# Part I – Agency Profile

**Agency Overview**

The Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR or Department) serves the citizens of Idaho by ensuring that water is conserved and available to sustain Idaho’s economy, ecosystems, and the resulting quality of life. Gary Spackman, the Director of IDWR, was appointed to his position by Governor C.L. “Butch” Otter on July 11, 2012, after serving as Interim Director since July 16, 2009.

The eight-person Idaho Water Resource Board (IWRB or Board) was created by constitutional amendment in 1965. The current members of the Board are Jeff Raybould, Chair; Jo Ann Cole-Hansen, Vice Chair; Dean Stevenson, Secretary; Patrick McMahon, Albert Barker, Dale Van Stone, Marcus Gibbs, and Brian Olmstead.

The Director and the Board interact in a level working relationship. The Board sets long-term vision and policy, and finances, constructs, and operates water projects on behalf of the state. The Department administers water rights, performs regulatory functions, and develops tools and resources to record and monitor Idaho’s water supply. Title 42, Idaho Code is the primary authority for the existence of IDWR, IWRB, and their respective programs.

The Department’s central office is located in Boise. Four regional offices serve Idaho citizens: Northern Regional Office in Coeur d’Alene, Eastern Regional Office in Idaho Falls, Southern Regional Office in Twin Falls, and Western Regional Office in Boise. The Department operates two field offices, one in Salmon and the other in Preston. The Salmon office houses staff necessary for implementing Board projects and water administration in the Salmon River basin. The Preston field office coordinates the Bear River Basin Adjudication.

**Agency Core Functions**

The Department is comprised of four bureaus:

* Water Allocation Bureau: One of two regulatory bureaus within the Department. Water Allocation Bureau personnel work in the state office and in all four regional offices. The Water Allocation Bureau contains two units: the Water Rights Section and the Adjudication Section.
* Water Compliance Bureau: The other regulatory bureau within the Department. The Compliance Bureau is comprised of the Water Distribution Section, Ground Water Protection Section, Stream Channel Protection Unit, and the Floodplain Management Unit.
* Planning and Projects Bureau: The Planning and Projects Bureau primarily supports Board programs, including the State Water Plan, Idaho Water Supply Bank, water project development and funding, minimum stream flows, natural and recreational river designations, and comprehensive basin and aquifer planning. The Bureau contains a Water Projects Section. Several adjunct staff report directly to the Planning Bureau Chief.
* Technical Services Bureau: The Technical Services Bureau was created in FY23 and comprises the formerly stand-alone Geospatial Technology and Hydrology Sections. The Geospatial Technology Section develops spatial data, analysis, and tools in support of IDWR operations. These products include Evapotranspiration data and analysis, interactive maps, and field and desktop tools that allow IDWR staff to collect spatial components of IDWR data. The Hydrology Section gathers and archives scientific data, analyzes and models hydrologic data, and technically supports administrative decisions for the management, planning, and protection of the state’s water resources.

In addition, the Safety of Dams program is a stand-alone unit overseen by the Deputy Director. Finally, Legal Services, Support Services, and one HR Specialist, Sr. support IDWR operations. The Legal Services staff are employees of the Office of the Attorney General and housed at IDWR. Support Services include Fiscal and Purchasing.

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| **Revenue and Expenditures** | | | | |
| **Revenue** | **FY 2021** | **FY 2022** | **FY 2023** | **FY 2024** |
| General Revenue Fund | 18,957,600 | 20,564,800 | 22,521,200[[1]](#footnote-1) |  |
| Indirect Cost Recovery | 609,800 | 639,700 | 720,300 |  |
| Aquifer Planning & Mgmt. | 1,453,400 | 1,474,700 | 1,534,800 |  |
| ARPA SLFRF[[2]](#footnote-2) | 0 | 0 | 100,030,000 |  |
| Water Admin. Fund | 1,612,500 | 1,641,200 | 1,741,400 |  |
| Technology Infrast. Stab. | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |
| Adjudications[[3]](#footnote-3) | 38,000 | 38,000 | 38,000 |  |
| Federal Grant | 1,725,600 | 1,561,400 | 1,774,500 |  |
| Miscellaneous Revenue | 1,542,400 | 1,737,100 | 1,624,100 |  |
| **Total** | **$25,939,300** | **$27,656,900** | **$129,984,300** |  |
| **Expenditures** | **FY 2021** | **FY 2022** | **FY 2023** | **FY 2024** |
| Personnel Costs | 11,794,300 | 12,886,400 | 13,894,400 |  |
| Operating Expenditures | 5,147,000 | 5,701,200 | 7,564,700 |  |
| Capital Outlay | 140,000 | 89,900 | 247,300 |  |
| Trustee/Benefit Payments | 408,500 | 408,500 | 73,779,900 |  |
| **Total** | **$17,459,800** | **$19,086,000** | **$95,486,300** |  |

