



IDAHO WATER USERS ASSOCIATION

Quarterly Newsletter



December 2016

IWUA President's Statement

Jim Hudson, President of the Idaho Water Users Association (IWUA), issued the following statement on December 7, 2016:

"Norm Semanko, Executive Director & General Counsel for IWUA since 2000, informed us that he has been offered a position as a Partner with the law firm of Moffatt, Thomas, Barrett, Rock & Fields, Chtd. in Boise, managing the firm's Water Law and Natural Resources Practice Group.

"While we regret that Norm's acceptance of this position will require IWUA to hire a new Executive Director, we are pleased that he has agreed to continue providing Executive Director services to IWUA until his replacement is hired and put in place.

"IWUA will issue a job announcement and accept applications for the Executive Director position in the near future. Information about the position will be available on IWUA's website at www.iwua.org."

Make Plans Now For IWUA Convention

The 80th Annual Convention and general meeting of Idaho's largest water use group is set for January 24-26 at the Riverside Hotel in Boise. The three-day gathering traditionally features a broad range of speakers and panels examining a wide range of water and environmental topics.

IWUA will also elect new officers during the convention and decide on resolutions that will guide the Association's activities during the coming year.

Registration information, the convention program and an on-line link that can be used to make hotel reservations is available on the IWUA website – iwua.org.

The convention begins Tuesday, January 24, with standing committee meetings during which resolutions, legislation, water quality issues, education, rural and urban affairs and other Association activities will be discussed in detail, according to Norm Semanko, IWUA Executive Director and General Counsel.

The main convention program will begin Wednesday, January 25. IWUA officials will also present a series of water related awards at a special luncheon the same day. In 2016 the Association presented a total of 10 awards at its annual convention.

The convention will end Thursday evening, January 26, with the Association's annual Legislative Banquet.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF JOB OPENING

Executive Director, Idaho Water Users Association, Boise, Idaho

The Idaho Water Users Association (IWUA) is searching for a new Executive Director. A job description for the position is available on line at: www.iwua.org. The starting salary is estimated at approximately \$100,000 per year, depending upon the successful applicant's qualifications, plus health insurance, retirement, and other benefits.

Interested applicants are requested to send a cover letter and resume to the IWUA office by email to on line a iwua@iwua.org or regular mail to 1010 W. Jefferson St., Suite 101, Boise, Idaho 83702. The deadline for materials to be received in the IWUA office is 5:00 p.m. on Friday, January 20, 2017. Questions may be directed by email to iwua@iwua.org or by calling 208-344-6690.

BoR Opens Two WaterSMART Funding Opportunities for Water Conservation, Energy Efficiency Grants

The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) has released two WaterSMART grant funding opportunities including the water and energy efficiency grants funding opportunity and the new small-scale water efficiency projects funding opportunity, BOR officials in Washington, DC announced recently.

In 2016, eight Idaho water organizations received a total of \$2,170,134 in funding from the WaterSMART grant programs for a variety of water related projects including canal lining, advanced water flow measurement devices, automated headgate installation and other projects.

Small-scale projects eligible for funding include installation of flow measurement or automation in a specific part of a water delivery system, lining of a section of a canal to address seepage, small rebate programs that result in reduced residential water use, or other similar projects that are limited in scope. These projects are eligible to receive up to \$75,000 in federal funding and a streamlined selection and review process has been developed to reflect the small-scale nature of these projects.



This outdated manual headgate will be replaced with an automated SCADA controlled headgate paid for in part by a 2016 WaterSMART grant.

This funding opportunity is available at www.grants.gov by searching for funding opportunity BOR-DO-17-F011. You can also contact Leah Meeks, a BOR local representative, at (208) 378-5025. She will also be speaking on the grant program at the upcoming convention.

Water and energy efficiency grants focus on larger scale projects that result in quantifiable and sustained water savings and that may have several components intended to address a significant water management concern.

Projects include canal lining and piping, more comprehensive installation of irrigation flow measurement or canal automation improvements, installation of water meters and other similar projects. Projects may also include components that increase renewable energy use and improve energy efficiency, and projects that result in instream flows for endangered species and other fish and wildlife or support water sustainability in other ways.

Applications may be submitted to one of two funding groups:

Funding Group I: Up to \$300,000 will be available for smaller projects that may take up to two years to complete.

Funding Group II: Up to \$1,000,000 will be available for larger, phased projects that will take up to three years to complete. No more than \$500,000 in federal funds will be provided within a given year to complete each phase.

Proposals must be submitted by January 18, 2017, at 4:00 p.m. MST. The funding opportunity is available at www.grants.gov by searching for funding opportunity number BOR-DO-17-F012.

