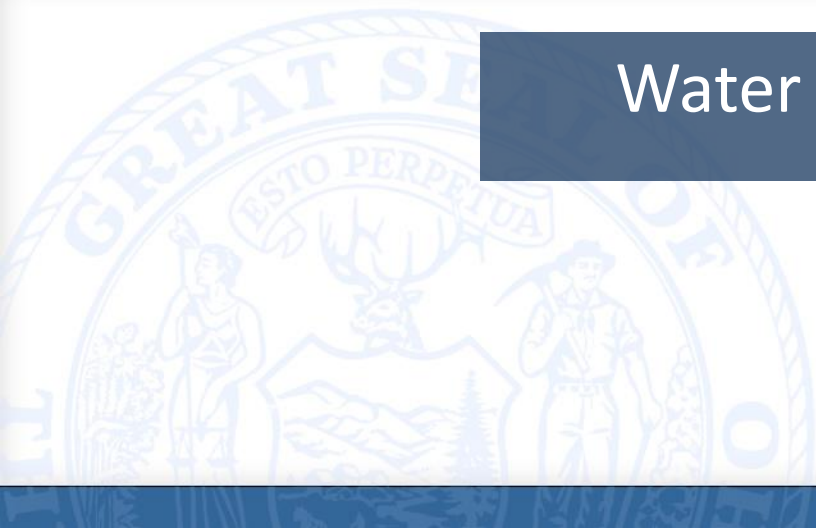




IDAHO
Water Resource Board



Water Sustainability Policy





C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER
GOVERNOR
September 5, 2012

Idaho Water Resource Board
322 East Front St.
Boise, ID 83720-0098

Chairman Uhling and Board Members,

I want to first and foremost thank you for your hard work and dedication to protecting the precious water resources of the State of Idaho.

The lives and livelihoods of Idahoans depend upon a reliable supply of water. Pre-statehood development along Idaho's vast river valleys and canyons began a dependence on water and reliance on property rights that created a foundation for the economic growth Idahoans have enjoyed for over 120 years. Looking ahead to the future, economic development and job creation is dependent upon the sustainability of our water supply.

The responsibility for planning for the optimum use of Idaho's water resources is constitutionally vested in the Idaho Water Resource Board. By developing visionary procedures and policies that will sustain the reliability of water supplies in the future, the Board can ensure water is available to meet both present and future needs. As an Idahoan, I believe we should never forget where we came from or the values such as property rights that are the backbone of our Idaho way of life.

Therefore, I request that the Idaho Water Resource Board define water sustainability in a way that ensures our values are respected and the unique qualities of our resources are protected. It is my hope that the Board will develop and adopt a policy to guide management and development of Idaho's water resources to maximize their sustainability. The Board's activities should be an inclusive process which involves stakeholders statewide. I will commit my office to assist and participate throughout this very important project.

I believe that formally incorporating such a policy will enable the Board to identify areas in Idaho where achieving sustainability needs more focused attention. Once identified, the Board can recommend activities that will enhance the reliability of water in these areas. The State, through the Idaho Water Resource Board, needs to proactively establish long-term goals to address today's issues and tomorrow's challenges.

Again, thank you for your dedicated service to the State of Idaho and I look forward to working with you as we address this important issue.

As Always – Idaho, "Esto Perpetua"

C.L. "Butch" Otter
Governor of Idaho

CLO/sg

"Therefore, I request that the Idaho Water Resource Board define water sustainability..."

"I believe that formally incorporating such a policy will enable the Board to identify areas where achieving sustainability needs more focused attention."



C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER
GOVERNOR

May 1, 2015

Roger Chase
Chairman, Water Resources Board

Dear Roger,

I applaud your efforts to develop a managed recharge program designed to facilitate the use of available water to restore aquifer levels and address declining spring flows in the reaches of the Snake River above Swan Falls. Recent reports on the Murphy flow minimums emphasize the value of your work and additional efforts to sustain and restore the water resource to protect our State economy. I will continue to support funding efforts to encourage partnerships with water users to develop effective large scale projects to conserve and maximize the waters of the State. Such actions should be implemented in such a manner that allows the State to measure success through groundwater level changes and river flows. Your efforts on the Eastern Snake Plain provide the template for projects throughout the State.

