

BEFORE THE IDAHO WATER RESOURCE BOARD

**IN THE MATTER OF THE MOUNTAIN HOME
AIR FORCE BASE SUSTAINABLE WATER
PROJECT**

**A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE A
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
AND PROVIDE SIGNATURE AUTHORITY**

1 WHEREAS, the Idaho Water Resource Board (Board) is a constitutional agency of the State
2 of Idaho and empowered by Idaho Code 42-1734 to acquire, purchase, leases or exchange land,
3 rights, water rights, easements, franchises and other property deemed necessary or proper for
4 the construction, operation and maintenance of water projects; and
5

6 WHEREAS, the Mountain Home Air Force Base (Base), as well as surrounding municipal
7 and agricultural uses, draws its water supply from the Mountain Home Aquifer, which is
8 overdrafted by approximately 30,000 acre-feet annually and declining approximately 2 feet per
9 year; and
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11 WHEREAS, there are also water quality issues in some of the wells that the Base depends
12 on for its water supply; and
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14 WHEREAS, the State of Idaho recognizes the economic value of the Base to the local and
15 state economy and supports the United States Air Force in achieving its national security
16 functions; and
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18 WHEREAS, the Mountain Home Air Force Base is one of the largest employers in Idaho. A
19 2019 Economic Impact Analysis for the Base, done by Boise State University, found there are
20 4,531 people in either military or civilian employment at the base and found the total economic
21 impact from the base to be approximately \$793 million; and
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23 WHEREAS, the State of Idaho, in partnership with the United States Air force, is working
24 on the Mountain Home Air Force Base Sustainable Water Project, the purpose of which is to
25 provide a sustainable, long-term water supply for the base from the Snake River and eliminate
26 the Base's reliance on the declining Mountain Home Aquifer; and
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28 WHEREAS, the project generally consists of a pump station at C.J. Strike Reservoir and a
29 14.4 mile long pipeline to bring Snake River water to the Base, as well as a water treatment plant
30 at the Base; and
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32 WHEREAS, in 2014, with funds provided by House Bill 479, the Board purchased senior-
33 priority Snake River Water Rights from the J.R. Simplot Company to provide a sustainable water
34 supply to the Base; and
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36
37 WHEREAS, it is anticipated that the State of Idaho, at its cost, through the Board, will build
38 the pump station and pipeline; and
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40 WHEREAS, it is anticipated that the United States Air Force, at its cost, will build the water
41 treatment plant, and
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43 WHEREAS, it is anticipated that upon project completion, the State will transfer
44 ownership of the pump station and pipeline, and the Air Force will assume operations and
45 maintenance responsibility for the entire project; and
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47 WHEREAS, the 2019 Idaho Legislature passed Senate Joint Memorial 104 expressing
48 support of the Mountain Home Air Force Base Sustainable Water Project; and
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50 WHEREAS, the 2019 Idaho Legislature passed House Bill 285, which appropriated \$20
51 million to the Water Management Account to be used by the Board for, among other purposes,
52 the Mountain Home Air Force Base Sustainable Water Project; and
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54 WHEREAS, the 2021 Idaho Legislature passed Senate Bill 1121, which appropriated \$50
55 million to the Water Management Account to be used by the Board for, among other purposes,
56 the Mountain Home Air Force Base Sustainable Water Project; and
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58 WHEREAS, the State of Idaho, through the Office of the Governor and the Board, has been
59 negotiating with the United State Air Force on a Memorandum of Understanding regarding the
60 Mountain Home Air Force Base Sustainable Water Project; and
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62 WHEREAS, the Memorandum of Understanding with the Air Force is ready to be executed.
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64 NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board approves the attached Memorandum
65 of Understanding between the State of Idaho and the United States Air Force and authorizes the
66 Chairman to sign the memorandum on behalf of the Board.

DATED this 7th day of May, 2021.


JEFF RAYBOULD, Chairman
Idaho Water Resource Board

ATTEST


JO ANN COLE-HANSEN, Secretary