

Memorandum

To: Idaho Water Resource Board
From: Mackenzie Kienholz
Date: October 30, 2024
Re: Environmental Resources Technical Working Group Meeting Report – Meeting #13



REQUIRED ACTION: None

Background

The Environmental Resources Technical Working Group (ERTWG) is established to study and discuss the potential impacts of Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer (ESPA) planned recharge activities on aquatic, wildlife, recreational resources, and on water quality, of the ESPA, Snake River and tributary water bodies. The working group may recommend actions to be undertaken by the Idaho Water Resource Board (IWRB) to minimize and/or mitigate the potential impacts of managed ESPA recharge activities.

The working group is convened at least twice annually, to consider:

- impacts of past recharge activities on ESPA and Snake River aquatic, wildlife and recreational resources, and on water quality;
- whether additional information should be gathered, to better understand the potential impacts of past and/or future recharge activities on ESPA, Snake River and tributary water resources;
- whether protocols for managed recharge activities should be recommended to the IWRB, to ensure potential impacts of recharge activities on water resources are adequately considered, including potential impacts on ESPA discharges and Snake River flows necessary to support aquatic species and maintain aquatic and riparian habitats.

A steering committee was established for the working group, to develop a governance structure for the working group. In the summer of 2022, the steering committee determined that a meeting report should be drafted following the conclusion of regularly scheduled working group meetings. The written working group meeting report would be provided to the IWRB, to inform the Board of the findings of the working group. This report summarizes the discussions of the working group meeting held October 30, 2024.

Attendees

The following is a list of the individuals who attended the meeting:

Individual	Association	Representation
Josh Morell	IDWR	Idaho Water Resource Board
Mackenzie Kienholz	IDWR	Idaho Water Resource Board
Wesley Hipke	IDWR	Idaho Water Resource Board
Alex Bell	IDEQ	Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
Nicholas Howell	IDEQ	Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

Nicole Rinaldi	IDEQ	Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
Scott Short	IDEQ	Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
Brett High	IDFG	Idaho Department of Fish & Game
Chase Cusack	IDFG	Idaho Department of Fish & Game
Joe Kozfkay	IDFG	Idaho Department of Fish & Game
Mike Peterson	IDFG	Idaho Department of Fish & Game
Tom Bassista	IDFG	Idaho Department of Fish & Game
Patrick Kennedy	IDFG	Idaho Department of Fish & Game
Frank Gariglio	IPC	Idaho Power Company
Jake Hughes	IPC	Idaho Power Company
Jennifer Cuhaciyen	IPC	Idaho Power Company
Ken Lepla	IPC	Idaho Power Company
Steve Brink	IPC	Idaho Power Company
Megan Satterwhite	IDA	Idaho Dairymen's Assn.
Christina Morriset	HFF	Henry's Fork Foundation
Travis Thompson	Marten Law, LLP	A & B Irrigation District Burley Irrigation District Milner Irrigation District North Side Canal Company Twin Falls Canal Company
W. Kent Fletcher	Fletcher Law Office	Minidoka Irrigation District American Falls Reservoir District No. 2
Jerry Rigby	Rigby, Andrus & Rigby Law, PLLC	Madison Ground Water District Henry's Fork Ground Water District Jefferson Clark Ground Water District Various Canal Companies & Irrigation Districts – South Fork and Henry's Fork

Meeting Minutes

1. Mackenzie Kienholz started the meeting at 2:00 p.m. by introducing the agenda and listing all attendees in person at the Idaho Water Resource Center in Boise, ID and online. Mackenzie then handed the presentation over to Josh Morell who provided an update on the fall 2023 to spring 2024 Idaho Water Resource Board (IWRB) recharge operations as well as a forecast for fall/winter 2024 recharge operations. Josh also provided a map of Board recharge sites that are active, in construction, and newly approved or being tested. Due to technological difficulties, this portion of the meeting was unable to be recorded.
2. Once Josh concluded his presentation, Tom Bassista of the Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game (IDFG) introduced the next presentation topic of whether IWRB recharge could play a role in white sturgeon flow needs in the mid-Snake River. Joe Kozfkay of IDFG then began the presentation on white sturgeon needs followed by Ken Lepla and Jennifer Cuhaciyen, both of Idaho Power Company.
3. There was discussion primarily between Tom Bassista and Wesley Hipke (IDWR) regarding timing of recharge and whether recharge could have an impact on white sturgeon flow needs, however the scheduled meeting end time was met. It was decided that an additional ERTWG meeting will be scheduled to specifically discuss this topic. Tom Bassista will contact IDWR staff after the new year to arrange a meeting time before the next regularly

scheduled ERTWG meeting. An invitation to this additional meeting will be sent to the ERTWG group email and posted on the ERTWG page of the IDWR website.

4. Mackenzie concluded the meeting by announcing that the next regularly scheduled ERTWG meeting will be held on April 30, 2025.