With respect to sustainability, in September of 2012, I requested that the Board develop a working definition of "water resource sustainability" recognizing existing uses and the law, but not foreclosing future opportunities. This definition was then intended to guide policy development and actions. Since that time I am aware of the preliminary steps your sub-committee has taken. These steps have been useful in developing the Boards' understanding of the concept of sustainability and how that concept is becoming a bigger part of our daily lives. As we look around the West at our neighboring states, drought, climate variability, growth and other water resource related subjects command the headlines. A Western Governors Association meeting doesn't go by where water isn't at the top of the agenda. As Idahoans we still have the opportunity to protect and ensure our heritage, but we need to move forward.

In an effort to provide further guidance on this important subject, I would submit that the following definition of sustainability as the term relates to Idaho's water resource be the guiding definition as the Board moves forward with its policy development, planning and management of water:

Sustainability is **"the active stewardship of Idaho's water resources to satisfy current uses and assure future uses of this renewable resource in accordance with State law and policy."**

Stewardship embodies management, administration, and immediate action to sustain the resource, and by necessity includes reversal of the declining trends with the goal being overall enhancement of the State's water resources. We all must be good stewards of the natural resources of the State realizing that if we sustain our water supplies, future development will necessarily follow. I would request that the Board move forward expeditiously to achieve sustainability of the State's water resources through the development of explicit criteria and goals with the input from Idaho's waterusers. Our precious resource is in your expert hands.

As always – Idaho, "Esto Perpetua"

C.L. "Butch" Otter
Governor of Idaho

"As we look around the West...drought, climate variability, growth and other water resource related subjects command the headlines."

"...we need to move forward."

"Sustainability is the active stewardship of Idaho's water resources to satisfy current uses and assure future uses of this renewable resource in accordance with State law and policy."



IDAHO WATER RESOURCE BOARD

August 4, 2015

C.L. "Butch" Otter
Governor

The Honorable C.L. "Butch" Otter, Governor
State Capitol
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, Idaho 83720

RE: Sustainability

Dear Governor Otter,

By letter dated May 1, 2015, you provided the Idaho Water Resource Board (IWRB) with a definition of sustainability as the term relates to Idaho's water resources in an effort to provide further guidance on development of a statewide water sustainability policy.

You indicate in your letter that "Sustainability is the active stewardship of Idaho's water resources to satisfy current uses and assure future uses of this renewable resource in accordance with State law and policy." Additionally, you say that "stewardship requires management, administration and immediate action to sustain the resource, and by necessity includes reversal of the declining trends with the goal being overall enhancement of the State's water resources. "

Over the next year, the IWRB Planning Committee will work to incorporate your guidance into the development of a statewide water sustainability policy that includes explicit criteria and goals with the long-term objective of adding the sustainability policy to the State Water Plan.

The State Water Plan provides the framework for the conservation, management and optimum use of the water resource and waterways of Idaho in the public interest. The IWRB looks forward to working closely with your staff as we continue to plan for the optimum use of Idaho's water resources. Should you have any questions or concerns please contact Brian Patton of our staff at 287-4831.

Sincerely

Roger Chase, Chairman

CC: Idaho Water Resource Board members
Gary Spackman, Director IDWR

Roger W. Chase
Chairman
Pocatello
District 4

Jeff Raybould
Vice-Chairman
St. Anthony
At Large

Vince Alberdi
Secretary
Kimberly
At Large

Peter Van Der Meulen
Hailey
At Large

Charles "Chuck"
Cuddy
Orofino
At Large

Albert Barker
Boise
District 2

John "Bert" Stevenson
Rupert
District 3

Dale Van Stone
Hope
District 1

"Over the next year, the IWRB Planning Committee will work to incorporate your guidance into the development of a statewide water sustainability policy that includes explicit criteria and goals with the long-term objective of adding the sustainability policy to the State Water Plan."

