



NEWS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **The Idaho Water Resource Board approves 19 new Aging Infrastructure Grants for \$11 million; tours Swan Falls Dam on the Snake River**

BOISE – (Nov. 20, 2023) – The Idaho Water Resource Board approved 19 new Leading Idaho Aging Infrastructure Grants (AIG) Friday at a cost of approximately \$11 million at its regular bimonthly meeting. The Board also toured the historic Swan Falls Dam, south of Kuna, with Idaho Power Co. officials.

The 19 new AIG projects approved by the Board were the third round of awards in the last two years, bringing the total number of grant projects approved to 38 at a cost of \$36 million. Two more rounds of AIG awards are planned in 2024.

The third round of AIG's approved by the Board are as follows:

- Marysville Irrigation Co., Ashton - \$42,965; total project cost \$186,800.
- Blaine County Canal Co., Howe - \$1.3M; total cost \$5.7M.
- Falls Irrigation District, American Falls - \$831,079; total cost \$9M.
- Egin Bench Canals Inc., St. Anthony - \$31,349; total cost \$125,396.
- Portneuf-Marsh Valley Canal Co., Downey - \$625,000; total cost \$1.8M.
- Grindstone Butte Mutual Canal Co., Boise - \$1.5M; total cost \$4.6M.
- Mountain Home Irrigation District, Mountain Home - \$132,412; total cost \$401,250.
- Payette Lakes Recreational Water & Sewer District, McCall - \$1.8M; total cost \$5.4M.
- United Canal Co., Blackfoot - \$70,000; total cost \$298,000.
- Fremont Madison Irrigation District, St. Anthony - \$16,575; total cost \$61,388.
- Milner Dam Inc. Milner Dam Spillway Rehab (3 projects) - \$2M; total cost \$9.4M.
- Weiser River Soil Conservation District, Weiser - \$124,410; total cost \$383,000.
- W. Indian Cove Water Co. Inc., Hammett - \$545,344; total cost \$1.6M.
- Long Island Irrigation Co., Menan - \$74,222; total cost \$224,915.
- Mill Canyon North Canal Co., Ovid - \$11,496; total cost \$34,839.
- Twin Falls Canal Co., Twin Falls - \$20,458; total cost \$68,191.
- Burgess Canal & Irrigation Co., Rigby - \$1M; total cost \$3.2M.
- Burnett Water Users Association, Pierce - \$825,000; total cost \$2.5M.
- Island Ward Canal Co., Rexburg - \$2,457; total cost \$7,370.

The deadline for the fourth round of AIG applications is on Dec. 1; The Board will make a decision on those applications in early 2024. During the 2022 and 2023 sessions, the Idaho Legislature appropriated funds to the Board for grants that improved water sustainability or rehabilitated and improved aging water infrastructure. The Board’s AIG program was a direct result of that appropriation. Matching funds are required; grant applications cannot exceed 33 percent of a project’s cost.

For more information, go to the [Aging Infrastructure Grants](#) web page.

Following the Board’s Work Session on Thursday, Idaho Power Co. officials led a tour of the historic Swan Falls Dam and the existing powerhouse facility, updated in 1994. Swan Falls Dam was the first dam built on the Snake River in 1901 to provide power to mines in the Silver City area in the Owyhee Mountains. Idaho Power acquired the dam in 1916. The powerplant originally had 10 generators creating 10,400 kilowatts of electricity. In the mid-1990s, Idaho Power built a new power plant with two hydropower generators that produce 27,170 kilowatts of electricity.

The old dam and powerhouse facility are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Idaho Power operates a museum at the dam. During the tour, Idaho Power officials noted that Swan Falls is a run-of-river dam with a small reservoir. It is operated in tandem with C.J. Strike Dam on the Snake River, located south of Mountain Home, officials said.

The Swan Falls facility has deep history not only as the oldest dam on the Snake River, but also as the location of a major water agreement forged between the State of Idaho and Idaho Power in the 1980s. Minimum stream flow water rights established in conjunction with the Swan Falls Settlement require flows of 3,900 cubic feet per second April 1 – Oct. 31 during the irrigation season, and 5,600 cfs during the winter months, Nov. 1- March 31 at a the Murphy streamflow gage downstream of the dam.

IDWR hydrology officials noted that the minimum flows at the Murphy gage have been maintained since the 1980s, but active management and monitoring are required, particularly in dry years. Idaho Power Co. officials noted the importance of maintaining the flows for hydroelectric power generation and to meet the utility’s fish and wildlife obligations on the Snake River.

In other action, the Board:

- Approved a new \$700,000 loan to Marsh Center Irrigation Co. near Downey to convert a nearly 27,000-foot section of open canal delivery system, beginning at Hawkins Reservoir, to a pressurized buried-pipe system. Total project cost is \$1.02M.
- Granted a time extension to four entities with existing loans – North Side Canal Co., North Side Pumping Co., King Hill Irrigation District, and Raft River Recharge Group.

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