

COPY

Christopher H. Meyer [ISB No. 4461]
Michael P. Lawrence [ISB No. 7288]
Preston N. Carter [ISB No. 8462]
GIVENS PURSLEY LLP
601 W Bannock St
Boise, Idaho 83702
PO Box 2720
Boise, Idaho 83701-2720
Office: 208-388-1200
Fax: 208-388-1300
www.givenspursley.com
Attorneys for Applicant SUEZ Water Idaho Inc.

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MAR 20 2018

DEPARTMENT OF
WATER RESOURCES

BEFORE THE IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

IN THE MATTER OF INTEGRATED
MUNICIPAL APPLICATION PACKAGE
("IMAP") OF SUEZ WATER IDAHO INC.,
BEING A COLLECTION OF INDIVIDUAL
APPLICATIONS FOR TRANSFERS OF
WATER RIGHTS AND APPLICATIONS
FOR AMENDMENT OF PERMITS.

**SUEZ'S MOTION TO DEFER OR, IN THE
ALTERNATIVE, FOR EXTENSION OF
TIME, WITH SUPPORTING ARGUMENT**

Pursuant to Idaho Department of Water Resources Rules of Procedure 565, 52, and 270.02, Applicant SUEZ Water Idaho Inc. ("SUEZ") respectfully requests that the Director defer briefing and a decision on the *Motion for Summary Judgment to Limit Planning Horizon* ("Motion for Summary Judgment") filed on March 16, 2018 by Boise Project Board of Control ("Boise Project")¹ until after the merits hearing scheduled for May 29 through 31, 2018. In the alternative, SUEZ respectfully requests that the Director extend the time to file SUEZ's response brief from March 30, 2018 (the default date under Rule 270.01) to April 13, 2018. SUEZ has also filed a *Motion for Expedited Consideration* of this motion to facilitate a decision by March 23, as necessary given the existing deadline of March 30.

¹ By its terms, the *Motion for Summary Judgment* was filed only by the Boise Project, and not by the other protestants represented by its counsel.

1. The Director should defer briefing and a decision on the *Motion for Summary Judgment* until after the merits hearing.

Under the Department's Rule of Procedure 565, the presiding officer "may consider and decide prehearing motions with or without oral argument or a hearing." SUEZ requests that the Director exercise this discretion and defer ruling on the *Motion for Summary Judgment* after the merits hearing for the following reasons.

First, the brevity of the *Motion for Summary Judgment* disguises the complexity of the issues it presents. The Boise Project's filing seeks a first-of-its-kind, precedential interpretation of the statutory requirement for a reasonable planning horizon for reasonably anticipated future needs, key issues in this case.² *Memorandum in Support of Motion for Summary Judgment* ("Memo in Support") at 4-6. The Boise Project asks the Hearing Officer to compare the duration of the planning horizon in SUEZ's *Master Water Plan for the Years 2015 through 2065* ("2065 Master Plan") to the durations of a COMPASS planning report and Blueprint Boise. *Id.* at 5-6. In the Boise Project's view, this facial comparison is all that is needed.

In reality, the Hearing Officer is called upon to weigh a broad range of facts and considerations before making a determination of the reasonableness of a municipal provider's planning horizon in light of the municipal provider's needs. This is not a trivial, check-the-box analysis. The statute speaks in terms of reasonableness: "'Planning horizon' refers to the length of time that the department determines is reasonable for a municipal provider to hold water rights to meet reasonably anticipated future needs. The length of the planning horizon may vary according to the needs of the particular municipal provider." Idaho Code § 42-202B(7)

² The Department has considered and acted on a handful of applications for reasonably anticipated future needs ("RAFN") water rights. None is on the scale of the pending IMAP application. To SUEZ's knowledge, the Department has made no rulings or otherwise established precedent (other than its RAFN guidance) regarding the questions presented in the *Motion for Summary Judgment*.