Governor Otter's State of the State Address

January 11, 2016



“Sustainability is a central value throughout Idaho, from the Treasure Valley to the Rathdrum Prairie and from Bear Lake to Hells Canyon. That’s why I’m proud to announce that the Water Resource Board has drafted a statewide sustainability policy. The Board will conduct public meetings throughout Idaho in the coming year to gather suggestions on incorporating its findings into our Comprehensive State Water Plan.”



C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER
GOVERNOR

January 25, 2016

Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee

Dear Legislator,

Active management, data-driven administration and immediate action are required to sustain Idaho's precious water resources, including reversing the decline in aquifer levels. We must exercise responsible stewardship of the resource to ensure the opportunity for future growth, development and prosperity. Our objective must be maintaining the long-term health of water resources throughout Idaho.

After additional discussions with the Idaho Department of Water Resources on the funding necessary to meet the State's commitment under the settlement agreement for the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer (ESPA), I am revising my budget recommendation to fully fund its accelerated implementation.

The revised recommendation in my Executive Budget includes:

- Transferring \$6.5 million in one-time funding to the Secondary Aquifer Planning, Management and Implementation Fund – increasing the total transfer to that fund to \$16.5 million
- Increasing ongoing funds for water sustainability projects by \$3 million – increasing the total for those projects to \$5 million

Jani Revier, Administrator of DFM, will present these and other revisions to the committee and will answer any questions you may have.

As groundwater reductions meet the benchmarks and goals of the water settlement agreement, the State's sustainability projects coupled with this funding will advance the needs of the water users and sustain Idaho's water resources.

As Always – Idaho, "Esto Perpetua"

C.L. "Butch" Otter
Governor of Idaho

"...the State's sustainability projects coupled with this funding will ... sustain Idaho's water resources."

Article XV, Section 7

Idaho Constitution

- Additionally, the State Water Resource Agency [*board*] shall have power to formulate and implement a state water plan for optimum development of water resources in the public interest.
- “[A]ny change in the state water plan shall be submitted to the Legislature . . . and the change shall become effective unless amended or rejected by law within sixty days of its admission to the Legislature.”

Idaho State Water Plan

Idaho Code Chapter 42, Section 1734A:

The board shall, subject to legislative approval, progressively formulate, adopt and implement a comprehensive state water plan for conservation, development, management and optimum use of all unappropriated water resources and waterways of this state in the public interest.

Idaho State Water Plan

First Plan: Objectives 1974
 Policies 1976

Subsequent revisions

1982, 1986, 1992, 1996, 2012

Idaho State Water Plan

- Proposed changes are adopted by the IWRB; changes submitted to the Idaho Legislature and shall become effective unless amended or rejected by law within sixty days of submission
- All state agencies are required to exercise their duties in a manner consistent with the Plan
- Provides guidance and direction for water planning, management, conservation and development

2016 Proposed Sustainability Policy

Sustainability Policy:

Sustainability is the active stewardship of Idaho's water resources to satisfy current uses and assure future uses of this renewable resource in accordance with State law and policy

2016 Proposed Sustainability Policy

Policy Narrative (excerpt #1)

Sustainable water management strategies to meet current and future needs must be based on adequate knowledge regarding available supplies, existing use, competing economic and social demands, and future needs. Planning and management actions to promote water sustainability must be designed and implemented to ensure that existing water rights are protected and the economic vitality of Idaho is optimized.

2016 Proposed Sustainability Policy

Policy Narrative (excerpt #2)

Stewardship of Idaho's water resources begins with the realization that the water resources of the State are not inexhaustible and therefore it is necessary to manage, administer, and take action to sustain, maintain and enhance the resource. Stewardship, by necessity, also includes taking affirmative steps to address declining trends in the resource where those trends exist and to establish policies that will prevent future unsustainable declines. The goal must be overall stewardship of the State's water resources for the good of the people of the State of Idaho.

2016 Proposed Sustainability Policy

Policy Narrative (excerpt #3)

The goal of sustainable use of water resources of the State must recognize that the goals of sustainable economic growth and protection of existing rights must coexist and are enhanced by measures that protect and maintain surface and ground water resources and the aquatic, riparian and human resources that depend on these water resources. Recognizing these needs will promote economic and environmental security and enhance the quality of life for the people of the State of Idaho.

