in surface water and ground water modeling, water delivery and water measurement. The director of the department of water resources shall also demonstrate experience and expertise in interpreting and applying Idaho water law and shall be familiar with irrigation and other water use practices in Idaho.

(3) The director may delegate such duties as are imposed upon him by law to an employee of the department of water resources whenever in the opinion of the director, such delegation is necessary for the efficient administration of his duties.

(4) The director shall organize the department into such divisions and other administrative subunits as may be necessary in order to efficiently administer the department and to fulfill the statutory obligations to administratively support the water resources board and the state soil and water conservation commission in conformance with the provisions of section 42-1805. All employees of the department, except the director, shall be selected and appointed by the director in conformance with the provisions of chapter 53, title 67, Idaho Code.

(5) The director and/or employees of the department of water resources may make reasonable entry upon any lands in the state for the purpose of making investigations and surveys, or for other purposes necessary to carry out the duties imposed by law.

(6) (a) Any authorization or order of the Idaho public utilities commission, under the provisions of section 61-328, Idaho Code, approving the sale, assignment or transfer of hydropower water rights used in the generation of electric power shall be issued only upon such conditions as the

director of the department of water resources shall require as necessary to prevent any change in use of water under the water rights held for hydropower purposes that would cause injury to any water rights existing on the date of the sale, assignment or transfer. Any such conditions shall ensure that the public interest, as it pertains to the use of water under the hydropower water rights, will not be adversely affected. Conditions, if any, imposed by the director shall be subject to review under section 42-1701A(4), Idaho Code.

(b) Subsection (6)(a) of this section may be satisfied by a written agreement between the holder of a water right held for hydropower purposes and the governor, which agreement has been ratified by the 2 legislature of the state of Idaho. The agreement between the governor and the Idaho power company dated October 15, 1984, and ratified by the legislature of the state of Idaho pursuant to section 42-203B, Idaho Code, and the subordination provisions relating to the Idaho power company's water rights satisfy subsection (6)(a) of this section.

SECTION 8. That Section 42-1805, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby amended to read as follows:

42-1805. Additional duties. In addition to other duties prescribed by law, the director of the department of water resources shall have the following powers and duties:

(1) To represent the state in all matters pertaining to interstate and international water rights affecting Idaho water resources; and to cooperate with all agencies, now existing or hereafter to be formed, within the state or within other jurisdictions, in matters affecting the development of the water resources of this state.

(2) To prepare a present and continuing inventory of the water resources of this state, ascertain means and methods of conserving and augmenting these and determine as accurately as possible the most effective means by which these water resources may be applied for the benefit of the people of this state.

(3) To conduct surveys, tests, investigations, research, examinations, studies, and estimates of cost relating to availability of unappropriated water, effective use of existing supply, conservation, storage, distribution and use of water.

(4) To prepare and compile information and data obtained and to make the same available to interested individuals or agencies.

(5) To cooperate with and coordinate activities with the director of the department of environmental quality as such activities relate to the functions of either or both departments

concerning water quality. Such cooperation and coordination shall specifically require that:

(a) The director meet at least quarterly with the director of the department of environmental quality and his staff to discuss water quality programs. A copy of the minutes of such meeting shall be transmitted to the governor.

(b) The director transmit to the director of the department of environmental quality reports and information prepared by him pertaining to water quality programs and proposed rules pertaining to water quality programs.

(c) The director shall make available to the director of the department of environmental quality and the director of the department of environmental quality shall make available to the director all notices of hearings relating to the promulgation of rules relating to water quality, waste discharge permits, and stream channel alteration, as such directly affect water quality, and notices of any other hearings and meetings which relate to water quality.

(6) To perform administrative duties and such other functions as the water resource board or state soil and water conservation commission may, from time to time, assign to the director to enable the board or commission to carry out its powers and duties.

(7) After notice, to suspend the issuance or further action on permits or applications, including permits or applications for domestic purposes or uses as defined in section 42-111, Idaho Code, required pursuant to section 42-227, Idaho Code, as necessary to protect existing vested water rights or to ensure compliance with the provisions of chapter 2, title 42, Idaho Code, or to prevent violation of minimum flow provisions of the state water plan.

(8) To promulgate, adopt, modify, repeal and enforce rules implementing or effectuating the powers and duties of the department.

(9) To seek a preliminary or permanent injunction, or both, or a temporary restraining order restraining any person from violating or attempting to violate:

(a) Those provisions of law relating to all aspects of the appropriation of water, distribution of water, headgates and measuring devices; or

(b) The administrative or judicial orders entered in accordance with the provisions of law.

(10) To develop, coordinate and provide, through contract or by other means, for weather modification projects involving cloud seeding that are designed to increase the water supplies of the state by enhancing natural precipitation and that conform to state water planning objectives. To accomplish these purposes, the director is authorized to accept and use funds acquired through legislative appropriation or by gift, grant, contribution or

funding received from any private or public individual or entity. All funds accepted under this provision shall be transmitted to the state treasurer for deposit in the water administration account and shall be reserved and made available until expended as ordered by the director for weather modification purposes determined by the director to be beneficial.

(11) To develop and implement a plan for data gathering to determine any effect of the weather modification efforts in which the department is involved.

(12) To receive, file, record, or retain documents of record on media other than paper.

SECTION 9. EFFECTIVE DATE. An emergency existing therefor, which emergency is hereby declared to exist, this act shall be in full force and effect on and after July 1, 2027.



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF
WATER RESOURCES

Strategic Plan

Fiscal Years 2027 - 2030



SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION
COMMISSION



July 1, 2026

(This page intentionally left blank)

Idaho Department of Water Resources
State Office
322 East Front Street
Boise, Idaho 83720
(208) 287-4800
www.idwr.idaho.gov

Strategic Plan Contents

About the Idaho Department of Water Resources	1
About IDWR’s Strategic Plan.....	2
IDWR & SWCC Missions, Visions, & Shared Commitment.....	4
IDWR FY27 Organizational Structure	5
SWCC FY27 Organizational Structure.....	6
Goal 1: Manage and Allocate the State’s Water Resources to Optimize Economic Activity, and Protect Public Safety and Idaho’s Ecosystems	7
Goal 2: Accurately Administer Water Rights and Distribute Water to Protect Senior Water Rights and Conserve Idaho’s Water	12
Goal 3: Advance Voluntary, Locally Led Conservation to Sustain Idaho's Working Lands and Natural Resources.	19
Goal 4: Sustain, Maintain, and Enhance the State’s Water Resources for the Benefit of Idaho’s Economy, Ecosystems, and Resulting Quality of Life	25
Goal 5: Promote and Finance Water Infrastructure Projects to Sustain Idaho’s Water Resources for the Benefit of the Citizens of the State and for Future Generations	29
Goal 6: Enhance the Capability of the Department to Manage and Protect the Natural Resources of the State and Serve the Public	32
Appendix A: IDWR & SWCC Fiscal Year 2027 Organizational Structure.....	36

About the Idaho Department of Water Resources

Agency History

In the late 1800s, disputes about water use created the need for recording and administering water rights. In response, the 1895 Idaho Legislature created the Office of the State Engineer. Water users could file applications to appropriate water with the agency, obtain written authorization to develop a water use, and perfect a recorded water right. The agency was renamed the Department of Reclamation in 1919 and then the Department of Water Administration in 1970. In 1965, the Legislature created the Idaho Water Resource Board (IWRB or Board). The Board provides strategic leadership for the conservation, development, financing, and long-term stewardship of Idaho's water resources through statewide planning, investment in water infrastructure, and protection of the public interest.

In 1974, the Department of Water Administration and the IWRB were combined and renamed the Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR or Department).

In 1939, in response to severe soil erosion due to common agricultural practices of the time, highlighted during America's Dust Bowl era, the Legislature created the Idaho Soil Conservation Commission. It was renamed the Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC or Commission) in 2010 in recognition of its important water conservation efforts. The Commission provides strategic leadership for the conservation and stewardship of Idaho's soil, water, and related natural resources through support for local conservation districts, investment in voluntary conservation programs, and collaboration with public and private partners

The Department Today

Consistent with its original legislative purpose, IDWR approves or denies proposals to appropriate water or change existing water rights, maintains water right records, recommends and records adjudicated water rights, and oversees the delivery of water in times of shortage. The Department also collects and analyzes hydrologic data, inspects dams and impoundment structures, protects ground water by permitting the construction of wells and licensing well drillers, protects natural stream channels by permitting construction alterations, and supports local communities in implementing the National Flood Insurance Program.

The Department and the IWRB interact in a level working relationship. The Board establishes long-term vision and policy through Idaho's State Water Plan for the use, protection, and development of water resources. The Board also administers several state monetary funds in trust for the development and funding of water projects and improvements within the state. The Department administers water rights, performs regulatory functions, and implements the Board's water projects through IDWR's Planning and Projects Bureau.

Recently, there have been four bureaus within IDWR: the Water Allocation Bureau, the Water Compliance Bureau, the Planning and Projects Bureau, and the Technical Services Bureau. In FY26, the Department, following approval by the Governor and the Legislature, formed the Water Administration Bureau to oversee priority water administration, water measurement

standards, and water district and watermaster training. The former Water Compliance Bureau was also renamed the Resource Protection Bureau to better align with the focus of its disparate programs including ground water protection, stream channel protection, flood plain protection, and ensuring the public safety of dams.

Beginning in FY27, and upon approval by the Governor and the Legislature, the SWCC will merge with the Department. The merger will streamline Idaho government and align the state's water management and voluntary conservation programs within a single agency while preserving the Commission's statutory responsibilities and its longstanding partnerships with Idaho's local soil and water conservation districts.

The Department operates four regional offices in Boise, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho Falls, and Twin Falls, along with field offices in Salmon and Preston, to deliver programs and services statewide. The Legal, Purchasing, and Financial groups support internal administrative services. The Department receives human resources support from the Division of Human Resources and information technology support from the Office of Information Technology Services. (See IDWR organizational chart on page 5).

Looking Forward

As Idaho's water needs continue to evolve, IDWR is preparing for both increasing demands on the state's water resources and a new chapter in the Department's organization. To protect senior priority water rights, the Department has limited new water appropriations in many areas of the state and continues to increase the areas in which it administers surface and ground water use by priority in times of water shortage. The Board remains focused on enhancing Idaho's water supplies to address current and future needs. These efforts will intensify as the demand for water from prospective and existing water users increases. The challenge for IDWR and the Board is to fulfill the sometimes-conflicting directives of promoting sustainable development of Idaho's water resources for the benefit of its citizens while, at the same time, protecting senior water rights.

Looking ahead, the Department and the Commission will continue their merger of staff and resources with the SWCC, creating a more coordinated approach to water management and voluntary conservation while preserving the Commission's and Department's unique statutory responsibilities and areas of expertise. By bringing together complementary programs and technical resources, the Department will strengthen its ability to serve Idaho's communities, agricultural producers, conservation districts, and water users through collaborative, efficient, and locally informed stewardship of the state's water and natural resources.

About IDWR's Strategic Plan

Statutory Requirement

Idaho law requires state agencies to develop a strategic plan that defines performance commitments and assesses progress toward agency goals (Idaho Code § 67-1903). Strategic

plans are based on the state fiscal year (July 1 - June 30), cover a four-year period that includes the year of development, and are updated annually.

Goals, Objectives, & Performance Measures

This plan contains six goals addressing the core functions of IDWR, IWRB, and SWCC: water resource management, water rights administration, water project development and financing, natural resource conservation, and agency operations. Objectives and associated tasks guide achievement of each goal, while performance measures and benchmarks track progress.

Each year, IDWR generates a fiscal year end Performance Report that documents progress on many of the performance measures included in this plan.¹ Performance measures reported in Part II of the Performance Report are shown in **bold font** and numbered to correspond with that report. The bureau responsible for each objective is identified in parentheses ([Responsible Bureau](#)), and, where applicable, Performance Report categories under “Cases Managed & Key Services Provided” appear beneath the related objective.

External Factors

Several factors outside of the Department’s control could affect this plan and the Department’s pursuit and achievement of its stated goals. Those factors include:

- Availability of funding
- Federal and State regulatory actions and mandates
- Weather patterns, droughts, natural disasters, and other environmental factors
- Litigation and court decisions
- Staff recruitment and retention in a challenging job market
- State and national economic and governance trends

Plan Development and Approval

The IDWR Strategic Plan, developed by the Director’s Executive Team, establishes the agency’s near and long-term priorities and tangible objectives. By evaluating productivity with performance measures, the Department and the public can assess IDWR’s progress and success in implementing and achieving its goals. The Department welcomes input from staff and publishes the plan for the public and all IDWR employees to reference.

The Director’s Executive Team consists of the following: Mathew Weaver, Director; Brian Patton, Deputy Director; Shelley Keen, Deputy Director; George Hitz, Deputy Administrator (SWCC); Megan Jenkins, Executive Assistant; Craig Saxton, Water Allocation Bureau Chief; Nick Miller, Water Administration Bureau Chief; Erik Boe, Resource Protection Bureau Chief; Cynthia Bridge Clark, Planning & Projects Bureau Chief; Ethan Geisler, Technical Services Bureau Chief; Sascha Marston, Fiscal Officer; and Jacci Ellis-Gibbons, HR Business Partner.

¹ The Department’s Performance Reports, Strategic Plans, and Annual Reports are available to view and download on IDWR’s website, here: <https://idwr.idaho.gov/about-idwr/>

IDWR & SWCC Missions, Visions, & Shared Commitment

IDWR Mission:

To serve Idahoans by ensuring their water is conserved and available to sustain Idaho's economy, ecosystems, and resulting quality of life.

IDWR Vision:

To achieve excellence in water management through innovation, efficiency, planning, and communication.

SWCC Mission:

To assist Conservation District supervisors in the carrying out of their non-regulatory and voluntarily initiated natural resources conservation programs and to coordinate with local, state, and federal partners the implementation of conservation systems to sustain, improve, and enhance Idaho's soil, water, air, plant, and animal resources.

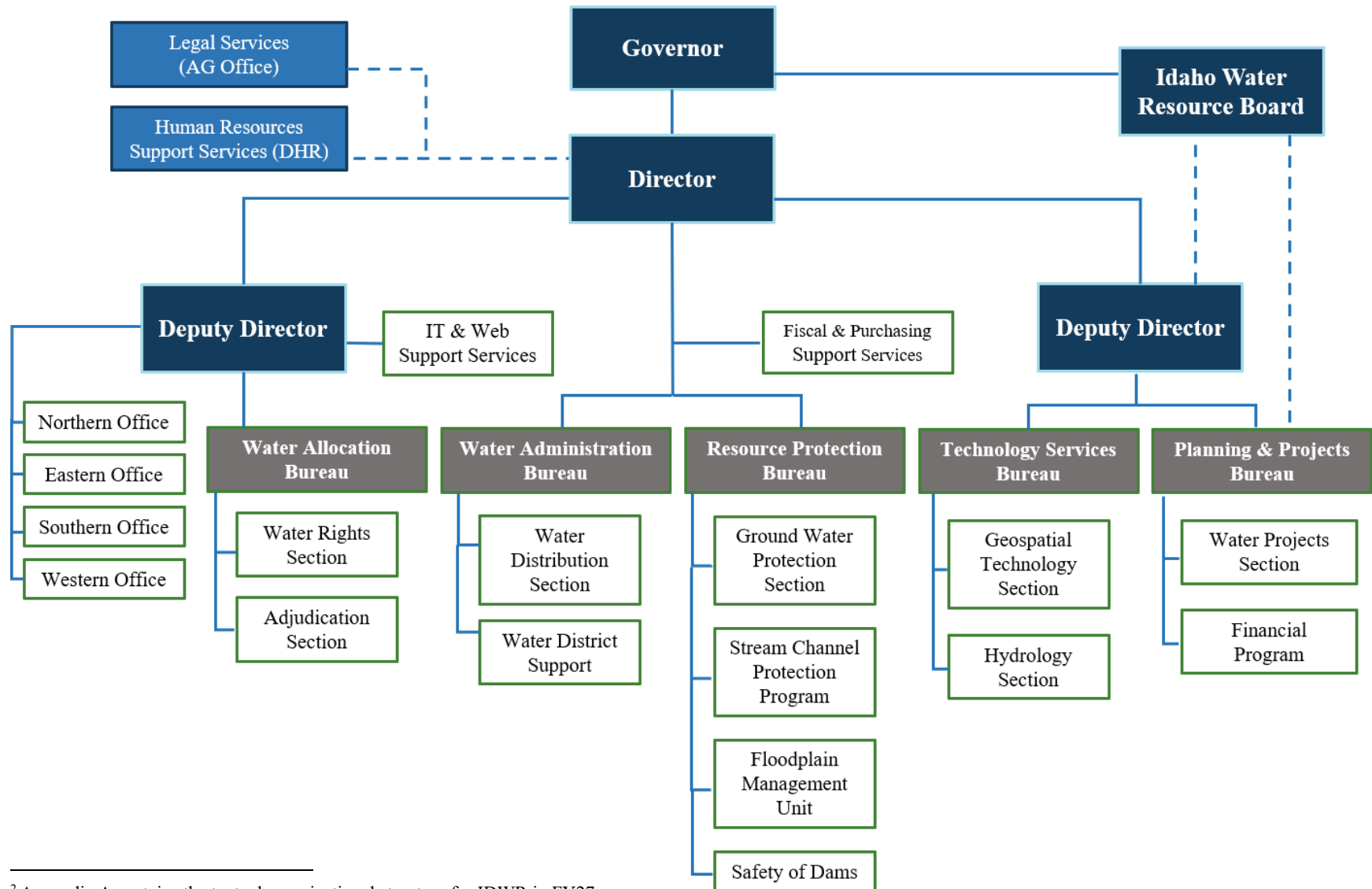
SWCC Vision:

Natural resources conservation in Idaho is driven by local leadership and priorities, is voluntary and incentive-based, non-regulatory, and demonstrates scientifically sound stewardship. The Conservation Commission and local Conservation Districts are the primary entities assisting private landowners and land users in the conservation, sustainment, improvement and enhancement of Idaho's natural resources.