Mark Your Calendar

January 24-26, 2017 – IWUA Annual Convention – The Riverside Hotel – Boise

February 14-17, 2017 – IWUA Ditchrider Workshops – Idaho Falls, Rupert, Jerome, Meridian

February 23-24, 2017 – Family Farm Alliance Annual Meeting – Las Vegas, Nevada

February 28 - March 2, 2017 – IWUA Applicator Recertification Workshops – Rupert, Jerome, Meridian

June 12-13, 2017 – IWUA Summer Water Law & Resource Issues Seminar – Sun Valley

Ditchrider & Applicator Recertification Workshops

IWUA will conduct its annual series of ditchrider and applicator workshops in February and March at locations around the state.

Ditchrider workshops will be held February 14-17 at locations in Idaho Falls, Rupert, Jerome and Meridian, according to Karen Edwards, IWUA Program Manager.

Applicator recertification workshops will be held February 28-March 2 in Rupert, Jerome and Meridian.

Contact Edwards for more information on how to register for the workshops.

Drought Response Program Grant Funding Available

Two other funding opportunities are also now available from the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) for entities to develop drought contingency plans and build long-term solutions to drought. These two funding opportunities are part of (BOR's) Drought Response Program.

The drought contingency planning funding opportunity is for applicants to request up to \$200,000 to develop a new drought plan or to update an existing drought plan. Applicants may also request technical assistance from (BOR) for the development of elements of the Drought Contingency Plan. States, irrigation districts, water districts, Indian tribes and other organizations with water or power delivery authority located in the 17 Western United States and Hawaii are eligible for this funding opportunity. It is available at www.grants.gov by searching for funding opportunity number BOR-DO-17-F009.

The drought resiliency projects funding opportunity is for projects that will increase the reliability of water supply; improve water management; implement systems to facilitate the voluntary sale, transfer, or exchange of water; and provide benefits for fish, wildlife, and the environment to mitigate impacts caused by drought.

Applications may be submitted under one of two funding groups for resiliency projects:

Funding Group I: Up to \$300,000 for projects that can be completed within two years

Funding Group II: Up to \$750,000 for larger projects that can be completed within three years.

Applicants must also provide a 50 percent non-Federal cost-share. It is available at www.grants.gov by searching for funding opportunity number BOR-DO-17-F010.

Applications for both categories of grants are due on February 14, 2017.

NOW IS THE TIME TO SHOW SUPPORT FOR OUR RIVER SYSTEM!

A total of 16 scoping meetings and two webinars are being held around the Pacific Northwest looking at the operation of 14 federal hydropower projects in the Columbia Basin, according to Federal authorities.

Together the agencies are soliciting public input on the impact of Columbia River system operations such as flood risk management, irrigation, power generation, navigation, fish and wildlife, cultural resources, recreation and socioeconomic interests.

Hosted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation and the Bonneville Power Administration the public comment period began on September 30 and will close on January 17, 2017.

They will then analyze the comments and develop a reasonable range of alternatives for long-term system operations. The range of alternatives will be further analyzed in an Environment Impact Statement draft that is expected to be completed by 2020 with a final due in 2021.

MAKE YOUR VOICES KNOWN TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO SHOW SUPPORT FOR OUR RIVER SYSTEM!

**By Norm Semanko
IWUA Executive Director & General Counsel**

If you believe that our multi-use river system – including irrigation storage and supply – is vital to the preservation of our economy, our communities and our way of life. Our voices supporting our river system must be heard and now is the time to do it.

A public comment period is underway through **January 17**. You can submit your comments in writing via mail to: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Attn: CRSOEIS, P.O. Box 2870, Portland, Oregon 97208-2870. You can also submit comments via email at: www.crso.info. Don't delay because your comments must be submitted by **January 17**.

