

IN THE SENATE

SENATE BILL NO. 1128

BY STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

AN ACT

RELATING TO THE WATER MANAGEMENT ACCOUNT; AMENDING CHAPTER 17, TITLE 42, IDAHO CODE, BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SECTION 42-1760A, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE FOR APPROPRIATIONS TO AND EXPENDITURES FROM THE WATER MANAGEMENT ACCOUNT; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

SECTION 1. That Chapter 17, Title 42, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby amended by the addition thereto of a NEW SECTION, to be known and designated as Section 42-1760A, Idaho Code, and to read as follows:

42-1760A. WATER MANAGEMENT ACCOUNT -- ANNUAL APPROPRIATION FOR WATER INFRASTRUCTURE. (1) It is the intent of the legislature to provide for ongoing investment in water infrastructure, including assisting in the success of the 2024 settlement agreement between surface water and groundwater users on the eastern Snake plain. The legislature recognizes the vital role of ongoing investments in water infrastructure in supporting the long-term sustainability of Idaho's water resources and overall economy. This appropriation reflects the state's commitment to securing its economic success by continuing a statewide approach to responsible water management and by maintaining and securing the state's water supply for agricultural, municipal, and industrial uses by Idaho citizens.

(2) The legislature hereby directs the addition of thirty million dollars (\$30,000,000), continuously funded out of the general fund, to the water management account established in section 42-1760, Idaho Code, to be administered by the Idaho water resource board. The funds shall be used for planning, constructing, rehabilitating, reconstructing, and improving water infrastructure throughout the state.

(3) Projects include but are not limited to:

(a) Aquifer recharge, ground water management, and other projects aimed at sustaining aquifer health and long-term water availability;

(b) Development and rehabilitation of water storage and conveyance systems, including reservoirs, diversion structures, pipelines, and canals;

(c) Water supply and delivery improvements that enhance efficiency and conservation; and

(d) Emergency water infrastructure repairs and upgrades to ensure the resilience of vital water systems.

(4) No more than fifty percent (50%) of the funds appropriated in this section may be used within a single board district, as defined in section 42-1732, Idaho Code, unless there are no competing funding applications for water infrastructure projects in other districts for the current fiscal year.

1 (5) The Idaho water resource board shall establish guidelines for the
2 application, evaluation, and allocation of funds to eligible projects in ac-
3 cordance with state water policy goals and statutory requirements.

4 (6) The board shall submit an annual report to the governor and the leg-
5 islature detailing the expenditures, progress, and effectiveness of funded
6 projects pursuant to this section.

7 (7) The board may coordinate with other state and federal agencies, as
8 well as local governments and private entities, to leverage additional fund-
9 ing and resources for water infrastructure development.

10 SECTION 2. An emergency existing therefor, which emergency is hereby
11 declared to exist, this act shall be in full force and effect on and after its
12 passage and approval.