(emphasis added). So does the Department's guidance: "Department staff must evaluate, among other things, whether the proposed planning horizon is reasonable." Mat Weaver, *Memorandum – Application Processing No. 74, Permit Processing No. 20, License Processing No. 13, Transfer Processing No. 29*, at 5 (Mar. 16, 2015) (replacing Nov. 15, 2014 and Nov. 13, 2013 versions) ("*RAFN Guidance*") at page 7 (emphasis added)).³

Boise Project focuses not on the definition of "planning horizon" but on the definition of "reasonably anticipated future needs." SUEZ believes that is wrong. The former is a number of years; the latter is a quantity of water. But there is no need to resolve this question now. Even if the definition of RAFN has some bearing on the determination of the duration of the planning horizon, it speaks in terms of consistency—or, more precisely, lack of inconsistency—with comprehensive plans or other pertinent planning documents. Idaho Code § 42-202B(8) ("‘Reasonably anticipated future needs’ refers to future uses of water by a municipal provider for municipal purposes within a service area which, on the basis of population and other planning data, are reasonably expected to be required within the planning horizon of each municipality within the service area not inconsistent with comprehensive land use plans approved by each municipality." (emphasis added)); *RAFN Guidance* at 8-9 (noting the statutory requirements of reasonableness and lack of inconsistency, and requiring review of comprehensive plans and other "pertinent planning document[s]").

Thus, to address the *Motion for Summary Judgment*, at a minimum the Hearing Officer must evaluate the overall reasonableness of the proposed planning horizon and compare the 2065 Master Plan to comprehensive land use plans and other pertinent documents. These documents

³ Memorandum of Mat Weaver to Regional Offices, Water Allocation Bureau, re: Recommendations for the Processing of Reasonably Anticipated Future Needs (RAFN) Municipal Water Rights at the Time of Application, Licensing, and Transfer (Nov. 13, 2013) ("*RAFN Guidance*").

span thousands of pages: the 2065 Master Plan is 335 pages; Blueprint Boise appears to be over 700; the COMPASS document is 218 pages; and the pertinent water planning documents run in the 100- to 200-page range. The analyses and conclusions in the documents are based on differing assumptions, forecasts, and are created for different purposes. Understanding these documents, their contents, their limitations, and their bearing on this case, as necessary to make a determination of reasonableness and consistency (or lack of inconsistency), will be a heavy lift, requiring the Hearing Officer to not only review the documents but also to hear testimony from expert witnesses concerning the creation, purpose, and impact of the documents.

Conceivably, the Boise Project and SUEZ could submit these many thousands of pages of documents, SUEZ could submit its expert testimony and other evidence, and the parties could ask the Director to pore through the documents and evidence, unguided, to determine the issue of consistency (or, more precisely, lack of inconsistency) before the May 29 hearing. This hardly seems a model for sound decision-making. At the hearing, SUEZ intends to introduce the pertinent planning documents and expert testimony that synthesizes, compares, and explains the relevant portions of the documents. SUEZ respectfully submits that the Director will be better served to hear the testimony, consider the arguments, and issue a decision on a full record rather than wading through reams of paper and issuing a decision on an abbreviated schedule.

Second, deciding the *Motion for Summary Judgment* before the hearing will not foster efficiency for the parties or the Director. While the Hearing Officer deliberates on the *Motion*, the parties have no choice but to prepare for the hearing scheduled for the end of May. By the time the Hearing Officer issues a decision, the parties will already be substantially or fully prepared for the hearing. Of course, if the Hearing Officer denies the *Motion for Summary Judgment*, the parties and the officer will have to repeat the evidence and argument at the

hearing. But even if the officer grants summary judgment on the planning horizon issue, the hearing will proceed. Setting aside the fact that the parties will have to be prepared regardless of the decision, the Boise Project has asked that the Hearing Officer “assign a planning horizon that conforms to the requirements of I.C. § 42-202B(8).” *Memo in Support* at 2. So the issue of reasonableness and consistency must still be heard, even if for a shorter horizon. The hearing will go on.

