



NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Information Contact: Craig Saxton, Adjudication Section Manager, 208-287-4800

## **Clark Fork-Pend Oreille River Basin Adjudication is under way, on schedule**

SANDPOINT - (Nov. 24, 2021) – The Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) is proceeding on schedule with the Clark Fork-Pend Oreille River Basin Adjudication. Water users can file water rights claims online anytime or wait until they receive a notice in the mail.

Notices are being mailed to landowners in sub-areas of the Clark Fork-Pend Oreille River Basin through the first half of 2022. Water users are not required to file water right claims until they receive a notice from IDWR.

A YouTube video posted earlier this week about the Clark Fork-Pend Oreille River Basin Adjudication contained erroneous information. IDWR officials want to confirm that the adjudication process is under way, and there is plenty of time to file water rights claims. IDWR officials also want to reassure the public that the purpose of the adjudication is to document and protect water rights held by water users.

The Clark Fork-Pend Oreille River Basin Adjudication enables existing water users to claim the quantities and priority dates for their water rights and have them recognized by an Idaho Court decree. Confirming the priority date matters because, in times of water scarcity, water users who are first in time are first in right, under Idaho water law.

So far, IDWR has sent out 5,000 notices to owners of property primarily located in the northwestern portion of Bonner County and western Boundary County, including the Priest River drainage (see map of Basin 97 below). The basin includes the communities of Coolin and Priest River. Later, notices of claim filing requirements will be mailed to landowners located in most of central and eastern Bonner County (see map of Basin 96 below).

IDWR will catalog and verify all surface and ground water uses claimed in the Clark Fork-Pend Oreille River basins as part of the adjudication process. Eventually, IDWR will file a Director's report, detailing

the department's recommendations to District Court regarding the elements of each water right. Ultimately, the court issues a decree confirming the elements of each water right.

Notices are being mailed to every property owner within the adjudication boundaries because the location of many existing water uses in the area is not known, officials said. IDWR has records for about 2,700 water rights on file Clark Fork-Pend Oreille River drainages. It is expected that up to 9,000 water right claims will be filed in the Clark Fork-Pend Oreille River Basin Adjudication.

A Notice of Claim is required for all water uses. However, owners of small domestic and/or stock water rights may choose to file a claim now or wait until later in the process.

Water users who receive all of their water from a city, an irrigation district, water utility district or a company are not required to file a claim for that water. A water delivery organization typically files for the water right used by all its customers or patrons.

To file a Notice of Claim, go to <https://idwr.idaho.gov/water-rights/adjudication/nia/cfprba/>. People can file a claim online or on a hard-copy form and submit the claim by mail.

Water users also can make an appointment with a representative at the IDWR regional offices at the following locations:

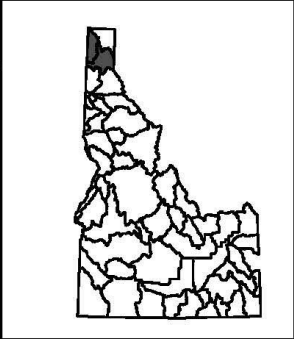
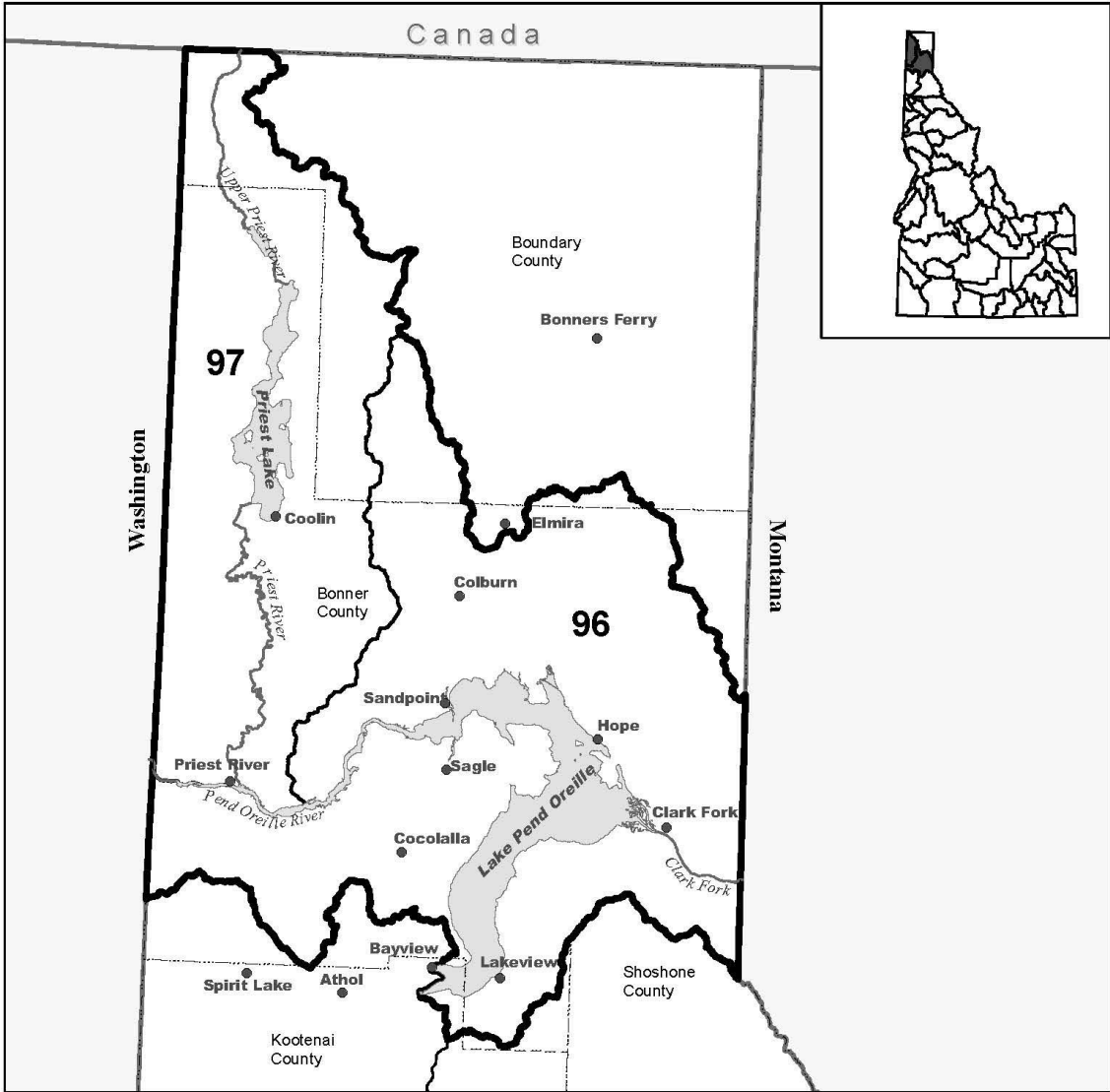
1. IDWR, Northern Region, 7600 Mineral Dr., Suite 100, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815; Phone: (208) 762-2800;
2. IDWR, State Office, 322 E Front St, Boise, ID 83720-0098; Phone: (208) 287-4800.

For more information, contact Evan Roda, Water Rights Supervisor, Adjudication Section, 208-762-2800.

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(See map below for the boundaries of Basins 96 and 97)

# Clark Fork-Pend Oreille River Basin Water System



**Legend**

- County Boundaries
- cities
- Clark Fork- Pend Oreille River Basin Water System Boundary
- IDWR Administrative Basins

