



# AGENDA

## IDAHO WATER RESOURCE BOARD

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Special Board Meeting No. 4-25

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

1:00 p.m. (MT) / Noon (PT)

Water Center

Conference Rooms 602 C & D

322 E. Front Street

BOISE

**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

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

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1. Roll Call
2. Support for 2024 ESPA Stipulated Mitigation Plan\*
3. Non-Action Items for Discussion
4. Next Meeting & Adjourn

\* Action Item: A vote regarding this item may be made at 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 [jennifer.strange@idwr.idaho.gov](mailto:jennifer.strange@idwr.idaho.gov) or by phone at (208) 287-4800.

**BEFORE THE IDAHO WATER RESOURCE BOARD**

IN THE MATTER OF MANAGEMENT OF THE  
EASTERN SNAKE PLAIN AQUIFER

RESOLUTION TO EXPRESS IWRB SUPPORT  
FOR THE 2024 STIPULATED MITIGATION PLAN  
AND COMMITMENT TO EASTERN SNAKE  
PLAIN AQUIFER PROJECTS

1           WHEREAS, the Idaho Water Resource Board (IWRB) is responsible for the conservation,  
2 development, management, and optimum use of Idaho’s water resources, including the Eastern Snake  
3 Plain Aquifer (ESPA); and  
4

5           WHEREAS, the Idaho Constitution, Article XV, Section 7, establishes that the IWRB shall have the  
6 duty of formulating and implementing a state water policy, developing, and conserving Idaho’s water  
7 resources, and that the legislature shall provide funding mechanisms to further these objectives; and  
8

9           WHEREAS, the ESPA is a critical water source, supplying groundwater to approximately one  
10 million acres of irrigated farmland, municipalities, businesses, and industries across southern and eastern  
11 Idaho; and  
12

13           WHEREAS, the ESPA is hydraulically connected to the Snake River, contributing to surface water  
14 supplies for approximately 600,000 acres in the Magic Valley, as well as supporting aquaculture,  
15 downstream hydropower generation, and other beneficial uses; and  
16

17           WHEREAS, since 1952, the volume of groundwater stored in the ESPA has declined due to changes  
18 in irrigation practices, groundwater development, and other factors, resulting in reduced spring flows,  
19 diminished surface water supplies, and increased water conflicts; and  
20

21           WHEREAS, the State of Idaho has previously committed to addressing these challenges through  
22 legislative measures, including Senate Concurrent Resolutions 136 and 138 in 2016, which established a  
23 managed recharge goal of 250,000 acre-feet annually and endorsed agreements between surface and  
24 groundwater users to sustain water resources; and  
25

26           WHEREAS, the 2024 Stipulated Mitigation Plan, executed on November 15, 2024, between the  
27 Surface Water Coalition and participating Groundwater Districts, supersedes prior agreements and  
28 continues groundwater conservation, managed aquifer recharge, and mitigation activities; and  
29

30           WHEREAS, the IWRB recognizes the necessity of additional investments in water infrastructure  
31 and managed aquifer recharge projects to achieve a revised ESPA managed recharge goal of 350,000 acre-  
32 feet annually, as outlined in proposed updates to the State Water Plan through Senate Concurrent  
33 Resolution 110; and  
34

35           WHEREAS, in accordance with Idaho Code § 42-1760, expenditures from the water management  
36 account shall support projects that contribute to the long-term stability of Idaho’s water resources,  
37 including but not limited to:

- 38 1. The construction of a raise of Anderson Ranch Dam on the South Fork of the Boise River;  
39 2. The Mountain Home Air Force Base water delivery and treatment systems; and  
40 3. The identification, study, construction, and expansion of managed aquifer recharge sites,  
41 groundwater-to-surface water conversion projects, and water measurement infrastructure above  
42 Milner Dam, based on scientific data and technical analysis to enhance the ESPA and fulfill Idaho's  
43 commitments under legislative resolutions.  
44

45 NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Idaho Water Resource Board formally expresses its  
46 support for the 2024 Stipulated Mitigation Plan and commits to identifying and advancing projects that  
47 reinforce the objectives of the agreement; and  
48

49 NOW, THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the IWRB will prioritize the implementation of  
50 projects that restore the ESPA, improve Snake River reach gains between Blackfoot and the Minidoka  
51 Dam, and sustain Idaho's water users while minimizing economic harm; and  
52

53 NOW, THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that when selecting and implementing projects, the  
54 IWRB shall consider the impacts on existing water rights, water quality, economic stability, drought  
55 resiliency, and overall water sustainability for the benefit of the state's citizens; and  
56

57 NOW, THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the IWRB will seek public input in the selection  
58 and implementation of projects and will work collaboratively with stakeholders to ensure the continued  
59 viability of Idaho's water resources.

DATED this 11th day of March 2025.

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JEFF RAYBOULD, Chairman  
Idaho Water Resource Board

ATTEST \_\_\_\_\_  
DEAN STEVENSON, Secretary