



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF
WATER RESOURCES

Strategic Plan

Fiscal Years 2024 - 2027

July 1, 2023

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About the Idaho Department of Water Resources

Agency History

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, disputes about water use created the need for recording and regulating water rights. In response, the 1895 Idaho Legislature created the Office of State Engineer. Water users could file applications to appropriate water with the agency, obtain written authorization to develop a water use, and perfect a recorded water right. The agency was renamed the Department of Reclamation in 1919 and then the Department of Water Administration in 1970. In 1965, the Legislature created the Idaho Water Resource Board (IWRB or Board) and, in 1974, renamed the Department of Water Administration to the Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR or Department).

The Department Today

Consistent with its original legislative purpose, IDWR approves or denies proposals to appropriate water or change existing water rights, archives water right records, recommends and records adjudicated water rights, and oversees the delivery of water in times of shortage. To promote sustainable development of Idaho's water resources, the Department gathers information and data on water resources. Additional responsibilities include safety of dams, groundwater protection (well construction oversight), regulation of stream channel alterations, and coordination with local communities to comply with the National Flood Insurance Program.

The Board authors and updates Idaho's State Water Plan for the use, protection, and development of water resources in the state. The Board also administers several state monetary accounts in trust for funding water projects and improvements within the state.

The Department and the Board interact in a level working relationship. The Board establishes long-term vision and policy and develops water projects on behalf of the state. The Department administers water rights, performs regulatory functions, and implements the Board's water projects through IDWR's Planning and Projects Bureau.

There are four bureaus within IDWR: the Water Allocation Bureau, the Water Compliance Bureau, the Planning and Projects Bureau, and the Technical Services Bureau, created in fiscal year 2023 (FY23). The Technical Services Bureau oversees IDWR's Hydrology Section and Geospatial Technology Section (GTS). The Purchasing, Financial, and Human Resources groups support IDWR staff. Beginning in FY24, state agency human resources staff are centralized and managed under the Department of Human Resources. (See organizational chart on page 4).

Looking Forward

Greater demand for a finite supply of water has changed the focus of IDWR and the Board in recent years. To protect senior priority water rights, IDWR has limited water appropriations in many areas of the state and has regulated water use in times of water shortage. The Board has exerted significant efforts to enhance water supplies to address shortages and future needs. These efforts will intensify as the demand for water from prospective water users increases. The challenge for IDWR and the Board is to fulfill the sometimes-conflicting directives of promoting

sustainable development of Idaho’s water resources for the benefit of its citizens while, at the same time, protecting senior water right holders.

About IDWR’s Strategic Plan

Statutory Requirement

Idaho law requires state agencies to develop a strategic plan that is the foundation for performance commitments and assessing progress toward agency goals (Idaho Code § 67-1903). Strategic plans are based on the state fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). This document strategically plans for a 4-year period, including the year in which it is developed, and is updated annually.

Goals, Objectives, & Performance Measures

This plan contains four goals. Each goal relates to one of four essential IDWR functions: managing water resources, administering water rights, financing projects, and supporting staff. Specific objectives and related tasks lead the Department to meet these goals. Performance measures with defined benchmarks, associated with those objectives, inform the Department of its progress.

Most performance measures in this strategic plan are reported in IDWR’s annual fiscal year end Performance Report¹. The performance measures reported in Part II of the annual Performance Report are listed in this plan in **bold** font and are numbered according to the order listed in the annual Performance Report. The bureau responsible for accomplishing an objective is stated in parentheses after each objective. Where applicable, IDWR-specific headers listed in the Performance Report under “Cases Managed, Key Services Provided” are listed and underlined in this plan, below the associated objective.

External Factors

Several factors outside of the Department’s control could affect this plan and the Department’s pursuit and achievement of the stated goals:

- Availability of funding
- Federal and State regulatory actions and mandates
- Weather patterns, droughts, natural disasters, and other environmental factors
- Litigation and court decisions
- Staff recruitment and retention in a challenging job market

Plan Development and Approval

The IDWR Strategic Plan, developed by the Director’s Executive Team, establishes the agency’s near and long-term priorities and tangible objectives. By evaluating productivity with performance measures, the Department and the public can assess IDWR’s progress and success

¹ The Department’s Performance Reports, Strategic Plans, and Annual Reports are available to view and download on IDWR’s website, here: <https://idwr.idaho.gov/about-idwr/>.

in implementing and achieving these goals. The Department welcomes any input from staff and publishes the plan for all IDWR employees' reference.

The Director's Executive Team consists of the following: Gary Spackman, Director; Mat Weaver, Deputy Director; Tim Luke, Compliance Bureau Chief; Brian Patton, Planning & Projects Bureau Chief; Shelley Keen, Regional Operations Bureau Chief; the Water Allocation Bureau Chief²; Matt Anders, Technical Services Bureau Chief; Sascha Marston, Fiscal Officer; Jacci Ellis-Gibbons, Sr. Human Resource Specialist; and Megan Jenkins, Administrative Assistant II.

IDWR's Mission, Vision, and Commitment

Our Mission:

To serve the citizens of Idaho by ensuring that water is conserved and available for the sustainability of Idaho's economy, ecosystems, and resulting quality of life.