Our Shared Commitment:

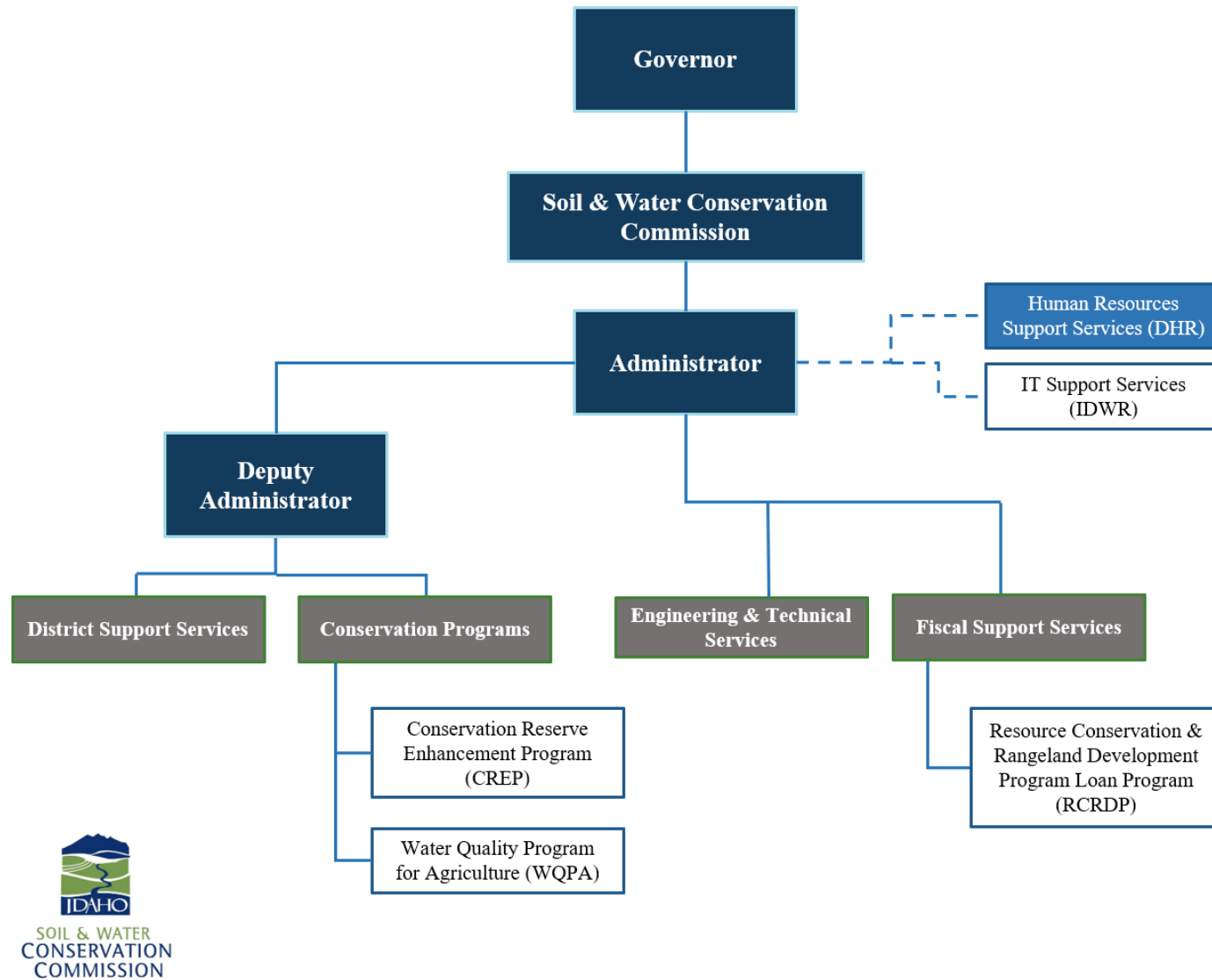
- Sustain Idaho's water and natural resources for the public good.
- Serve our customers responsively and timely.
- Balance competing interests consistent with Idaho law.
- Be forward-looking, evidence-based, and innovative.
- Build strong partnerships across local, state, tribal, and federal organizations.
- Deliver uncompromising ethical behavior.
- Communicate early, honestly, and completely.
- Return to the taxpayer an honest day's time and effort.

IDWR FY27 Organizational Structure²



² Appendix A contains the textual organizational structure for IDWR in FY27.

SWCC FY27 Organizational Structure³



³ Appendix A contains the textual organizational structure for SWCC in FY27.

Goal 1: Manage and Allocate the State's Water Resources to Optimize Economic Activity, and Protect Public Safety and Idaho's Ecosystems

The Department manages and allocates the state's water resources. Orderly administration of finite water resources begins with an accurate determination of existing water rights through court adjudications. To sustain economic activity and growth, IDWR implements efficient processes for appropriating water for new uses and for changing existing water rights. The Department protects public safety and Idaho's ecosystems by enforcing minimum design criteria and construction standards for wells, stream channel alterations, and impoundment structures associated with dams and mine tailings.

Goal 1, Objective 1: Timely process water use applications, notices, and related filings. (Water Allocation Bureau)

Benchmarks for the water right processes below reflect the Department's targeted maximum fiscal year-end pending workload. For Water Supply Bank (WSB) leases and rentals, a benchmark of 30 days reflects IDWR's estimate of routine processing times. Knowing the pending year-end workload of licenses, applications for permits, applications for transfer, and ownership change notices, and WSB processing times, is necessary for the Department to develop and assign the resources needed to timely and efficiently complete water allocation processes.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY27 Benchmark	FY28 Benchmark	FY29 Benchmark	FY30 Benchmark
1. Number of pending, unprotested Applications for Permit, not subject to a moratorium	Water Rights Section	325	300	300	300
2. Number of pending Water Right Transfer applications	Water Rights Section	100	100	100	100
Number of permits needing Water Right Licensing ⁴	Water Rights Section	650	900	850	800
Number of pending, protested Applications for Permit, not subject to a moratorium	Water Rights Section	120	120	120	120
Number of pending Water Right Ownership Change applications	Water Rights Section	250	250	250	250
3. Median number of days to receive, process, and recommend WSB Leases and Rentals	Water Rights Section	30	30	30	30

⁴ Over the next two fiscal years, approximately 1,500 permits will require proof of beneficial use. Even accounting for permits that lapse or receive extensions under Idaho Code § 42-204, the resulting licensing workload is expected to exceed recent processing capacity. Accordingly, the "Number of Permits Needing Water Right Licensing" benchmarks have been adjusted to reflect this anticipated increase, which is largely driven by permit applications filed in response to the Clark Fork-Pend Oreille River Basin Adjudication.

Goal 1, Objective 2: Determine the validity (or elements) of each claim to a water right filed in Idaho’s general adjudications and submit Director’s Reports for recommendation of claims to the Idaho Water Adjudications Court. (Water Allocation Bureau)

Adjudications – Claims & Recommendations

- Submit a Director’s Report for Basin 11 Part 1 in the Bear River Basin Adjudication, **by December 31, 2026.**
- Send first round commencement notices to property owners within Basin 98 of the Kootenai River Basin Adjudication, **by December 31, 2026.**

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY27 Benchmark	FY28 Benchmark	FY29 Benchmark	FY30 Benchmark
4. Total number of statewide adjudication claims taken, and recommendations completed.⁵	Adjudication Section	4000⁶	2400	2900	2200
Total number of Northern Idaho Adjudication claims taken, and recommendations completed.	Adjudication Section	700	1100	1600	1200
Total number of Bear River Basin Adjudication claims taken, and recommendations completed.	Adjudication Section	1000	1100	1200	900
Total number of Kootenai River Basin Adjudication claims taken, and recommendations completed.	Adjudication Section	2300	200	100	100

⁵ In FY25, IDWR updated Performance Measure #4 from Total number of statewide adjudication claims taken, and recommendations submitted to the Idaho Water Adjudications Court to Total number of statewide adjudication claims taken, and recommendations completed. The change better reflects IDWR staff’s productivity throughout an extended period. A “Director’s Report” includes multiple recommendations prepared over multiple fiscal years and is held until IDWR can submit a large group of recommendations to the court in a single report. The Director’s Report can contain thousands of recommendations. Reporting only the submittal of Director’s Reports does not accurately reflect IDWR’s productivity in a single fiscal year.

⁶ The fiscal year benchmarks for Performance Measure #4 are benchmark sums of the total number of claims taken and recommendations completed in the Northern Idaho, Bear River, and Kootenai River Basin Adjudications.

Goal 1, Objective 3: Timely issue Stream Channel Alteration (SCA) permits and inspect stream channel alterations to protect private property, public safety, and stream channels. (Resource Protection Bureau)

Stream Channel Protection Unit

Idaho Code § 42-3802 states that SCA permit applications shall be submitted to IDWR not less than 60 days prior to commencing project construction. The Department aims to process at least 80% of IDAPA minimum standard SCA permit applications within 60 days of receipt to assist with the timely commencement of SCA projects.

Pre and post SCA permit inspections assist landowners with the proper planning and implementation of projects and ensure compliance with permitted activities. The benchmark for the percentage of permitted SCA activities receiving inspections gradually increases to 45% by FY28 and will be evaluated then to determine if the benchmark should be adjusted.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY27 Benchmark	FY28 Benchmark	FY29 Benchmark	FY30 Benchmark
Percentage of SCA applications processed within 60 days of receipt (minimum standard projects only)	Stream Channel Protection Unit	80%	80%	80%	80%
Percent of permitted SCA activities receiving pre- or post-inspection (all SCA projects)	Stream Channel Protection Unit	44%	45%	45%	45%

Goal 1, Objective 4: Operate and manage the Safety of Dams program through timely inspections and sufficient emergency planning to ensure public safety and prevent damage or loss of property. (Director)

Idaho Code § 42-1710 requires IDWR to regulate dams, reservoirs, and mine tailings impoundment structures for the protection of life and property. The Department currently regulates approximately 400 water storage dams and more than 20 mine tailings impoundment structures in Idaho. Dam Safety personnel prioritize inspection of regulated dams according to their size and the potential consequences that a dam failure and sudden release of water would present to downstream life and property. The frequency of individual project inspections depends on the project's hazard rating and other factors including the project's age, physical condition, size, and storage capacity. The Department must inspect all regulated dams no less than every five years.

Safety of Dams Program

- Coordinate with dam owners to ensure all non-federal high-hazard dams have an up-to-date Operation/Emergency Plan, prepared by the dam owner, and reviewed by IDWR's Dam Safety Program, **ongoing**.
- Inspect high and significant hazard dams as scheduled annually per hazard classification and comply with the statutory requirement to inspect every dam at least once every five years, **ongoing**.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY27 Benchmark	FY28 Benchmark	FY29 Benchmark	FY30 Benchmark
Percent of non-federal high-hazard dams with an up-to-date Operation/Emergency Plan.	Safety of Dams Program	100%	100%	100%	100%
Percentage of dams inspected each year that are necessary to comply with the annual inspection schedule.	Safety of Dams Program	100%	100%	100%	100%

Goal 1, Objective 5: Inspect wells during construction and modification to ensure well construction activities do not harm the public, or waste or contaminate water resources. (Resource Protection Bureau)

Ground Water Protection Section

The Department has statutory authority for the state-wide administration of the rules governing well construction and licensing of well drillers in Idaho. Prior to drilling a well, the well owner or well driller must first obtain a drilling permit from IDWR. All wells must be constructed by a licensed well driller.

Well construction activities include well seal placement and well decommissioning. The Department targets 5-10% of inspections to occur during well-seal placement. Remaining inspections occur during other phases of well construction or modification. The number of well construction applications changes from year-to-year and correlates with state economic conditions and population growth trends. Inspecting 28% of wells is consistent with IDWR's capacity, which is impacted by current staffing resources, recent annual inspection progress, the number of new wells drilled annually, and increasing public demand on staff resources to manage groundwater resources.

(The Ground Water Protection Section's Performance Measure is on the following page).

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY27 Benchmark	FY28 Benchmark	FY29 Benchmark	FY30 Benchmark
5. Percentage of wells inspected during construction or modification	Ground Water Protection Section	28%	28%	28%	28%

Goal 1, Objective 6: Educate and engage with regulated industries, landowners, and communities regarding resource protection laws, rules, and policies. (Resource Protection Bureau)

Ground Water Protection Section

The Department has statutory responsibility for the licensing of well drillers and operators in Idaho. To protect public safety and water resources, IDWR works with the Idaho Ground Water Association (IGWA) to facilitate well driller and operator training workshops.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY27 Benchmark	FY28 Benchmark	FY29 Benchmark	FY30 Benchmark
Number of IGWA well driller workshops or online course presentations supported by IDWR	Ground Water Protection Section	3	3	3	3

Floodplain Management Program

IDWR's Floodplain Coordinator administers the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) in Idaho by assisting communities with adopting compliant ordinances, reviewing floodplain development to prevent increased flood risk, supporting flood planning efforts, and delivering training on NFIP requirements. These efforts ensure communities remain eligible for FEMA flood insurance.

Over the past four years, IDWR has reduced its backlog of Community Assistance Visits (CAVs) from about 25 to two. Capping new CAVs at two per year aligns with FEMA's planned transition to a streamlined audit process in FY28 and enables the Floodplain Coordinator to prioritize daily technical assistance. The Department has also modestly increased Community Assistance Contacts (CACs) from four to five annually to better identify local needs and guide support under the future audit framework. To support ongoing government reform and efficiency improvement, FEMA plans to combine its FEMA's CAV and CAC process will be combined into a single Performance Measure by FY28 under a New Audit Process (NAP).

(The Floodplain Management Unit's Performance Measures are on the following page).

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY27 Benchmark	FY28 Benchmark	FY29 Benchmark	FY30 Benchmark
Number of NFIP Community Assistance Visits (CAV) initiated	Floodplain Management Unit	2	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of NFIP Community Assistance Contacts (CAC) initiated	Floodplain Management Unit	5	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of NFIP audits under NAP ⁷	Floodplain Management Unit	N/A	N/A	6	6
Number of NFIP Training, Outreach, & Presentations facilitated by IDWR	Floodplain Management Unit	6	6	6	6

⁷ This performance measure is new for FY26 and will replace the previous CAV and CAC performance measures by FY28.

Goal 2: Accurately Administer Water Rights and Distribute Water to Protect Senior Water Rights and Conserve Idaho's Water

Idaho law tasks the Director of IDWR to “direct and control” the distribution of natural water sources within the state. To orderly distribute water, the Department creates water districts. Watermasters, elected by water users, measure, distribute, and curtail authorized and unauthorized diversions of water within water districts. Administration of water rights includes the development and enforcement of water measurement standards to support accuracy and fairness. To ensure the accurate and fair administration of water rights, the Department must collect data, develop water use accounting tools, assess the hydrologic impact of water diversions, and predict future water supplies.

Goal 2, Objective 1: Create or modify water districts for the administration of water rights and establish technical and professional resources for water district staff. (Water Administration Bureau)

Water Distribution Section

Idaho Code § 42-604 requires the Director to divide the state into water districts. Priorities include adding basins tributary to the Eastern Snake Plain and the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer (ESPA) that are not currently administering groundwater, and administering Trust Water Rights from the Swan Falls Settlement Agreement⁸. A benchmark of three or more districts created or modified per year starting in FY27, and increasing the goal year-over-year as the new bureau becomes more experienced, is realistic based on the Department's current staff resources and workloads.

- Modify Water District 120 to administer groundwater in the Rock, Palisades, Willow, and Blackfoot River basins, which are all tributaries to the ESPA, **by June 30, 2027.**
- Modify Water District 100 to administer groundwater in the lower portion of the Teton River basin, a tributary to the ESPA, **by December 31, 2027.**
- Modify Water District 110 to administer groundwater in the Medicine Lodge, Birch, and Beaver-Camas basins, which are all tributaries to the ESPA, **by December 31, 2027.**
- Create a water district to administer groundwater in the Henry's Fork River basin, a tributary to the ESPA, **by December 31, 2027.**
- Create or modify existing water districts as needed to bring 50 or more administrable Trust Water Rights into a water district each year until all TWRs have been incorporated⁹, **ongoing.**

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY27 Benchmark	FY28 Benchmark	FY29 Benchmark	FY30 Benchmark
6. Number of water districts created or modified	Water Distribution Section	≥3	≥4	≥5	≥6

⁸ Visit IDWR's [Swan Falls Settlement](#) webpage to learn more and view the Swan Falls Settlement Agreement.

⁹ Excluding non-administrable water rights, the Department estimates that between 200-300 trust water rights are outside current water district boundaries and not subject to priority administration. Non-administrable water rights include de minimis domestic and stockwater uses.