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| **Planning and Projects Bureau** | | | | |
| **Cases Managed and/or Key Services Provided** | **FY 2021** | **FY 2022** | **FY 2023** | **FY 2024** |
| **Water Resource Board** |  |  |  |  |
| Loans | 3 for $171,000 | 8 for $4,871,615 | 15 for $39,265,720 |  |
| Revenue Bond Issuances | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |
| **Research and Project Development** | |  |  |  |
| Surface Water Storage Studies in Progress | 3 | 1 | 1 |  |
| **ESPA Aquifer Management** |  |  |  |  |
| Acre-feet (AF) Recharged into Aquifer | 130,463 AF | 157,586 AF | 146,943 AF |  |
| **Streamflow Improvement Projects** |  |  |  |  |
| Upper Salmon River Basin | 6 for $1,058,261 | 1 for $27,000 | 4 for $610,646 |  |
| **Water Supply Bank** |  |  |  |  |
| Rental Applications Received | 124 | 129 | 104 |  |
| Rental Applications Processed | 127 | 59 | 130 |  |
| Lease Applications Received | 219 | 170 | 124 |  |
| Lease Applications Processed | 235 | 103 | 186 |  |
| Lease Contract Release Requests | 2 | 12 | 13 |  |

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| **Water Allocation Bureau** | | | | |
| **Cases Managed and/or Key Services Provided** | **FY 2021** | **FY 2022** | **FY 2023** | **FY 2024** |
| **Adjudications (State Law Based Claims)** |  |  |  |  |
| New Claims Filed | 322 | 3,035 | 5,938 |  |
| Recommendations Submitted to the Court | 112 | 2,303 | 132 |  |
| Number of Active Claims Awaiting the Director’s Report | 2,135 | 3,010 | 8,807 |  |
| **Applications for Permit** |  |  |  |  |
| Number of Applications Received | 523 | 982 | 1,101 |  |
| Number of Unprotested Applications Pending | 208 | 452 | 410 |  |
| Number of Protested Applications Pending | 155 | 144 | 145 |  |
| Total Applications in Progress | 363 | 596 | 555 |  |
| Total Permits Issued[[4]](#footnote-4) | 509 | 717 | 1,104 |  |
| Applications on Moratorium Hold | 705 | 701 | 714 |  |

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| **Water Allocation Bureau (Cont.)** | | | | |
| **Cases Managed and/or Key Services Provided** | **FY 2021** | **FY 2022** | **FY 2023** | **FY 2024** |
| **Water Right Transfers** |  |  |  |  |
| Number of Applications Received | 279 | 260 | 281 |  |
| Number of Applications Resolved | 291 | 253 | 267 |  |
| Number of Unprotested Applications Pending | 90 | 85 | 109 |  |
| Number of Protested Applications Pending | 27 | 28 | 37 |  |
| Total Number Applications Pending | 117 | 113 | 146 |  |
| **Water Right Licenses** |  |  |  |  |
| Number of Licenses Issued | 412 | 241 | 326 |  |
| Number of Permits Needing Water Right Licensing[[5]](#footnote-5) | 581 | 604 | 623 |  |
| **Water Right Ownership Changes** |  |  |  |  |
| Number of Ownership Changes Processed | 2,581 | 3,224 | 2,750 |  |
| Number of Ownership Changes Pending | 645 | 473 | 278 |  |
| **Safety of Dams Program** |  |  |  |  |
| Inspections of Existing Dams | 93 | 87 | 91 |  |
| Percentage of dams inspected each year that are necessary to comply with the annual inspection schedule[[6]](#footnote-6) | 81.6% | 76.3% | 80% |  |
| Design Review & Approval - New Const. or Repair | 11 | 13 | 8 |  |
| Percentage of High Hazard Dams with Up-to-Date Operation/Emergency Plans | 63% | 58.7% | 43% |  |
| Number of Dam Failures or Uncontrolled Releases of Stored Water[[7]](#footnote-7) | 0 | 0 | 1 |  |