Our Vision:

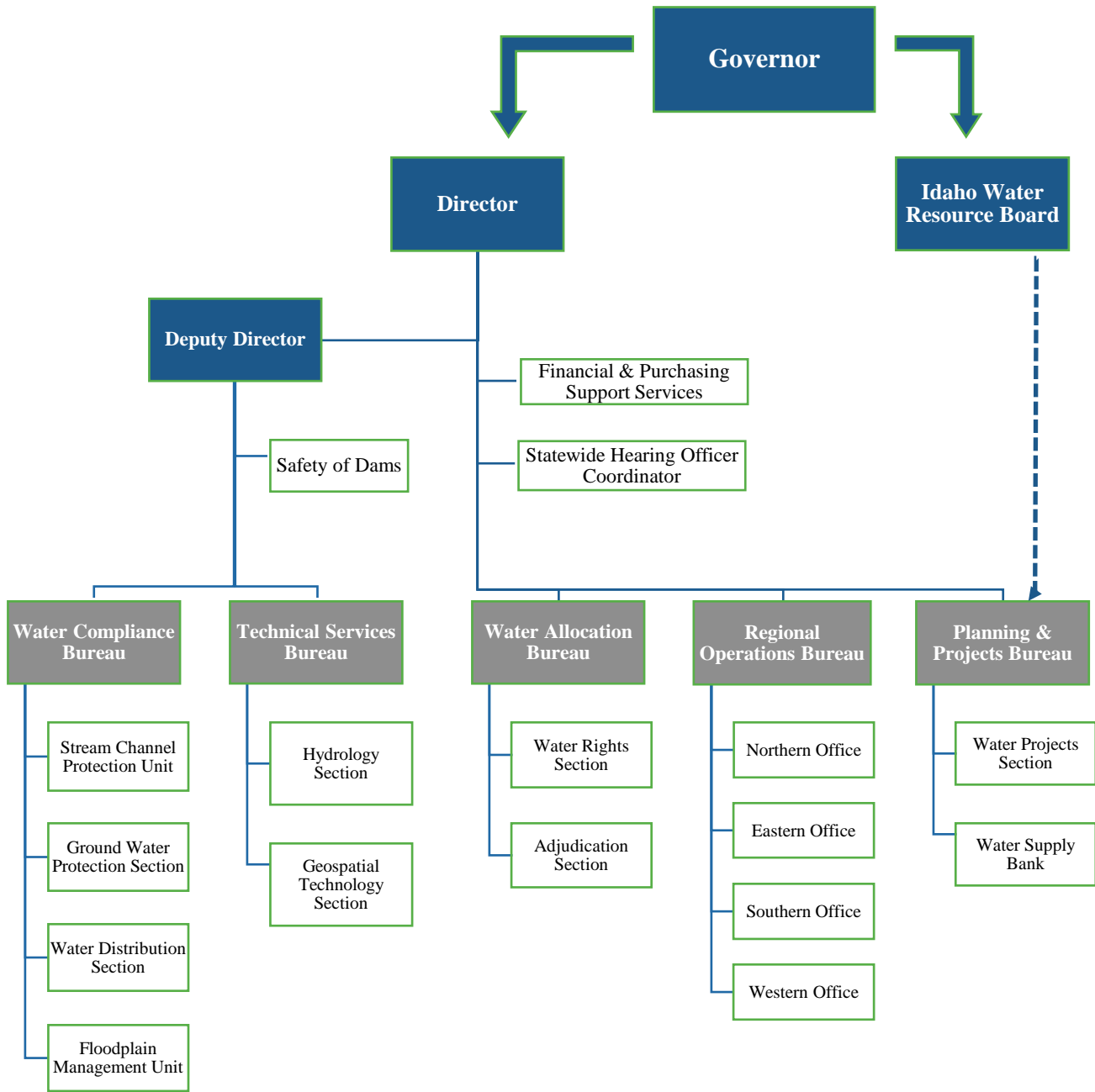
To achieve excellence in water management through innovation, efficiency, planning, and communication.

Our Commitment:

- Sustain Idaho's Water Resources for the public good.
- Serve our customers responsively.
- Balance competing interests consistent with Idaho law.
- Be forward-looking and innovative.
- Deliver uncompromising ethical behavior.
- Communicate early, honestly, and completely.
- Return to the taxpayer an honest day's time and effort.

² Near the end of FY23, the Department's Water Allocation Bureau Chief moved into IDWR's new, Regional Operations Bureau Chief position. The Department is actively recruiting for a Water Allocation Bureau Chief.

IDWR Organizational Structure



Goal 1: Manage and Allocate Water Resources as Required by Statute to Optimize Economic Activity and Protect Public Safety

The Department manages and allocates the state's water resources. Orderly administration of finite water resources begins with an accurate determination of existing water rights through court adjudications. To sustain economic activity and growth, IDWR implements efficient processes for appropriating water for new uses and for changing existing water rights. The Department protects public safety by enforcing minimum design criteria and construction standards for wells, stream channel alterations, and impoundment structures associated with dams and mine tailings.

