MEMO

To: Idaho Water Resource Board Finance Committee
From: Brian W. Patton
Subject: Water Sustainability Initiative
Date: September 9, 2013

Attached is a "Water Sustainability Initiative" that grew out of discussions between Chairman Chase and other IWRB members and representatives of the Idaho Water Users Association. The initiative consists of three parts:

1) Proposed Aquifer Recharge/Credit Legislation

2) State Water Plan Sustainability Policy

3) Proposed Funding Package for Water Sustainability Projects. Monitoring, and Planning.

The recharge/credit legislation and sustainability policy are being moved forward in their respective processes. The funding package was included in the IDWR budget request.

Water Sustainability Initiative

- **Part 1 – Proposed Aquifer Recharge/Credit Legislation**: Would authorize Water Board to issue rules for aquifer recharge and an "aquifer credit" program. Initially it is focused on the ESPA but may be extended to other aquifers in the future as needed. Would allow local entities to conduct recharge within framework of Board's program and receive marketable mitigation credits after an enhancement to the aquifer (amount yet to be determined). This may help offset the cost of ESPA managed recharge. The credits may allow for some new water uses and economic development while working toward aquifer stabilization.
- **Part 2 – State Water Plan Sustainability Policy:** At the request of the Governor, develop a state-wide policy for the sustainability of water resources to be included in the State Water Plan.
- **Part 3– Proposed Funding Package for Water Sustainability Projects, monitoring, and planning:** Restoration of $12-15M one time funds that were previously withheld and $3M ongoing funds

Ongoing Funding $3M annually

- **ESPA Managed Recharge** **$1M/yr**
  Recharge is a central component of the ESPA CAMP and is vital to achieving stabilization of ESPA. This would pay for annual operations costs at full CAMP level of 250,000 AF per year.
- **Aquifer monitoring, measurement, and modeling** **$1M/yr**
  Continue to establish and maintain aquifer monitoring and measurement systems for high priority aquifers (Eastern Snake, Treasure Valley, Rathdrum Prairie, Wood River valley, Mountain Home, Big Lost, Lewiston). Complete Wood River Valley and Treasure Valley ground water models.
- **Complete aquifer planning studies for high-priority aquifers** **$1M/yr**
  1) Wood River Valley Aquifer – likely conjunctive administration water call could impact ability of existing water uses to continue. Determine options for meeting downstream water needs while allowing for upper basin water needs to continue and expand in the future.
  2) Mountain Home Aquifer - declining ground water aquifer is impacting the viability of the Air Force Base and other agricultural and municipal water uses. Begin planning project to deliver replacement water from Snake River to these vital uses, or other options to stabilize aquifer.
  3) Palouse Basin – declining ground water aquifer shared between two states is limiting future growth of the Moscow area. Project future water needs and determine options for meeting needs and stabilizing aquifer.
  4) Lower Snake – develop strategies to manage lower Snake River in conjunction with ESPA spring discharge to maintain Swan Falls minimum flows as required in the Swan Falls Agreement.

$15M one-time funds – projects would be cost-shared with water users where appropriate

- **Mountain Home AFB Water Rights** **$4M**
  Acquire senior-priority Snake River water rights to provide a reliable water supply to the base and other water uses currently utilizing a declining ground water supply.
- **Managed Recharge Infrastructure** **$4M**
  Develop additional managed recharge capacity to meet ESPA CAMP recharge goals
- **Northern Idaho** **$500K**
  Conduct joint studies to determine extent of future water needs prior to any interstate water dispute with Washington to ensure water availability for Idaho's future economic development.
- **Galloway** **$2M**
  Initiate environmental compliance and land exchange analysis for Galloway Project so pace of project development can be maintained. Geotechnical drilling shows site is buildable at reasonable costs. Operations analysis is underway and should be complete in 2014.
- **Boise River –Arrowrock** **$1.5M**
  Complete Arrowrock enlargement and flood control feasibility study in partnership with Corps of Engineers and local partners.
- **Island Park Reservoir Enlargement** **$2.5M**
  Begin project for converting up to 29,000 AF of flood surcharge space into storage space with 3-foot spillway raise
- **Water Supply Bank** **$500K**
  Computer infrastructure necessary for operation of Water Supply Bank at current high use levels.