

TO: Idaho Water Resource Board

FROM: Neeley Miller, Planning & Projects Bureau

DATE: May 19, 2015

RE: Sustainability Policy



Background

On September 5, 2012, Governor Otter sent a letter (attached) to the Idaho Water Resource Board ("Board" or "IWRB") requesting the Board develop "visionary procedures and policies that will sustain the reliability of water supplies in the future." Additionally, the Governor directed that the Board "define water sustainability in a way that ensures that our values are respected and the unique qualities of our resources are protected."

The guidance in the 2012 letter from the Governor characterizes sustainability as providing reliable water supply for current needs and water availability for future economic development and job creation. The Governor also requested that a sustainability policy express a commitment to Idaho values, property rights, and state water law.

Sustainability Vision Concept

Between November 2013 and May 2014 the Water Resource Planning Committee met several times to develop a recommendation for a sustainability policy. These meetings included presentations and panel discussions from experts on the topic of sustainability.

The Idaho State Water Plan (SWP) adopted by the Board in 2012 contains 49 policies which are intended to guide water management, development, conservation and optimum use of Idaho's water. Although there is no specific policy titled "sustainability" the theme of sustainability is a fundamental concept throughout the SWP. The policies provide support and identify actions which will lead to reliability for water supplies to meet current and future demands and changing conditions.

To further the Board's commitment to implementation of the SWP consistent with the Governor's request, staff developed a draft *Vision for Sustainability of Idaho's Water Resources* which was reviewed by the Board at the May 2014 meeting.

A copy of this draft language is attached to this memo. There was discussion among the Board members at the May 2014 Board meeting as to whether the draft was responsive to the Governor's request. Board members requested that the sustainability policy language be remanded to the Water Resource Planning Committee for reconsideration.

Update on task since last WRP Committee

At the March 20, 2015 Water Resource Planning Committee staff reviewed the draft *Vision for Sustainability of Idaho's Water Resources* language with the committee and solicited feedback. Committee members asked staff to review the State Water Plan and identify areas in the plan where term "sustainability" is mentioned either directly or indirectly through closely-related language included in the plan. Attached to this memo you will find a list of those SWP policies that are closely related to sustainability.

Additional Guidance from Governor

On May 1, 2015, Governor Otter sent a letter (attached) to Roger Chase, Chairman of the Idaho Water Resource Board applauding the Board's efforts to develop a managed recharge program designed, "to facilitate the use of available water to restore aquifer levels and address declining spring flows in the reaches of the Snake River above Swan Falls."

Additionally, the Governor indicated that with respect to sustainability he is aware of the preliminary steps a committee of the Board has taken to broaden the Board's understanding of the concept of sustainability. In the letter, the Governor provides the following definition of sustainability as the guiding definition for the Sustainability of Idaho's water resources as the Board moves forward with its policy development, planning and management of water:

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.

The Governor goes on to say that, "Stewardship embodies management, administration, and immediate action to sustain the resource, and by necessity includes reversal of the declining trends with the goal being overall enhancement of the State's water resources.

Action Items for today

1. Discuss staff progress on tasks since last meeting
2. Review and discuss additional guidance from the Governor
3. Identify a path forward
4. Next steps and timeline



IDAHO
Water Resource Board



2012

Idaho State Water Plan



State Water Plan Policy Sections

Statewide Policies

1. Optimum Use
2. Conservation
3. Management

River Basins Policies

4. Snake River Basin
5. Bear River Basin
6. Panhandle Basins
7. Salmon-Clearwater Basin

1. Optimum Use

It is in the public interest to establish policies, initiatives, and programs that lead to optimum use of the water resources of the state. Water is essential to the vitality and prosperity of the state. All the waters of the state, when flowing in their natural channels, including the waters of all natural springs and lakes within the boundaries of the state are the property of the state (Idaho Code § 42-101).

Optimum Use

- State Sovereignty
- Beneficial Use of Water
- Transferability of Use
- Water Supply Bank
- Conjunctive Management
- Ground Water Withdrawal
- Quantification & Measurement of Water Resources
- Surface Water Supply Enhancement
- Aquifer Recharge
- Water Quality
- CAMP
- Interstate Aquifers
- Weather Modification
- Hydropower

2. Conservation

The Conservation policies focus on careful planning and prudent management of Idaho's water. The purpose of the policies is to encourage water conservation practices and manage the use of water resources for the benefit of all Idaho citizens consistent with the prior appropriation doctrine, as established by law. Conservation should be implemented through voluntary, market based programs, when economically feasible. Conservation practices should be given priority consideration for increasing water supplies.