Goal 1, Objective 1: Reduce processing delays for the following major water right processes: applications for permit, water right licensing, applications for transfer, water supply bank leases and rentals, and ownership changes. (Water Allocation and Planning & Projects Bureaus)

Benchmarks for the water right processes below reflect the Department’s desired maximum fiscal year-end pending workload. Knowing the pending year-end workload of licenses, applications for permits, applications for transfer, and ownership change notices helps the Department develop and assign the resources needed to timely and efficiently complete water appropriation processes. The Planning & Projects Bureau oversees the Water Supply Bank (WSB). For WSB leases and rentals, a benchmark of 30 days reflects IDWR’s estimate of routine processing times under normal workloads.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY24 Benchmark	FY25 Benchmark	FY26 Benchmark	FY27 Benchmark
1. Number of permits needing Water Right Licensing	Water Rights Section	600³	575	525	475
2. Number of pending Water Right Transfer applications	Water Rights Section	100	100	100	100
Number of pending, unprotested Applications for Permit, not subject to a moratorium	Water Rights Section	275	250	225	200
Number of pending, protested Applications for Permit, not subject to a moratorium	Water Rights Section	120 ⁴	100	80	60
Number of pending Water Right Ownership Change applications	Water Rights Section	250	250	250	250
3. Median number of days to receive, process, and recommend WSB Leases and Rentals	Water Supply Bank with assistance from Water Rights Section	30	30	30	30

³In FY24 IDWR continued the trend begun in FY23, by increasing the benchmarks for pending water right licensing. In FY23, population growth in northern and western Idaho drove a higher-than-expected number of applications for new water rights, which diverted IDWR resources from water right licensing. Also, the ongoing tight labor market impaired IDWR’s ability to timely recruit and maintain staff for the Water Rights program, including water right licensing.

⁴ In FY23 IDWR was not able to reduce the number of protested applications for permit to 120. In response, IDWR maintained the benchmark at 120 in FY24.

Goal 1, Objective 2: Determine the validity (or elements) of each claim to a water right filed in Idaho’s general adjudications and submit Director’s Reports for recommendation on claims to the Idaho Water Adjudications Court. (Water Allocation Bureau)

Adjudications (State Law Based Claims)

- Complete the second round of commencement notice mailings in the Clark Fork – Pend Oreille River Basin Adjudication (Basins 96 and 97) **by December 31, 2023.**
- Complete the first round of Bear River Basin Adjudication commencement notice mailings for Basins 11 and 13 **by March 31, 2024.**

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY24 Benchmark ⁵	FY25 Benchmark	FY26 Benchmark	FY27 Benchmark
4. Total number of statewide adjudication claims taken, and recommendations submitted to the Idaho Water Adjudications Court	Adjudication Section	4000	4000	4000	3000

Goal 1, Objective 3⁶: Recruit, develop, and maintain a trained and experienced group of core Hearing Officers to promptly resolve contested case applications. (IDWR Director)

- Send at least one Hearing Officer per year to training through the National Judicial College, **ongoing.**
- Each trained Hearing Officer shall preside over and resolve, a minimum of two contested case disputes per fiscal year, **ongoing.**
- Hearing Officers render written decisions within at least 90 days from the date of hearing, **ongoing.**

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY24 Benchmark	FY25 Benchmark	FY26 Benchmark	FY27 Benchmark
Number of Hearing Officer training workshops conducted by IDWR	Hearing Officer Coordinator	4	4	4	4

⁵ Benchmarks for performance measure #4 are reduced for the FY24-FY27 strategic planning period. In FY23 the Department revised operation plans in adjudication to distribute workload more evenly by spreading out submission of planned Director's Reports, and waiting until FY27 to take claims in Bear River basins 15 and 17.

⁶ Beginning with this FY24-27 Strategic Plan, former Goal 1 Objective 3, Modernize IDWR’s workflow tracking and record retention processes in the water rights program to reduce labor costs, enhance accessibility, and limit paper use, is merged with Goal 4 Objective 2. Both objectives aimed to enhance the capabilities of staff in the Water Rights Section through improved workflow processes and a defined record retention policy. Goal 1 objectives listed after the previous G1O3 are re-numbered to reflect this change.

Goal 1, Objective 4: Timely issue Stream Channel Alteration (SCA) permits and inspect SCA activities to balance the protection of private property, public safety, and stream channels. (Water Compliance Bureau)

Stream Channel Alterations Program

Idaho Code § 42-3802 states that SCA permit applications shall be submitted to IDWR not less than 60 days prior to commencing project construction. The Department increased its benchmark of percent of SCA permit applications processed within 60 days in the FY23-FY26 Strategic Plan, from 75% to 80%, due to progress made in FY21 and FY22, and current program staffing levels. Projected performance for FY23 is about 75% given some staffing shortage during the first half of the year. The 80% target may be achieved over the next four years if staffing levels remain constant.

