

IDAWRA: IWRB's ESPA Managed Recharge Program
February 16, 2017, 11:30 - 1:00
Washington Group Plaza Training Room, 720 Park Blvd., Boise
Speaker: Wesley Hipke, IDWR, Recharge Program Manager

Idaho Section of the American Water Resources Association

IDAWRA: IWRB's ESPA Managed Recharge Program

Thursday, February 16, 2017, 11:30 - 1:00

Washington Group Plaza Executive Dining Room, 720 Park Blvd., Boise

Speaker: Wesley Hipke, IDWR, Recharge Program Manager

The Idaho Water Resource Board (IWRB) has been tasked with developing a managed recharge program in the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer (ESPA) capable of recharging 250,000 acre-feet per year (af/yr) to stabilize the ESPA. The ESPA has been losing approximately 200,000 acre-feet annually from aquifer storage since the 1950s resulting in declining groundwater levels and spring flows from the aquifer. The recharge goal was originally established in the ESPA Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan and was included in the 2015 SWC-IGWA Settlement Agreement. In 2016, the Idaho Legislature passed and approved Senate Concurrent Resolution 136, which reaffirmed the importance of the program and directed the IWRB to develop managed recharge capacity for an average of 250,000 acre-feet annually in the ESPA by December 31, 2024. Stabilizing the ESPA is critical to maintaining the minimum flow requirements on the Snake River, reducing conflicts between the water users, and the economic stability of the area.

Three primary elements of the IWRB's ESPA recharge implementation strategy are to:

- Utilize Snake River natural flow that would otherwise leave the ESPA area.
- Assist canal operators and other entities with infrastructure improvements that will allow recharge water to be delivered during the winter months.
- Develop and maximize the recharge capacity of managed recharge sites.

This presentation will cover some of the issues and complexities in conducting managed recharge in the ESPA, the accomplishments to date, and the IWRB's plans for reaching the goal of 250,000 af/yr of managed recharge by 2014.

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Wesley is a Professional Registered Geologist in the State of Idaho, with over 25 years of experience in hydrogeology. He received a B.S. from the University of Nebraska and a M.S. from Wichita State University. Over 19 years of his experience was with the Arizona Department of Water Resources developing their Artificial Recharge Program and managing the Groundwater Modeling Section. Since 2015 Wesley has been the Recharge Program Manager at the Idaho Department of Water Resources.

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