Conservation

- **Water Use Efficiency**
- Federally Listed Species and State Species of Greatest Conservation Need
- **Minimum Stream Flows**
- State Protected River System
- Riparian Habitat and Wetlands
- **Stream Channel Rehabilitation**
- Safety Measures Program
- Flood Hazard Areas
- Flood Damage Control Levee Regulation

3.Management

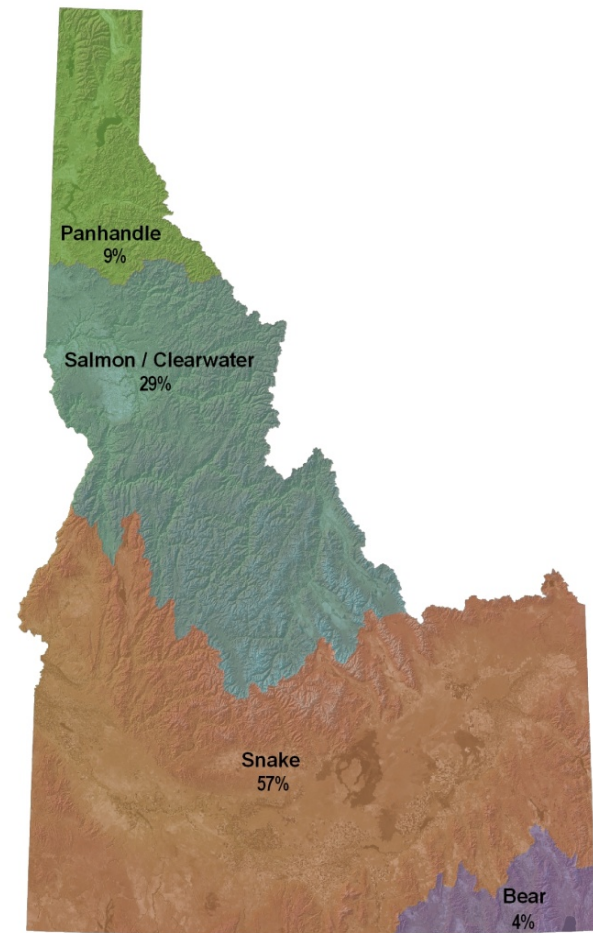
The Management policies focus on maintaining and enhancing administrative programs and practices related to **current and future demands on Idaho's water** and energy resources.

Management

- Review of Federal Reservoir Water Allocation
- Hydropower Siting
- Research Program
- Funding Program
- Water Planning Program
- Water Rights Adjudication
- Climate Variability

River Basins

- 4. Snake River Basin
- 5. Bear River Basin
- 6. Salmon-Clearwater River Basins
- 7. Panhandle Basins



4. Snake River Basin Policies

- 4A Minimum Stream Flows
- 4B Milner Zero Minimum Flow
- 4C Reallocation of Snake River Trust Water
- 4D Conjunctive Management of the ESPA and Snake River
- 4E New Storage
- 4F Agriculture
- 4G DDMI
- 4H Hydropower Use
- 4I Navigation
- 4J Fish, Wildlife, Recreation, and Scenic Resources

5. Bear River Basin

5A Bear River Compact

5B **Bear River Basin Water Management**

5C Interstate Water Delivery

5D Bear Lake

6. Salmon-Clearwater Basin

6A Habitat Conservation Plans

6B Instream Flow

7. Panhandle Basins

7A Interstate Aquifers

7B Minimum Flows

7C Navigation, Fisheries, and Recreation

QUESTIONS

Optimum Use Policies:

Policy 1B: Beneficial Use of Water (Implementation): Review existing state policies and programs to ensure that **traditional and emerging water use needs are recognized as beneficial uses** of water. Establish or participate in local and regional advisory groups to **formulate recommendations regarding traditional and emerging water use needs and priorities**. (Milestones): Policies and rules revised to accommodate emerging water use needs. Statutory and/or regulatory changes made to accommodate emerging beneficial uses of water.