Pre and post SCA permit inspections assist landowners with the proper planning and implementation of projects. The Department increased its benchmarks for SCA permit inspections beginning in FY22, and again in FY23, based on recent annual inspection performance, the average annual number of permits approved, and current staffing levels. Projected performance in FY23 is about 38% to 40% due again to staffing shortage over the first half of the year. The benchmark for the next four years is revised to gradually increase from 40% in FY24 to 45% in FY27.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY24 Benchmark	FY25 Benchmark	FY26 Benchmark	FY27 Benchmark
Percentage of SCA applications processed within 60 days of receipt (minimum standard projects only)	Stream Channel Protection Unit	80%	80%	80%	80%
Percent of permitted SCA activities receiving pre- or post-inspection	Stream Channel Protection Unit	40%	42%	43%	45%

Goal 1, Objective 5: Operate and manage the Safety of Dams program through timely inspections and sufficient emergency planning to ensure public safety and prevent loss of property. (IDWR Deputy Director)

Idaho Code § 42-1710 requires IDWR to regulate dams, reservoirs, and mine tailings impoundment structures for the protection of life and property. The Department currently regulates nearly 600 water storage dams and more than 20 mine tailings impoundment structures in Idaho. Dam Safety program personnel inspect existing projects according to the potential consequences that a dam failure and sudden release of water would present to downstream life and property. The frequency of individual project inspections depends on the project’s hazard

rating and other factors including the project’s age, physical condition, size, and storage capacity. The Department must inspect all statutory sized dams no less than every five years.

Safety of Dams Program

- Coordinate with dam owners to ensure all high-hazard dams have an up-to-date Operation/Emergency Plan, prepared by the dam owner, and reviewed by IDWR’s Dam Safety Program, **ongoing**.
- Inspect high and significant hazard dams as scheduled annually per hazard classification and comply with the statutory requirement to inspect every dam at least once every five years, **ongoing**.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY24 Benchmark	FY25 Benchmark	FY26 Benchmark	FY27 Benchmark
Percent of high-hazard dams with an up-to-date Operation/Emergency Plan.	Safety of Dams Program	70%	80%	90%	100%
Percentage of dams inspected each year that are necessary to comply with the annual inspection schedule.	Safety of Dams Program	100%	100%	100%	100%

(Goal 1 objectives are continued on the following page).

Goal 1, Objective 6: Inspect wells during construction and modification to ensure well construction activities do not harm the public, or waste or contaminate water resources. (Water Compliance Bureau)

Groundwater Protection

The Department has statutory authority for the state-wide administration of the rules governing well construction and licensing of well drillers in Idaho. Prior to drilling a well, the well owner or well driller must first obtain a drilling permit from IDWR. In addition, all wells must be constructed by a well driller with a valid IDWR issued license.

Well construction activities include well seal placement and well decommissioning. The Department targets 5-10% of inspections to occur during well seal placement. Remaining inspections occur during other phases of well construction or modification. The number of well construction applications has steadily increased since FY17. A benchmark of 26% to 28% of wells inspected reflects IDWR’s ability to inspect wells based on current staffing resources, recent annual inspection progress, the number of new wells drilled annually, and increasing public demand on staff resources to manage groundwater resources.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY24 Benchmark	FY25 Benchmark	FY26 Benchmark	FY27 Benchmark
5. Percentage of wells inspected during construction or modification	Ground Water Protection Section	26%	28%	28%	28%

Goal 1, Objective 7: Educate and engage with regulated industries, landowners, and communities regarding resource protection laws, rules, and policies. (Water Compliance Bureau)

Groundwater Protection and Flood Plain Management Program

The Department has statutory responsibility for the licensing of well drillers and operators in Idaho. To protect public safety and water resources, IDWR works with the Idaho Groundwater Association (IGWA) to facilitate well driller and operator training workshops.

The Department’s Floodplain Coordinator implements the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) in Idaho. Management of the program involves reviewing city ordinances, adopted in compliance with federal rules, to execute the NFIP at the community level. The Department assists communities in adopting floodplain ordinances to ensure the community qualifies for the NFIP, which is necessary for citizens to obtain and keep FEMA flood insurance. The Floodplain Coordinator also helps communities in planning for floods, conducts training on floodplain protection, and reviews work done within floodplains to ensure that it will not cause an increase in flood levels when flooding occurs.

Beginning in FY23, IDWR reduced benchmarks for the number of newly initiated NFIP Community Assistance Visits (CAVs), or community audits. The Department reduced the

backlog of open CAVs over the past one to two years from about 30 to seven. Minimizing the number of new CAVs over the next four fiscal years will allow IDWR’s Floodplain Coordinator to maintain a reasonable CAV workload while assisting many other communities and the general public with day-to-day technical questions about NFIP regulations. For similar reasons, IDWR reduced benchmarks in recent years for the number of newly initiated Community Assistance Contacts (CACs), or reviews of community floodplain ordinances and implementation.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY24 Benchmark	FY25 Benchmark	FY26 Benchmark	FY27 Benchmark
Number of IGWA well driller workshops or online course presentations supported by IDWR	Ground Water Protection Section	2-3	2-3	2-3	2-3
Number of NFIP Community Assistance Visits (CAV) initiated	Floodplain Management Program	2	4	4	5
Number of NFIP Community Assistance Contacts (CAC) initiated	Floodplain Management Program	6	6	6	6
Number of NFIP Training, Outreach, & Presentations facilitated by IDWR	Floodplain Management Program	6	6	6	6

Goal 2: Administer and Regulate Water Rights, Protect Senior Water Rights, and Conserve Idaho's Water for Future Use

Idaho law tasks the Director of IDWR to “direct and control” the distribution of natural water sources within the state. To orderly distribute water, the Department creates water districts. Watermasters, elected by water users, distribute water within water districts, measure water diversion and use, control and curtail diversions of water, and curtail unauthorized uses. Administration of water rights includes the development and enforcement of water measurement standards to support accuracy and fairness. Accurate and fair administration and regulation of water rights also require data collection and the development of tools to account for water diversions, assess the hydrologic impact of water diversions, and predict future water supplies.

