

Background on Petition for IDWR Action on Palouse Aquifers

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Idaho Department of Water Resources
Presented to the
North Idaho Legislative Working Group
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Petition

- Received November 22, 2003
- Submitted by a coalition of organizations:
 - Palouse Water Conservation Network
 - Friends of the Clearwater
 - Moscow Civic Association
 - Palouse Group of the Sierra Club
 - Idaho Conservation League, North Idaho Office

Petition (cont.)

- Requested eight actions be taken by the Director, IDWR

Actions Requested by Petition

- Designation deep aquifer (Grande Ronde aquifer) as a critical ground water area
- Designation shallow aquifer (Wanapum aquifer) as a ground water management area
- Impose moratorium on processing & approval of applications for permit from deep aquifer

Actions Requested by Petition (cont.)

- Impose moratorium on further development of existing permits
- Reduce withdrawals from Grande Ronde aquifer to achieve sustainable pumping rate
- Require metering and reporting of withdrawals
- Rescind portions of Interagency Agreement

Actions Requested by Petition (cont.)

- Establish advisory committee with charge to:
 - Develop groundwater management plan
 - Develop water conservation plan
 - Develop requirements & conditions for permits
 - Provide forum for collecting/reviewing technical data
 - Develop public participation plan

Designations

- **Critical Ground Water Area:** an area which does not have sufficient ground water to provide a reasonably safe supply for irrigation of cultivated lands or other uses at current or projected rates of withdrawal
- **Ground Water Management Area:** an area approaching a critical ground water area

Idaho Code Section 42-233a

Idaho Code 42-233b

Designations

- Adoption of management plan can provide for protection against forfeiture of water rights *(Idaho Code 42-223(4))*
- Director may administer water rights by priority, with advance notice *(Idaho Code 42-233a, b)*
- Director may deny/restrict applications for permit
- Reporting can be required

Designation Process

- **GWMA**
 - Director, IDWR, designates by Order
 - No public hearing or meeting required
 - Order may be appealed
- **CGWA**
 - Director, IDWR designates by Order
 - Hearing required after issuance of Order
 - Order may be appealed