



NEWS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Idaho Water Resource Board inks contract with Reclamation to proceed with project design, construction on raising Anderson Ranch Dam

BOISE - (Nov. 29, 2021) – The Idaho Water Resource Board voted unanimously to approve a contract with the Bureau of Reclamation to complete final project design and construction of a six-foot raise of the Anderson Ranch Dam, increasing reservoir storage by approximately 29,000 acre feet.

Board staff officials said four negotiation meetings were held to develop a cost-share contract between Reclamation and the Board as the non-Federal project partner. The Board and Reclamation faced a Dec. 16, 2021 deadline to begin final design work as part of the construction activities as per the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act (WIIN Act). Finalizing the contract with Reclamation was a key step in meeting that deadline.

“This was yeoman’s work. I think we’ve got a good product here for moving forward with the Anderson Ranch project,” said Jeff Raybould, Chairman of the Idaho Water Resource Board.

“We want to thank the negotiating team,” added Lanie Paquin, Manager of the Snake River Area Reclamation Office. “Now we can move forward with detailed design of the dam raise, an important next step in the project.”

Preliminary estimates indicate the overall project will cost \$83.3 million to complete. The WIIN Act requires Reclamation’s project partners to pay the non-federal share of project capital costs upfront. In this case, the Board will cover 88.95 percent of the project costs and Reclamation will cover 11.05 percent.

Reclamation officials have paused the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the project, pending further development of final design. The detailed design analysis work will inform the environmental compliance analysis and allow the Board to consider whether to move forward with construction, officials said.

In other action, the Board approved \$533,000 to cover funding shortages for costs related to the operations and maintenance of the Collaborative Cloud Seeding Program in the Upper Snake River, Boise River and Big Wood River basins.

Funding for this year’s cloud seeding program also includes \$35,000 for the final development costs of a weather instrumentation device known as a “SWEdars.” The SWEdars, developed by Boise State

University's Dr. Hans-Peter Marshall, will provide data similar to a remote SNOTEL site (precipitation, snowfall and snow-water equivalent (SWE) data), at a significantly lower cost and with a comparatively minimal footprint. The SWEadar devices will be placed in areas where SNOTEL data sites are not present to provide better coverage of data on snowpack and SWE, officials said. Idaho Power Company has also supported the development of the SWEadar devices with the intent to use the devices for cloud seeding operations in the future.

See Sunday's article in the [Washington Post](#) that spotlighted Idaho's cloud seeding program.

In other action, the Board:

- Learned that aquifer recharge operations are underway in the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer (ESPA). About 23,000 acre-feet of water has been recharged into the ESPA so far, officials said. Because of low reservoir carry-over in the Upper Snake region, the amount of ESPA recharge is expected to be below-average this year, officials said.
- Adjusted the interest rate for the Board's Loan Program to match the Federal Prime Rate at 3.25 percent. The rate will be set quarterly based on the Federal Prime Rate on the first day of each quarter. The Board also created a reduced interest rate incentive set at 80 percent of the Federal Prime Rate for shorter term loans of 15 years or less that are used to fund aging infrastructure projects.
- Approved four loan requests:
 - An additional \$10,000 to the Point Springs Grazing Association, adding to its existing loan from the Board for drilling a new stockwater well.
 - King Hill Irrigation District, \$1.5 million for new irrigation pipelines and replacing aging infrastructure. The King Hill project has a total cost of \$2.95 million. It also has received a \$1.9M grant from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The district serves 11,573 acres of irrigated lands in Elmore and Twin Falls counties.
 - Blaine County Canal Company, \$250,000 for a \$1.5M project to install a new diversion structure, move its point of diversion and build an enclosed pipeline. The canal company serves 4,880 acres of irrigated lands in Butte County. NRCS, Trout Unlimited and Rocky Mountain Power will contribute the balance of funds for the project.
 - Lakeview Estates Subdivision Homeowners Association in Clearwater County, \$65,000 for water master plan. The subdivision serves 35 parcels.

For more information about the Idaho Water Resource Board, go to <https://idwr.idaho.gov/iwrb/>

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