Goal 2, Objective 2: Develop and implement tools, resources, and educational opportunities for watermasters to improve the administration of water rights and regulation of water use in water districts throughout the state. (Water Administration Bureau)

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY27 Benchmark	FY28 Benchmark	FY29 Benchmark	FY30 Benchmark
Number of water district or watermaster trainings and workshops facilitated by IDWR	Water Distribution Section	3	3	3	3
Number of additional water districts integrating a GIS based, mobile data collection and automation tool	Water Distribution Section	2	2	2	2

Goal 2, Objective 3: Maintain and enhance a timely, fair, transparent, and consistent enforcement program. (Resource Protection Bureau)

Surface & Groundwater Investigations

The Department maintains this objective through education, water use investigations, and implementation of both formal and informal enforcement actions. The Department receives many allegations of illegal water use from the public. In addition to investigating these allegations when they have merit, IDWR audits select geographical areas to evaluate if irrigators are complying with the legal elements of their water rights. These audits help ensure fair and consistent water use enforcement and are often conducted in areas of water use conflict or in areas with pending changes in water administration practices.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY27 Benchmark	FY28 Benchmark	FY29 Benchmark	FY30 Benchmark
Number of area-wide irrigation audits completed with GIS based tools and methods	RPB's Enforcement Coordinator	≥2	≥2	≥2	≥2

Goal 2, Objective 4: Recruit, develop, and maintain a trained and experienced group of core Hearing Officers to promptly resolve contested case applications. (Director)

- Send at least one Hearing Officer per year to the National Judicial College or training, **ongoing**.
- Each trained Hearing Officer shall preside over and resolve three to five contested case disputes per fiscal year, **ongoing**.

- Hearing Officers render written decisions within at least 90 days from the date of hearing, **ongoing**.
- Maintain sufficient Hearing Officer appointments to timely preside over and render decisions for all active contested case proceedings, **ongoing**.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY27 Benchmark	FY28 Benchmark	FY29 Benchmark	FY30 Benchmark
Total number of appointed Hearing Officers ¹⁰	Director	8-10	8-10	8-10	8-10

Goal 2, Objective 5: Develop, implement, or revise tools to administer and manage surface and groundwater resources. (Technical Services Bureau)

The Department's Hydrology Section is responsible for completing the following tasks:

Surface & Groundwater Management Tools

- Update or replace the existing USGS/ Kjelstrom regression-based method for estimating aquifer discharge to estimate aquifer discharge more accurately along the Milner Dam to King Hill reach of the Snake River. Publish the final project report, **by June 30, 2027**.
- Prepare an ESPA aquifer management budget, fall forecast tool, and groundwater level index for supporting the development and future implementation of an ESPA Ground Water Management Area Ground Water Management Plan **by June 30, 2027**.
- Partner with the Idaho Water Resources Research Institute (IWRRI) to develop an updated Star Bridge moratorium administrative boundary using contemporary hydrogeologic data and methods **by June 30, 2027**.

Groundwater & Surface Water Model Efforts

- Construct and calibrate a transient groundwater flow model for the Big Lost River basin and publish the final project report, **by December 31, 2026**.
- Revise and recalibrate the ESPAM v2.3 and publish the final project report, **by June 30, 2027**.
- Revise and recalibrate the Wood River groundwater model and publish the final project report, **by June 30, 2027**.
- Construct and calibrate a transient groundwater flow model for the Western Snake River Plain including the Mountain Home Plateau, **by June 30, 2028**.

¹⁰ In FY25, the previous performance measure, *Number of Hearing Officer training workshops conducted by IDWR* was changed to the *Total number of appointed Hearing Officers*. Currently, seven qualified IDWR staff serve as hearing officers on contested case matters. Due to the increase in the number of contested cases before the Department, it is necessary for IDWR to recruit at least one to three more hearing officers and maintain a total of 8-10 hearing officers each fiscal year to timely preside over and resolve three to five contested cases in the fiscal year.

- Construct and calibrate a transient groundwater flow model for the Raft River basin, **by December 31, 2029.**
- Construct a Riverware model for the Big Wood River basin, **by December 31, 2029.**

Water Rights Accounting Program Modernization Efforts

- Develop a Water Right Accounting SQL database to replace the existing Microsoft Access databases, **by December 31, 2026.**
- Develop a Big Wood River Basin Water Right Accounting program, **by March 1, 2027.**

Goal 2, Objective 6: Analyze water level monitoring data and prepare technical reports summarizing aquifer conditions for priority water resources. (Technical Services Bureau)

The Department's Hydrology Section is responsible for completing the following tasks:

- Prepare a peer-reviewed technical report summarizing groundwater conditions in the West Central¹¹ monitoring network, **by December 31, 2026.**
- Prepare a peer-reviewed technical report characterizing and summarizing the surface and groundwater hydrology of the Camas Prairie sub-basin within the Wood River basin, **by June 30, 2027.**
- Prepare a peer-reviewed technical report summarizing groundwater conditions in the North Ada County monitoring network, **by June 30, 2027.**
- Prepare a peer-reviewed technical report characterizing and summarizing the surface and groundwater hydrology of the Portneuf River basin, **by June 30, 2027.**
- Prepare peer-reviewed technical summary reports of water level data, water level trends, and aquifer conditions for each of the designated Groundwater Management Areas (GWMAs) and each of the Critical Groundwater Areas (CGWAs) on a five-year frequency, **ongoing.** To meet the five-year reporting frequency, the Department established the annual benchmarks below.
- Evaluate the current technical basis for the Rathdrum Prairie GWMA, including the aquifer boundary, **by December 31, 2027.**

(The Goal 2, Objective 6 Performance Measures are on the following page).

¹¹ The West Central location refers to the Payette and Weiser River drainages.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY27 Benchmark	FY28 Benchmark	FY29 Benchmark	FY30 Benchmark
Number of published, peer-reviewed technical summary reports of GWMA	Hydrology Section	≥2	≥2	≥2	≥2
Number of published, peer-reviewed technical summary reports of CGWA	Hydrology Section	≥1	≥1	≥1	≥1

Goal 2, Objective 7: Streamline hydrologic data collection and processing. (Technical Services Bureau)

Water Measurement Sites & Equipment Deployment

Idaho Code, § 42-231 requires the Director to conduct “investigations, surveys, and studies relative to the extent, nature and location of ground water resources of [Idaho].” Idaho Code, §§ 42-1805 (2) and (3) describe additional duties of the Director, which include preparing “a present and continuing inventory of Idaho’s water resources. . . .” Idaho Code, § 39-120 recognizes that IDWR has the responsibility to collect baseline water resource data and charges IDWR with the shared responsibility to develop and administer a “comprehensive ground water quality monitoring network. . . .”

To fulfill these statutory mandates, IDWR maintains statewide monitoring networks that measure groundwater levels, spring flows, return flows, and groundwater quality. Priority administration of water resources often results in a public desire to expand these monitoring networks to gather more data across the state. To support expanding monitoring networks while maintaining a static workforce, IDWR has modernized and automated resource intensive manual monitoring processes. Efforts have included deploying and maintaining automated measurement equipment, establishing telemetered communication networks, and automating data collection, processing, and publication.

The Department’s Hydrology Section is responsible for completing the following tasks:

- Integrate the use of a GIS-based, mobile data collection and automation tool in hydrologic data collection programs as opportunities present themselves, **ongoing**.
- To facilitate the gathering of real-time, high-frequency data for model calibration and trend analysis, install 10 new surface water or groundwater monitoring sites or upgrade equipment annually in existing sites, **ongoing**.
- Expand groundwater data collection efforts in southern Canyon County to support administrative decision-making and Western Snake River Plain groundwater modeling. Add new monitoring sites by instrumenting existing unmonitored wells or drilling new monitoring wells **by December 31, 2027**.

- Conduct groundwater-level synoptic measurements in the Treasure Valley to support groundwater modeling efforts and development of water level change maps. Measure approximately 550 wells during three synoptic events (fall 2026, spring 2027, and spring 2028) to support administrative decision-making and groundwater modeling, **by December 31, 2027.**

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY27 Benchmark	FY28 Benchmark	FY29 Benchmark	FY30 Benchmark
7. Install or upgrade surface water or groundwater monitoring sites.	Hydrology Section	10	10	10	10

Goal 2, Objective 8: Review and administer Trust Water Rights (TWRs) issued consistent with, and in conformance with, the 1984 Swan Falls Settlement and the 2009 Framework Reaffirming the Swan Falls Settlement. (Water Administration and Water Allocation Bureaus)

The Water Rights Section within the Water Allocation Bureau is responsible for the following tasks:

- Coordinate with IDWR’s legal team to review the Attorney General’s Office’s summary regarding responses to questions about IDWR’s authorities and limitations in administering TWRs and evaluating TWR term limits, **by June 30, 2027.**
- Develop and propose a plan for reviewing term limited TWRs, that includes review criteria and the resources needed to accomplish the review, **by December 31, 2027.**
- Initiate a review of term limited TWRs, **by June 30, 2028.**

The Water Administration Bureau is responsible for the following tasks:

- Plan for and develop a management policy addressing conjunctive water rights management in the Milner to Murphy reach of the Snake River and tributary basins, **by March 1, 2027.**
- Support the creation of administrative entities and infrastructure (water districts, ground water districts, measurement and control orders, etc.) necessary to carry out mitigation plans anticipated to be developed and available to holders of Trust Water Rights, **Ongoing.**

Goal 3¹²: Advance Voluntary, Locally Led Conservation to Sustain Idaho's Working Lands and Natural Resources.

Idaho's privately owned forests, rangelands, croplands, and wetlands are essential to the state's economic, environmental, and community well-being, including agricultural production, clean water, healthy soils, wildlife habitat, and resilient landscapes. Sustaining these resources depends on voluntary, locally led conservation efforts that balance responsible stewardship with private property rights and productive land use. The Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission supports Idaho's Conservation Districts through technical assistance, financial resources, education, and partnerships with local, state, and federal organizations to implement conservation systems that improve soil health, water quality, watershed function, habitat, and overall natural resource resilience. By strengthening local conservation capacity and fostering collaborative stewardship, the Commission helps ensure Idaho's working lands and natural resources remain healthy, productive, and sustainable for future generations.

¹² Beginning in FY27 and in support of the IDWR and SWCC merger, the Department is combining IDWR's and SWCC's Strategic Plans. Goal 3 has been updated to reflect the Commission's strategic goals and objectives. Former Goal 3, "Sustain, Maintain, and Enhance the State's Water Resources for the Benefit of Idaho's Economy, Ecosystems, and Resulting Quality of Life," was reassigned as Goal 4, with subsequent Goals also relabeled in sequence.

The Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission

The Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC) supports Idaho's Conservation Districts in advancing voluntary, locally led conservation efforts that sustain and enhance the state's soil, water, air, plant, and animal resources. Through partnerships with landowners, Conservation Districts, and local, state, and federal organizations, SWCC helps implement conservation practices that improve natural resource conditions while supporting Idaho's working lands, agricultural economy, and communities.



In 2025, Governor Brad Little directed SWCC and the Department to evaluate opportunities to improve government efficiency and leverage partnerships through potential integration. Following this evaluation, stakeholder engagement, and legislation enacted during the 2026 Session, the SWCC and Department will formally merge staff and resources during FY27. As a result of this merger, the SWCC's goals and objectives are incorporated into IDWR's strategic plan.

Goal 3, Objective 1: Support Districts' Voluntary Conservation Efforts. (SWCC)

The SWCC supports Idaho's Conservation Districts by strengthening state and local partnerships, expanding technical guidance and organizational capacity, and fostering collaboration that advances voluntary, locally led conservation efforts. Through coordinated assistance and strong partnerships, Conservation Districts can successfully develop and implement conservation projects that address local natural resource priorities across Idaho.

The SWCC conducts an optional annual Conservation District Survey, due July 31, to assess district performance and satisfaction with the SWCC during the preceding fiscal year. Each year, SWCC staff review district requests, overall workload, and the Commission's capacity to assist Conservation Districts.

(The Goal 3, Objective 1 Performance Measures are on the following page).

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY27 Benchmark	FY28 Benchmark	FY29 Benchmark	FY30 Benchmark
Percentage of Conservation Districts satisfied with services & programs provided ¹³	SWCC	90%	90%	90%	90%
Percentage of Conservation Districts satisfied with the effectiveness of the communications received from the Commission ¹⁴	SWCC	90%	90%	90%	90%
Percentage of requests submitted by Conservation Districts that receive the requested assistance ¹⁵	SWCC	90%	90%	90%	90%

Goal 3 Objective 2: Deliver Conservation Programs and Services to improve natural resource conditions. (SWCC)

The SWCC coordinates with federal, state, and local partners to implement voluntary conservation programs that support Idaho landowners, Conservation Districts, and partners in addressing priority natural resource concerns. Through the conservation programs listed below, the SWCC offers technical assistance, financial resources, and conservation planning. These programs support the implementation of best management practices that improve water quality, conserve water supplies, enhance watershed health, and sustain productive agricultural lands.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) offers technical leadership and guidance to private landowners in coordination with federal, state, and other partners to reduce groundwater consumption on cropland within the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer.

(The Goal 3, Objective 2 Performance Measures are on the following page).

¹³ Targeted to determine achievement of IC 22-2718(4)(a).

¹⁴ Targeted to determine achievement of IC 22-2718(4)(b).

¹⁵ Established by the SWCC to track delivery of Technical Assistance hours provided to Districts.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY27 Benchmark	FY28 Benchmark	FY29 Benchmark	FY30 Benchmark
Number of total CREP-enrolled acres over which technical leadership and guidance is delivered ¹⁶	SWCC	15,000 acres	15,000 acres	15,000 acres	15,000 acres

Resource Conservation & Rangeland Development Program

The Resource Conservation & Rangeland Development Program (RCRDP) conserves natural resources by offering low- interest conservation loans. The RCRDP supports Idaho landowners in implementing projects that enhance long-term stewardship of agricultural, rangeland, and forest resources. The program’s goals include improving soil health, promoting efficient and beneficial water use, restoring and protecting riparian areas, and conserving or enhancing fish and wildlife habitat across the state.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY27 Benchmark	FY28 Benchmark	FY29 Benchmark	FY30 Benchmark
Number of acres implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs) facilitated by RCRDP funding ¹⁷	SWCC	600 acres	600 acres	600 acres	600 acres

Ground Water Quality and Nitrate Priority Areas

The SWCC, in partnership with local conservation districts, partner agencies, and landowners, offers technical assistance for developing Ground Water Quality Improvement Plans within Nitrate Priority Areas. The program promotes and supports the improvement and maintenance of groundwater quality through the adoption of Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce nitrate leaching from agricultural operations into groundwater sources.

(The Goal 3, Objective 2 Performance Measures are on the following page).

¹⁶ Developed to determine progress toward meeting state goals per the Revised Agreement Between the United States Department of Agriculture Commodity Credit Corporation and the State of Idaho concerning the implementation of the 2021 ESPA Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.

¹⁷ As described in Idaho Agricultural Pollution Abatement Plan (rev. February 2025).

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY27 Benchmark	FY28 Benchmark	FY29 Benchmark	FY30 Benchmark
Number of acres implementing BMPs to maintain and improve ground water quality ¹⁸	SWCC	54,000 acres	54,000 acres	54,000 acres	54,000 acres

Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Planning Program

The SWCC develops and publishes TMDL plans that are a framework and tool for Conservation Districts, landowners, and other partners to meet Idaho's non-point source water quality goals.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY27 Benchmark	FY28 Benchmark	FY29 Benchmark	FY30 Benchmark
Percentage of TMDL implementation plans completed within 18 months of EPA ¹⁹ approval and DEQ assignment to the Commission. ²⁰	SWCC	100%	100%	100%	100%

Goal 3, Objective 3: Increase Awareness and Engagement Through Outreach and Communication. (SWCC)

The SWCC promotes understanding of Idaho's voluntary, locally led conservation efforts by sharing information, success stories, and resources with Conservation Districts, landowners, partners, decision makers, and the public. The SWCC seeks to strengthen awareness of conservation programs and their benefits through timely, effective communication that fosters collaboration, encourages participation, and highlights the value of conservation across Idaho.

(Goal 3, Objective 3 Performance Measures are on the following page).

¹⁸ As described in Idaho Agricultural Pollution Abatement Plan (rev. February 2025).

¹⁹ Environmental Protection Agency.

²⁰ Established in Idaho Nonpoint Source Management Plan (rev. December 2020) pursuant to IDAPA 58.01.02.010.24, Idaho Water Quality Standards.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY27 Benchmark	FY28 Benchmark	FY29 Benchmark	FY30 Benchmark
Increase the number of newsletter subscribers ²¹	SWCC	20 new subscriptions	20 new subscriptions	20 new subscriptions	20 new subscriptions
Increase annual percentage of social media reach, likes, and follows ²²	SWCC	10% increase	10% increase	10% increase	10% increase

Goal 3, Objective 4: Support the successful integration of IDWR and SWCC by aligning the two where missions and goals overlap, while preserving clear separation between regulatory and non-regulatory functions throughout the transition.

