



NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

IDWR contacts: Christopher Holmes, Water Rights Supervisor, IDWR Preston office, 208-701-7200  
Craig Saxton, IDWR Adjudication Section Manager, 208-287-4800

## **IDWR to host public information meetings Jan. 23-24 on the Bear River Basin Adjudication**

PRESTON – (Jan. 17, 2024) – The Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) has scheduled two public meetings on Jan. 23-24 in Preston to present information and background about the Bear River Basin Adjudication.

Water users and property owners in Preston, Franklin and Grace, in particular, are invited to the meetings to learn about the opportunity to file water right claims as part of the Bear River Basin Adjudication. IDWR is now starting to work on water rights claims in Basin 13 in western Franklin County (see map below). The public meetings are an important first step in that process.

The meetings will be held in Preston at the Robinson Building, Franklin County Fairgrounds (186 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> N St, Preston, ID 83263) on:

- Tuesday, Jan. 23. at 6 p.m.
- Wednesday, Jan. 24 at 11 a.m.

On June 2021, Presiding Idaho Water Adjudication Judge Eric Wildman signed a commencement order directing IDWR to proceed with the Bear River Basin Adjudication. An adjudication is a court proceeding that inventories and catalogs water rights. The Idaho Legislature has allocated funding to support the adjudication of water rights in the Bear River Basin.

The Bear River Basin is divided into four separate subbasins, 11, 13, 15, and 17 (see map below). IDWR has received more than 2,100 water rights claims from property owners and organizations in Basin 11.

In early 2024, IDWR will mail notices to surface and groundwater users in Basin 13 about the opportunity to file water rights claims. A second mailing in eastern Franklin County will go out in about 4-5 months after the first mailing.

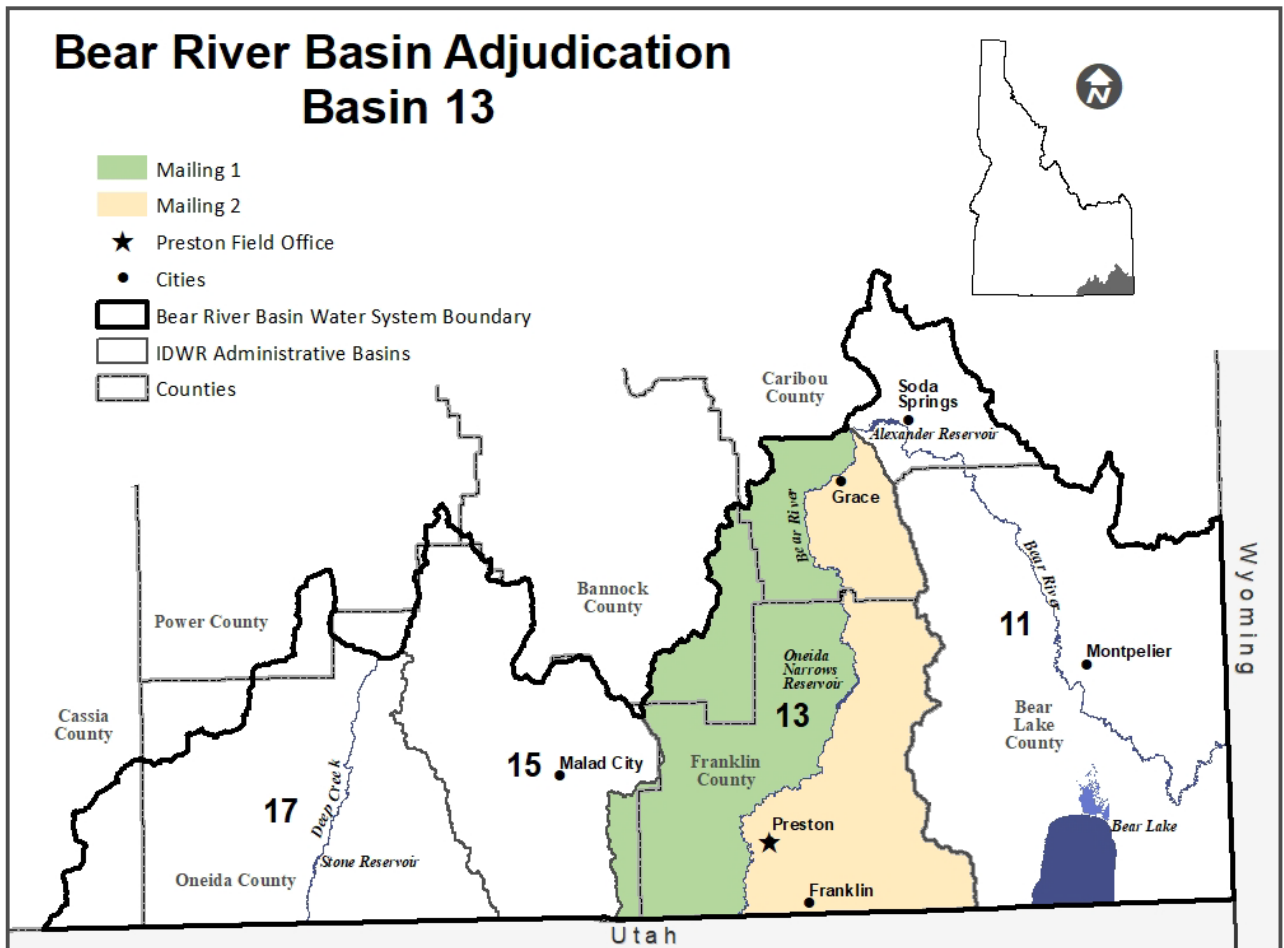
IDWR anticipates approximately 13,000 water rights claims will be filed in the Bear River Basin. With some exceptions, all water users will be required to file claims. People with small domestic and/or stockwater rights may choose to file a claim now or wait until later in the process. A claim is NOT required to be filed in instances where the individual property owner or water user is not the owner of the water right.

Following the water rights filings, IDWR staff will catalog and confirm all water rights as part of the adjudication

process. IDWR will eventually file a Director’s Report detailing IDWR’s recommendations to District Court regarding the elements of each water right. Ultimately, the court will issue a decree confirming the elements of each water right. IDWR has a field office in Preston to assist water users in processing their respective water rights claims.

IDWR has conducted many water rights adjudications across the state, including the Snake River Basin Adjudication, which decreed 160,000 water rights throughout Southern Idaho in the state’s largest river basin.

For more information, go to the IDWR [Bear River Basin Adjudication web page](#).



#####