Policy 1D: Water Supply Bank: The sale or lease of water is critical to the efficient management and optimal use of the state's water resources. Thus, use of the state's Water Supply Bank should be expanded to **meet traditional and emerging needs for water**. (Discussion): The scope of **existing and future water use needs** requires further development of flexible water banking systems that address local water use needs and ensure the optimum use of the state's water resources. The Water Supply Bank should provide for the **efficient mechanisms that are responsible to traditional and emerging needs for water**. (Implementation): Monitor existing procedures, statutes, and rules of the Water Supply Bank to determine whether additional strategies are needed **to meet current and future water use demands**.

Policy 1E: Conjunctive Management: Where a hydraulic connection exists between ground and surface waters, they should be conjunctively managed to maintain a **sustainability water supply**.

Policy 1F: Ground Water Withdrawal: **Withdrawals from an aquifer should not exceed the reasonable anticipated average rate of future nature recharge to that aquifer**. (Discussion): The comprehensive aquifer management planning initiated by the Idaho Water Resource Board discussed in Policy 1E provides opportunities for stakeholder participation in ground water management. Local advisory committees help the Board establish goals, objectives, and strategies to maximize available water supplies and assist with plan implementation. Public participation is key to the development of innovative approaches for meeting **current and future demands on the state's ground water resources**.

Policy 1G: Interstate Aquifers (Milestones): Approval and implementation of cooperative agreements, which may include coordinated aquifer management plans, that ensure Idaho's water **supply meets current and future needs**.

Policy 1H: Quantification and Measurement of Water Resources: Quantification and measurement of Idaho's water supply and use is essential for **sound water resource planning, management, and administration**. Language suggests quantification and measurement are **essential for sustainable water planning and management**.

Policy 1I: Aquifer Recharge: Managed recharge projects may be an appropriate means for enhancing ground and surface water supplies, providing mitigation for junior ground water depletions, or **to help maintain desirable aquifer levels**. (Aquifer Storage and recovery): **The use of recharge to store surface water in a confined underground area could be an important element in meeting future water use needs.**

Policy 1K: Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plans (CAMP) (Narrative): Board will be responsible for implementing the CAMPs to obtain **sustainable water supplies** and provide for the optimum use of a region's water resources.

Policy 1L: Surface Water Supply Enhancement: Surface water development will continue to play an important role in **meeting Idaho's future water needs**. (Discussion): The construction of new reservoirs, enlargement of existing reservoirs, and development of off-stream storage sites could **increase water supplies necessary to meet increased demand**.

Policy 1M: Weather Modification: Weather modification offers the possibility of **augmenting water supplies** (necessary to meet current and future demand).

Policy 1N: Hydropower: Appropriation of water for hydropower should be subordinated to subsequent upstream beneficial uses **to assure an adequate supply of water for all future beneficial** uses and minimum stream flows for hydropower project should be established by state actions.

Conservation Policies:

Policy 2A: Water Conservation and water use efficiency should be promoted. (Discussion): As water efficiencies increase, **conserved water may be available to supply existing uses, new demands, or improve stream flows**.

Policy 2C: Minimum Stream Flows: The Idaho Water Resource Board will exercise its authority **to establish and to protect minimum stream flow water rights** on those water bodies where it is in the public interest to protect and support instream uses. (Discussion): **Minimum stream flows protect and support many non-consumptive beneficial uses of water** such as fish and wildlife habitat, aquatic life, recreation and aesthetic values, transportation, navigation, hydropower generation, and water quality. **These uses contribute to Idaho's economy and the well being of its citizens.**

Policy 2F: Stream Channel Rehabilitation: (Discussion): Damage and destruction of stream channels can result from natural and human-caused changes and disturbances. Where current practices, legacy effects of past activities, or nature disturbances threaten public safety, private property, or the over quality and quantity of water produced in the affected watershed, it is in the state's interest to take remedial action in a cost-effective manner. In many instances,

historical targets for restoration are not practical and therefore **restoration efforts should be designed to be sustainable in a rapidly-changing environment.**

Management Policies:

Policy 3A: Review of Federal Reservoir Water Allocation: This state and federal partnership ensures that **water resource and management issues are addressed in a comprehensive way**, thereby providing for optimal use of the state's resource. **It will become even more important to coordinate state and federal management strategies as demand on the state's water supply increase.**

Policy 3C: Research Program: Focused research is necessary to support water resource planning and collaborative solutions that **address changing demands on the state's water supplies.** (Discussion): **Research and data gathering are essential to the state's efforts to meet future water challenges in a sustainable way.**

Policy 3D: Funding Program: **Funding mechanism to support the development, preservation, conservation and restoration of the water resources of the state** should be based on flexible strategies that provide **equitable benefits.** (Discussion): As discussed in Policy 4E, the Board has entered into agreements with the USACE and the USBOR for studies in the Boise River and Snake River basins. **As demands increase on Idaho's water storage and delivery systems,** the need for additional water storage feasibility studies and funding partnerships will be assessed.