- Develop recommended amendments to Idaho Code necessary to complete the integration of the SWCC into IDWR, consistent with changes initiated in 2026 by House Bill 503 and Senate Concurrent Resolution 115, and submit the recommendations through the Governor’s Executive Agency Legislation process, **by December 31, 2026.**
- Conduct stakeholder outreach, gather feedback, and prepare a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between SWCC and the IDWR Director to present at the Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts Fall Conference (Nov. 17–19, 2026), and sign and implement the MOU upon enactment of all supporting legislation, **by June 30, 2027.**
- Coordinate with the Office of Information Technology Services to implement ITS services and hardware, **by June 30, 2027.**
- Identify other opportunities to improve efficiency, coordination, and service delivery while maintaining SWCC’s statutory mission, authorities, and role, **ongoing.**

²¹ Established by SWCC.

²² Established by SWCC.

Goal 4²³: Sustain, Maintain, and Enhance the State’s Water Resources for the Benefit of Idaho’s Economy, Ecosystems, and Resulting Quality of Life

Groundwater levels in much of Idaho are declining, and in some areas, aquifers cannot sustain all existing surface and groundwater uses. Inadequate or diminishing water supplies often cause contentious, costly, and time-consuming litigation, as well as negatively affecting local and regional economies. The 2016 Legislature passed Senate Concurrent Resolution 137 (SCR137), instructing the Idaho Water Resource Board to identify and implement water projects to stabilize aquifers and enhance ground water supplies throughout Idaho. In 2017, the addition of Policy ‘8A: Sustainability’ to the State Water Plan strengthened SCR137. Policy 8A reads: “Sustainability is the active stewardship of Idaho’s water resources to satisfy current uses and assure future uses of this renewable resource in accordance with State law and policy.” To prevent the negative economic impacts associated with limited water supplies, the Board, with support from the Legislature and Governor, proactively implements water projects and programs to manage and enhance surface water supplies and stabilize or recover aquifers across the state.

²³ Formerly labeled Goal 3. Relabeled to Goal 4 in FY27 for inclusion of the SWCC’s strategic objectives to Goal 3.

Goal 4, Objective 1: Support and grow an ongoing managed recharge program for the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer (ESPA) to stabilize and recover the aquifer. (Planning & Projects Bureau).

ESPA Aquifer Management

In accordance with Senate Concurrent Resolution 110 (2025), the State Water Plan and the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan were revised and approved by the Legislature in 2026. To implement those revisions, the IWRB will develop sufficient managed recharge capacity through the construction of recharge sites, water diversion facility enhancements, delivery agreements, and refinement of operational protocols to achieve an annual 15-year average managed recharge volume of 350,000 acre-feet.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY27 Benchmark	FY28 Benchmark	FY29 Benchmark	FY30 Benchmark
8. Average annual volume of water recharged into the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer²⁴	Water Projects Section	350,000 acre-feet	350,000 acre-feet	350,000 acre-feet	350,000 acre-feet

Goal 4, Objective 2: Complete the Mountain Home Air Force Base (MHAFB) Water Resilience Project to deliver reliable surface water supply to the MHAFB and relieve demand on the over-drafted Mountain Home Aquifer. (Planning & Projects Bureau).

The Board completed construction of the pipeline and transmission system in June 2025, while the United States Air Force continues construction of the water treatment plant, with project completion scheduled for December 2026.

- Complete the ownership transfer of the pipeline from the State to the United States Airforce, **by December 2026.**

Goal 4, Objective 3: Partner with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) to complete the Anderson Ranch Dam Raise for additional water storage. (Planning & Projects Bureau).

The USBR is scheduled to complete the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and issue a Record of Decision (ROD) by or around December 31, 2026, and is initiating the construction contracting process.

- Coordinate with USBR to support the EIS completion schedule, issuance of a Record of Decision (ROD), and initiation of the construction contracting process following issuance of the ROD, **by or around December 31, 2026.**

²⁴ Beginning in FY26, the Board's ESPA recharge Performance Measure #8, is updated to report the 15-year average annual recharge volume for consistency with the State Water Plan. Previously, the Performance Measure captured the actual annual amount of water recharged into the ESPA. The Department's Fiscal Year 2027 Performance Report will capture the updated Performance Measure and report the average annual recharge volume. The actual annual volume of water recharged under the Board's natural flow rights will continue to be reported in the Performance Report under the Planning & Projects Bureau Section. The ability to meet the average annual 350,000 acre-feet recharge goal is dependent on annual water supply.

- Coordinate with USBR and Boise River basin stakeholders to obtain an approved water right permit, prior to issuance of construction contracts.
- Coordinate with USBR and Boise River basin water users to identify and execute agreements for the use of additional water storage, **by December 31, 2027.**
- Complete the Anderson Ranch Dam Raise project, **by December 31, 2031.**

Goal 4, Objective 4: Complete the Lemhi Basin Framework Program, to support anadromous fish passage while maintaining the agricultural economy of the Lemhi basin. (Planning & Projects Bureau)

- Complete the remaining 3 of 10 required source switches (i.e. relocation of a water right's point of diversion from a tributary stream to the main stem river), or equivalent re-diversion projects, above the L-6 diversion location on the Lemhi River, **ongoing.**
- Secure additional short-term agreements with water users to meet the required minimum stream flows of 35 cfs for 80% of the days between March 15 and July 1, **ongoing.**
- Implement actions assigned to the Water Board as part of the Lemhi Basin Comprehensive Settlement Agreement including:
 - Complete a feasibility assessment of an operational cloud seeding program for the Lemhi Basin that identifies suitable cloud seeding methods and estimates program costs and anticipated benefits to inform a decision on whether to pursue implementation of a cloud seeding program in the basin, **by December 31, 2026.**
 - Complete Managed Recharge and Surface Storage Feasibility Studies, **by December 31, 2027.**
- Secure additional short-term agreements with water right holders to meet the required minimum stream flows of 25 cfs at the L-6 diversion for the period between March 15 and November 15, **by December 31, 2030.**

Goal 4, Objective 5: Work with interested stakeholders to evaluate opportunities for cloud seeding in Idaho basins to augment and sustain water resources and continue to coordinate and partner in the collaborative cloud seeding program. (Planning & Projects Bureau).

- Complete annual or multi-year operation and funding agreements with partners in the Collaborative Cloud Seeding program, **by December 31, 2026.**
- In accordance with commitments under the Lemhi Basin Comprehensive Settlement, complete a feasibility assessment of an operational cloud seeding program for the Lemhi River Basin (see Goal 4, Objective 4), **by December 31, 2026.**
- Complete a target and control analysis for the Collaborative Cloud Seeding Program to refine estimates of program effectiveness and water supply benefits and improve future program evaluation, **by December 31, 2027.**
- Complete a feasibility assessment of an operational cloud seeding program for the Clearwater Basin to identify suitable cloud seeding methods, estimate program costs and anticipated benefits, and inform a decision on whether to pursue implementation of a cloud seeding program in the basin, **by December 31, 2027.**

- Complete an evaluation of cloud seeding methods in the Bear River Basin to determine the effectiveness of alternative cloud seeding technologies and inform future program implementation, **by December 31, 2027.**

Goal 4, Objective 6: Promote and support the development and implementation of stakeholder driven water management initiatives to promote the sustainable use of the state’s water resources and reduce water user conflict. (Planning & Projects Bureau)

- Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer - Support IDWR and stakeholders in the development of a Ground Water Management Plan for the ESPA Ground Water Management Area, **by December 31, 2027.**
- Wood River Basin – Support the adoption of a revised Big Wood River Ground Water Management Area Management Plan: (1) support for the Collaborative Cloud Seeding Program; (2) support for the Conservation, Infrastructure, and Efficiency Fund (2026-2028) under which the IWRB approved up to \$200,000 in matching funds for projects that support the goals of the Management Plan, **ongoing.**
- Bear River Basin – Support actions to improve Bear River and Bear Lake Operations through participation in stakeholder negotiations, policy development, technical analyses and data collection, and acquisition of easements or other infrastructure to optimize operations, **ongoing.**
- Swan Falls Agreement and Minimum Stream Flows at the Murphy Gage – In accordance with direction from the Governor, the IWRB will facilitate development and implementation of a long-term mitigation strategy through the Swan Falls Implementation Group to provide participating Trust Water Right holders with greater water supply certainty while ensuring the State continues to meet its minimum stream flow obligations under the Swan Falls Agreement, **by March 1, 2028 and ongoing.**

Goal 4, Objective 7: Acquire, build, or operate water infrastructure that support water sustainability initiatives. (Planning & Projects Bureau)

- Manage operations of the IWRB’s Dworshak Small Hydropower Plant to optimize revenue generation, **ongoing.**
 - Oversee Operations and Maintenance Contractor to maintain facility and comply with existing stakeholder agreements, **ongoing.**
- Operate and maintain Priest Lake Outlet Dam, **ongoing.**
 - Update operations and emergency action plan, **by December 31, 2026.**
 - Develop Asset Management Plan for future maintenance, operations, and upgrades, **by December 31, 2027.**

Goal 5²⁵: Promote and Finance Water Infrastructure Projects to Sustain Idaho’s Water Resources for the Benefit of the Citizens of the State and for Future Generations

In 2023, the Idaho Legislature passed House Concurrent Resolution 7 (HCR7) encouraging the Governor of the State of Idaho, the Idaho Water Resource Board, and the Idaho Department of Water Resources to continue pursuing, in conjunction with the Legislature, ongoing investments in the state's water infrastructure and to establish a long-term plan that identifies future projects intended to protect, improve, and secure the state's water resources for the benefit of the citizens of the state and for future generations.

²⁵ Formerly labeled Goal 4. Relabeled to Goal 5 in FY27 for inclusion of the SWCC’s strategic objectives to Goal 3.

Goal 5, Objective 1: Through the IWRB’s Financial Loan and Grant Programs promote, support, and finance water projects to assist entities to develop the state’s water resources, address water sustainability, and rehabilitate or improve aging water infrastructure. (Planning & Projects Bureau)

- Develop publicly available tools and resources, such as workshops, application and reimbursement examples, and customer feedback surveys, for IWRB Financial Loan and Grant Program applicants and awardees, **by December 31, 2026**.
- Manage the IWRB’s Loan Program, **ongoing**.
 - Process and approve Loan applications each fiscal year, **ongoing**.
 - Update Loan program policy as directed by the Board, **ongoing**.
- Operate the IWRB’s Grant Programs, which include the Flood Management, Aging Infrastructure, ESPA Groundwater to Surface Water Conversions, and Measuring and Monitoring²⁶ Grant programs, **ongoing**.
 - Award IWRB approved grants for qualifying projects each fiscal year, **ongoing**.
- Operate an ESPA specific Surface Water Efficiencies program, **ongoing**.
 - Award IWRB approved proposals for qualifying projects each fiscal year, **ongoing**.

Goal 5, Objective 2²⁷: Advance water supply sustainability by identifying, evaluating, prioritizing, and implementing projects and initiatives that address regional, basin, and statewide water supply needs, including through IWRB funding and coordination with federal, state, local, and other partners. (Planning & Projects Bureau)

- Maintain a list of priority projects determined to have potential regional water supply benefits and that may be eligible to receive IWRB funding or other support, **ongoing**.
 - Develop and manage a transparent process to review, evaluate, and approve projects for inclusion on the Regional Water Sustainability Projects Priority List, **ongoing**.

Consistent with Senate Joint Memorial 101 (SJM-101) (2026), the Board is prioritizing the identification and evaluation of new and expanded water storage opportunities, including on-stream and off-stream storage options, and coordinating with federal and non-federal agencies and stakeholders to address drought resiliency, population growth, and long-term water security needs in Idaho.

- Coordinate with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and stakeholders to implement the Upper Snake River Basin Study, including evaluation of new and expanded storage opportunities such as Teton Dam, a potential Minidoka Dam raise, and a potential Jackson Lake Dam raise. Complete initial scoping and baseline analysis, **by December 31, 2027**.

²⁶ The Measuring and Monitoring Grant Program supports measurement of ground and surface water diversions, with an emphasis on diversions in the ESPA.

²⁷ G5O2 was updated in FY27 from “Allocate funding appropriated to the IWRB to support implementation of projects intended to help achieve water supply sustainability on a regional, basin, or statewide scale,” to the current G5O2, for the inclusion of tasks associated with SJM-101 (2026) and HCR-34 (2026).

- Continue supporting the development of additional water storage capacity through the expansion, rehabilitation, and modernization of existing storage facilities, including projects such as the Lost Valley Reservoir Dam Raise, Anderson Ranch Dam Raise, and other dam repair and enhancement efforts, **ongoing**.

House Concurrent Resolution No. 34 (HCR-34) (2026) directs the Board to identify and implement opportunities for further development of Idaho's remaining allocation under the Bear River Compact to address Idaho's statewide water obligations.

- Complete an analysis of Idaho's remaining allocation under the Bear River Compact and submit required reports to Idaho legislative leadership evaluating current Compact allocation development, water supply availability in the Lower Division, and preliminary opportunities, costs, and timelines for developing Idaho's remaining allocation to address statewide water supply needs, **by September 30, 2026**.

Goal 5, Objective 3: Consistent with Idaho Code §§ 67-466 and 67-705, submit reports to the Idaho Legislature regarding IWRB operations and programs by the mandated filing deadline(s). (Planning & Projects Bureau).

- Maintain an administrative process and schedule for identifying required annual reports, coordinating report development, and ensuring timely submission of all required reports to the Idaho Legislature in accordance with statutory deadlines, **ongoing**.

Goal 6²⁸: Enhance the Capability of the Department to Manage and Protect the Natural Resources of the State and Serve the Public

The Department cannot accomplish its many and varied responsibilities without business operations support services including geospatial and information technology, human resources, finance, purchasing, and contracting. These functions are vital to ensuring current productivity, and effectiveness can be maintained with existing resources despite increasing workloads. Objectives in this area focus on offering support services and tools to meet employee needs, including working with (1) the Governor’s Office of Information Technology Services to build and implement up-to-date and secure technology solutions that increase the efficiency of the Department, and (2) the Division of Human Resources to recruit and retain outstanding staff.

²⁸ Formerly labeled Goal 5. Relabeled to Goal 6 in FY27 for inclusion of the SWCC’s strategic objectives to Goal 3.

Goal 6, Objective 1: Modernize and improve IDWR’s ability to create, share, and distribute water resources information and data, and analysis with its staff, water user stakeholder groups, and the public. (Technical Services Bureau, Agency-Wide)

The Department’s Geospatial Technology Section is responsible for completing the following tasks:

- Migrate existing online mapping applications to a supported platform, **by December 31, 2027.**
 - Migrate the Well Driller Locator to a supported platform, **by December 31, 2026.**
- Develop a comprehensive Southern Idaho Irrigated Lands Classification for a wet and dry year, **by June 30, 2027.**
- Present findings and conclusions to the Bear River Commission Technical Advisory Committee on the utility of Google Earth Engine's random forest classifier as a methodology to determine seasonal irrigation status, **by June 30, 2027.**

The Department’s support services in conjunction with management staff shall support the following tasks:

- Identify, prioritize, and implement edits and updates to IDWR’s webpage for compliance with Federal ADA requirements and to improve public user experience and information accessibility, **by April 24, 2027.**
 - Train website content managers on creating and maintaining ADA compliant digital content, **by April 24, 2027.**
- Maintain a social media presence to inform the public about IDWR and IWRB current events, **ongoing.**

Goal 6, Objective 2: Modernize IDWR’s workflow tracking and record retention processes in the water rights program to reduce labor costs, enhance accessibility, and limit paper use. (Water Allocation Bureau)

- Complete a water right records Document Retention Schedule **by June 30, 2027.**
 - Begin implementation of the Document Retention Schedule **by December 31, 2027.**
- In collaboration with the Office of Information Technology Services (OITS), develop a workflow software to assign and track the water rights workload digitally across all IDWR offices, measure and report individual and program performance, and adjust workload distribution to meet current needs **by June 30, 2027.**²⁹
 - Coordinate with OITS to finalize the requirements and expectations of the project and create a Proof of Concept **by December 31, 2027.**
 - Implement the new workflow software for use in the Water Allocation Bureau **by June 30, 2028.**

²⁹ Timely completion of this task and the following sub-tasks will be contingent on resources available at OITS to develop a workflow tracking software.

Goal 6, Objective 3: Expand and update geospatial and remote sensing tools, software, applications, and other resources to support IDWR’s business operations. (Technical Services Bureau)

The Department’s Geospatial Technology Section is responsible for completing the following tasks:

- Identify potential improvements to the remote sensing model using a comparison of actual evapotranspiration and consumptive use measurements with remote sensing model estimates, **ongoing**.
 - Evaluate and report on the differences between satellite-based evapotranspiration estimates that use automated cloud masks and those that use traditional hand-digitized masks, **by June 30, 2027**.
 - Test remote sensing ET model calibration improvements against measured evapotranspiration data. Report results, **by June 30, 2028**.
- Evaluate existing vector GIS datasets on the IDWR file server by staff usage, **by June 30, 2028**.
 - Inventory Non-REST services vector data on IDWR file services and develop a maintenance schedule for the datasets, **by June 30, 2027**.
- Migrate fourteen ASP.Net applications and APIs to .Net 8 or .Net 10 **by June 30, 2028**.
 - Migrate the two highest priority ASP.Net applications and APIs to .Net 8 or .Net 10, **by June 30, 2027**.