State Water Plan Policy Sections

1. Optimum Use
2. Conservation
3. Management
 - River Basins
4. Snake River Basin
5. Bear River Basin
6. Panhandle Basins
7. Salmon-Clearwater Basin
8. Sustainability

8. SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability focuses on the overall stewardship of the State's water resources for the good of the people of the State of Idaho.

8A - SUSTAINABILITY OF IDAHO'S WATER RESOURCES

Sustainability is the active stewardship of Idaho's water resources to satisfy current uses and assure future uses of this renewable resource in accordance with State law and policy.

Discussion:

Water is the foundation of Idaho's economy and culture; the lives and livelihoods of Idahoans depend on a reliable supply of water. Stewardship of Idaho's water resources begins with the realization that the water resources of the State are not inexhaustible and therefore it is necessary to manage, administer, and take action to sustain, maintain and enhance the resource. Stewardship, by necessity, also includes taking affirmative steps to address declining trends in the resource where those trends exist and to establish policies that will prevent future unsustainable declines. The goal must be overall stewardship of the State's water resources for the good of the people of the State of Idaho.

The State of Idaho encompasses some of the most diverse and awe inspiring physical and geological features in the country. From the depths of Hells Canyon to the peak of Mount Borah, from sage brush deserts, to the extensive agricultural farm and ranch land, to alpine forests and meadows, to the cities and towns, the ecosystems of each of these varied areas all rely on the water resources of the State. The people of the State interact with and depend upon the water resources in these different landscapes in many different ways. Therefore, the water sustainability policy of the state of Idaho must embrace the diversity of the State, while recognizing the potential for a use or activity in one place to affect the water resources in another part of the State.

Sustainable water management strategies to meet current and future needs must be based on adequate knowledge regarding available supplies, existing use, competing economic and social demands, and future needs. Planning and management actions to promote water sustainability must be designed and implemented to ensure that existing water rights are protected and the economic vitality of Idaho is optimized.

The goal of sustainable use of water resources of the State must recognize that the goals of sustainable economic growth and protection of existing rights must coexist and are enhanced by measures that protect and maintain surface and ground water resources and the aquatic, riparian and human resources that depend on these water resources. Recognizing these needs will

promote economic and environmental security and enhance the quality of life for the people of the State of Idaho.

Implementation Strategies:

- Ensure that all actions taken toward a sustainable water future protect and respect private property rights, both in the land and water rights
- Inventory Idaho's water supply, current uses, and future water supply needs
- Evaluate long-term and short-term trends in water availability for present and future uses
- Identify areas where present water supplies are either inadequate for present uses or not sustainable, and develop management plans to address supply in an appropriate timeframe respecting private property rights
- Identify management alternatives and projects that optimize existing and future water supplies without compromising water quality
- Prioritize and implement management alternatives and projects where competing demands and future needs are most critical
- Enhance water transfer mechanisms in Idaho law, policy and regulations to allow future economic opportunities to utilize existing water supplies, while protecting existing uses
- Utilize the Idaho Water Resource Board's Funding Program and prioritize allocation of funds for projects that ensure water sustainability across the state
- Identify water conservation measures that water users, municipalities, governmental agencies and other entities can undertake to help protect the water resources of the State and provide guidance to those entities on best practices to implement those conservation measures
- Recognize that conservation measures may reduce water supplies utilized by others in other parts of the resource
- Identify and provide funding for aquifer stabilization strategies throughout the state with due regard to the priorities of basin specific Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plans
- Pursue enhancement of surface water storage supply as a mechanism for meeting Idaho's future water needs
- Use a grassroots approach to identify problems and developing optimal solutions. The needs of individual basins must be taken into consideration in how the resource should be managed while recognizing the potential for decisions in one basin to affect the resources of another basin. An integrated and collaborative approach to water resource management is critical for the sound and efficient use of Idaho's water resources. The State of Idaho when appropriate should work together with, water users, tribes, local communities, neighboring states, and the federal government to resolve water issues

- Protection of the quality of existing water supplies, particularly those ground water resources that are used for drinking water supplies, to ensure the vitality of local communities. This goal requires other state and local agencies to exercise their appropriate authorities to protect the water resources and to assist in meeting the goal of sustainable economic growth