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| **Water Compliance Bureau** | | | | |
| **Cases Managed and/or Key Services Provided** | **FY 2021** | **FY 2022** | **FY 2023** | **FY 2024** |
| **Water Distribution Section** | | | | |
| Water Districts Created, Expanded, or Modified | 0 | 3 | 5 |  |
| Measurement Orders Issued (comprehensive only) | 0 | 1 | 1 |  |
| **Ground Water Protection Section** | | | | |
| Well Permits Issued | 4,739 | 4,938 | 4,648 |  |
| Driller Licenses Issued[[8]](#footnote-8) | 283 | 264 | 261 |  |
| Injection Well Apps Processed | 525 | 932 | 493 |  |
| Geothermal Well Apps Processed | 0 | 0 | 1 |  |
| Percentage of Permitted Wells Inspected | 23.4% | 26.5% | 29.1% |  |
| Number of IGWA well driller workshops or online course presentations supported by IDWR | 1 | 2 | 3 |  |
| **Enforcement (Water Rights, Well Construction, and Stream Channel Alteration)** | | | | |
| Notices of Violation Issued | 12 | 20 | 17 |  |
| **Stream Channel Protection Unit** | | | | |
| Stream Channel Alteration (SCA) Apps Received | 324 | 333 | 329 |  |
| SCA Permits Issued[[9]](#footnote-9) | 234 | 250 | 271 |  |
| Percentage of SCA applications processed within 60 days of receipt (Min. Standard Projects only) | 88.6% | 85.8% | 82.3% |  |
| Percentage of permitted SCA activities receiving pre or post inspection | 42.7% | 38% | 31% |  |
| **Recreational Mining** | | | | |
| Letter Permits Issued | 343 | 237 | 238 |  |
| **Flood Plain Management Program** | | | | |
| NFIP Community Asst. Visits (CAVs) Opened or Ongoing | 24 | 21 | 8 |  |
| CAVs Closed | 4 | 9 | 15 |  |
| NFIP Comm. Asst. Contacts (CACs) Initiated[[10]](#footnote-10) | 25 | 6 | 0 |  |
| Training, Outreach, & Presentations Given | 13 | 9 | 9 |  |

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| **Technical Services Bureau[[11]](#footnote-11)** | | | | | | | |
| **Hydrology Section: Cases Managed and/or Key Services Provided** | **FY 2021** | | **FY 2022** | | **FY 2023** | | **FY 2024** |
| **Surface and Ground Water Investigations** | | | | | | | |
| Initiated | 1 | 1 | | 1 | |  | |
| Ongoing | 5 | 4 | | 4 | |  | |
| Completed | 0 | 1 | | 0 | |  | |
| **Ground Water Model Revisions and Recalibration efforts** | | | | | | | |
| Initiated | 0 | 0 | | 1 | |  | |
| Ongoing | 1 | 1 | | 2 | |  | |
| Completed | 1 | 0 | | 1 | |  | |
| **Water Rights Accounting Program Modernization efforts** | | | | | | | |
| Initiated | 2 | 2 | | 0 | |  | |
| Ongoing | 1 | 1 | | 3 | |  | |
| Completed | 0 | 2 | | 0 | |  | |
| **Water Measurement Sites** | | | | | | | |
| Total Water Measurement Sites | 1,508 | 1,593 | | 1,593 | |  | |
| Total Ground Water Measurement Sites | 1,256 | 1,353 | | 1,328 | |  | |
| Managed Recharge | 87 | 85 | | 89 | |  | |
| Geothermal | 37 | 42 | | 42 | |  | |
| Ground Water Quality | 303 | 256 | | 233 | |  | |
| Water Level Monitoring only | 829 | 970 | | 964[[12]](#footnote-12) | |  | |
| Total Surface Water Sites | 252 | 240 | | 265 | |  | |
| Surface Water Quality | 16 | 16 | | 6 | |  | |
| Surface Water Gaging[[13]](#footnote-13) | 236 | 224 | | 259 | |  | |
| **Equipment Deployment** | | | | | | | |
| New Pressure Transducers Deployed in Wells | 25 | 15 | | 26 | |  | |
| Telemetry stations and instrumentation upgraded[[14]](#footnote-14) | 1 | 10 | | 21 | |  | |