Policy 3E: Water Resource Planning Program: Comprehensive water planning will help ensure **sufficient water supplies to satisfy Idaho's future water needs.** (Discussion): **As demands for water increase, the need for water-related planning escalates.** The planning process provides opportunities for involving all affected parties – water users, resource managers, and policymakers, identifies problems, alternatives, and solutions, and allows for continuous updating and revisions in light of new problems and opportunities.

Policy 3G: (Climate Variability): Planning for the potential impacts of climate variability requires increased flexibility in water management and the identification of existing tools that can be adapted to **address climate-induced changes in water supplies (for both current and future uses).** (Implementation): Identify and **implement adaptive mechanisms to address the impact of climate variability on water supplies (available for current and future uses).**

Snake River Basin Policies:

Policy 4A: Snake River Minimum Stream Flows: Approximately 57%¹ of the surface area of the State of Idaho is within the Snake River Basin. Although the Snake River Basin represents 50% of the water resources of the State, it is the water supply for 76% of Idaho's population. Thus, the Snake River Basin is the backbone of Idaho's economy. Effective management of this resource is essential to protecting existing water rights, supporting agriculture, **sustaining economic growth**, maintaining base flows for hydropower generation, and preserving fish, wildlife, and other environmental values.

Policy 4B: Snake River Milner Zero Minimum Flow (Implementation Strategies): Develop and maintain a **reliable supply of water for existing uses and future beneficial uses** above Milner Dam, and (2) Implement a **sustainable aquifer** recharge program.

Policy 4D: Conjunctive Management of the ESPA and Snake River: The ESPA and the Snake River below Milner Dam should be conjunctively management to provide a **sustainable water supply for all existing and future beneficial uses** within and downstream of the ESPA.

(Discussion): **Sustaining Snake River minimum stream flows downstream of the ESPA** may require short-term and long-term adaptive management measures. Monitoring efforts and adaptive management measures are crucial to **sustaining the economic viability and social and environmental health of the ESPA and the Snake River**. Successful adaptive management strategies, built on the principles of conjunctive management of ground and surface water, supported by scientific understanding and reliable data that take into account the complex and interrelated nature of Snake River subbasins, will accomplish two goals: 1) **ensure an adequate and sustainable water supply for existing and future uses**, and 2) reduce conflicts between ground and surface water users.

4E: Snake River Basin New Storage: Although there are major dams and reservoirs designed for water storage, flow regulation, and flood control on the Snake River and its tributaries, their existing capacity is insufficient **to provide the water supply and management flexibility needed for the myriad of existing and future beneficial uses**.

Policy 4F: Snake River Basin Agriculture: Development of supplemental water supplies **to sustain existing agriculture development** is in the public interest.

Policy 4G: Snake River Domestic, Commercial, Municipal and Industrial Uses (DCMI): It is in the public interest to ensure the availability of water fuor future DCMI uses in the Snake River Basin. (Discussion): **While most DCMI water uses are largely non-consumptive, future growth**

¹ The Salmon and Clearwater Basins are not included in this calculation because they are treated as separate basins for purposes of the State Water Plan.

in Idaho's population and commercial and industrial expansion require a sustainable water supply.