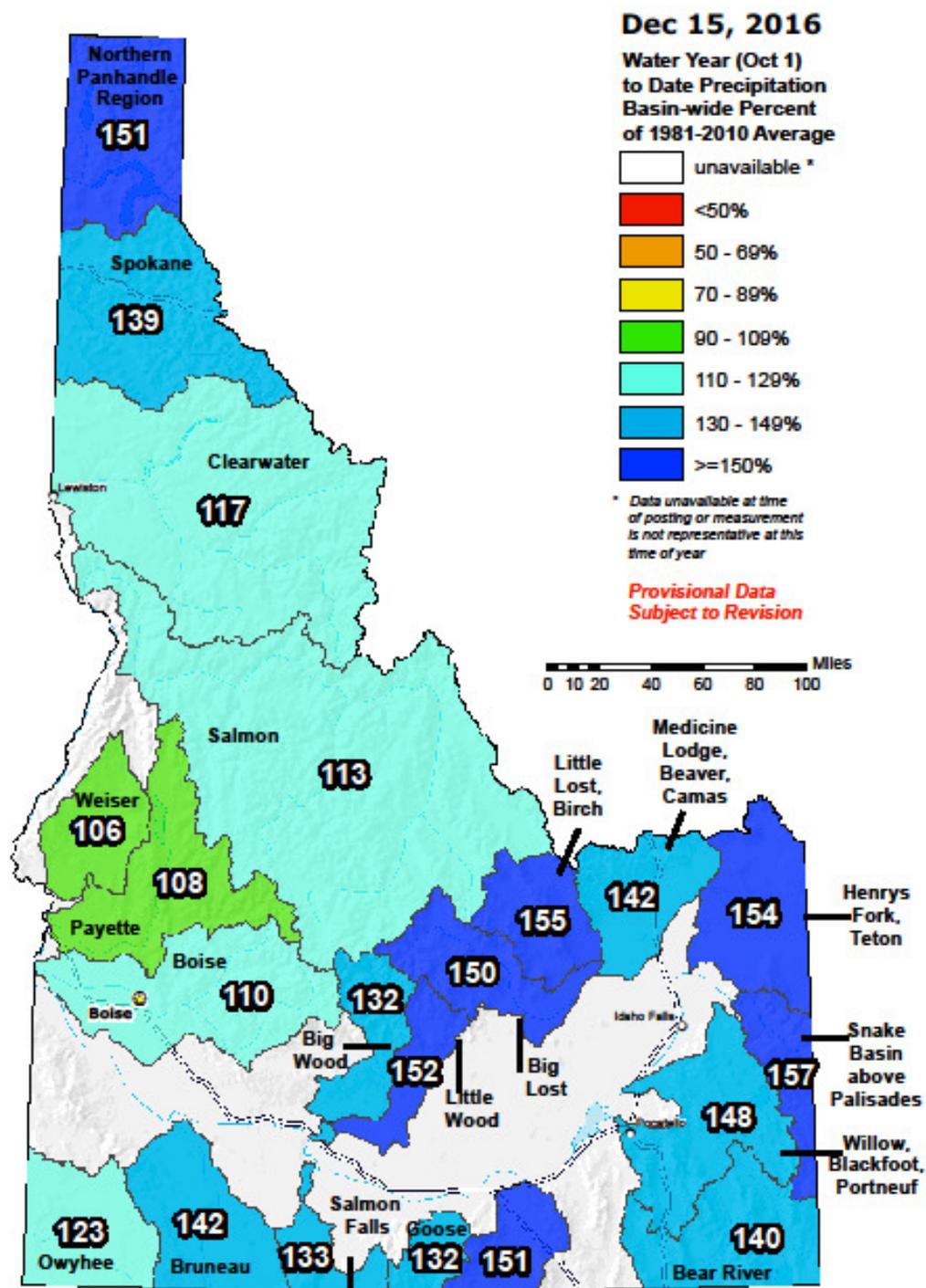
The federal agencies in charge of the Columbia River System Operations are beginning the process of preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The EIS will “present a range of alternatives for long-term system operations and evaluate the potential environmental and socioeconomic impacts on flood risk management, irrigation, power generation, navigation, fish and wildlife, cultural resources and recreation.”

The EIS process was a directive from the latest court ruling in the ongoing debate about how best to balance the benefits of the river system with the impacts to salmon and steelhead species protected under the Endangered Species Act.

A series of public scoping meetings are underway to examine issues and accept public comment. This is our opportunity to tell the federal agencies how we envision the future of our river system - including the continued operation and maintenance of the irrigation storage and supply dams and reservoirs built by the federal government. The Nez Perce Water Rights Agreement of 2004 shows that we can continue to pursue aggressive strategies to protect endangered species, while maintaining the multi-use river system that means so much to all of us.

We hope you will join us in expressing this position in the EIS process. Act now because it is imperative that the federal agencies hear and weigh comment from the water users during the process.

Idaho SNOTEL Water Year (Oct 1) to Date Precipitation % of Normal



The water year to date precipitation percent of normal represents the accumulated precipitation found at selected SNOTEL sites in or near the basin compared to the average value for those sites on this day. Data based on the first reading of the day (typically 00:00).

Prepared by:
 USDA/NRCS National Water and Climate Center
 Portland, Oregon
<http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov>

DEQ provides funding opportunities for drinking water and wastewater systems

Idaho drinking water and wastewater systems seeking financial assistance to improve water quality or address infrastructure challenges are encouraged to submit a letter of interest to the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) by January 16, 2017.

Each year, DEQ provides funding opportunities, in the form of grants or loans, to certain eligible drinking water and wastewater systems that are experiencing public health or water pollution issues.

Grants provide up to 50% of the cost of project facility planning activities (with the grantee providing a matching share from local sources). Grants awarded under this program must be used entirely to prepare facility plans that identify the most cost-effective, environmentally sound methods to upgrade eligible water and wastewater systems to achieve and maintain compliance with state and federal standards.

DEQ's loan funds provide low-interest funding—up to 100% of project costs—to design and construct system improvements. Loans also may be awarded to address nonpoint source pollution control activities such as pollutant trading, upgrading or replacing individual septic tanks, restoring wetlands, treating and controlling stormwater, and addressing agricultural runoff. For more information contact any DEQ regional office.



TO YOU AND YOURS

FROM YOUR IWUA STAFF