



Water District Creation for Snake River Water Rights Basin 02 – Milner to Swan Falls

IDWR PUBLIC HEARING
February 28, 2012
Mountain Home, ID



Hearing Agenda

- Background Information
 - What is a water district
 - Proposed Boundaries for Water District 02
 - Reasons for Creation
 - Water District operation and timelines
 - Water Measurement



Water Districts

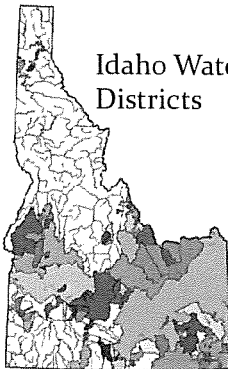
Chapter 6, Title 42, Idaho Code
Created by order of Director of IDWR for purposes of water right administration, specifically, distribution of water from public or natural water sources in accordance with water right priority dates.

Water Districts

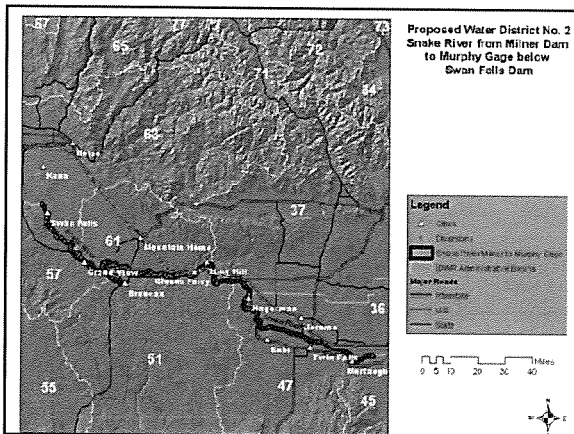
- Creation of Water Districts
 - "The director shall divide the state into water districts ... such that each public stream and tributaries, or independent source of water supply, shall constitute a water district."
 - "The director may create a water district by entry of an order ... in order to properly administer uses of the water resource."

Idaho Code § 42-604

Idaho Water Districts



Proposed Water District No. 2
Snake River from Milner Dam
to Murphy Gage below
Swan Falls Dam



Water District 02 Area of Notice Milner to Swan Falls/Murphy Gage

- Over 225 Notices Sent (Snake River SW Rights Only)
 - Excluding in-stream stock water rights

Number of Water Rights and Diversions in Area

- About 520 water rights total (excludes in-stream stock)
- About 290 unique diversion locations (per water rights)
 - About 385 rights & 160 diversions with irrig. use > 5 acres
 - About 65 rights & 60 diversions with irrig. use ≤ 5 acres
 - About 40 rights & 40 diversions with non-irrigation use (not including domestic/stock uses ≤ 0.24 cfs)
 - Total irrigation water rights cfs (gross) ≈ 3,170 cfs

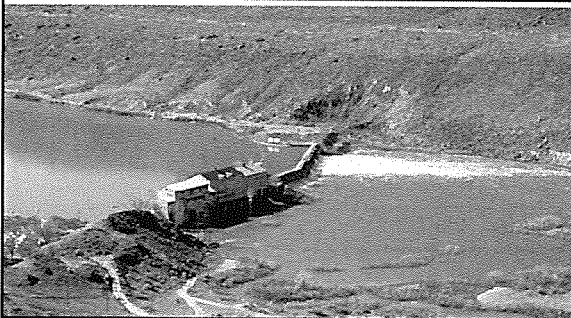
Why Create a Water District for this area?

- SRBA completed for this area
- SRBA District Court issued Order of Interim Administration, September 21, 2011
- Settlement of Swan Falls in-stream flow rights
 - need to measure diversions, reservoir flows & river flows for accuracy & to protect in-stream flow rights

Why Create a Water District for this area?