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| **Technical Services Bureau** | | | | |
| **Geospatial Technology Section: Cases Managed and/or Key Services Provided** | **FY 2021** | **FY 2022** | **FY 2023** | **FY 2024** |
| **GIS Large Database, Development, & Integration Projects** | |  |  |  |
| Initiated | 2 | 4 | 3 |  |
| Ongoing | 6 | 6 | 4 |  |
| Continuous[[15]](#footnote-15) | 0 | 0 | 3 |  |
| Completed | 1 | 3 | 3 |  |
| Target GIS projects and requests completed | 89 | 193 | 132 |  |

**Licensing Freedom Act**

Agencies who participate in licensure must report on the number of applicants denied licensure or license renewal and the number of disciplinary actions taken against license holders.

| **License or Permit** | **FY 2021** | **FY 2022** | **FY 2023** | **FY 2024** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Class I Operator Permit** | | | | |
| Total Number of Licenses | 85 | 95 | 69 |  |
| Number of New Applicants Denied Licensure | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |
| Number of Applicants Refused Renewal of a License | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |
| Number of Complaints Against Licensees | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |
| Number of Final Disciplinary Actions Against Licensees | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |
| **Class II Operator Permit** | | | | |
| Total Number of Licenses | 33 | 33 | 34 |  |
| Number of New Applicants Denied Licensure | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |
| Number of Applicants Refused Renewal of a License | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |
| Number of Complaints Against Licensees | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |
| Number of Final Disciplinary Actions Against Licensees | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |
| **Licensed Driller** | | | | |
| Total Number of Licenses | 165 | 136 | 158 |  |
| Number of New Applicants Denied Licensure | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |
| Number of Applicants Refused Renewal of a License | 0 | 0 | 0 |  |
| Number of Complaints Against Licensees | 3 | 9 | 0 |  |
| Number of Final Disciplinary Actions Against Licensees | 2 | 1 | 1 |  |

***Part II – Performance Measures***

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| **IDWR Goal 1:** Manage and allocate water resources as required by statute to optimize economic activityand protect public safety. | | | | | | |
| **Performance Measure** |  | **FY 2021** | **FY 2022** | **FY 2023** | **FY 2024** | **FY 2025** |
| 1. **Water Right Licenses**   Number of Permits Needing Water Right Licensing | **actual** | **581** | **604** | **623** |  |  |
| *target* | *550* | *450* | *575* | *600* |  |
| 1. **Water Right Transfers**   Number of Pending Water Right Transfer Applications[[16]](#footnote-16) | **actual** | **117** | **113** | **146** |  |  |
| *target* | *100* | *100* | *100* | *100* |  |
| 1. **Water Supply Bank**[[17]](#footnote-17)   Median number of days to receive, process, and recommend water supply bank leases and rentals | **actual** | **48** | **52** | **27** |  |  |
| *target* | *30* | *30* | *30* | *30* |  |
| 1. **Adjudications (State Based Claims)**   Total Claims Taken and Recommendations Submitted to the Idaho Water Adjudications Court[[18]](#footnote-18) | **actual** | **434** | **5,338** | **6,070** |  |  |
| *target* | *N/A* | *5,500* | *4,000* | *4,000* |  |
| 1. **Ground Water Protection**   Percentage of wells inspected during construction, modification, or decommissioning | **actual** | **23.4%** | **26.5%** | **29.1%** |  |  |
| *target* | *25%* | *30%* | *30%* | *26%* |  |

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| **IDWR Goal 2:** Administer and regulate water rights, protect senior water rights, and conserve Idaho’s water for future use. | | | | | | |
| **Performance Measure** |  | **FY 2021** | **FY 2022** | **FY 2023** | **FY 2024** | **FY 2025** |
| 1. **Water Distribution**   Water Districts created or modified | **actual** | **0** | **3** | **5** |  |  |
| *target* | *1-2* | *1-2* | *1-2* | *1-2* |  |
| 1. **Ground Water Measurement Sites**   New Pressure transducers in monitoring wells | **actual** | **25** | **15** | **26** |  |  |
| *target* | *25* | *25* | *25* | *25* |  |
| 1. **Telemetry stations and instrumentation upgraded** | **actual** | **1** | **10** | **21[[19]](#footnote-19)** |  |  |
| *target* | *5[[20]](#footnote-20)* | *5* | *5* | *10* |  |