Goal 2, Objective 1: Create or modify water districts to establish additional resources for water users and to administer water rights. (Water Compliance Bureau)

Water Distribution

Idaho Code § 42-604 requires IDWR’s Director to divide the state into water districts. Priority areas and sources include adding groundwater sources to new or existing water districts within the Portneuf River drainage (Administrative Basin 29) and adding sources and water rights to new or expanded water districts within the Snake River Moratorium and Trust Water areas. A benchmark of 1-2 districts created or modified per year is realistic based on the Department’s current staff resources and workloads.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY24 Benchmark	FY25 Benchmark	FY26 Benchmark	FY27 Benchmark
6. Number of water districts created or modified	Water Distribution Section	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2

Goal 2, Objective 2: Develop and implement tools, resources, and educational opportunities for watermasters to improve the administration of water rights and regulation of water use in water districts throughout the state. (Water Compliance Bureau)

- Revise IDWR’s Watermaster Handbook by **June 30, 2024**.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY24 Benchmark	FY25 Benchmark	FY26 Benchmark	FY27 Benchmark
Number of water district or watermaster trainings and workshops facilitated by IDWR	Water Distribution Section	2-3	2-3	2-3	3-4
Number of additional water districts integrating a GIS based, mobile data collection and automation tool ⁷	Water Distribution Section	1-2	2-3	2-3	2-3

⁷ Before FY23, this performance measure was *Number of additional water districts integrating ESRI’s Survey123 automated data acquisition application*. IDWR contracts with ESRI for geospatial software and services. ESRI is currently changing some of its software options and terminology. Beginning in FY23, IDWR is using a generic description for ESRI’s mobile data collection software to allow for changes in ESRI’s software options and terminology.

Goal 2, Objective 3: Maintain and enhance a timely, fair, transparent, and consistent enforcement program. (Water Compliance Bureau)

Surface and Groundwater Investigations

The Department maintains this goal through education, water use investigations, and implementation of both formal and informal enforcement actions as necessary. The Department receives many allegations of illegal water use annually. Allegations come primarily from other water users. In addition to investigating these allegations when they have merit, IDWR also self-initiates irrigation audits for select geographical areas to evaluate if water users are complying with the legal elements of their water rights. These audits help ensure fair and consistent water use enforcement and are often conducted in areas of water use conflict or in areas with pending changes in water administration practices.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY24 Benchmark	FY25 Benchmark	FY26 Benchmark	FY27 Benchmark
Number of area-wide irrigation audits completed with GIS based tools and methods	WCB's Enforcement Coordinator w/assistance from GTS	1-2	2	2-3	2-3

Goal 2, Objective 4: Develop, improve, and implement tools to administer and manage surface and groundwater resources. (Technical Services Bureau)

The Department's Hydrology Section is responsible for completing the following tasks under Goal 2, Objective 4:

Surface and Groundwater Investigations

- Update or replace the existing USGS/ Kjelstrom regression-based method for estimating aquifer discharge to estimate aquifer discharge more accurately along the Milner Dam to King Hill reach of the Snake River. Publish the final project report **by September 30, 2026.**

Groundwater Model Revisions and Recalibration efforts

- Evaluate managed aquifer recharge possibilities in the Treasure Valley groundwater flow model and publish a final report **by May 1, 2024.**
- Construct and calibrate a transient groundwater flow model for the Big Lost River basin and publish the final project report **by June 30, 2025.**

Water Right Accounting Program Modernization efforts

- Finalize the draft Water District 63 Water Accounting Manual detailing concepts, practices, and procedures used to distribute natural flow and storage water within the water district **by December 31, 2023.**

- Document special calculations to aid in accurate Water Right Accounting for Water District 01 storage programs **by December 31, 2023**.
- Develop a new Water Right Accounting database for the Bear, Big Lost, Boise, Payette, and Upper Snake River basins to replace the existing Microsoft Access databases **by December 31, 2024**.

Goal 2, Objective 5: Analyze water level monitoring data and prepare technical reports summarizing aquifer conditions for priority water resources. (Technical Services Bureau)

The Department’s Hydrology Section is responsible for completing the following tasks:

- Prepare a peer-reviewed technical report characterizing and summarizing the surface and groundwater hydrology of the Raft River basin **by December 31, 2023**.
- Prepare a peer-reviewed technical report characterizing and summarizing the surface and groundwater hydrology of the Mountain Home Plateau **by September 30, 2024**.
- Prepare a peer-reviewed technical report characterizing and summarizing the surface and groundwater hydrology of the Camas Prairie sub-basin within the Wood River basin (Basin No. 37) **by September 30, 2025**.
- Prepare a peer-reviewed technical report characterizing and summarizing the surface and groundwater hydrology of the Portneuf River basin **by December 31, 2026**.
- Prepare peer-reviewed technical summary reports of water level data, water level trends, and aquifer conditions for each of the twelve designated Groundwater Management Areas (GWMAs) and each of the eight Critical Groundwater Areas (CGWAs) on a five-year frequency, **ongoing**. To complete this task on a five-year frequency for each managed and critical groundwater area, the Department established the annual benchmarks below.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY24 Benchmark	FY25 Benchmark	FY26 Benchmark	FY27 Benchmark
Number of published, peer-reviewed technical summary reports of Groundwater Management Areas (GWMA)	Hydrology Section	2-3	2-3	2-3	2-3
Number of published, peer-reviewed technical summary reports of Critical Groundwater Management Areas (CGWMA)	Hydrology Section	1-2	1-2	1-2	1-2