- Regulation
 - address unauthorized uses
 - assure diversions within water right limits
 - delivery of rented water through reach
- Administer/Manage water rights
 - maintain current/accurate records (ownership & water right descriptions)

Overview of Swan Falls in-stream flow rights



Water Districts

Features

- Watermasters elected annually to provide water distribution services
 - elected by users, appointed by IDWR Director
 - compensated by users via assessments
 - receive guidance/direction from Director
- Advisory Committee elected annually
 - comprised of water users in district
 - serve in advisory capacity to watermaster and director, draft and implement resolutions, may mediate problems within district

Water Districts

- General Duties of Watermaster:
 - 1) deliver water in accordance with water right priority dates
 - authority to control/regulate diversion works
 - 2) measure and report diversions under water rights
 - 3) provide annual reports of expenses & water delivered (watermaster report, daily log books or distribution report, proposed budget)
 - 4) report and control unauthorized diversions
 - local resource/expert; review transfers

Water Districts

Meetings, Elections, Budgets

- Annual meeting held to elect watermaster, adopt a budget and resolutions, and select an advisory committee.
- Voting is by majority vote of users present, or if requested, by alternative method that involves votes equal to dollar amount assessed.
Idaho Code § 42-605

Water Districts

Meetings, Elections, Budgets

- Amount of water use is basis for assessments. (IC § 42-612)
- Alternative methods and flexibility provided for voting and assessment of non-consumptive uses. (IC § 42-605A)
- Budget collected either by county or by district. (IC § 42-612 and 42-618)
- Participation is mandatory

District Creation

- District meeting is first Monday of March, by law, or
- Between first Monday of January & third Monday of March, by district resolution
- Director can schedule special meeting or first meeting at any time

District Creation

Who's usually included:

- All water rights are included, but for Administrative & Assessment purposes, IDWR may exclude:
 - domestic/stock water uses meeting definition of Sec. 42-111, Idaho Code
 - in-stream livestock
 - other small rights/uses (≤ 0.24 cfs)
 - minimum in-stream flow rights

Note: hydropower rights included but may be assessed differently

District Creation

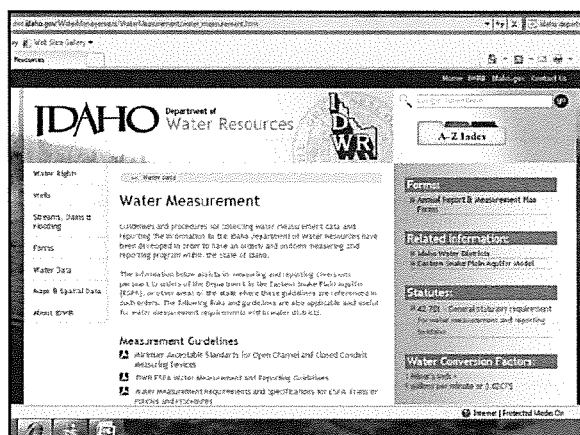
Measurement Requirements:

- For Measurement Purposes, typically exclude:
 - irrigation uses/diversions ≤ 5 acres
 - domestic/stock water uses, in-stream livestock & other small rights/uses ≤ 0.24 cfs diversion rate
- All other rights/diversions are measured
 - Estimate less than 200 diversions total

Measurement Requirements

Likely Scenario:

- Order to require installation of measuring devices:
 - Phase-in over one to two years
 - Submittal of measurement plans in first year
- Must install standard measuring devices as per IDWR standards
 - Open channel (weirs, flumes, doppler meters)
 - Closed conduit (magnetic flow meters)



Measurement Requirements

Costs:

- Open Channel
 - Range from several hundred dollars to \$10,000 depending on size
- Closed Conduit
 - Mag Meters: ≈ \$2,000 – \$3,400 for 10 inch line + install
 - For larger diameter pipe: Mag cost varies on diameter
 - Ultrasonic meter ≈ \$3,500 with display, minimal install

Measurement Requirements

Other Needs:

- Large diversions likely need monitoring & telemetry equipment
- Additional river gages needed
 - State, Idaho Power, USGS & other parties currently investigating gage sites
 - Additional gage costs likely split among State, IPCo, USGS
 - Water District could cost share some percentage?

Creation Timeline

- Public Meeting held 1/17/2012
- Mailed individual notice of hearing
- Today's hearing
- Ten day comment period
- Issue order with notice of annual meeting
- Conduct meeting

Creation Timeline – Next Steps

- Issue order mid-March
- Schedule annual meeting mid-April

Annual Meeting

Propose:

- No Adopted Budget in first year
- IDWR staff inventory diversions first year & work with users on measurement plans
- Elect advisory committee

Advisory Committee

- Work with IDWR next one to two years on:
 - Implement measurement requirements
 - Future water district budget & resolutions
 - Shaping of Water District

Future Considerations

- Snake River from Swan Falls to State Border
 - Expand District?
 - Separate District?

