



**US Army Corps
of Engineers** ®
Walla Walla District

News Release

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Corps, IWRB to sign agreement for Boise River Interim Feasibility Study

BOISE, Idaho – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Idaho Water Resource Board (IWRB) will formalize a partnership to study water resource issues in the Boise River Valley.

The Corps' Walla Walla District Commander Lt. Col. Michael J. Farrell and Idaho Water Resource Board (IWRB) Chairman Terry T. Uhling (I) will sign a Feasibility Cost Share Agreement (FCSA) during the IWRB's May 29 meeting, initiating a partnership for the Boise River General Investigation (GI) – Interim Feasibility Study phase.

The meeting is slated to begin at 8:30 a.m. in Conference Rooms C and D at the Idaho Water Center, 322 E. Front St., in Boise. The signing will occur following the board's roll call, reading of the agenda and approval of minutes.

Lower Boise River basin issues identified in previous studies and by stakeholders include flood risk, water supply, ecosystem restoration, water quality, and recreation. The Interim Feasibility Study will focus on water supply issues and initiate analysis of flood risks. Other identified issue areas will be examined in depth in a later study phase.

"We're extremely pleased to be moving forward with our state partners on this important study," said Lt. Col. Michael J. Farrell, commander of the Corps' Walla Walla District. "The development that has occurred in the Treasure Valley makes it very timely to reexamine flood risk management, ecosystem and future water supply issues."

The interim feasibility study will: 1) evaluate and document the existing conditions on the Boise River, 2) evaluate public safety risks, 3) conduct detailed analysis on storage opportunities in the Boise River basin, and 4) develop a plan to complete the remainder of the feasibility study.

"Given the many issues we see including community growth, flooding possibilities and climate change, we need to take a serious look at all our options," said Hal Anderson, IDWR Division Administrator. "The hope is that we can come up with one or more possible projects that we can take to the next study phase.

"It is vital for us to be working on real solutions to our water supply needs before crisis hits," he added.

The study is anticipated to be completed in March 2012 at an estimated cost of \$1.74 million. The cost of the interim feasibility study will be shared equally (50/50) between the federal government and the non-federal sponsor.

The IWRB has also initiated development of a Treasure Valley Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan (CAMP) to address future water supply and demand issues for the Lower Boise River basin 50 years into the future. The Boise River GI - Interim Feasibility Study will provide technical information about water storage potential in the Boise River drainage that will be used in the Treasure Valley CAMP.

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BACKGROUND ON THE BOISE RIVER GI – INTERIM FEASIBILITY STUDY

- WRDA 1986 provides that GI studies are conducted in two phases: the reconnaissance phase and the feasibility phase. The Corps completed a reconnaissance study in 1995 (Lower Boise River and Tributaries, Idaho Reconnaissance Study), with full federal funding, which identified several proposals for feasibility-level studies. That feasibility study can be viewed online or downloaded at www.nww.usace.army.mil/reports/miscellaneous/boise.pdf . A 905(b) report was completed in 2000 that also recommended moving to feasibility phase.
- The Boise River GI Feasibility Study will be conducted using a two phased approach. The partnership with the IWRB will initiate the first phase, an interim feasibility study. Additional partnerships may be formed to complete the second feasibility study phase.

To learn more about the Corps of Engineers and its mission in the Walla Walla District, go to www.nww.usace.army.mil.

For more information about the IWRB, check out their Web site at www.idwr.idaho.gov/waterboard/ or contact IWRB Public Information Officer Bob McLaughlin at (208) 287-4828.

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