SUEZ respectfully submits that the Department’s and parties’ time is better spent preparing for and conducting the full hearing rather than making paper submissions beforehand. Deferring briefing and a decision on the *Motion for Summary Judgment* will reduce duplicative efforts and foster the just, speedy, and economical decision of all the issues presented by the agency. *See* Rule 52 (“The rules in this chapter will be liberally construed to secure just, speedy and economical determination of all issues presented to the agency.”).⁴

Third and finally, at heart, this proceeding is designed to provide the Director and the Department with the opportunity to vet and, ultimately, settle upon the proper interpretation of the Idaho Municipal Planning statute as applied to these facts. This close to the hearing, faced with important issues of fact and law, SUEZ respectfully submits that the Director, the Department, and the parties will be better served by hearing the evidence on all issues and making a decision afterwards, rather than a rushed or piecemeal decision on a cold, voluminous paper record.

⁴ If the requested deferral is not granted, SUEZ will, of course, urge denial of the *Motion for Summary Judgment* on the obvious ground that material facts central to the issue of the duration of the planning horizon are in dispute, and that the motion should be denied on that ground without reaching the merits. SUEZ would have no choice, however, but to brief the merits as well.

2. In the alternative, the Director should grant an extension of time to allow SUEZ a full and fair opportunity to respond to the *Motion for Summary Judgment*.

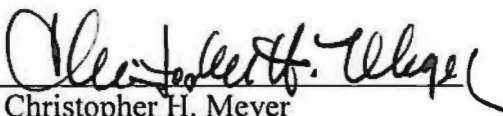
Rules 565 and 270.02 provide that the presiding officer can grant an extension of time for good cause. Good cause is present here.

First, the rules provide fourteen days as a default response time. This short timeframe may be adequate for run-of-the-mill motions. But the Boise Project's *Motion for Summary Judgment* is not a run-of-the-mill motion. It presents important and complicated legal and factual issues that require consideration of voluminous documents and evidence, including expert testimony. SUEZ needs more than fourteen days to review and analyze the documents cited by the Boise Project, and to then synthesize and present its evidence on the reasonableness and lack of inconsistency of its planning horizon. Fourteen days is not enough time for the task at hand.

Second, the timing is particularly difficult here. Counsel for SUEZ is, among other things, preparing for the hearing in May and other pressing matters, including the Refill litigation. One member of the team, the lead counsel, has a preplanned family wedding trip from March 23, to March 27, 2018; another has a pre-planned family trip for March 27 to April 2, 2018. These scheduling issues, combined with the nature of the issues presented in the *Motion for Summary Judgment*, provide good cause for an extension of time. SUEZ respectfully requests that, if the Director is not inclined to defer decision until after the merits hearing, that an extension be granted such that the response is due on April 18, 2018, 28 days after the *Motion for Summary Judgment* was filed.

Respectfully submitted this 20th day of March, 2018.

GIVENS PURSLEY LLP

By 
Christopher H. Meyer

By 
Preston N. Carter

Attorneys for SUEZ Water Idaho Inc.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 20th day of March, 2018, the foregoing was filed, served, and copied as shown below. Service by email is authorized by the Hearing Officer's Order of September 11, 2017 at page 3.

DOCUMENT FILED:

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0098
Hand delivery or overnight mail:
322 East Front Street
Boise, ID 83702

<input type="checkbox"/>	U. S. Mail
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hand Delivered
<input type="checkbox"/>	Overnight Mail
<input type="checkbox"/>	Facsimile
<input type="checkbox"/>	E-mail

SERVICE COPIES TO PROTESTANTS, INTERVENORS, AND INTERESTED PARTIES:

Stephan L. Burgos
Director
Public Works Department
CITY OF BOISE
PO Box 500
Boise, ID 83701-0500
Facsimile: 208-433-5650
sburgos@cityofboise.org

Hand delivery or overnight mail:
150 N Capitol Blvd, City Hall #1
Boise, ID 83702
(For the City of Boise, intervenor in support)

<input type="checkbox"/>	U. S. Mail
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hand Delivered
<input type="checkbox"/>	Overnight Mail
<input type="checkbox"/>	Facsimile
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	E-mail

Abigale R. Germaine, Esq.
Assistant City Attorney
City Attorney's Office
CITY OF BOISE
PO Box 500
Boise, ID 83701-0500
Facsimile: 208-384-4454
agermaine@cityofboise.org