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| **IDWR Goal 3:** Promote and finance projects that will advance the sustainability of water resources into the foreseeable future and that will optimize the use of water of the State of Idaho. | | | | | | |
| **Performance Measure** |  | **FY 2021** | **FY 2022** | **FY 2023** | **FY 2024** | **FY 2025** |
| 1. **Water Resource Board**   Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer acre-feet (AF) recharged into aquifer | **actual** | **130,463 AF** | **157,586 AF** | **146,943 AF** |  |  |
| *target* | *250,000 AF* | *250,000 AF* | *250,000 AF* | *250,000 AF* |  |

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1. $6 million from the General Revenue Fund is transferred to the IWRB’s continuously appropriated funds. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This revenue source was previously labeled ‘Economic Recovery Fund’. Beginning with this FY23 report, this revenue is re-labeled ‘American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF)’ to better describe the funding source. The Department will continue to receive ARPA funds until December 31, 2026. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. This revenue source was previously called ‘N. Idaho Adjudication’. In FY22, IDWR renamed the revenue source ‘Adjudications’ to reflect all adjudication activity in the State. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The label for this metric was previously “Total Applications Completed” and represented the total number of water right permits issued by IDWR in a fiscal year. For clarity, in FY22 IDWR relabeled this metric as “Total Permits Issued.” [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The label for this metric was previously “Number of Licenses Pending" and represented the total number of permits with proof of beneficial use filed still needing licensing as of the end of the fiscal year. Starting in FY23, IDWR relabeled this metric to more accurately reflect the values reported. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. This performance measure was newly added to IDWR’s FY24-27 Strategic Plan and is the percentage of total dams inspected that required inspection in the reporting fiscal year. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The “Number of Dam Failures or Uncontrolled Releases of Stored Water” metric was added to the Performance Report in FY21. The prevention of dam failures and uncontrolled releases of water is a primary indicator of the level of success of the State’s dam safety program. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The annual number of driller licenses issued includes Driller Licenses and Class I and II Operator Permits. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Some permits issued in the current fiscal year were received in the previous fiscal year. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. This metric was incorrectly labeled ‘CACs Completed’ and has been corrected to ‘CACs Initiated’, consistent with IDWR’s Strategic Plan. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. In FY23, IDWR combined its Hydrology and Geospatial Services Sections under the new Technical Services Bureau. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Plus 1,034 additional wells for FY23 mass measurement events in the Big Lost River Basin (123), Mountain Home Plateau (119) and Eastern Snake River Plain (792). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Includes USGS gages and return flow sites. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. The Department updated this metric in FY23 from “New telemetry systems installed at stream gage stations” to “Telemetry stations and instrumentation upgraded”. The Department is now in the maintenance stage for telemetry development and is not installing as many new telemetry stations as done previously. However, newly installed telemetry stations will still be included in the fiscal year-end total of this metric. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. The Department added “Continuous” projects to the FY23 Performance Report to represent GTS projects that do not have an end date. “Ongoing” projects represent GTS projects with a long-term end date. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Pending transfer applications represent the backlog of unprocessed transfer applications at the end of the fiscal year. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Effective FY20, IDWR changed the Water Supply Bank performance measure. The previous measure tracked the number of applications received, over which IDWR has no control. The new measure tracks the median number of days to process applications. Number of applications received and processed are still available in Part I of this report. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. The previous adjudication performance measure, “Percent of Recommendations filed in the CSRBA and the PRBA by basin”, does not account for early years of basin-wide adjudication when IDWR is taking claims rather than completing recommendations. In FY21, IDWR began reporting on the sum of claims-taking and recommendation activities. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. The actual FY20, FY21, and FY22 totals for performance measure #8 represent new telemetry systems installed at stream gage stations. Beginning with FY23, the Department updated this measure to include both upgraded and newly installed telemetry stations. The actual FY23 total, 21, accounts for seven upgrades and 14 newly installed telemetry stations. Because IDWR is in the maintenance stage of telemetry installation, there is more opportunity for upgrades than new installations, and thus the benchmark is increased to ‘10’. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. In FY21, the benchmark for this performance measure was reduced from ‘10’ telemetry systems deployed to ‘5’ telemetry systems deployed. IDWR’s Strategic Plans FY22-25 and FY23-26 incorrectly list the benchmark for this performance measure as ‘10’. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)