Goal 6, Objective 4: Review current hardware and software and ensure IDWR personnel have all the necessary IT resources to perform their jobs efficiently in various physical locations in and away from the office. (Agency-wide)

The Department’s Financial and Purchasing support services, and management staff are responsible for the following tasks:

- Develop and conduct periodic employee survey to assess general satisfaction with existing IT services and resources (e.g., hardware, software, internet service, etc.), **ongoing**.
- Coordinate with OITS to ensure that IDWR’s IT related objectives are included in OITS’ ITS Strategic Road Map, **ongoing**.
- Replace 4+ year old desktop computers and 3+ year old laptops, agency wide each fiscal year, **ongoing**.
- Replace 5+ year old agency servers each fiscal year as needed, **ongoing**.

Goal 6 Objective 5: Recruit qualified staff agency wide.

The Department’s managers in cooperation with the Division of Human Resources (DHR) are responsible for the following tasks:

- Facilitate an agency wide New Employee Orientation biennially, **ongoing**.

- Attend at least one career fair or job recruitment event each quarter to promote employment at IDWR, **ongoing**.
- Facilitate or offer regular hiring manager training focusing on duties and responsibilities, LUMA processes, and best practices to ensure efficient and productive employee recruitment and hiring, **ongoing**.

Goal 6 Objective 6: Retain agency staff to minimize loss of institutional knowledge, ensure agency wide productivity, and ensure high-quality work. (Director, Support Services)

The Department needs to attract and retain talented employees and ensure compensation is offered within competitive norms for the type and size of the organization and the duties, responsibilities, and performance expectations of each role.

The Department’s Fiscal and DHR support services in conjunction with managers shall support the following tasks:

- Contract for an external review and analysis of existing compensation and recommended competitive compensation, **by June 30, 2027**
- Conduct 90-day new employee feedback surveys, “stay interviews,” and “exit interviews” with employees, **ongoing**.
- Create and implement action plans responding to the state-wide employee engagement surveys, new employee feedback surveys, “stay interviews,” and “exit interviews,” **ongoing**.

Goal 6, Objective 7: Maintain and regularly update the Department’s continuity of operations processes and procedures to successfully recover IDWR’s business operations if the State Office becomes inaccessible or inoperable. (Agency-wide)

Consistent with the expectations of the Office of Emergency Management and the Governor, as set forth in Executive Order 2022-04, IDWR designated two employees as its *Agency Emergency Coordinators* (AECs). Agency Emergency Coordinators are required to “train, exercise, and participate in the State Emergency Management Program to facilitate emergency support and logistics in response to emergencies and disasters.” In fulfilling these obligations, the AECs are responsible for the following tasks:

- Designate up to two National Incident Management System-compliant AECs, **by December 31, 2026**.
- Update the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) contacts and assigned responsibilities, **by December 31, 2026**.
- Update COOP contacts and assigned responsibilities, **by December 31, 2028**.
- Review the IDWR’s Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) and Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) biennially to update personnel contact lists and emergency contact procedures, and to meet Recovery Time Objectives and Recovery Point Objectives, **ongoing**.

-End-

Appendix A: IDWR & SWCC FY27 Organizational Structure

Idaho Department of Water Resources FY27 Organizational Chart

Governor

Director

- Fiscal & Purchasing Support Services

(dotted) Legal Services (AG Office)

(dotted) Human Resources Support Services (DHR)

Water Administration Bureau

- Water Distribution Section
- Water District Support

Resource Protection Bureau

- Ground Water Protection Section
- Stream Channel Protection Program
- Floodplain Management Unit
- Safety of Dams

Deputy Director

- IT & Web Support Services

Northern Office

Eastern Office

Southern Office

Western Office

Water Allocation Bureau

- Water Rights Section
- Adjudication Section

Deputy Director

Technology Services Bureau

- Geospatial Technology Section
- Hydrology Section

Planning & Projects Bureau

- Water Projects Section
- Financial Program

Idaho Water Resource Board

(dotted) Deputy Director

Technology Services Bureau

- Geospatial Technology Section
- Hydrology Section

Planning & Projects Bureau

- Water Projects Section
- Financial Program

Idaho Soil & Water Conservation Commission FY27 Organizational Chart

Governor

Soil & Water Conservation Commission

Administrator

- Engineering & Technical Services
- Fiscal Support Services
 - Resource Conservation & Rangeland Development Program (RCRDP) Loan Program

(dotted) Human Resources Support Services (DHR)

(dotted) IT Support Services (IDWR)

Deputy Administrator

- District Support Services
- Conservation Programs
 - Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
 - Water Quality Program for Agriculture

MEMO

To: Idaho Water Resource Board/Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC))

From: Loretta Strickland, SWCC Ag Program Manager

Date: September 11, 2026

Subject: Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission Water Quality Program for Agriculture (WQPA)



INFORMATIONAL ITEM

Staff will provide a PowerPoint presentation update on the Water Quality Program for Agriculture (WQPA).

Attachments:

- *PowerPoint Presentation*



1

Program Recap

- Unfunded from FY2012 FY2022
- Revitalized FY2023 FY2026 with \$12 million
- ISWCC received 274 grant proposals requesting \$26.5 million in WQPA
- 134 projects funded

2

Projects

131 projects completed to date:

- \$3.99 million invested in irrigation infrastructure
- \$4.49 million invested in on-farm irrigation improvements
- \$1.16 million invested in streambank, riparian, and erosion BMPs
- \$768 k invested in livestock BMPs
- \$352 k invested in soil health BMPs
- \$1.02 million invested in soil and water conservation districts

\$11,782,633.88 total WQPA invested to date

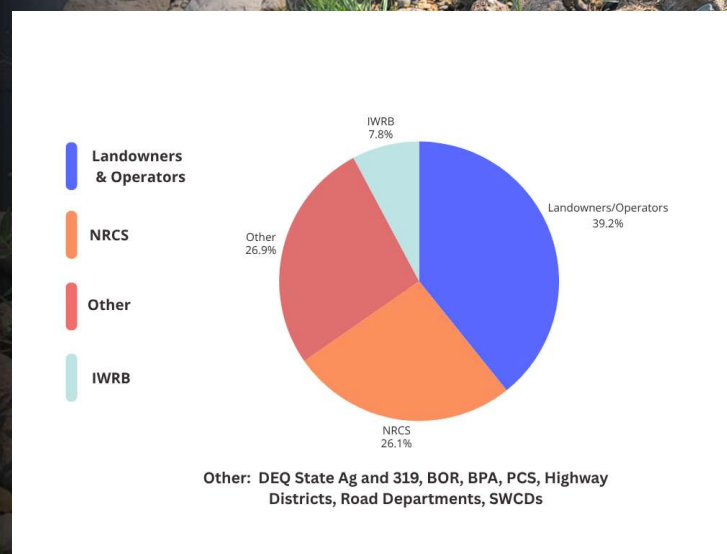
3

Match and ROI

Project Match = \$22.4 million

\$34.2 million in projects implemented

ROI = \$2.90



4

Why WQPA Works

- ISWCC's strong working relationship with SWCDs, NRCS, and landowners
- Versatile enough for the entire state
- Is used as a standalone funding source, but often times is leveraged
- Quick turn around of funds
- Timeline and ease of program



5

Districts as sponsors

Districts drive locally led, voluntary conservation.

WQPA strengthens district capacity, enabling more local projects.

2025
District
Report



6

WQPA shortfall

There is still more to do:

- \$14.47 million more requested than available
- 140 projects not funded
- Districts have ongoing lists of shovel-ready projects



7

A wide landscape photograph showing a field of tall grass in the foreground, with several hay bales scattered across it. In the background, there are rolling hills and a cloudy sky. The word "Questions?" is overlaid in large white text in the center of the image.

Questions?

8

MEMO

To: Idaho Water Resource Board/Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission

From: Mary Condon, IDWR Project Manager Supervisor

Date: September 17, 2026

Subject: Idaho Water Resource Board Grant Program Survey



INFORMATIONAL ITEM

Staff will provide a PowerPoint presentation on the agenda item.

Attachments:

- *PowerPoint Presentation*



IDAHO
Water Resource Board



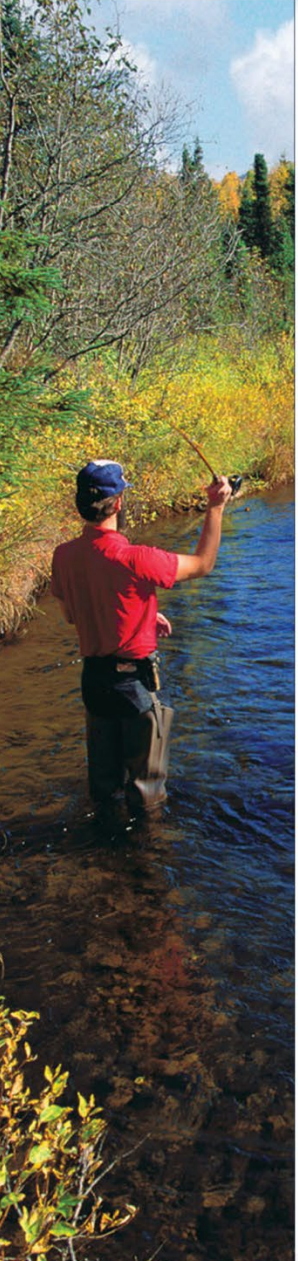
Grant Program – Comprehensive Survey 2026

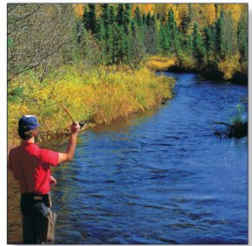
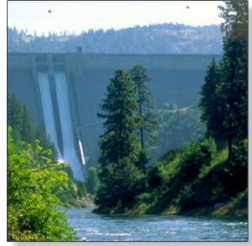
Presented by Mary Condon
September 17, 2026



Grant Program Comprehensive Survey

- Grant Program Overview & Funding
- Survey Scope & Development
- Survey Solicitation & Respondents
- Survey Key Findings
- Staff Recommendations





IWRB Grants Overview

Aging Infrastructure Grants, Est. 2022

- 50% Cost Share, Up To \$2M
- Examples: dam rehab, spillway repairs, headgate replacement

Flood Management Grants, Est. 2019

- 50% Cost Share, Up To \$200K
- Examples: bank rehab, channel repair, lidar, bridge repair

Groundwater to Surface Water Conversion Grants, Est. 2025

- 50% Cost Share for Soft Conversion, 75% for Hard Conversion
- Examples: irrigated fields, municipal parks

Measuring & Monitoring Grants (Telemetry), Est. 2025

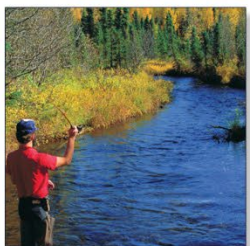
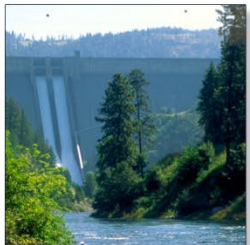
- 50% Cost Share, Up To \$250K
- Examples: monitoring wells, flumes, weirs, telemetry

*Competitive – Funding is limited and dependent on final IWRB approval

Grant Program Funding

Grant Fiscal Year (FY)	Total # Awarded	Rounds	Appropriations/ Budgeted		Total Active as of Aug 2026	Completed as of Aug 2026
Aging Infrastructure <i>FY22-FY26</i>	127	6	\$75,000,000 +\$30,274,363	A B	50	48
Flood Management <i>FY19-FY27</i>	102	10	\$8,400,000	A	19	67
Groundwater to Surface Water Conversions <i>FY25-FY26</i>	26	2	\$38,621,296 +\$14,669,375	B B	10	10
Measuring & Monitoring <i>FY25-FY26</i>	17	2	\$815,102 +\$1,000,000	B B	15	1
Totals	272	N/A	\$168,780,136		94	126

<https://idwr.idaho.gov/iwrb-overview/iwrb-financial-programs-grants/>



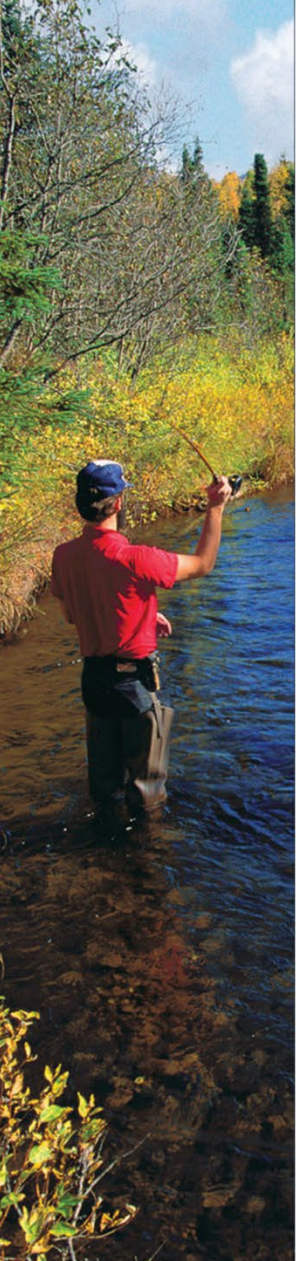
Grant Survey Scope & Development

- Survey has 33 questions
- Six main sections:
 - About the Applicant/Awardee
 - Application, Criteria, and Requirements
 - Scoring and Transparency
 - Communication and Timing
 - Reimbursement and Documentation
 - Other Comments
- Internal review & refinement of survey
- Timing estimate of 10 – 20 minutes. Actual median was 15 minutes for 36 respondents.



Solicitation for feedback

- Grant Workshop June 17th with QR Code
- Social media & Website
- Follow-up email – 170+ addresses
- Third email – 85+ addresses
- 9 responses as of July 30th
- Fourth email – 170+ addresses
- 36 Responses as of August 21st



Respondents & Unique Grant Applicants

Grant	Applications	Unique	Percent	Respondents
Aging Infrastructure	177*	121	66%	76%
Flood Management	103*	44	24%	12%
Groundwater to Surface Water Conversion	26	8	4%	6%
Measuring & Monitoring or Other	20	11	6%	6%
Total	326	184	100%	100%

*Soil & Water Conservation District Applicants: 8 Aging Infrastructure; 25 Flood Management

Duplicate entities/sponsors for a single grant type were removed to get the number of unique applicants to better compare if the range of respondents was comparable to applications received. The responses were representative of the applicant percentages for each grant type.

About the Applicant/Awardee

Key findings

Q1. Type of entity – **38% irrigation district or canal company**, 31% consultants, 17% State, County, or Municipality

Q2. Current cycle or previous cycle – **75% previously applied**

Q3. Outcome – **79% received funding**, 15% pending

Q4. Total Project Costs – **41% under \$250k**, 24% over \$1M

Q5. Funding Request – **63% less than \$250k**, 36% more than \$250k

From the comments:

“A couple items for consideration: 1. Small scale infrastructure funding to address localized potable water supply challenges (failing wells, neighborhood water line extensions or similar). 2. Funding for non-traditional water resources, for example geothermal systems. 3. Small scale planning funding (aquifer recharge, drought management planning, water conservation planning). 4. Funding for potable water conservation initiatives.”

Criteria & Requirements

Key findings:

Q9. Sponsor staff hours spent preparing application – **53% 10-25 hours**, 35% more than 25 hours

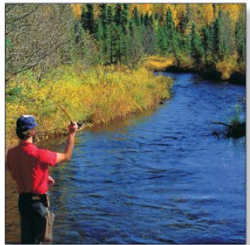
From the comments:

"I think it should be moderately difficult so that you can weed out anyone who thinks grant administration during the project is going to be easy."

"Clear cut guidelines"

"It is fairly easy to be funded."

Standardizing all the applications as much as possible would make it easier to re-use information from previous projects that applies to new projects too."





Criteria & Requirements, continued

Key findings:

Q13. Current communication – **59% Direct Assistance**, 21% email updates

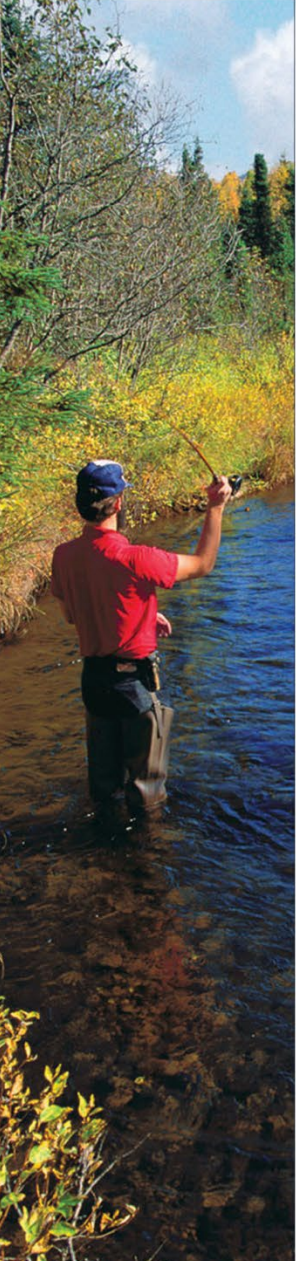
Q14. Improved support – **Examples for in-kind documentation, reimbursement, & scoring** top responses, less than 10% workshop, one-on-one, & FAQs.

From the comments:

“It seems there was a lag in communication for a short time, but likely due to staffing. No issues at this time”

“Your staff is very helpful and great to work with. It may be overwhelming for everyone to request help, but your team does a great job.”

