

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

RS22395

The Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) is amending Idaho Code, Section 42-1805 (7) to provide the Director of IDWR with the authority to return pending applications to appropriate water back to the applicants when the applications seek to divert water in an area where a moratorium order has been issued. This change is necessary to reduce the number of applications held by IDWR in fully appropriated areas and to avoid holding unprocessed applications in areas that become fully appropriated in the future. Presently, IDWR is holding approximately 640 applications in the moratorium area of the Eastern Snake River Plain and it is unlikely that the moratorium order will be withdrawn.

FISCAL NOTE

Returning applications may include a refund of the application fee. Most of the 640 applications held in the Eastern Snake River Plain have not incurred advertising or other costs associated with processing of the applications. Refunds would likely total approximately \$50,000 from the Water Management fee account. Processing the returned applications and associated refunds could be accomplished over multiple years to reduce the fiscal impact in any given year.

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