



NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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IDWR reminds water users in Upper Salmon River Basin #75 to install water-measuring devices before 2025 irrigation season begins

SALMON – (Jan. 22, 2025) – The Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) has sent a notice to about 960 water users in Administrative Basin 75 in the Upper Salmon River area, part of Water District 170, reminding them to install water-control and measuring devices on surface water and groundwater diversions prior to the beginning of the 2025 irrigation season.

Water users in Basin 75 were first notified about water-control and measurement device requirements in June 2023.

Starting in 2006, water users in other areas of Water District 170 (Upper Salmon Basin) have been notified of the need to install measurement devices on surface water and groundwater diversions and have a means to control the flow of water, such as a headgate.

(See map on page 3 for boundaries of Water District 170 and sub-districts).

By law, IDWR requires water-control and measurement devices to be installed on surface and groundwater diversions in all water districts of the state (Idaho Code 42-701). Upper Salmon Basin Watermaster David Graybill is available to provide technical assistance to water users. Graybill has been busy doing outreach in the field with water users, checking on compliance with water-measurement devices and answering questions. Graybill and the Water District 170 sub-district watermasters plan to visit all 2,400 diversions in the Upper Salmon Basin in the coming years to ensure water-control and measurement devices are installed, and that they're in a proper-functioning condition.

Measurement and control devices are necessary for the local watermaster to properly distribute water in water districts, Graybill noted. Watermasters use the devices to ensure only the authorized amount of water is diverted by each water user. Watermasters are required to record and report the amount of water delivered to each water user.

Exceptions: Most domestic and stockwater users are exempt from the measurement requirement. Water users authorized to irrigate 5 acres of land or less, or other water users authorized to divert less than 0.24 cubic feet

per second of water flow are exempt from needing a measuring device, but are still required to have a lockable control structure such as a headgate.

Helpful resources for water users: The [water-measurement page](#) on the IDWR web site provides background information for water users on what kinds of measurement devices are required for surface water or groundwater. See this link on [minimum acceptable standards](#) for open channel and close conduit measuring devices.

In May 2023, the Lemhi Soil and Water Conservation District and IDWR held an educational workshop for water users about the types of water-measuring devices available for surface water and groundwater diversions. IDWR plans to host more workshops in the future.

Many water-control and measuring devices are available off the shelf from irrigation supply stores, IDWR officials noted. Industry-standard surface water measuring devices approved by IDWR include:

- **Weirs:** contracted or suppressed rectangular weirs, Cipolletti weir, 90-degree V-notch weir.
- **Flumes:** Parshall flume, trapezoidal flume, ramped flume (ramped, broad-crested weir).
- **Submerged Orifices:** submerged rectangular orifice, constant head orifice.
- **Current Meter/Acoustic Profiler:** acoustic doppler flow meter and current profiler.

Technical and financial assistance for installing water-measurement devices: Water users can reach out to the following agencies for help:

- **Lemhi Soil and Water Conservation District** – contact Steve Fischer, 208.756.3211 or lsxcd@hotmail.com
- **Idaho Department of Fish and Game Anadromous Fish Screen Program (for headgates associated with fish screens)** – contact Mike Demick, staff biologist and easement specialist, 208.756.6022 or mike.demick@idfg.idaho.gov
- **U.S. Forest Service Diversions and Fish Passage** – contact Kelly Larkin Schade, 208.756.5229 or kelly.schade@usda.gov. Please be aware that installation of headgates and measuring devices on federal land may require a special use permit or other authorization. Water users with diversions on federal land should contact the relevant land management agency as soon as possible to obtain any required authorization.
- **Idaho Governor’s Office of Species Conservation** – Daniel Bertram, Program Manager, 208.756.6322 or daniel.bertram@osc.idaho.gov
- **Bureau of Reclamation** – Brian Hamilton, project engineer in Salmon, bhamilton@usbr.gov.
- **Natural Resources Conservation Service** – Joshua Chapman, Resource Conservationist, 208.477.4283 or joshua.chapman@usda.gov
Location of Upper Salmon River Basin Water District 170 and its sub-districts.