Hand delivery or overnight mail:
150 N Capitol Blvd
Boise, ID 83702
(For the City of Boise, intervenor in support)

<input type="checkbox"/>	U. S. Mail
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hand Delivered
<input type="checkbox"/>	Overnight Mail
<input type="checkbox"/>	Facsimile
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	E-mail

Chris M. Bromley, Esq.
McHugh Bromley PLLC
380 S 4th St, Ste 103
Boise, ID 83702
Facsimile: 208-287-0864
cbromley@mchughbromley.com
(For the City of Boise, intervenor in support)

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

John Roldan, P.E.
Strategic Water Resources Manager
Public Works Department
CITY OF BOISE
PO Box 500
Boise, ID 83701-0500
Facsimile: 208-433-5650
jroldan@cityofboise.org
Hand delivery or overnight mail:
150 N Capitol Blvd
Boise, ID 83702
(For the City of Boise, intervenor in support)

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Warren Stewart, P.E.
City Engineer
Public Works Department
CITY OF MERIDIAN
33 E Broadway Ave, Ste 200
Meridian, ID 83642
Facsimile: 208-898-9551
wstewart@meridiancity.org
(For the City of Meridian, intervenor in support)

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Dale Bolthouse
Director
Public Works Department
CITY OF MERIDIAN
33 E Broadway Ave, Ste 200
Meridian, ID 83642
Facsimile: 208-898-9551
dbolthouse@meridiancity.org
(For the City of Meridian, intervenor in support)

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Warren Stewart
Engineering Manager
Public Works Department
CITY OF MERIDIAN
33 E Broadway Ave, Ste 200
Meridian, ID 83642
Facsimile: 208-898-9551

dbolthouse@meridiancity.org
(For the City of Meridian, intervenor in support)

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Kyle Radek, P.E.
Assistant City Engineer, Engineering Division
Public Works Department
CITY OF MERIDIAN
33 E Broadway Ave, Ste 200
Meridian, ID 83642
Facsimile: 208-898-9551

kradek@meridiancity.org
(For the City of Meridian, intervenor in support)

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Garrick Nelson
Staff Engineer II
Public Works Department
CITY OF MERIDIAN
33 E Broadway Ave, Ste 200
Meridian, ID 83642
Facsimile: 208-898-9551

gnelson@meridiancity.org
(For the City of Meridian, intervenor in support)

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Charles L. Honsinger, Esq.
HONSINGER LAW, PLLC
PO Box 517
Boise, ID 83701
Facsimile: 208-908-8065

honsingerlaw@gmail.com
(For the City of Meridian, intervenor in support)

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Brent Orton, P.E., MSC
Public Works Director, City Engineer
CITY OF CALDWELL
621 East Cleveland Blvd.
Caldwell, ID 83605
Facsimile: 208-455-3012

borton@cityofcaldwell.org
(For the City of Caldwell, intervenor in support)

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Christopher E. Yorgason, Esq.
Middleton City Attorney
YORGASON LAW OFFICES, PLLC
6200 N Meeker Pl
Boise, ID 83713
Facsimile: 208-375-3271
chris@yorgasonlaw.com
(For the City of Middleton, protestant)

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Cherese D. McLain, Esq.
MOORE, SMITH, BUXTON & TURCKE, CHARTERED
950 W Bannock St, Ste 520
Boise, ID 83702
Facsimile: 208-331-1202
cdm@msbtlaw.com
(For the Star Sewer & Water District, intervenor in support, and for the City of Eagle, interested party)

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

S. Bryce Farris, Esq.
Andrew J. Waldera, Esq.
SAWTOOTH LAW OFFICES, PLLC
PO Box 7985
Boise ID 83707
Facsimile: 208-629-7559
bryce@sawtoothlaw.com
andy@sawtoothlaw.com
Hand delivery or overnight mail:
1101 W River St, Ste 110
Boise ID 83702
(For Nampa & Meridian Irrigation District and Settlers Irrigation District, protestants)

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Albert P. Barker, Esq.
Shelley M. Davis, Esq.
BARKER, ROSHOLT & SIMPSON, LLP
PO Box 2139
Boise, ID 83701-2139
Facsimile: 208-344-6034
apb@idahowaters.com
smd@idahowaters.com

