

## **Water Rights; Understanding the Water Appropriation Process Through Time**

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Region-specific factors and competing demands impact the available supply of ground and surface water and effect changes in regional water budgets. Resulting insufficient water supplies to satisfy beneficial uses have and could result in increased administrative curtailment, conflict among water users, and litigation.

In time the competition over water has increased tensions among water users and possibly other interested parties but, in the long run has led to a positive result of innovative solutions. These solutions demonstrate that the water resources of Idaho can meet emerging water demands while respecting existing water users.

Since 1895 water rights have provided the framework for administering new and existing water uses in Idaho. The Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) diligently works to administer water rights while working with the public, federal, state, and local units of governmental and private entities.

As part of administering water rights, IDWR actively guides, manages, and plans for the use and conservation of Idaho's water resources to sustain Idaho's economy, ecosystem, and the resulting quality of life.

In 2012, the Idaho Water Resource Board released a revised version of the State Water Plan. This is the fifth revision of the State Water Plan since the first plan was adopted in 1976. Each version reflects the changing landscape of water in Idaho. The State Water Plan is a valuable resource in understanding the level of innovation that is contemplated and carried out for the current and future administration of water in Idaho.