IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF
WATER RESOURCES

NEWS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Director pauses water right curtailment compliance inspections

BOISE - (June 13, 2024) – On Thursday, June 13, 2024, Director Mathew Weaver of the Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) directed his staff to pause conducting compliance field inspections in connection with his May 30, 2024, water right curtailment order. The May 30 order was issued as part of the Surface Water Coalition delivery call matter after the Department projected that Twin Falls Canal Company may suffer a water supply shortage of 74,100 acre-feet. The Director paused inspections in recognition of substantial progress in settlement negotiations between surface water users and the four ground water districts not currently protected from curtailment under an approved mitigation plan.

“The Department hopes the parties can finalize an agreement,” said Shelley Keen, IDWR Deputy Director. “If the parties finalize an agreement, ground water district members will be protected from curtailment.” If a settlement is ultimately reached, IDWR does not anticipate pursuing enforcement actions with any ground water district members who comply with the mitigation plan for the rest of the irrigation season.

This week IDWR staff completed compliance field inspections for about 60% of the curtailed wells. During the field inspections, the IDWR confirmed that many ground water users had stopped irrigating and were complying with the curtailment order. IDWR did not turn off any wells or physically require anyone to stop irrigating during its field inspections

If settlement discussions are not successful, under Idaho State law, IDWR will be required to resume curtailment enforcement. If the Department must resume curtailment enforcement, the Department will do so only after full communication with affected ground water users and the public.

Please see the IDWR FAQ about the May 30 curtailment order.

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