Goal 2, Objective 6: Streamline hydrologic data collection and processing. (Technical Services Bureau)

Water Measurement Sites and Equipment Deployment

Idaho Code, § 42-231 requires the Director to conduct “investigations, surveys, and studies relative to the extent, nature and location of ground water resources of [Idaho].” Idaho Code, § 42-1805 (2)(3) describes additional duties of the Director, which includes preparing “a present and continuing inventory of Idaho’s water resources. . . .” Idaho Code, § 39-120 recognizes that IDWR has the responsibility to collect baseline water resource data and charges IDWR with the shared responsibility to develop and administer a “comprehensive ground water quality monitoring network. . . .”

To fulfill these statutory mandates, IDWR maintains statewide monitoring networks to measure ground water levels, spring flows, return flows, and ground water quality. Priority administration of water resources often results in a public desire to grow these monitoring networks to provide more and finer resolution data across the state. To collect more data across multiple growing monitoring networks, while maintaining a static workforce, IDWR must deploy automated processes in lieu of past and existing manual processes. Automated processes include deploying measurement instrumentation, establishing telemetered communication networks, and automating data collection, processing, and publication programs.

The Department’s Hydrology Section is responsible for completing the following tasks under Goal 2, Objective 6:

- Integrate the use of a GIS-based, mobile data collection and automation tool in hydrologic data collection programs as opportunities present themselves, **ongoing**.
- Install automated hydrologic data collection equipment to facilitate the collection of real-time, high-frequency data for model calibration and trend analysis, **ongoing**.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY24 Benchmark	FY25 Benchmark	FY26 Benchmark	FY27 Benchmark
7. Number of additional pressure transducers installed annually into existing monitoring wells	Hydrology Section	25	25	25	10
8. Number of telemetry stations and instrumentation upgraded annually⁸	Hydrology Section	10	10	10	10

⁸ Beginning with this FY24-27 Strategic Plan, the Department updated performance measure #8, formerly *New Telemetry systems installed at stream gauge stations*, to *Number of telemetry stations and instrumentation upgraded annually*. This change will also be reflected in IDWR’s FY23 Performance Report.

Goal 2, Objective 7: Review and administer Trust Water Rights (TWR) issued consistent with, and in conformance with the 1984 Swan Falls Settlement and the 2009 Framework Reaffirming the Swan Falls Settlement. (Compliance and Water Allocation Bureaus)

The Water Distribution Section, within the Compliance Bureau is responsible for the following task:

- Plan for and develop a management policy addressing conjunctive water rights management in the Milner to Murphy reach of the Snake River and tributary basins **by June 30, 2024.**

The Water Rights Section within the Water Allocation Bureau is responsible for the following tasks:

- Plan for and develop criteria for reviewing term limited TWRs **by December 31, 2024.**
- Initiate review of term limited TWR, **by June 30, 2025.**

Goal 3: Promote and Finance Projects that will Advance the Sustainability of Idaho's Water Resources into the Foreseeable Future

In 2023, the Idaho Legislature passed House Concurrent Resolution 7 (HCR7) encouraging the Governor of the State of Idaho, the Idaho Water Resource Board, and the Idaho Department of Water Resources to continue, in conjunction with the Legislature, to pursue ongoing investments in the state's water infrastructure and to establish a long-term plan that identifies future projects intended to protect, improve, and secure the state's water resources for the benefit of the citizens of the state and for future generations. Groundwater levels in Idaho have been declining, and in some areas, aquifers cannot sustain all surface and groundwater uses. Reduced water supplies often cause contentious, costly, and time-consuming litigation. To prevent negative economic impacts on the state and local regions, the Board has proactively implemented water projects to reverse groundwater level declines and stabilize aquifers across the state.

Unless otherwise stated, the Department’s Water Projects Section within the Planning & Projects Bureau is responsible for the tasks listed under Goal 3 objectives.

Goal 3, Objective 1: Develop and implement a 250,000 acre-foot average annual managed recharge program for the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer (ESPA) to stabilize and recover the aquifer. (Planning & Projects Bureau).

Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer - Aquifer Management

- Develop and finalize Standards and Procedures for the ESPA Managed Recharge Program⁹ by **June 30, 2024**.

Performance Measure	Responsible Section	FY24 Benchmark	FY25 Benchmark	FY26 Benchmark	FY27 Benchmark
9. Annual volume of water recharged into the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer	Water Projects Section	250,000 acre-feet	250,000 acre-feet	250,000 acre-feet	250,000 acre-feet

Goal 3, Objective 2: Complete the Mountain Home Air Force Base (MHAFB) Water Supply Project¹⁰ to deliver reliable surface water supply to the MHAFB and relieve demand on the over-drafted Mountain Home Aquifer. (Planning & Projects Bureau)

- Complete project final design by **June 30, 2024**.
- Commence construction upon finalization of a project contract with the U.S. Air Force. Complete the project by **February 28, 2026**.