Milestones:

- Respect for private property rights in accordance with State law and policy
- Identify number of basins where water supply and demand have been inventoried
- Identify number of basins where management alternatives have been identified and implemented to optimize existing and future water supplies, including surface water storage, ground water recharge, conservation measures and weather modification
- Obtain more accurate water supply, water measurement, and forecasting information
- Disseminate water supply forecasts to water users in cooperation with other federal and state agencies
- Measure utilization of water bank and transfer procedures to allow sustainable use of the resource
- Determination and implementation of measures and policies to enhance the utility of the water bank and transfer procedures
- Financial programs and funding strategies that meet the future water resource needs of the State of Idaho. Secure funding and resources in cooperation with the Governor and legislature. Reliable on-going, long-term funding will be needed to enable and support active stewardship of Idaho's water resources.
- Basin aquifer stabilization - stabilization of ground water levels in basins where declines are occurring to restore and maintain sustainable aquifer levels
- Initiate and facilitate construction of additional surface water storage to meet current and future needs
- Use of adaptive management to identify and address uncertainties for success, including those related to data, modeling, and impacts of climate variability
- Balance water supply and demand – supply and demand must be in balance to support current and future use within a particular basin
- Improve data management – accurate and abundant data is necessary to assist with ensuring stewardship of Idaho's water resources to satisfy current and future uses
- Coordination with State and local entities on measures to protect and enhance ground water and surface water resources so that these resources are available for use by the people of the State of Idaho

Public Comment

The public comment period commenced on Friday, May 20 and will remain open through the close of business on Friday, September 30, 2016.

Comments can be submitted:

- Through e-mail to SWP@idwr.idaho.gov;
- Through mail to IWRB, ATTN: SWP, PO Box 83720-0098, Boise, ID 83720-0098;
- Through testimony at any of the scheduled public hearings.
- More information found at:

http://www.idwr.idaho.gov/waterboard/WaterPlanning/StateWaterPlanning/State_Planning.htm

Sustainability Policy Public Hearing Schedule

Hearing #	Dates	Time	Location	City
1	June 7	6:30 pm	Idaho Water Center; Rm 602 C & D	Boise
2	June 13	6:30 pm	Community Campus, Minnie Moore Rm	Hailey
3	June 28	6:30 pm	CSI Campus, Shields Bldg., Rm 118	Twin Falls
4	July 20	6:30 pm	Edgewater Resort	Sandpoint
5	August 23	6:30 pm	Red Lion	Lewiston
6	August 30	6:30 pm	City Council Chambers, City Annex	Idaho Falls
7	September 14	6:30 pm	City of Chubbuck, City Council Chambers	Chubbuck

BEFORE THE IDAHO WATER RESOURCE BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF)
CHANGE TO THE) A RESOLUTION
IDAHO STATE WATER PLAN)
_____)

WHEREAS, the Idaho Water Resource Board (Board), pursuant to its planning authorities in Article XV, Section 7 of the Idaho Constitution, and Idaho Code 42-1734, 1734A, and 1734B developed a proposed Sustainability section for the Idaho State Water Plan (Plan) adopted on November 28, 2012; and

WHEREAS, as required under Idaho Code 42-1734A, the Board has sought substantial public participation and comment on the proposed change to the Plan by providing a public comment period greater than 60 days, including opportunity for submission of written comments and for oral testimony at seven public hearings throughout the State; and

WHEREAS, the Board has reviewed the record of public comments consisting of oral testimony and written comments and has modified its proposed change to the Plan accordingly.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, having considered the proposed draft change to the Plan and the record of public comments, the Board hereby adopts the attached final version of the change to the Plan. The Board directs that the adopted change be submitted to the Idaho Legislature as required by Idaho Constitution Article XV, Section 7 and Idaho Code 42-1734B(6), and that copies also be provided to the Office of the Governor and Director of the Idaho Department of Water Resources and be published and distributed generally as required by Idaho Code 42-1734B(5).

