



NEWS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **More rental water needed for Idaho Water Supply Bank; existing water rights holders encouraged to consider leasing water to the bank**

BOISE - (May 14, 2024) – The Idaho Water Resource Board is seeking to find water users with valid water rights who may have some surplus water available for lease for terms of 1 to 5 calendar years.

The Board operates a Water Supply Bank as a water-exchange program to facilitate the acquisition and voluntary exchange of water rights for new and supplemental water uses. Certain areas of the state are experiencing a high demand for the rental of water rights, but available supplies are limited, said Mary Condon, Water Supply Bank coordinator for the Board.

“This is a completely voluntary program, but we wanted to make sure that water users are aware of the opportunity to lease surplus water to the Water Bank so we could provide more water rentals in high-demand areas,” Condon said. “Leasing a water right to the Water Bank is a very popular option for water users who are not using their rights and need to protect them from forfeiture due to non-use. The added benefit is the potential to receive payments if their rights are rented from the bank by others.”

Specific areas of high-demand are as follows:

- Surface water rights in the Middle Snake River area between Milner Dam and Swan Falls Dam.
- Ground water rights senior to 1955 in the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer region, especially between Rexburg and American Falls.
- Ground water rights in the Big Lost River Basin, below Mackay.
- Ground water rights in the Raft River Critical Ground Water Area.
- Ground water rights in the Mountain Home Ground Water Management Area.
- Ground water rights in the Bruneau-Grandview Ground Water Management Area.
- Primary ground water rights in the Wood River Valley, especially north of Gimlet.

“All or most of the water made available through leases in the above-listed areas of the state have been completely rented in the last few years, which resulted in some rental applications unable to be filled, or other rental applications were not even filed with the IDWR because of the known limited availability of leased water in the area or source,” Condon said.

“We want to make sure that existing water users in these areas are aware of that situation. If they have

surplus water available and are willing to lease it to the Board's bank, it could be an opportunity for them and people who need the rental water."

Background: The application filing fee for leasing a water right into the Board's bank is \$250 per water right. The fee covers administrative costs, and the rights are protected against forfeiture from non-use while they are leased to the bank. Rental payment to the owner of the water right is made if the water right is rented.

Water rental rates in 2024 are \$23 per acre-foot and will increase to \$33 per acre-foot in 2025. The owner receives 90% payment of the rental price.

Additional information about the Water Supply Bank and forms to lease water into the Board's bank are located on the IDWR website at <https://idwr.idaho.gov/iwrp/programs/water-supply-bank/>. Water users also can contact Mary Condon for more information if they have questions about how the program works at [Mary.Condon@idwr.idaho.gov](mailto:Mary.Condon@idwr.idaho.gov) or 208-287-4936.

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