

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 11, 2025

TO: Jake Garringer, Special Assistant to Governor's Office, North Idaho; Shelley Keen, Deputy Director, Idaho Department of Water Resources

FROM: Michelle Richman, Northern Regional Manager, Idaho Department of Water Resources

RE: Recap of Clearwater POD Meeting with City Officials from Moscow and Lewiston (Water Rights 86-4034A, 86-4034B, 86-7090, 86-7324)

To fulfill a request made by Jake Garringer of the Governor's office, IDWR Northern Region agreed to lead a meeting between the City of Lewiston and the City of Moscow to begin exploring collaborative opportunities for their new Points of Diversion (POD) on the Clearwater River. We held the meeting in Lewiston on March 4, 2025. Daniel Sturgis (Technical Hydrogeologist) and Chace Bell (Water Resources Supervisor) joined me. The City of Lewiston was represented by Mayor Dan Johnson, and briefly by phone, Alannah Bailey (Water Projects Supervisor). The City of Moscow was represented by Mayor Art Bettge, Tyler Palmer (Deputy City Administrator) and Bill Belknap (City Administrator). Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) staff from the Lewiston office included Sujatta Connell (Regional Administrator) and AJ Maupin (Water Quality Engineering Manager).

Prior to the joint meeting, there were some reservations towards a collaborative effort and possible shared POD. However, during and after the meeting, both cities identified potential benefits for collaboration and appreciated the initial dialog. The City of Moscow was especially enthusiastic about the possibilities. City officials exchanged contact information and plan to hold future meetings that include their project engineers to discuss the project details going forward.

Projects for the Cities of Lewiston and Moscow are at different stages, and that may pose some challenges for cooperation. The City of Lewiston will install a new POD upriver of its current POD. This has the benefit of being upriver of the Clearwater Paper Reservoir; furthermore, sedimentation and sand intake is anticipated to be less problematic in the new location. IDWR did discuss the need for the City of Lewiston to submit an Application for Transfer to change their POD on their existing surface water rights to reflect a new legal description. (The existing surface water rights from the Clearwater River include 86-4034A, 86-4034B, 86-7090, and 86-7324.) The City of Lewiston has enough funding (\$6.7 Million) to complete the intakes and fish screens and all in-water work, but it is my understanding they need to acquire an additional \$8 Million to complete the remainder of the project.

The City of Moscow indicated it would award a 12-month project to an engineering firm, potentially by the end of March of 2025. The engineering firm will pursue design concepts for the City of Moscow for an intake from the Clearwater River. The City of Moscow indicated it will need a diversion rate of 10 cubic feet per second from the river. This includes a diversion rate for aquifer stabilization (30% of the City's 2018 demand) and an additional rate to meet the 50-year anticipated demand. If the project moves forward, the City of Moscow would need to apply for new water rights from the Clearwater River. In a prior meeting held in 2024 with members of the Palouse Basin Aquifer Committee, IDWR staff provided an initial recommendation that the City of Moscow apply for a non-RAFN water right for a POD on the Clearwater River with no additional diversion rate above what the City already uses. A separate water right application would cover the City's anticipated demand. The City also discussed the complexities of supplying water to Pullman, Washington and mentioned that aquifer recharge in Idaho could be used in lieu of a direct pipeline. IDWR will continue to work with the City of Moscow as needed to assist with the development of its water right applications. The City is aware of the need to work with DEQ to fulfill drinking water requirements as a municipal provider.

Both cities have taken initial steps to continue their conversation with each other to potentially identify opportunities for collaboration.