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TO: IDAHO WATER RESOURCE BOARD

FROM: Neal Farmer and Mat Weaver

DATE: September 9, 2013

SUBJECT: Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer Recharge Activities Update

This memo provides a summary of current ESPA managed recharge activities.

Prospects for Late-Season Recharge
American Falls reservoir and Palisades reservoir are down to approximately 4% capacity. Both North Side Canal Company and American Falls Reservoir District 2 (Milner-Gooding Canal) have informed IDWR that they have maintenance and construction projects and will not be able to assist with recharge this fall. Southwest Irrigation District indicates they will attempt to inject recharge waters if the Board's water right comes into priority.

Walcott Recharge Site Progress
The contract between the Board and A&B Irrigation District and the Magic Valley Groundwater District is signed and completed. CH2M Hill and WH Pacific contractors are continuing to work on the Lake Walcott Recharge Site base map, preliminary engineering design, and information for the Environmental Assessment process. On August 12, two 12-inch diameter test boreholes were drilled using A&B Irrigation District's well drilling equipment and IDWR staff were onsite to assist and record information (see photos). The first well was drilled to 120 feet and the second well to 140 feet depth. Depth to water in a nearby stock well measured 132 feet. The intent of these two wells was to drill down to just above the water table to explore the subsurface geology between land surface and the water table. If the geology is fractured and porous enough above the water table for injection of recharge water, then water quality might be improved from filtration before the water enters the aquifer. On August 28th, injection tests were completed for the two test wells to evaluate the character of the subsurface rocks and preliminary information suggests that the shallow zone above the water table has low permeability and a report is in progress.

Site Tour for Recharge Water Right Application Stakeholders
On July 11th, a tour of recharge sites was provided by IDWR for recharge water right application stakeholders to view onsite conditions at Lake Walcott recharge site, Mile Post 31 recharge site, Southwest Irrigation District recharge, and the Shoshone recharge site. Participants seemed pleased to get the chance to view the sites.

322 East Front Street, Boise, Idaho 83720 Tel: (208) 287-4800 Fax: (208) 287-6700

Above: test well drilling on August 12th.
Below: injection tests in the test wells on August 28th.