

**BEFORE THE DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
OF THE STATE OF IDAHO**

IN THE MATTER OF A DECLARATION)
OF DROUGHT EMERGENCY FOR)
CAMAS COUNTY)
_____)

**ORDER DECLARING
DROUGHT EMERGENCY**

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners for Camas County has requested that the Governor and the Director of the Idaho Department of Water Resources declare a drought emergency for Camas County to allow administrative actions to lessen the impacts of drought conditions in the county; and

WHEREAS, Camas County is included within the Camas Creek and South Fork Boise River drainages; and

WHEREAS, the south-central portion of the state, including Camas County, is experiencing drought conditions due to below normal precipitation and snowpack levels. Specifically, overall snow water equivalent (SWE) rates this year in the Camas Creek and South Fork Boise River drainage basins on April 1 was respectively 72 and 81 percent of median. Water year to date precipitation levels as of May 1 in both the Camas Creek and South Fork Boise River drainages was about 75 percent of average.

WHEREAS, May through September stream flow volume forecasts for Camas Creek near Blaine and the South Fork Boise River at Anderson Ranch Dam are respectively estimated to be only 16 and 49 percent of average; and

WHEREAS, the United States Drought Monitor Index on May 13, 2021, showed Camas County included within that portion of south-central Idaho classified as abnormally dry to severe drought; and

WHEREAS, section 42-222A, Idaho Code, provides that upon declaration of a drought emergency for an area designated by the Director of the Department of Water Resources ("Director") and approved by the Governor, the Director is authorized to allow temporary changes in the point of diversion, the place of use, and the purpose of use for valid existing water rights and temporary exchanges of water rights when the Director determines that such changes can be accomplished in accordance with the provisions of section 42-222A, Idaho Code; and

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that pursuant to the authority of the Director provided in section 42-222A, Idaho Code, a drought emergency for purposes of section 42-222A, Idaho Code, is hereby declared for Camas County, Idaho.

IT IS FURTHER HEREBY ORDERED that pursuant to this declared drought emergency and the provisions of section 42-222A, Idaho Code, the following procedures and requirements shall apply to the filing, processing, and approval of any application for a temporary change to an existing water right within Camas County during the pendency of this declared drought emergency:

1. An application for a temporary change to an existing water right shall be made upon forms provided by the department and shall be accompanied by an application fee of fifty dollars (\$50.00) per application.
2. The Director is not required to publish notice of the proposed change pursuant to the provisions of section 42-211, 42-222(1) or 42-240, Idaho Code, and is not required to make findings as provided in said sections. A temporary change may be approved upon completion of the application form, payment of the filing fee, and a determination by the Director that the proposed change can be properly administered and there is no information that the change will injure any other water right. If the right to be changed is administered by a watermaster within a water district, the Director shall obtain and consider the recommendations of the watermaster before approving the temporary change application.
3. All temporary changes approved pursuant to the provisions of this order shall expire on the date shown in the approval which shall not be later than December 31, 2021, and thereafter, the water right shall revert to the point of diversion and place of use existing prior to the temporary change. Nothing herein shall be construed as approval to authorize construction of a new well as a new point of diversion or to alter a stream channel.
4. The recipient of an approved temporary change issued pursuant to this order shall assume all risk of curtailment or mitigation should the diversion and use of water under the temporary change cause injury to other water rights or result in an enlargement in use of the original right.
5. Temporary changes shall only be approved for the purpose of providing a replacement water supply to lands or other uses that normally have a full water supply, except for the drought condition. Temporary changes may not be approved to provide water for new development or to allow expansion of the use of water under existing water rights. If the right to use the water is represented by shares of stock in a corporation, or if the diversion works or delivery system for such right is owned or managed by an irrigation district, no change in point of diversion, place or nature of use of such water shall be made or allowed without the written consent of such corporation or irrigation district.
6. Any applicant for a temporary change who is aggrieved by a denial of the Director for a temporary change pursuant to this order and the provisions of section 42-222A, Idaho Code, may request a hearing pursuant to section 42-1701A(3), Idaho Code, and may seek judicial review of the final order of the

Director pursuant to the provisions of section 42-1701A(4), Idaho Code.

IT IS FURTHER HEREBY ORDERED that this order is effective upon approval of the Governor and expires on December 31, 2021, unless extended or terminated by order of the Director.

DATED this 19th day of May, 2021.



GARY SPACKMAN
Director

APPROVED this 19th day of May, 2021.



Brad Little
Governor

RECEIVED

MAY 17 2021

DEPARTMENT OF
WATER RESOURCES

Camas County Board of Commissioners
Courthouse Annex
Fairfield, Idaho 83327

Camas County, Idaho - In business since 1917!

April 28, 2020

Gary Spackman, Director
Idaho Department of Water Resources
PO Box 83720
Boise, Idaho 83720-0098

Subject: Request for a 2021 Declaration of Drought Emergency for Camas County

Dear Director Spackman,

Camas County's Board of Commissioners is writing to ask that your Department and Idaho's Governor declare, as soon as possible, a drought emergency for Camas County. We've been asked to request this declaration by the Water Master of our independent irrigation district, District 37B. "Declaring a drought declaration will open up other resources through the state for us to help deal with our impending water shortage."

We appreciate your agency's consideration of our request. Following is a summary of our reasoning and documentation for this request:

- The South Central portion of Idaho, including Camas County, is, as you know, experiencing drought conditions due to below normal precipitation and snow pack levels.
- The Camas Creek Divide snowtel site was at 61% of normal.
- The USGS Camas Creek flow gauge recorded a high of 186 CFS, the lowest recording 30 years and only 75% of last year's peak flow.
- Surface irrigation, in our district, starts on most rights on April 15. In the next day or so, the Water Master will probably be forced to cut 1885 and junior Soldier Creek rights. Twin Lakes Reservoir (Mormon Reservoir) is approximately at 20% capacity and the Water Master estimates that it will run for 10 days. According to the Water Master, the other six reservoirs are at varying levels from 30% down to just a pond for stockwater, and will be bone dry by June.
- Ranchers are already shocked at how the lowland grass is dry and no water in stock ponds and springs. Renee Keller, the range management specialist for the USFS, has already warned ranchers with livestock allotments that they will probably be asked to come off the forest early this year.
- The portion of Camas County that would be affected by this declaration would be the drainage of Camas Creek, which joins the Wood River drainage at Magic Reservoir.

Thank you and your agency for your consideration. If you have questions that we can answer, please let us know. As always, we appreciate the work that IDWR does for all of us.

Sincerely,



The Camas County Board of Commissioners
Travis Kramer, Chairman