“Please hire more staff. Leaving the majority of [correspondence] to pass through [employee name redacted] is unfair on [him/her] and results in poor response times and inadequate responses.”



Scoring and Transparency

Key Findings:

Q11. Fairness in scoring – **69% agree the scoring system fairly reflects project merit**, 1 respondent answered no.

From the comments:

“The scoring is subjective. [Reference to James 2:1-4 redacted]. In summary, someone who is not a Wordsmith, and cannot afford to pay someone who is, might have their project unfairly judged because the application is not as fancy as others. The unfortunate part is that this project may be the most important, and where the money is needed the most.”

“Most of the time I feel ok about the ranking, sometimes I wonder how certain project[s] rank better [than] ours.”

“I feel like in the past year the program has taken significant strides to improve transparency and increase engagement. Maybe this is because I am regularly looking now for the open opportunities.”



Communication and Timing

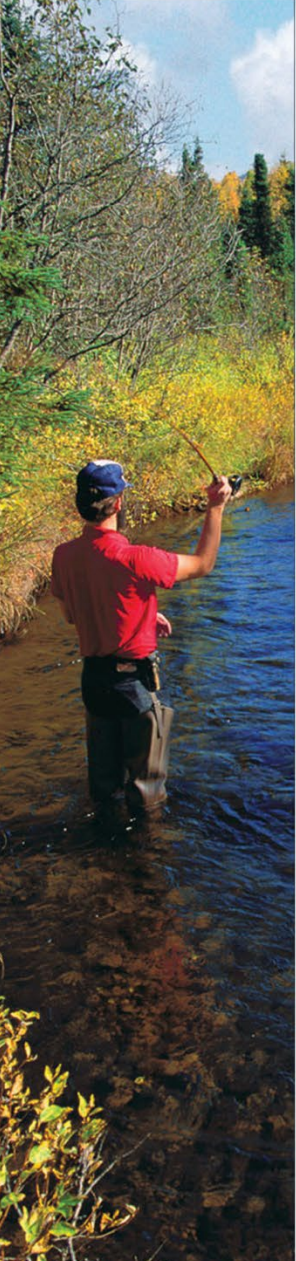
Key Findings

Q15. What improvements could be implemented?

From the comments:

“Timeliness. After receiving notification that our application had been successful, we waited many weeks to receive a contract and then waited many more weeks for IDWR to sign and return the contract after we signed and submitted it. This delayed the start of the project. Now we are a full season--6 months--behind on the work schedule.”

“We had a long lag between our grant award announcement and grant agreement. I know that IDWR allows work to proceed, but governments are hesitant to do so without an approved agreement. It would be beneficial to shorten this time frame. Also, feels like [year-to-year] changes (change in match amount % for example) could be better publicized.”



Communication and Timing, Continued

Key findings:

Q30. Application and award date timing – **61% award late summer to early fall, apply in spring**, 19% award late fall, apply in late spring/summer (current cycle), 19% award winter, apply in fall

From the comments:

“It would be nice to know if you have the grant prior to the construction season for most applicants. Receiving notice after November 1 delays the projects through the winter months. If you had application deadlines in the [spring], it would help with project planning and execution.”

“I think spring application works best with awarding in the fall. Most projects are planned for the irrigation offseason, and fall is typically when procurement starts. Being that most of the time reimbursement ahead of contract award is not allowed this would provide no delays in schedule and allow all costs to be captured.”

Reimbursement and Documentation

Key Findings:

Q18. Time spent preparing reimbursement request – **48% under 10 hours**, 33% spent 10-25 hours, 18% spent more than 25 hours.

From the comments:

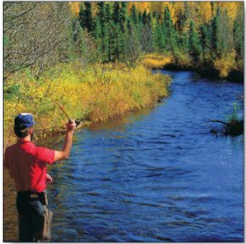
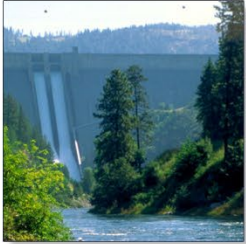
“The previous awarded grant and reimbursement was from several years ago and was very easy to submit. Looking at the new criteria, it does look like it requires more time and information.”

“Streamline the process, We received another grant to [help] us and it was more money and less of a headache and the money was [already] put in our [account] months ago.”

“Timeline, I sent repeated emails over a [6-month] timeline to get the contract in place so that we could start the project after the project was approved. I [was told] of one system that I needed to enter our info into but not the second system.* These accounting systems are very [cumbersome] for people who do not work inside them every day.”*

**References to IPRO and PaymentWorks outside IDWR*

Other Comments



"The application process and the communication I received was good. I attended webinar's before starting the process to ensure our project qualified for the right grant."

"Don't allow contracting or other paperwork processes delay shovel-ready projects."



"These grant programs are essential to conservation districts to continue to improve Idaho's water quality and water quantity/efficient use. Thanks to the legislature for providing funding and to IWRB/IDWR for administering. We've found the department staff to be great to work with. You just need more folks or better systems to avoid costly delays!"



"The contract and associated documents need to be completed within 30 days. The process seemed to drag out forever. In the meantime, details were missed which required a significant amount of extra time and duplication. We need to work together more efficiently."

Other Comments, continued

"If a project is designed without grant funds it is usually ready to bid for fall construction in spring/early summer. Shovel ready projects usually have a better estimated cost than preliminary designs which is good for an application, but if the grant funds are not awarded until late fall this hurts project schedules and could cause change orders for delay. So a spring application and early fall (before end of irrigation season) award is better."

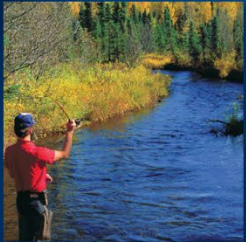
"The nimble nature of the program is refreshing. IWRB funds projects to get work completed. It just works. Great job."

"When the grant is approved there should be an overview sheet with all the steps required to get [through] the process. All the accounting systems to create accounts in. The process to get a contract in place, since this took an [extreme] amount of time for us. An example of submissions for reimbursements, so we know what you are looking for approval of reimbursement."

"None, thank you so much for the programs! They have made a world of difference in our area."

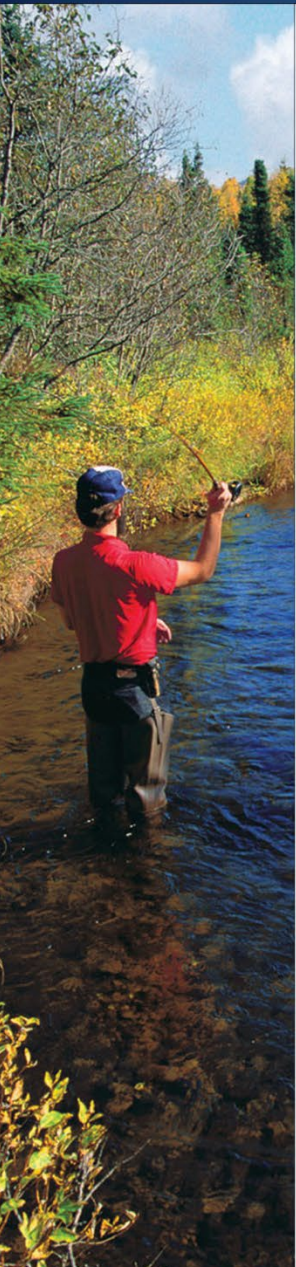
Recommendations:

- Provide more transparency to applicants by posting online previously awarded applications with scoring on criteria
- Produce examples for the reimbursement process and requirements, additional staff contacts, and overview of the workflow process
- Evaluate and implement ways to streamline the contracting process after an award
- Move the award date up earlier in the year so awardees can get projects started in the fall, even with delays in contracting



Current 2026 - FY2027

[illegible]



New concrete structure and canal automation equipment installed on the Middle Branch of the Fall River canal system. (Photo courtesy Aaron Dalling, FMID)

Questions?

MEMO

To: Idaho Water Resource Board/Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC)

From: Planning & Projects Bureau Staff

Date: September 11, 2026

Subject: Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Update



INFORMATIONAL ITEM

SWCC CREP Manager Rob Sharpnack will provide an informational overview of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.

Attachments:

- *PowerPoint Presentation*

Slide 1

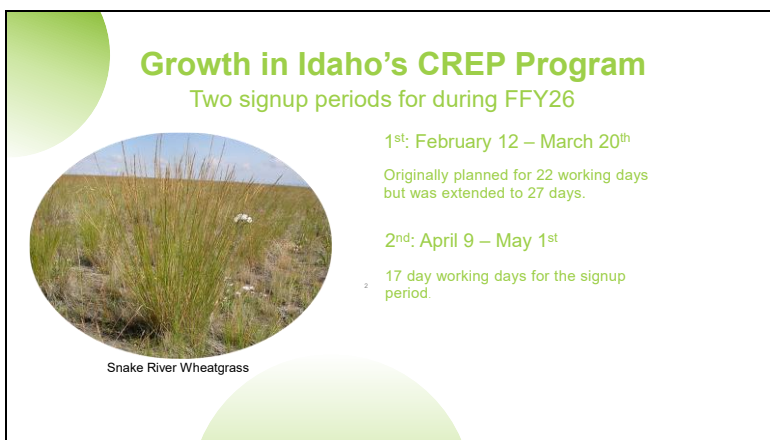


Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

CREP is a groundwater savings program in southern Idaho that reduces the amount of irrigation water consumptive use, conserves energy, and reduces erosion while promoting aquatic and terrestrial wildlife habitat.

9/17/2026

Slide 2



Growth in Idaho's CREP Program

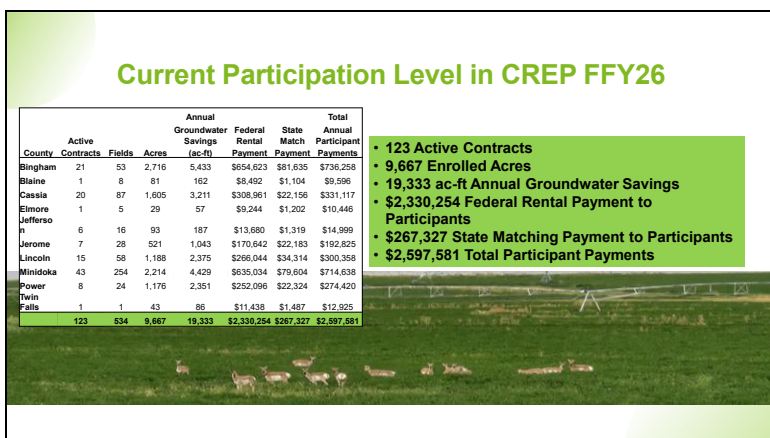
Two signup periods for during FFY26

1st: February 12 – March 20th
Originally planned for 22 working days but was extended to 27 days.

2nd: April 9 – May 1st
17 day working days for the signup period.

Snake River Wheatgrass

Slide 3

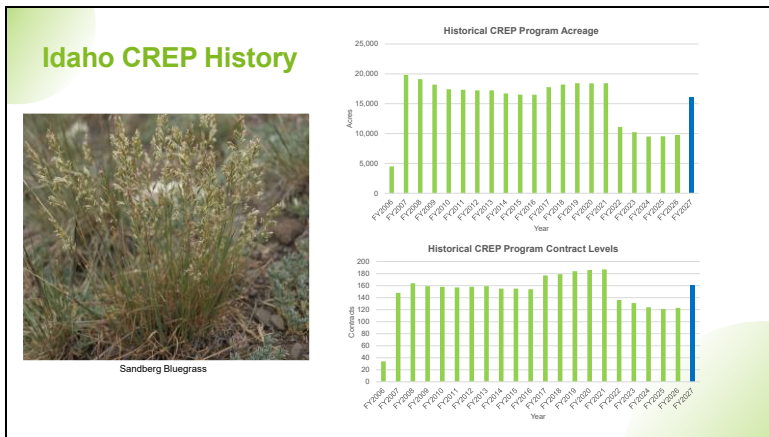


Current Participation Level in CREP FFY26

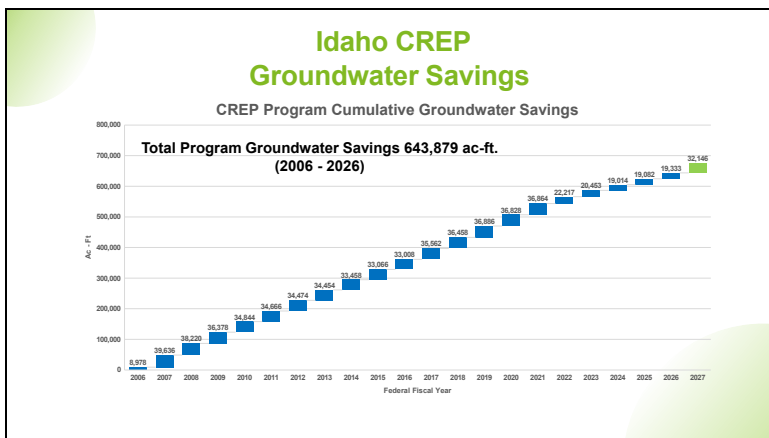
County	Active Contracts	Fields	Acres	Annual Groundwater Savings (ac-ft)	Federal Rental Payment	State Match Payment	Total Annual Participant Payments
Bingham	21	53	2,716	5,433	\$654,623	\$81,635	\$736,258
Blaine	1	8	81	162	\$8,482	\$1,104	\$9,586
Cassia	20	87	1,605	3,211	\$308,961	\$22,156	\$331,117
Elmore	1	5	29	57	\$9,244	\$1,202	\$10,446
Jefferson	6	16	93	187	\$13,680	\$1,319	\$14,999
Jerome	7	28	521	1,043	\$170,642	\$22,183	\$192,825
Lincoln	15	58	1,188	2,375	\$266,044	\$34,314	\$300,358
Minidoka	43	254	2,214	4,429	\$635,034	\$79,604	\$714,638
Power	8	24	1,176	2,351	\$252,096	\$22,324	\$274,420
Twin Falls	1	1	43	86	\$11,438	\$1,487	\$12,925
Total	123	534	9,667	19,333	\$2,330,254	\$267,327	\$2,597,581

- 123 Active Contracts
- 9,667 Enrolled Acres
- 19,333 ac-ft Annual Groundwater Savings
- \$2,330,254 Federal Rental Payment to Participants
- \$267,327 State Matching Payment to Participants
- \$2,597,581 Total Participant Payments

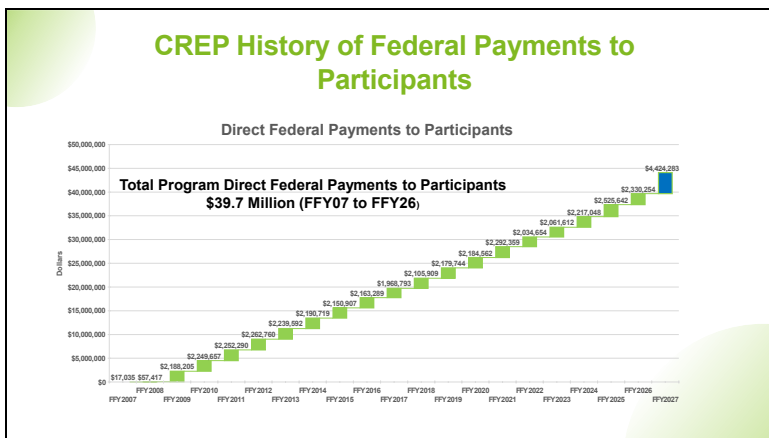
Slide 4



Slide 5



Slide 6



Slide 7



Slide 8

Limiting Factors for CRP/CREP Enrollment

1. Limited warning of upcoming signup periods.
2. Brief signup periods.
3. CRP cap of \$50k payments/year
4. More competitive land rental payments limit acreage that can be enrolled.
5. Variation in land payment rates from county to county.
6. National cap of 27 million acres for all CRP related programs.

Siberian Wheatgrass

Idaho's CREP Program

Idaho's CREP program is one of many state CREP programs across the country. All of these CREP programs fall under the larger umbrella of the national CRP program, which addresses many different conservation goals.

