



State of Idaho

**DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES**

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DIRK KEMPTHORNE  
Governor

KARL J. DREHER  
Director

June 17, 2005

«First\_Name» «Last\_Name»  
«Company\_Name»  
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Re: Upper Salmon Water District Steering Committee

Dear Water Users:

On May 13, 2005, the Idaho Department of Water Resources (Department) sent notice to water right holders in Administrative Basins 71 and 72 advising that the State of Idaho had petitioned the Snake River Basin Adjudication (SRBA) District Court to authorize administration of water rights in these two administrative basins. This is the first step towards creation of the Upper Salmon Water District that will provide organization for water right administration and regulation within the Upper Salmon River Basin, including Administrative Basins 71, 72, 73, 74, and 75. The State of Idaho committed to create an Upper Salmon Water District covering Basins 71 through 75 as part of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Federal Reserved Water Rights Agreement. The Department plans to propose creation of the water district and hold a hearing on the matter this fall. The Department intends to initially limit creation of the water district to Basins 71 and 72, and then expand into the remaining basins the following year.

On February 24, 2005, Department representatives met in Salmon, Idaho with water users and representatives from existing water districts within Basins 72, 73, 74 and 75 to discuss the Wild and Scenic water rights agreement and creation of the new Upper Salmon Water District. Water users who attended the February 24<sup>th</sup> meeting suggested the Department organize a steering committee consisting of water users and representatives from each of the administrative basins to provide for local water user input prior to the Department's hearing that will be scheduled later this year. The Department agrees with this suggestion and has found the water district steering committee process to work well in other areas of the state. Several water users have expressed interest in serving on this committee.

This letter is an invitation to you to serve on the Upper Salmon Water District Steering Committee. The Department proposes that this committee meet two to three times prior to the Department's hearing on creation of the water district, which will likely be scheduled for late October or early November of this year. In addition, a larger public meeting may also be scheduled in August or September. The steering committee should remain active at least until the first annual water district meeting, and perhaps longer until the other administrative basins are added to the district. We expect the first annual water district meeting to be held in March 2006. The objective of the committee is to provide local water user input regarding organization and governance of the district, including budget issues, watermaster election, staffing, and advisory committee representation and authorities. The Department recommends that the first steering committee meeting be held in July. Meetings would likely be held in Challis, as that is the most central location.

The Department further recommends that the steering committee consist of representatives from each administrative basin as follows:

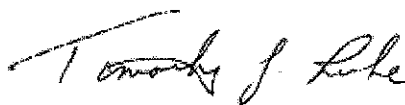
<u>Administrative Basin</u>	<u>Suggested Minimum No. of Representatives</u>
71 (Stanley Basin)	2
72 (Challis & East Fork areas)	2
73 (Pahsimeroi Basin)	1
74 (Lemhi Basin)	1
75 (Salmon River below Salmon)	1
Municipal Representative	1
Industrial/Commercial Representative	1
Idaho Legislative Representative	1
Forest Service Representative	1
BLM Representative	1
Counties Representative	1
<u>Total</u>	<u>13</u>

Please note that the suggested number and type of representation above is merely a Department recommendation. All meetings will be open to the public. The Department welcomes additional participation but cautions against forming a committee that may be too large. Water user representation should not be limited merely to owners of surface water rights, but should include ground water users as well. The Department will have at least one representative working with the committee at all meetings.

This letter of invitation has been sent to those individuals or entities listed on Attachment A, Upper Salmon River Water District Steering Committee Candidates. Several water users have already volunteered to serve on the committee. Other individuals have been recommended by other area water users or based on the Department's knowledge of individuals who own water rights and/or who have been active in local water districts and water issues. The Department seeks additional recommendations for interested persons to fill the minimum number of committee spaces as suggested above. In order to facilitate additional suggestions or comment, a copy of this letter has also been forwarded to those individuals who participated in the Department's February 24, 2005 meeting in Salmon.

Please contact Tim Luke or Bob Foster to accept or reject this invitation on or before **July 5, 2005**. Questions or comments may be directed to Tim Luke by calling 208-287-4959, by e-mail at [tim.luke@idwr.idaho.gov](mailto:tim.luke@idwr.idaho.gov), or by writing at the address listed on this letter. You may also contact Bob Foster, IDWR Salmon Field Office, at 208-756-6644.

Sincerely,



Tim Luke  
Manager, Water Distribution

Attachment A

Cc: Karl Dreher, Director, Idaho Department of Water Resources  
IDWR Southern and Eastern Regions

ATTACHMENT A  
UPPER SALMON WATER DISTRICT  
STEERING COMMITTEE CANDIDATES

Basin 71, Stanley Basin

Jay Neider (volunteer)

Recommended names:

Cliff Hansen

James Henslee, President, Salmon Falls Land and Livestock

Bruno or Piero Piva, Iron, Goat, Meadow and Valley Creeks

Basin 72, East Fork Salmon River, Salmon River and Tributaries near Challis

Jack Challis, Challis Creek (volunteer)

Recommended names:

Doug or Wayne Baker, East Fork Salmon River

Gary Chamberlain, Salmon River and Idaho Water Resource Board member

Basin 73, Pahsimeroi River and tributaries

Ted O'Neal (only user from WD73 who attended IDWR meeting of 2/25/05)

OR other representative from current elected water district advisory committee or a water user designated by the advisory committee.

Basin 74, Lemhi River and tributaries

Carl Ellsworth (WD74 and WD74W, attended IDWR meeting, recommended by several users)

OR other representative from Lemhi Basin that may represent WD74 and at least one other district, preferably a water user designated or recommended by the WD74 advisory committee. Other names recommended include: RJ Smith, Bruce Mulkey, James Whittaker

Basin 75, Salmon River near/below Salmon

Dave McFarland, Carmen Creek (volunteer)

Legislative Representative(s):

Rep. Lenore Barrett, Challis

Sen. Don Burtenshaw, Terreton

Municipal Representative:

Letters sent to cities of Challis, Salmon, and Stanley

Industrial/Comm. Representative:

Letter sent to Thompson Creek Mining Co

Counties Representative:

Letters sent to Custer and Lemhi County Commissions

Forest Service Representative:

Letter sent to US Forest Service

BLM Representative:

Letter sent to BLM