Policy 4J Snake River Fish, Wildlife, Recreation, and Scenic Resources: (Discussion): The State has entered into a number of voluntary agreements that benefit fish, wildlife, and recreation, and scenic values **while protecting existing water rights and uses and providing for economic stability.**

Bear River Basin Policies:

Policy 5B: Bear River Basin Water Management in the Bear River Basin: **The Idaho Water Resource Board supports enhancing water supplies, increasing water use efficiency, and implementing water supply bank mechanisms to help meet future water needs in the Bear River Basin.**

Salmon/Clearwater River Basins:

Policy 6A: Conservation Plans in the Salmon /Clearwater River Basins: (Discussion): The Salmon and Clearwater River basins support a thriving agricultural industry and significant tourism. Because a number of fish species in the Salmon and Clearwater River basins have been listed as threaten or endangered under the ESA, **numerous programs are being implemented to improve fish habitat, while protecting existing water rights.**

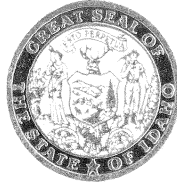
Policy 6B: The Idaho Water Resource Board will promote, provide, and where possible expand opportunities for voluntary, market-based transactions **to improve instream flow for the benefit of ESA-Listed aquatic species (while protecting existing water rights).** (Discussion): These partnerships **benefit targeted fish species and support local economies.**

Panhandle Policies:

Policy 7A: Interstate Aquifers in the Panhandle River Basins: Pursuant to Idaho Code § 42-1779, which established the Statewide Comprehensive Aquifer Planning and Management Program, a comprehensive aquifer management plan was adopted on July 29, 2011 for the Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer by the Idaho Water Resource Board. **The Board will be responsible for implementing the plan to obtain sustainable water supplies and optimum use of the region's water resources.** (Implementation): Evaluate timing for developing a CAMP for the Palouse

River Basin that establishes goals, objectives, and **strategies to address the increasing demand on water supplies**, reduce cross-boundary conflicts, and provide for effective conjunctive management of hydraulically connected water resources. Advise and provide technical support to Palouse Basin Aquifer Committee and other stakeholders to promote **the wise use of the region's water supply**.

Policy 7B Minimum Stream Flows in the Panhandle River Basins: The Idaho Water Resource Board will establish and **protect minimum stream flow and lake level water rights to preserve the scenic and recreational water bodies** in the Panhandle river basins. (Discussion): These **water rights protect and support many beneficial uses of water** such as fish and wildlife habitat, aquatic life, recreation and aesthetic values, and navigation in the Panhandle basins and make a **significant contribution to the economy of the region and the state**. **Population growth and new water demand may increase the need to obtain additional minimum stream flows in the Panhandle region**. The establishment and use of local water supply banks and rental pools should be considered as a strategy for addressing the need for minimum stream flow water rights or new water rights in the Panhandle region, including minimum lake levels for the protection of navigation and transportation, fish and aquatic resources, and aesthetic and recreational values.



C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER
GOVERNOR

May 1, 2015

Roger Chase
Chairman, Water Resources Board

Dear Roger,

I applaud your efforts to develop a managed recharge program designed to facilitate the use of available water to restore aquifer levels and address declining spring flows in the reaches of the Snake River above Swan Falls. Recent reports on the Murphy flow minimums emphasize the value of your work and additional efforts to sustain and restore the water resource to protect our State economy. I will continue to support funding efforts to encourage partnerships with water users to develop effective large scale projects to conserve and maximize the waters of the State. Such actions should be implemented in such a manner that allows the State to measure success through groundwater level changes and river flows. Your efforts on the Eastern Snake Plain provide the template for projects throughout the State.

With respect to sustainability, in September of 2012, I requested that the Board develop a working definition of "water resource sustainability" recognizing existing uses and the law, but not foreclosing future opportunities. This definition was then intended to guide policy development and actions. Since that time I am aware of the preliminary steps your sub-committee has taken. These steps have been useful in developing the Boards' understanding of the concept of sustainability and how that concept is becoming a bigger part of our daily lives. As we look around the West at our neighboring states, drought, climate variability, growth and other water resource related subjects command the headlines. A Western Governors Association meeting doesn't go by where water isn't at the top of the agenda. As Idahoans we still have the opportunity to protect and ensure our heritage, but we need to move forward.

In an effort to provide further guidance on this important subject, I would submit that the following definition of sustainability as the term relates to Idaho's water resource be the guiding definition as the Board moves forward with its policy development, planning and management of water:

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."**

Stewardship embodies management, administration, and immediate action to sustain the resource, and by necessity includes reversal of the declining trends with the goal being overall enhancement of the State's water resources. We all must be good stewards of the natural resources of the State realizing that if we sustain our water supplies, future development will necessarily follow. I would request that the Board move forward expeditiously to achieve sustainability of the State's water resources through the development of explicit criteria and goals with the input from Idaho's waterusers. Our precious resource is in your expert hands.