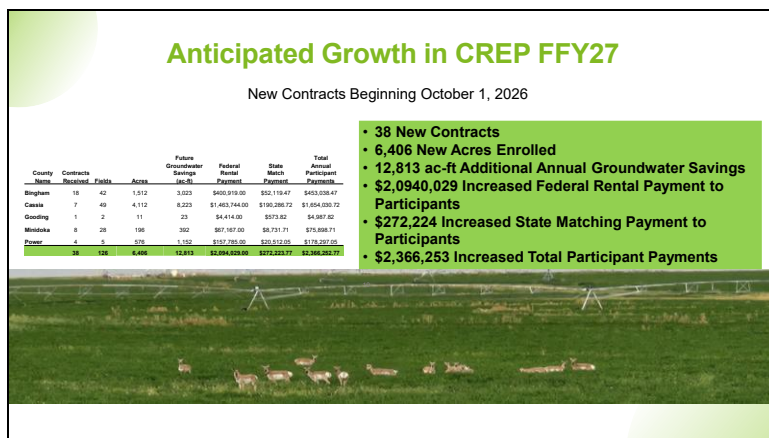
Slide 9

Received New CREP Applications

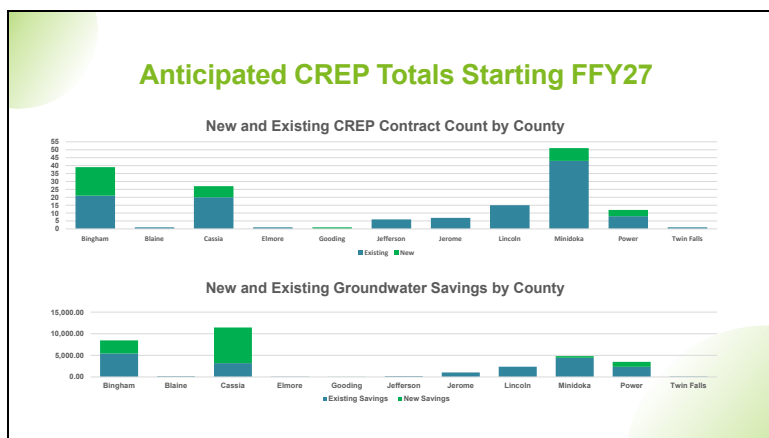
Slender Wheatgrass

1st Signup Period	2nd Signup Period
• 54 Applications Received • 130 Fields • 3,756.4 Acres	• 7 Applications Received • 48 Fields • 3,720.2 Acres

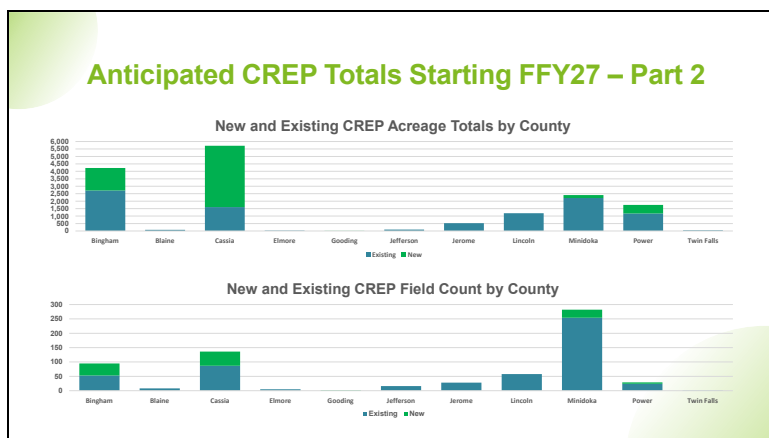
Slide
10



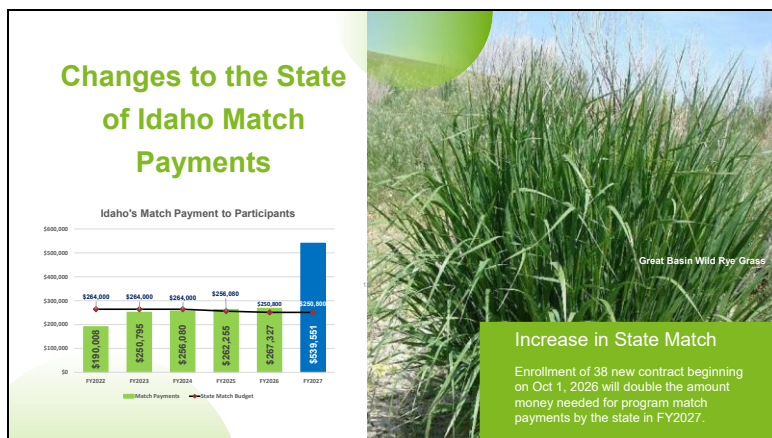
Slide
11



Slide
12



Slide
13



Slide
14

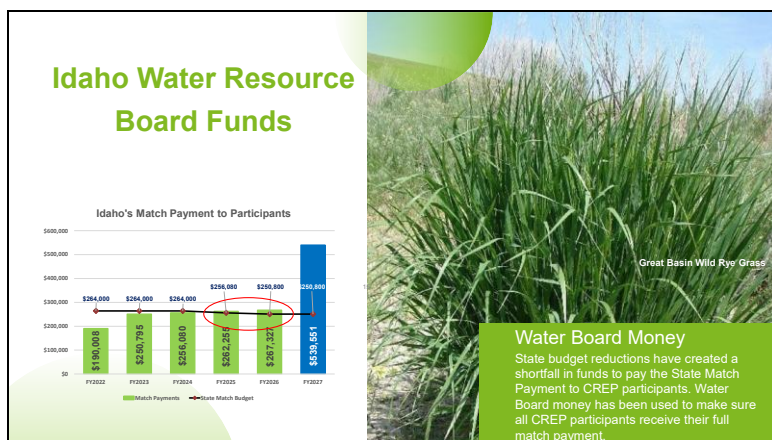
Future Enrollment and Growth of Idaho's CREP Program

LIMITATIONS:

1. The Farm Bill has not been re-enacted, continued, or extended. There is not ability to have signups for the program without a Farm Bill.
2. Room under the National CRP Cap of 27 million acres nationwide for all CRP programs.
 - In FFY26 there was approximately 1.8 million acres available for enrollment under the National CRP Cap.
 - For FFY27 there is an anticipated 1.3 million acres for enrollment under the National CRP Cap.
 - For FFY28 there will be an anticipate <400,000 acres available under the National CRP Cap.
 - For FFY29 there will be an anticipated <400,000 acres available under the National CRP Cap.
 - For FFY30 there will be an anticipated 4.0 million acres available under the National CRP Cap.

Alfalfa

Slide
15



Slide
16



Sainfoin

Thank you for your Time!

Any Questions?



9/17/2026

MEMO

To: Idaho Water Resource Board/Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission

From: Ethan Geisler, IDWR Technical Services Bureau Chief

Date: September 17, 2026

Subject: Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer Groundwater Model (ESPAM) Background



INFORMATIONAL ITEM

Staff will provide a PowerPoint presentation update on the agenda item.

Attachments:

- *None*

MEMO

To: Idaho Water Resource Board/Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission

From: John Loffredo, IDWR Transactions Program Manager

Date: September 11, 2026

Subject: Lemhi River Rehabilitation Project Update



INFORMATIONAL ITEM

Staff will provide a PowerPoint presentation update on matters related to the Lemhi River and the L-6/L-7 Rehabilitation Project.

Attachments:

- *PowerPoint Presentation*



Collaboration in the Upper Salmon River

How IWRB and SWC intersect on the road to salmon recovery

Presented By:

John Loffredo, Program
Manager – Idaho Water
Transactions Program

Idaho Water Resource Board
Idaho Soil & Water Commission
Joint Work Session
September 17th, 2026

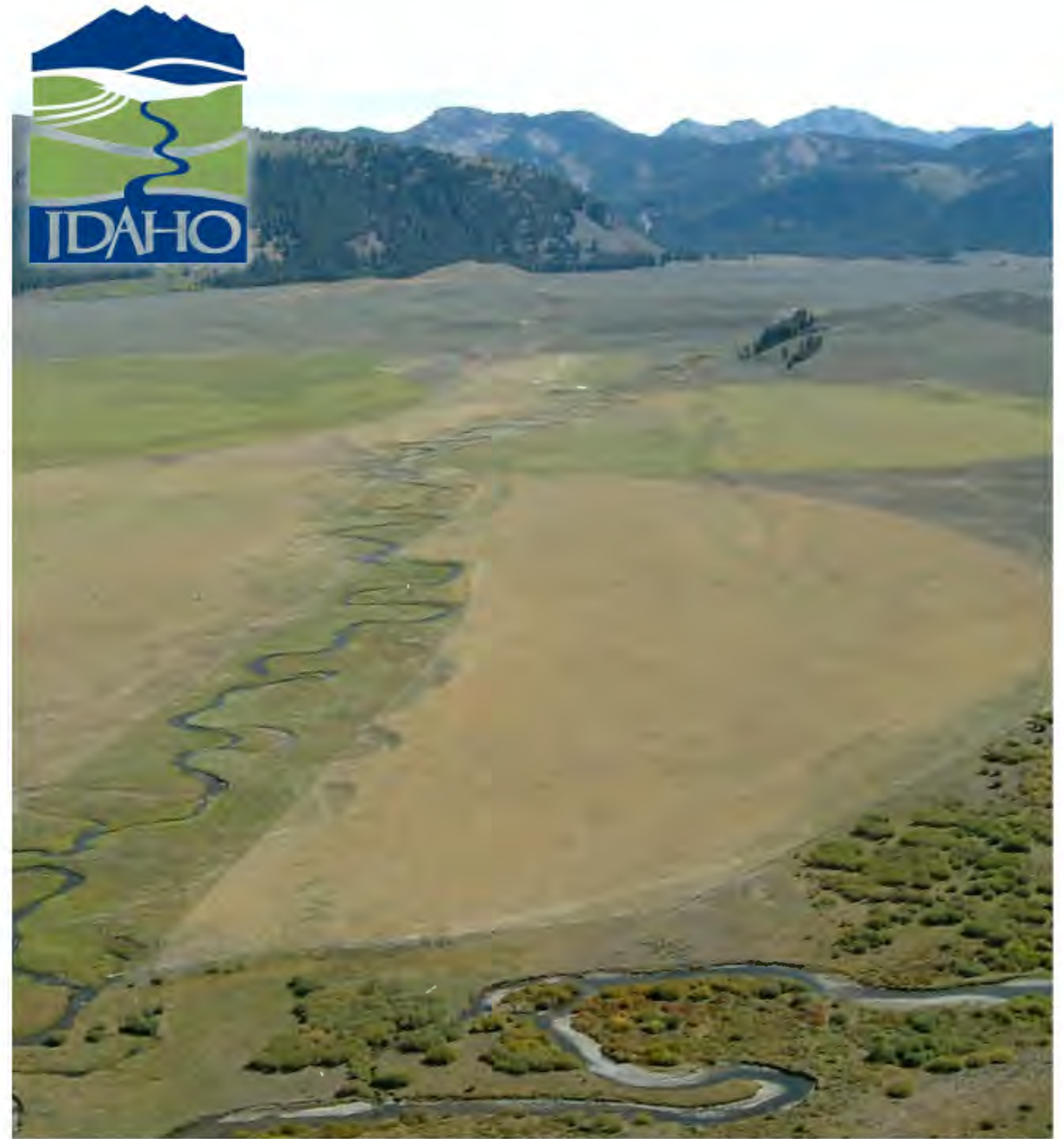
SWC & IWRB – 20-yr of collaboration in Upper Salmon River Basin

Year	Project	Flow Protected
2009	P-9 Cross-Ditch (Pahsimeroi)	32 cfs
2011	Sulphur Creek (Pahsimeroi)	1 cfs
2012	PBSC 6/7 (Pahsimeroi)	7 cfs
2017	Meadow Creek-3 (Stanley)	0.1 cfs
2018	Pole Creek (Stanley)	12-18 cfs
2024	Knapp Creek (Stanley)	6 cfs
2024	P-12 (Pahsimeroi)	2 cfs
2025	L-6/L-7	25-35 cfs



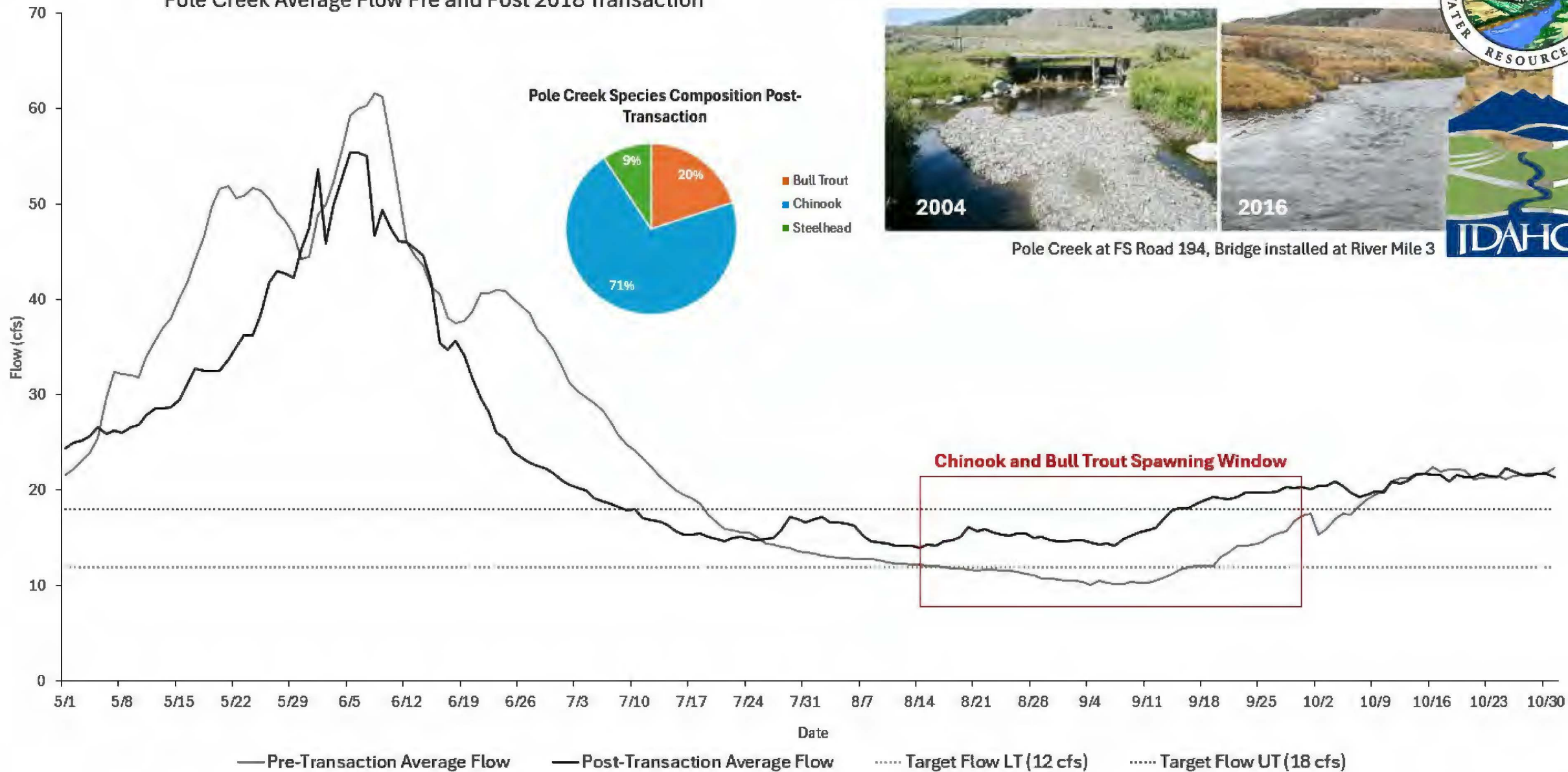


Pole Creek, Salmon River headwaters





Pole Creek Average Flow Pre and Post 2018 Transaction



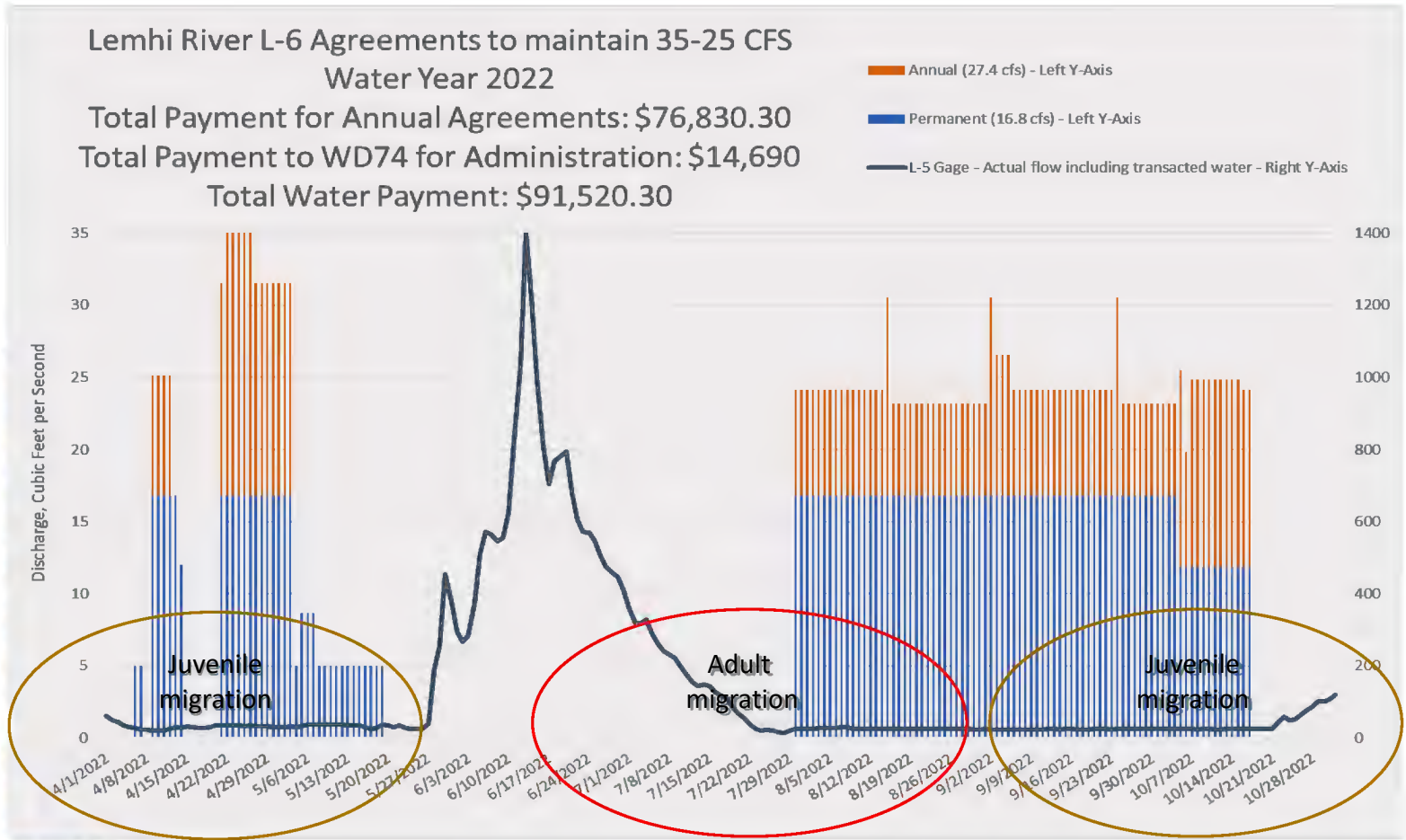
Pole Creek at FS Road 194, Bridge installed at River Mile 3



