



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF
WATER RESOURCES

NEWS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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IDWR to hold five public hearings March 24-26 in E. Idaho to get feedback on adding tributary basins to ESPA Area of Common Groundwater Supply

EASTERN IDAHO - (March 17, 2024) – The Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) has scheduled five public hearings over the course of three days between March 24th and March 26th in five communities in Eastern Idaho. The purpose of these public hearings is to present information on the proposal to expand the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer (ESPA) Area of Common Groundwater Supply to include certain tributary basins and to get feedback from water users on the proposal. This action is being proposed due to the impact of groundwater use in ESPA tributary basins on senior surface water users.

The five tributary basins proposed to be included in the ESPA Area of Common Ground Water Supply at this time are the Big Lost Basin (Water District 34), Little Lost Basin (Water District 33), American Falls Basin (Water District 290), Portneuf Basin (Water District 129) and Raft Basin (Water District 143). More hearings will be held in the future to get feedback from water users in the remaining tributary basins (see map of the tributary basins on page 2).

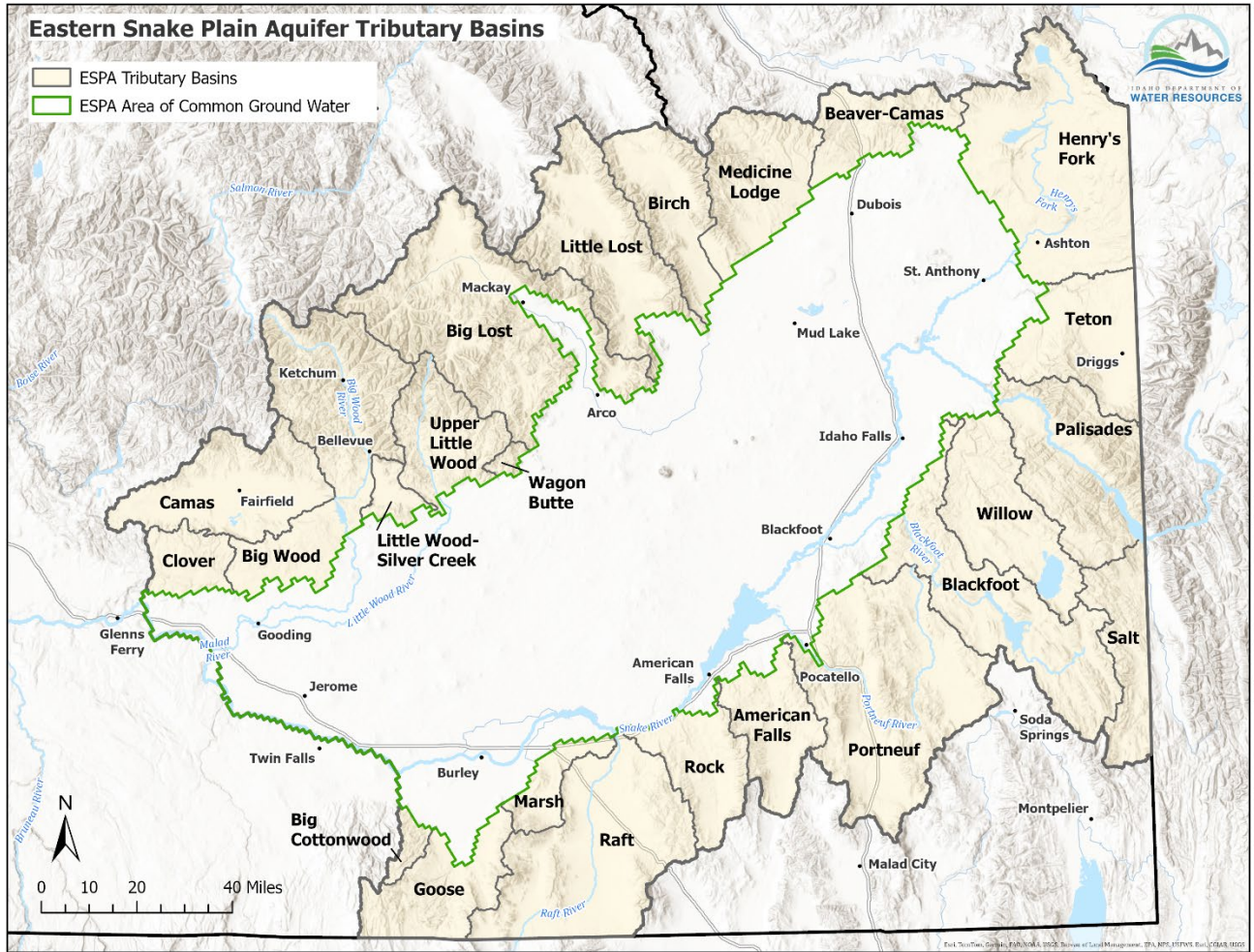
The five public hearing dates and times are shown below. The public notices are also posted on the [Townhall Idaho](#) website.

Monday, March 24, 2025	Tuesday, March 25, 2025	Wednesday, March 26, 2025
Big Lost Basin, 1 p.m. Valley Community Center 3353 3155 North Moore, ID 83255	American Falls Basin, 1 p.m. Arbon Elementary School 4405 Arbon Valley Highway Arbon, ID 83212	Raft Basin, 11 a.m. Raft River High School 55 North First West Malta, ID 83342
Little Lost Basin, 5 p.m. Howe Community Center 1533 Hwy 33 Howe, ID 83244	Portneuf Basin, 6 p.m. Marsh Valley High School Performing Arts Center 12655 S Old Hwy 91 Arimo, ID 83214	

Idaho Code § 42-233c was passed in the 2024 legislative session and authorizes the Director of IDWR to expand the ESPA Area of Common Ground Water Supply to include tributary basins that affect the ESPA. Consumptive use of groundwater and surface water in basins tributary to the ESPA reduces inflow to the ESPA and Snake River, and therefore, reduces the water supply needed by senior surface water users reliant on the Snake River and springs emerging from the ESPA, officials said. If the tributary basins are added to the ESPA Area of Common Groundwater Supply, groundwater rights in these tributary basins that do not meet the definition of domestic and stockwater as defined under Idaho Code §§ 42-111 and 42-1401A(11) will be subject to priority

administration and conjunctive management associated with delivery calls connected to the ESPA Area of Common Ground Water Supply.

For more information, please contact Brian Ragan at IDWR, brian.ragan@idwr.idaho.gov, 208-287-4800.



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