Goal 3, Objective 3: Work with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (BoR) to complete the Anderson Ranch Dam Raise for additional water storage. (Planning & Projects Bureau)

- Conduct and complete the final Environmental Impact Statement by **August 31, 2024**.
- Coordinate with Treasure Valley water users and BoR to identify and contract for the use of additional water storage by **August 31, 2024**.
- Complete the Anderson Ranch Dam Raise project by **December 31, 2029**.

⁹ See the IWRB’s [ESPA Managed Recharge Program](#) webpage for more information.

¹⁰ See the [Mountain Home Air Force Base Sustainable Water Supply Project](#) webpage for more information.

Goal 3, Objective 4: Complete the Lemhi Basin Framework Program, to support anadromous fish passage while maintaining the agricultural economy of the Lemhi basin. (Planning & Projects Bureau)

- Complete the remaining 3 of 10 required source switches (i.e. relocation of a diversion from a tributary stream to the main stem river) or equivalent re-diversion projects above the L-6 diversion location on the Lemhi River **by December 31, 2025**.
- Secure additional short-term agreements with water right holders to meet required minimum stream flows of 25 cfs at the L-6 diversion for the period between March 15 and November 15, **ongoing**.
- Implement actions assigned to the Water Board in the Lemhi Settlement Agreement¹¹ including:
 - Create four Minimum Streamflow Water Rights on Bohannon Creek, Big Timber Creek, Hayden Creek, Canyon Creek, and at McFarland Campground, **complete**.
 - Complete Cloud Seeding Feasibility Study **by December 2023**.
 - Complete Managed Recharge and Surface Storage Feasibility Studies **by December 2024**.

Goal 3, Objective 5: Implement the Aging Infrastructure Grant Program per legislative direction¹². (Planning & Projects Bureau)

- Plan for and implement the 3rd and 4th rounds of grant awards to be distributed by the Board during FY24.

Goal 3, Objective 6: Operate the Board’s Revolving Loan Program and Flood Management Grant Program to help water users and Idaho citizens achieve their water infrastructure needs and repair damages to stream banks and channels caused by flooding. (Planning & Projects Bureau)

- Process and approve Revolving Loan applications. Update Revolving Loan program policy as directed by the Board, **ongoing**.
- Plan for and implement the Flood Management Grant program during FY24. Distribute Flood Management Grant awards annually, **ongoing**.

Goal 3, Objective 7: Develop, implement, monitor, and evaluate water projects statewide to ensure the sustainability of water resources in Idaho. (Planning & Projects Bureau)

- Develop and implement process for funding projects listed on the Regional Water Sustainability Projects¹³ priority list and begin funding selected projects, **by December 31, 2023**.

The projects listed in the table on the following page represent existing IWRB projects and are separate projects from those listed on the Regional Water Sustainability Projects list.

¹¹ For more information see the [Lemhi River Basin Settlement](#) webpage.

¹² See [House Bill 769](#), Appropriations to the Department of Water Resources for Fiscal Year 2023.

¹³ For more information, see the IWRB’s [Regional Water Sustainability List Projects](#) webpage, and the [Regional Water Sustainability Projects list](#).

Projects	FY24 Benchmark	FY25 Benchmark	FY26 Benchmark	FY27 Benchmark
Priest Lake Water Management Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete reconstruction of Outlet Dam. - Commence optimized operations, maintenance, and monitoring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop an EAP¹⁴, Asset Management, and O&M Plan for the Outlet Dam. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue and refine optimized operations, maintenance, and coordination with local stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue and refine optimized operations, maintenance, and coordination with local stakeholders.
Bear River & Bear Lake Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Acquire easement needed for optimized operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete operations negotiations with stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commence and refine optimized operations, maintenance, and monitoring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Commence and refine optimized operations, maintenance, and monitoring.
Treasure Valley Ground Water Recharge Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluate recharge proposals in the Treasure Valley with the TVGWM¹⁵. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operate and calibrate the TVGWM as needed. - Plan for and implement any needed actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operate and calibrate the TVGWM as needed to support monitoring and management initiatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Operate and calibrate the TVGWM as needed to support monitoring and management initiatives.
Ririe Reservoir Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluate the feasibility of modifying the flood control rule curves for operation of Ririe Dam Reservoir. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modify flood control rule curves if evaluation justifies modification. - Implement revised operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modify of flood control rule curves if evaluation justifies modification. - Implement revised operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement revised operations.
Cooperative Cloud Seeding Program in Basins 01, 37, and 63	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete a final feasibility report of a statewide climatology assessment. - Solidify institutional arrangements between the state, IPCO¹⁶, and water users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor and evaluate cloud seeding operations. - Develop standards and procedures for evaluating and supporting cloud seeding. - Plan for and implement any needed actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor and evaluate cloud seeding operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor and evaluate cloud seeding operations.

¹⁴ Emergency Action Plan (EAP); Operation and Management Plan (O&M)

¹⁵ Treasure Valley Groundwater Model (TVGWM)

¹⁶ Idaho Power Company (IPCO)

Goal 4: Enhance the Capability of the Department to Manage and Protect the Water Resources of the State and Serve the Public

The Department cannot accomplish its many and varied responsibilities without business operations support services including geospatial and information technology, human resources, finance, purchasing and contracting. These functions are vital to the success of Department employees and IDWR as a whole. Objectives in this area focus on offering support services and tools to meet employee needs, including working with the Governor's Office of Information Technology Services to build and implement up-to-date and secure technology solutions that increase the efficiency of the Department.