Lemhi River L6/L7 Diversions: Repair & Partial Consolidation



*Lemhi River @ L-6; April 2022 – 35 cfs
River Mile 7*



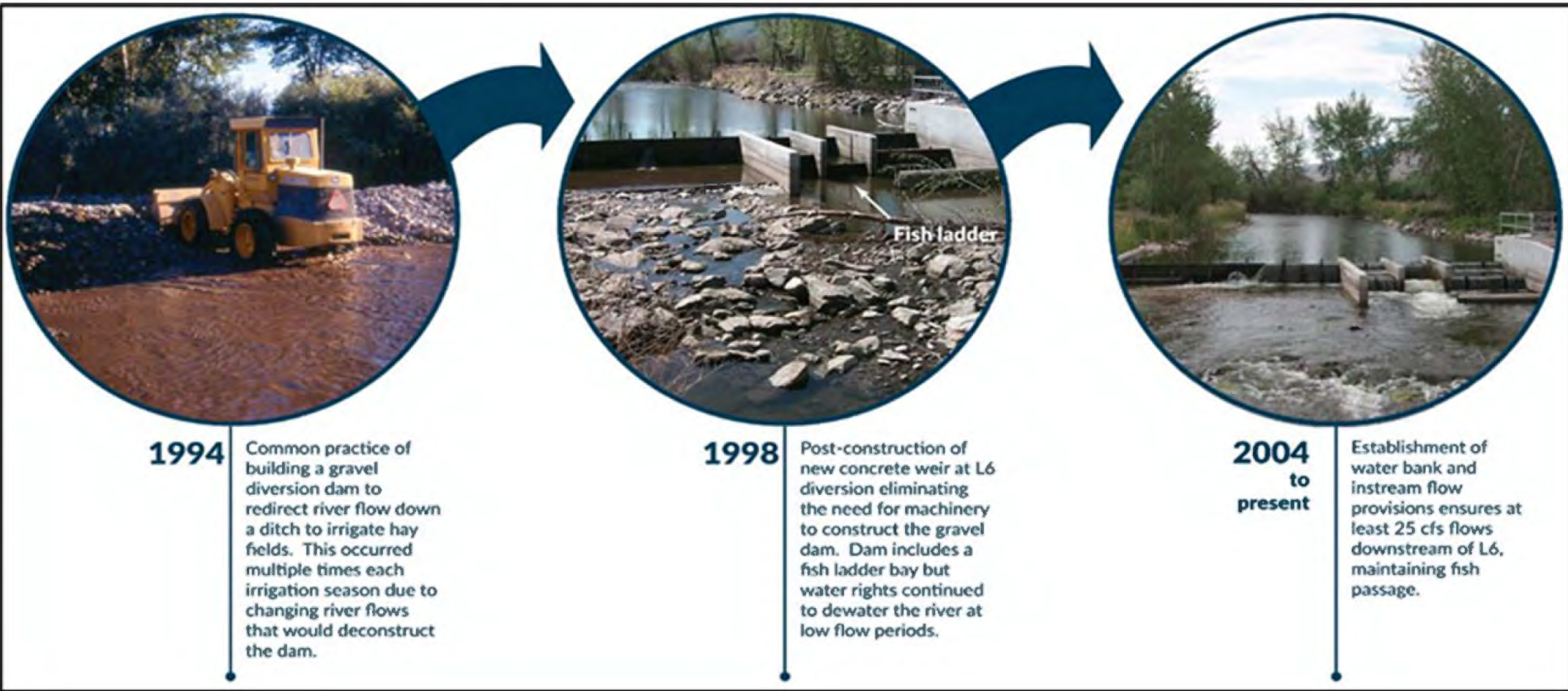
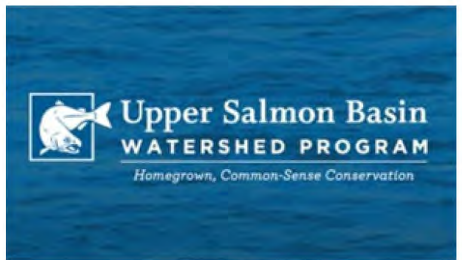
Lower Lemhi River Minimum Stream Flow

L-6 Diversion
25-35 cfs

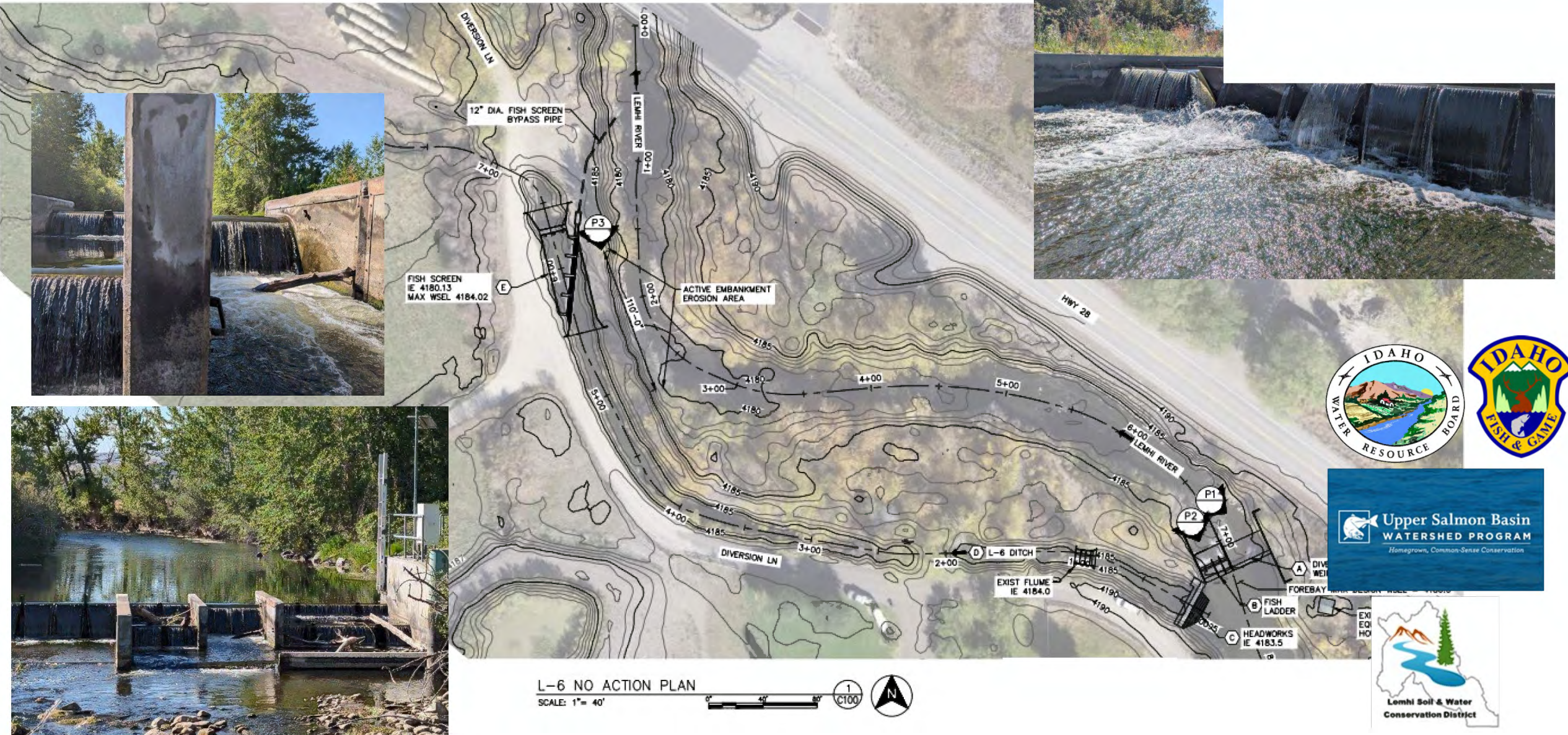


PARTNERSHIPS IN WATER CONSERVATION
SEPTEMBER 1997 WATERSHED CONSERVATION DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM LEMHI RIVER, IDAHO

Lemhi River L-6 and L-7/7A Diversion Improvements



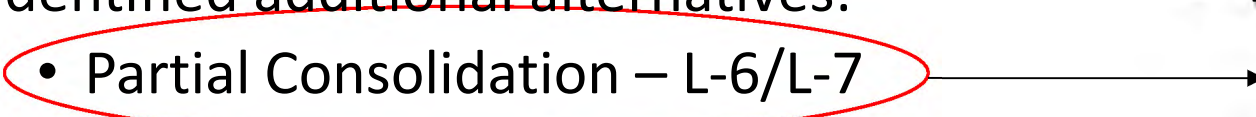
L-6 Diversion: No Action Plan

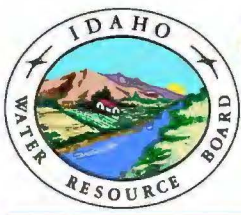


Monthly Water User Meetings – Summer & Fall 2025

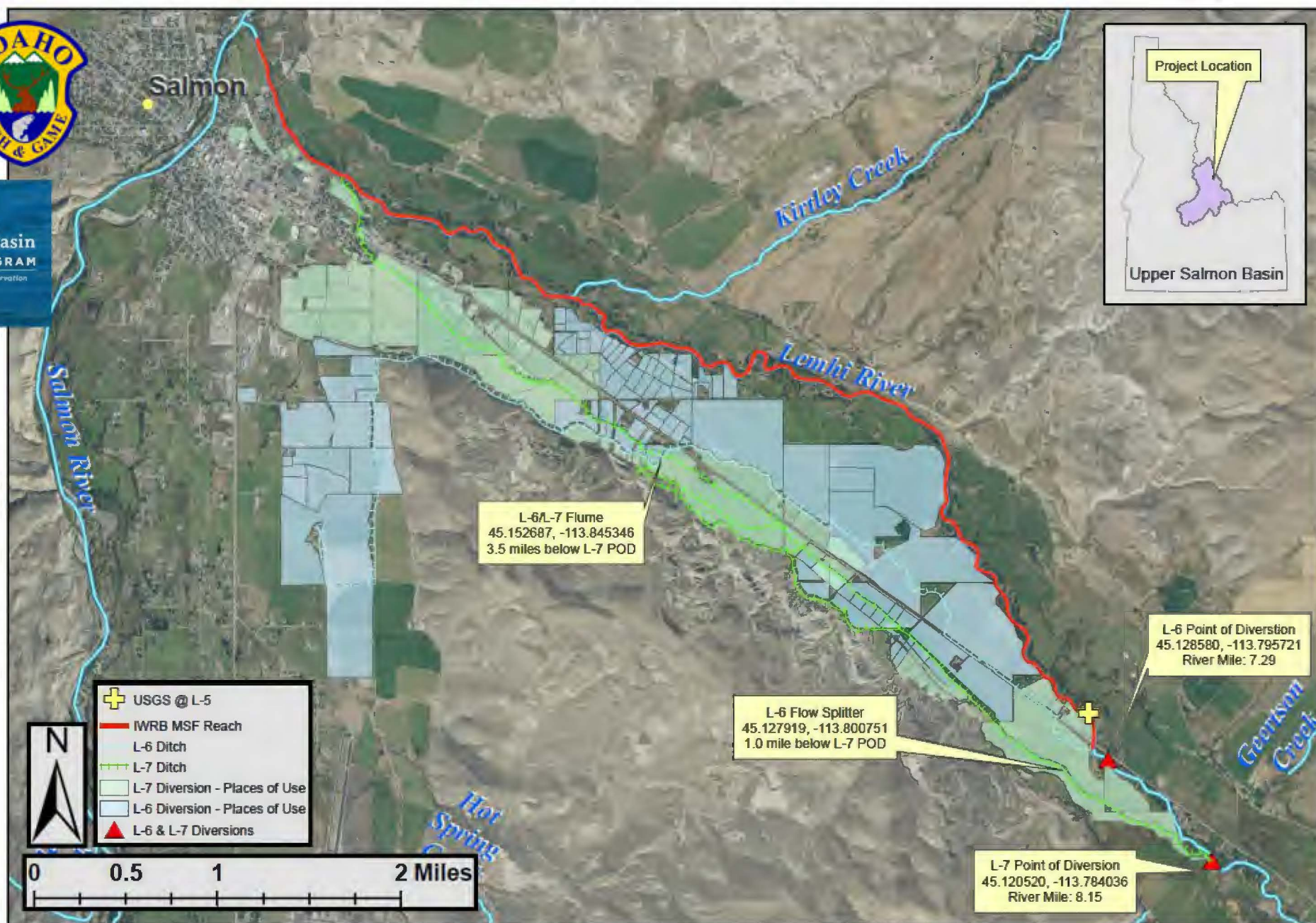
- July – December:
 - Meetings between L-6/L-7 water users, IDFG, IWRB, OSC, LSWCD
 - Initially, small group of large water users -> public meeting held 12/17/25 with all affected users
- Discussed Pros/Cons of alternatives evaluated by QRS and down-ditch issues
- Agency staff and large water users evaluated additional alternatives:
 - Partial Consolidation – L-6/L-7
 - GW well Source Switch
 - S-13/14 Exchange
 - Partial Consolidation – L-3A

Monthly Water User Meetings – Summer & Fall 2025

- July, August, September meetings between L-6/L-7 water users, IDFG, and IWRB
 - Discussed Pros/Cons of alternatives evaluated by QRS and down-ditch issues
 - Identified additional alternatives:
 - Partial Consolidation – L-6/L-7
 - GW well Source Switch
 - S-13/14 Exchange
 - Partial Consolidation – L-3A
 - Reduce L-6 Diversion by at least 20%
 - Add Point-of-Diversion to select L-6 rights
 - Administer L-6 high water at L-7
 - Administer 12 cfs L-6 base rights at L-7
 - Reduces underflow variation in L-6 ditch to maintain 35-25 cfs MSF
 - Protects reach gains between L-7 and L-6 for irrigator use.
- 



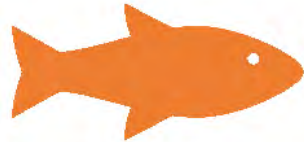
Upper Salmon Basin
WATERSHED PROGRAM
Homegrown, Common-Sense Conservation



Project Outcomes: The project modernizes Lemhi River L6/L7 diversions to protect minimum stream flows, improve irrigation efficiency, and restore ESA-listed salmonid passage, ensuring reliable water administration and access to 60+ upstream miles of critical habitat.

**L-6 & L-7 Diversions
Repair and Partial Consolidation
R28 PCSRF Proposal
LSWCD - Nov. 2025**

Main take-home: win-win for fish and irrigators



Fish:

- Increased passage for juvenile life stages
- Functioning diversion weir for long-term administration of MSF
- Relocation of L-6 fish screen mitigates flood risk to key infrastructure



Irrigators:

- Increased flexibility for senior water right administration
- Functioning diversion weir mitigates long-term maintenance burden
- Relocation of L-6 ditch mitigates flood risk to key infrastructure

Potential Project Timeline

Activity	Fall 2026	Winter 26-27	Spring 2027	Winter 27-28	Summer 2028	2029
Weir & Headgate Design	X	X				
Ditch assessment & Design	X	X				
80% - 100% Diversion design		X	X			
Water right transfer			X			
80% - 100% Ditch design		X	X			
Fish screen & Fish ladders				X		
Ditch Construction				X		
Diversion Construction					X	
Adaptive Management & Performance Monitoring					X	X





Northwest **Power** and
Conservation Council

QUESTIONS?



Credit: A. Cassel

MEMO

To: Idaho Water Resource Board/Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC)

From: Planning & Projects Bureau Staff

Date: September 11, 2026

Subject: Cattle Grazing Contributions to Watershed Management



INFORMATIONAL ITEM

SWCC Commissioner and Vice Chair Wendy Pratt will provide an informational presentation on the contributions of cattle grazing to watershed management.

Attachments:

- *None*

MEMO

To: Idaho Water Resource Board/Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission

From: Planning & Projects Bureau Staff

Date: September 17, 2026

Subject: Flood District 10 Improvement Projects



INFORMATIONAL ITEM

Representatives of Flood District 10 will provide an informational update on the agenda item.

Attachments:

- *None*