As always – Idaho, "Esto Perpetua"

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C.L. Butch Otter".

C.L. "Butch" Otter
Governor of Idaho



C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER

GOVERNOR
September 5, 2012

Idaho Water Resource Board
322 East Front St.
Boise, ID 83720-0098

Chairman Uhling and Board Members,

I want to first and foremost thank you for your hard work and dedication to protecting the precious water resources of the State of Idaho.

The lives and livelihoods of Idahoans depend upon a reliable supply of water. Pre-statehood development along Idaho's vast river valleys and canyons began a dependence on water and reliance on property rights that created a foundation for the economic growth Idahoans have enjoyed for over 120 years. Looking ahead to the future, economic development and job creation is dependent upon the sustainability of our water supply.

The responsibility for planning for the optimum use of Idaho's water resources is constitutionally vested in the Idaho Water Resource Board. By developing visionary procedures and policies that will sustain the reliability of water supplies in the future, the Board can ensure water is available to meet both present and future needs. As an Idahoan, I believe we should never forget where we came from or the values such as property rights that are the backbone of our Idaho way of life.

Therefore, I request that the Idaho Water Resource Board define water sustainability in a way that ensures our values are respected and the unique qualities of our resources are protected. It is my hope that the Board will develop and adopt a policy to guide management and development of Idaho's water resources to maximize their sustainability. The Board's activities should be an inclusive process which involves stakeholders statewide. I will commit my office to assist and participate throughout this very important project.

I believe that formally incorporating such a policy will enable the Board to identify areas in Idaho where achieving sustainability needs more focused attention. Once identified, the Board can recommend activities that will enhance the reliability of water in these areas. The State, through the Idaho Water Resource Board, needs to proactively establish long-term goals to address today's issues and tomorrow's challenges.

Again, thank you for your dedicated service to the State of Idaho and I look forward to working with you as we address this important issue.

As Always – Idaho, "Esto Perpetua"

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "C.L. Butch Otter".

C.L. "Butch" Otter
Governor of Idaho

CLO/sg

VISION FOR SUSTAINABILITY OF IDAHO'S WATER RESOURCES

Draft May 2014

Water is the foundation of Idaho's economy and culture; the lives and livelihoods of Idahoans depend on a reliable supply of water. Sustainable water management strategies that meet current and future needs must be based on adequate knowledge regarding available supplies, existing use, competing economic and social demands, and future needs. Planning and management actions that promote water sustainability will provide certainty that existing water rights are protected and the economic vitality of Idaho is optimized.

The policies and actions set out in the Idaho State Water Plan address a range of current and future water supply needs. The implementation strategies are designed to meet multiple water supply management goals. Their effectiveness in achieving water sustainability will be evaluated on an ongoing basis. An inclusive process with stakeholders statewide is fundamental to meeting the ever-increasing challenges associated with sustainable water management in Idaho.

Fundamental Strategies for a Sustainable Water Future in the State Water Plan

- Ensure that all actions taken toward a sustainable water future protect and respect private property rights.
- Inventory Idaho's water supply, current uses, and future water supply needs.
- Identify management alternatives and projects that optimize existing and future water supplies.
- Prioritize and implement management alternatives and projects where competing demands and future needs are most critical.
- Use adaptive management processes to anticipate future uncertainties and design projects that can be adapted to changing conditions.
- Prioritize allocation of funds for projects that ensure water sustainability.

VISION FOR SUSTAINABILITY OF IDAHO'S WATER RESOURCES

Sustainability is the active stewardship of Idaho's water resources to satisfy current uses and assure future use of this renewable resource in accordance with State law and policy.

Discussion:

Water is the foundation of Idaho's economy and culture; the lives and livelihoods of Idahoans depend on a reliable supply of water. Stewardship of Idaho's water resources embodies the management, administration, and immediate action to sustain the resource, and by necessity includes the reversal of declining trends with the goal being overall enhancement of the State's water resources.

Sustainable water management strategies that meet current and future needs must be based on adequate knowledge regarding available supplies, existing use, competing economic and social demands, and future needs. Planning and management actions that promote water sustainability will provide certainty that existing water rights are protected and the economic vitality of Idaho is optimized.