DATED this 2nd day of November, 2016


Roger Chase, Chairman
Idaho Water Resource Board

ATTEST 
Vince Alberdi, Secretary

8. SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability focuses on the overall stewardship of the state's water resources for the good of the people of the State of Idaho.

8A - SUSTAINABILITY OF IDAHO'S WATER RESOURCES

Sustainability is the active stewardship of Idaho's water resources to satisfy current uses and assure future uses of this renewable resource in accordance with state law and policy.

Discussion:

This Sustainability Policy depends on the state's sovereignty over its water resources. Water is the foundation of Idaho's economy and culture; the lives and livelihoods of Idahoans depend on a reliable supply of water. Stewardship of Idaho's water resources begins with the realization that the water resources of the state are not inexhaustible. Therefore, it is necessary to manage and administer Idaho's water resources and protect Idaho's water quality. Stewardship, by necessity, also includes taking affirmative steps to address declining trends in the resource, where those trends exist, and to establish policies that will prevent future unsustainable declines. The goal must be overall stewardship of the state's water resources for the good of the people of the State of Idaho.

The State of Idaho encompasses some of the most diverse and awe-inspiring physical and geological features in the country. From the depths of Hells Canyon to the peak of Mount Borah, from sagebrush deserts to the extensive agricultural farm and ranch land, from alpine forests and meadows to the cities and towns, the ecosystems of each of these varied areas all rely on the water resources of the state. The people of the state interact with and depend upon the water resources in these different landscapes in many different ways. Therefore, the water sustainability policy of the State of Idaho must embrace the diversity of the state, while recognizing the potential for a use or activity in one place to affect the water resources in another part of the state.

Sustainable water management strategies to meet current and future needs must be based on adequate knowledge regarding available supplies, existing use, trends, competing economic and social demands, and future needs. Planning and management actions to promote water sustainability must be designed and implemented to ensure that existing water rights are protected and the economic vitality of Idaho is optimized.

The goal of sustainable use of water resources of the state must recognize that the goals of sustainable economic growth and protection of existing rights must coexist with and are enhanced by measures that protect and maintain surface and ground water resources and the

aquatic, riparian, fish and wildlife, recreational, and human resources that depend on these water resources. Recognizing these needs will promote economic and environmental security and enhance the quality of life for the people of the State of Idaho.

Implementation Strategies:

- Ensure that all actions taken toward a sustainable water future protect and respect private property rights both in the land and water rights.
- Inventory Idaho's water supply, current uses, and future water supply needs.
- Evaluate long-term and short-term trends in water availability for present and future uses.
- Identify areas where present water supplies are either inadequate for present uses or not sustainable, and develop management plans to address supply in an appropriate time frame, while respecting private property rights.
- Identify management alternatives and projects that optimize existing and future water supplies without compromising water quality.
- Prioritize and implement management alternatives and projects where competing demands and future needs are most critical.
- Enhance water transfer mechanisms in Idaho law, policy, and regulations to allow future economic opportunities to utilize existing water supplies, while protecting existing uses.
- Utilize the Idaho Water Resource Board's Funding Program and prioritize allocation of funds for projects that ensure water sustainability across the state.
- Utilize the state protected river system and the Idaho Water Resource Board minimum stream flow water rights to sustain water supplies for fisheries and recreational opportunities.
- Educate the public about water uses and the need for water conservation measures.
- Identify water conservation measures that water users, municipalities, governmental agencies, and other entities can undertake to help protect the water resources of the state and provide guidance to those entities on best practices to implement those conservation measures.
- Recognize that conservation measures may reduce water supplies utilized by others in other parts of the resource.
- Identify measures and provide funding for aquifer stabilization strategies, including managed recharge, throughout the state with due regard to the priorities of basin-specific Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plans.
- Pursue enhancement of surface water storage supply as a mechanism for meeting Idaho's future water needs.
- Recognize weather modification may help to achieve water sustainability goals.
- Cooperate with flood control entities to ensure flood control actions are consistent with water sustainability.

- Improve data management—accurate and abundant data is necessary to assist with ensuring stewardship of Idaho's water resources to satisfy current and future uses.
- Coordination with state and local entities on measures to protect and enhance ground water and surface water resources so that these resources are available for use by the people of the State of Idaho.