Goal 4, Objective 1¹⁷: Modernize and improve IDWR’s ability to create, share, and distribute data and analysis with its staff, water use stakeholder groups, and the wider public. (Technology Services Bureau)

The Department’s Geospatial Technology Section is responsible for completing the following tasks:

- Publish thirty, currently unavailable IDWR datasets to the internet through a web service to accommodate public access **by June 30, 2024.**
 - Evaluate existing vector GIS datasets on the IDWR file server by staff usage **by June 30, 2024.**
 - Publish the 30 highest-ranked datasets to ArcGIS Enterprise for access by IDWR staff **by December 30, 2024.**
- Update Esri licensing to allow IDWR staff concurrent use of ArcGIS Desktop and ArcGIS Pro without loss of any current functionality **by June 30, 2024.**
- Update and migrate IDWR’s WrEdit data management extension to ArcGIS Pro **by June 30, 2025.**

Goal 4, Objective 2¹⁸: Modernize IDWR’s workflow tracking and record retention processes in the water rights program to reduce labor costs, enhance accessibility, and limit paper use. (Water Allocation Bureau)

- In collaboration with the Office of Information Technology Services (OITS), develop a workflow software to assign and track the water rights workload digitally across all IDWR offices, measure and report individual and program performance, and adjust workload distribution to meet current needs **by June 30, 2024¹⁹.**
 - Coordinate with OITS to finalize the requirements and expectations of the project and create a Proof of Concept **by January 30, 2024.**
 - Implement the new workflow software for use in the Water Allocation Bureau **by August 31, 2024.**
- Complete a water right records Document Retention Schedule **by June 30, 2024.**
 - Begin implementation of the Document Retention Schedule **by August 31, 2024.**

¹⁷ The former Goal 4, Objective 1, Reestablish levels of agency IT functionality (e.g., hardware, software, email and phone systems, networks, and webpage), user support, and user satisfaction, comparable to levels that existed before the initiation of Phase 2 of the Office of Information Technology Services’ IT Modernization effort has been realized and is complete upon the Department’s hiring of an IT Services & Agency Webpage Coordinator in FY22. The objectives under Goal 4 are re-numbered to reflect this change.

¹⁸ Beginning with this FY24-27 Strategic Plan, the former FY23-26 Strategic Plan Goal 1, Objective 3 is removed from the Goal 1 section and combined with Goal 4, Objective 2. Both objectives aimed to enhance the capabilities of staff in the Water Rights Section through improved workflow processes and a defined record retention policy.

¹⁹ Timely completion of this task and the following sub-tasks will be contingent on resources available at OITS to develop a workflow tracking software.

Goal 4, Objective 4: Expand and improve the Geospatial Technology Section’s support of IDWR’s business operations. (Technical Services Bureau)

The Department’s Geospatial Technology Section is responsible for completing the following tasks:

- Finalize and include on IDWR’s website, a software application to serve trust water right information related to the implementation of the Swan Falls Settlement **by June 30, 2024.**
- Migrate two ASP.Net applications and APIs to .Net 6 or .Net 8 **by December 31, 2024.**
- Migrate fourteen ASP.Net applications and APIs to .Net 6 or .Net 8 **by December 31, 2026.**
- Collect three years of evapotranspiration and consumptive use data at three field locations and compare the results to METRIC evapotranspiration (ET) estimates **by November 1, 2027.**
- Publish an ET website that will serve crop water need data to IDWR staff and the public **by January 1, 2024.**

Goal 4, Objective 5: Maintain and regularly update continuity of operations processes and procedures to successfully recover IDWR’s business operations if the State Office becomes inaccessible or inoperable. (Agency-wide)

Consistent with the expectations of the Office of Emergency Management and the Governor’s Office, as set forth in Executive Order 2014-07, IDWR has designated two employees as its *Agency Emergency Coordinators* (AEC). Agency Emergency Coordinators are required to “train, exercise, and participate in the State Emergency Management Program to facilitate emergency support and logistics in response to emergencies and disasters.” In fulfilling these obligations, the AECs are responsible for the following specific tasks:

- Review the IDWR Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) and Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) biennially to update personnel contact lists and emergency contact procedures. Review **by December 31, 2023.**
- Review and update the IDWR Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) and Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP) biennially to meet Recovery Time Objectives (RTO) and Recovery Point Objectives (RPO). Review **by December 31, 2023.**

Goal 4, Objective 6: Review current hardware and software and ensure IDWR personnel have all the necessary IT resources to perform their jobs efficiently in various physical locations in and away from the office. (Agency-wide)

The Department's Financial and Purchasing support services, and management staff are responsible for the following tasks:

- Complete the transition from desktop computer workstations to laptop workstations for all employees whose job does not necessitate a workstation, **by June 30, 2024**.
 - Annually replace agency-wide, 4+ year old workstations and 3+ year old laptops annually, before the end of the fiscal year, **ongoing**.
 - Annually replace 5+ year old agency servers, **ongoing**.
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