Hand delivery or overnight mail:
1010 W Jefferson, Ste 102
Boise, ID 83702
*(For Boise Project Board of Control, Big Bend
Irrigation District, Boise-Kuna Irrigation District,
and Wilder Irrigation District, protestants)*

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Richard T. Roats, Esq.
City Attorney
CITY OF KUNA
PO Box 13
Kuna, ID 83634
Facsimile: 208-922-5989
rroats@kunaID.gov
kunaattorney@icloud.com
(For the City of Kuna, interested party)

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Bob Bachman
Public Works Director
CITY OF KUNA
PO Box 13
Kuna, ID 83634
Facsimile: None
bbachman@kunaID.gov
Hand delivery or overnight mail:
6950 S Ten Mile Rd
Meridian, ID 83634
(For the City of Kuna, interested party)

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

COURTESY COPIES TO IDWR AND OTHER NON-PARTIES:

James Cefalo
Hearing Officer
Eastern Regional Office
Idaho Department of Water Resources
900 North Skyline Dr., Ste. A
Idaho Falls ID 83402-6105
Facsimile: 208-525-7177
james.cefalo@idwr.idaho.gov

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Sharla Cox
Administrative Assistant
Eastern Regional Office
Idaho Department of Water Resources
900 North Skyline Dr., Ste. A
Idaho Falls ID 83402-6105
Facsimile: 208-525-7177
sharla.cox@idwr.idaho.gov

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Kimi White
Paralegal
IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
PO Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0098
Facsimile: 208-287-6700
kimi.white@idwr.idaho.gov
Hand delivery or overnight mail:
322 E Front St
Boise, ID 83702

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Garrick L. Baxter, Esq.
Deputy Attorney General
IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
PO Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0098
Facsimile: 208-287-6700
garrick.baxter@idwr.idaho.gov
Hand delivery or overnight mail:
322 E Front St
Boise, ID 83702

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Emmi Blades, Esq.
Deputy Attorney General
IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
PO Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0098
Facsimile: 208-287-6700
emmi.blades@idwr.idaho.gov
Hand delivery or overnight mail:
322 E Front St
Boise, ID 83702

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Nick Miller, P.E.
Manager
Western Regional Office
IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
2735 Airport Way
Boise, ID 83705-5082
Facsimile: 208-334-2348
nick.miller@idwr.idaho.gov

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Sarah A. Klahn, Esq.
White & Jankowski, LLP
511 Sixteenth St, Ste 500
Denver, CO 80202-4224
sarahk@white-jankowski.com
Facsimile: (303) 825-5632
(For the City of Pocatello, withdrawn)

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Kathleen Marion Carr, Esq.
Office of the Field Solicitor
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
960 Broadway Ave, Ste 400
Boise, ID 83706
Facsimile: 208-334-1918
kathleenmarion.carr@sol.doi.gov
(For the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, withdrawn)

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

E. Gail McGarry
Program Manager, Water Rights & Acquisitions
U.S. BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
Pacific Northwest Regional Office
1150 N Curtis Rd
Boise, ID 83706-1234
Facsimile: 208-378-5305
emcgarry@usbr.gov
(For the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, withdrawn)

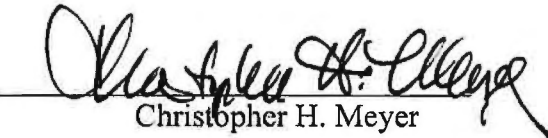
☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Matt J. Howard, Esq.
Water Rights Analyst
U.S. BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
Pacific Northwest Regional Office
1150 N Curtis Rd
Boise, ID 83706-1234
Facsimile: 208-378-5305
mhoward@usbr.gov
(For the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, withdrawn)

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail

Paul L. Arrington, Esq.
Director
Idaho Water Users Association
1010 W Jefferson St, Ste 101
Boise, ID 83702
Facsimile: 208-344-2744
paul@iwua.org

☐ U. S. Mail
☐ Hand Delivered
☐ Overnight Mail
☐ Facsimile
☒ E-mail


Christopher H. Meyer