The policies and actions set out in the Idaho State Water Plan address a range of current and future water supply needs. The implementation strategies are designed to meet multiple water supply management goals. Their effectiveness in achieving water sustainability will be evaluated on an ongoing basis. An inclusive process with stakeholders statewide is fundamental to meeting the ever-increasing challenges associated with sustainable water management in Idaho.

Fundamental Strategies for Water Sustainability in the State Water Plan:

- Ensure that all actions taken toward a sustainable water future protect and respect private property rights.
- Inventory Idaho's water supply, current uses, and future water supply needs.
- Identify management alternatives and projects that optimize existing and future water supplies.
- Prioritize and implement management alternatives and projects where competing demands and future needs are most critical.
- Use adaptive management processes to anticipate future uncertainties and design projects that can be adapted to changing conditions.
- Prioritize allocation of funds for projects that ensure water sustainability.

Milestones:

COMPREHENSIVE STATE WATER PLAN

The Comprehensive State Water Plan represents the state's position on water development, management, and conservation. Accommodating Idaho's growing and changing water needs and the increasing demands on both surface and ground water presents a significant challenge. Sustainability is the active stewardship of Idaho's water resources to satisfy current uses and assure future use of this renewable resource in accordance with State law and policy. Stewardship of Idaho's water resources embodies the management, administration, and immediate action to sustain the resource, and by necessity includes the reversal of declining trends with the goal being overall enhancement of the State's water resources. The Plan seeks to meet that challenge through the establishment of policies on water development, management, and conservation with accompanying strategies that may be implemented as funds become available and milestones which will assist in ongoing Plan review.

Objectives

The following objectives of the State Water Plan are formulated for the conservation, development, management, and optimum use of all unappropriated water resources and waterways of this state in the public interest. Idaho Code § 42-1734A.

1. **Water Management** - Encourage the quantification of water supplies, water uses, and water demands for all water rights within the state. Encourage integrated, coordinated, and adaptable water resource management and the prudent stewardship of water resources.
2. **Public Interest** - Ensure that the needs and interests of the public are appropriately considered in decisions involving the water resources of the state.
3. **Economic Development** - Encourage and support economic development through the optimum use of water resources. Promote the integration and coordination of the use of water, the augmentation of existing supplies, and the protection of designated waterways for all beneficial purposes. Idaho Code § 42-1734A(1)(b).
5. **Environmental Quality** - Maintain, and where possible enhance water quality and water-related habitats. Study and examine the quality of rivers, streams, lakes, and ground water [Idaho Code § 42-1734(15)], and ensure that due consideration is given to the needs of fish, wildlife, and recreation in managing the water resources of the state. Where appropriate, initiate state protection of waterways or water bodies with outstanding fish and wildlife, recreation, geologic, or aesthetic values.

6. **Public Safety** - Encourage programs ensuring that life and property within the state are not threatened by the management or use of the state's water resources.

Policies

A main goal of this document is to help water managers, planners, and users formulate management strategies and policies needed to meet growing and changing water use needs.

The Board adopts the following policies for the conservation, development, management, and optimum use of all the unappropriated water resources and waterways of this state in the public interest. Idaho Code § 42-1734A.

The policies and actions set out in the Idaho State Water Plan address a range of current and future water supply needs. The implementation strategies are designed to meet multiple water supply management goals. Their effectiveness in achieving water sustainability will be evaluated on an ongoing basis. An inclusive process with stakeholders statewide is fundamental to meeting the ever-increasing challenges associated with sustainable water management in Idaho.

Sustainable water management strategies that meet current and future needs must be based on adequate knowledge regarding available supplies, existing use, competing economic and social demands, and future needs. Planning and management actions that promote water sustainability will provide certainty that existing water rights are protected and the economic vitality of Idaho is optimized.

Fundamental Strategies for Water Sustainability in the State Water Plan:

- *Ensure that all actions taken toward a sustainable water future protect and respect private property rights.*
- *Inventory Idaho's water supply, current uses, and future water supply needs.*
- *Identify management alternatives and projects that optimize existing and future water supplies.*
- *Prioritize and implement management alternatives and projects where competing demands and future needs are most critical.*
- *Use adaptive management processes to anticipate future uncertainties and design projects that can be adapted to changing conditions.*
- *Prioritize allocation of funds for projects that ensure water sustainability.*