BEFORE THE IDAHO WATER RESOURCE BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF THE BOISE RIVER FEASIBILITY STUDY

RESOLUTION TO COMMIT FUNDS AND PROVIDE SIGNATORY AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, House Joint memorial No. 8 (HJM 8) passed and approved by the 2008 Idaho Legislature encouraged the Idaho Water Resource Board (IWRB), in coordination with other public and private entities, to initiate and complete the study of additional water storage projects in the state of Idaho including, but not limited to, the study of Twin Springs Dam in the Boise River drainage; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 428 passed and approved by the 2008 Idaho Legislature directed the IWRB to conduct the statewide comprehensive aquifer planning and management effort, including evaluation of additional surface water storage, and House Bill 644, also passed and approved by the 2008 Idaho Legislature, created the Aquifer Planning and Management Fund and provided funds to carry out the statewide comprehensive aquifer planning and management effort; and

WHEREAS, the IWRB initiated the Treasure Valley Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan, and the Lower Boise River Interim Feasibility Study (Interim Feasibility Study) was one of the associated technical studies designed to assess water storage potential in the Boise River drainage; and

WHEREAS, though a Federal Cost Share Agreement (FCSA) between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the IWRB as the non-federal sponsor, the Corps completed the Water Storage Screening Analysis and Lower Boise River Interim Feasibility Study, Preliminary Evaluation of Arrowrock Site reports in 2010 and 2011 respectively; and

WHEREAS, in 2012 the Corps implemented the SMART Planning initiative which streamlined the process by which the Corps implemented feasibility studies and required that all on-going studies amend existing agreements to conform to modified planning requirements. Compliance with the modified planning process resulted in an increase in the scope of the Interim Feasibility Study; and

WHEREAS, House Bill 479 passed and approved by the 2014 Idaho Legislature appropriated $1.5 million to complete the Corps’ Boise River Feasibility Study and the IWRB approved a resolution, dated November 5, 2014, authorizing the expenditure of up to $1.5 million from the Revolving Development Account for completion of the study; and

WHEREAS, on January 30, 2015, the IWRB and the Corps executed an amendment to the Interim Feasibility Study FCSA to authorize completion Corps’ Boise River Feasibility Study which was intended to build on the previous studies to evaluate alternatives to reduce flood risk and increase the amount of water available for use in the Boise River watershed; and
WHEREAS, a raise of Arrowrock Dam appeared to be the most promising alternative to meet flood risk reduction and water supply needs, however, after completion of extensive hydrologic and economic modeling that included evaluation of current potential flood damages, the Corps determined that a federal interest could not be justified at this time as project costs exceeded benefits from the Arrowrock Dam raise options; and

WHEREAS, results of the study and the Corps’ recommendations were presented to the IWRB and, on January 24, 2017, the IWRB approved termination of the Boise River Feasibility Study FCSA with the Corps; and

WHEREAS, a recent study commissioned by the IWRB to inform the Corps’ feasibility study predicts that a significant amount of new water supply may be needed to meet DCMI needs of the growing Treasure Valley population over the next 50 years (Treasure Valley DCMI Water-Demand Projections (2015-2065), August 2016); and

WHEREAS, declines in the Treasure Valley aquifer in some areas and the interconnectivity between ground and surface water have resulted in restrictions on new groundwater development in parts of the Treasure Valley; therefore, additional surface water storage may be required to reduce demand on the aquifer in those areas and to meet future water needs; and

WHEREAS, these future water demand projections and the Corps’ study established a need for additional water supply and significant flood risk reduction in the Treasure Valley; therefore, through the IWRB’s termination resolution, it resolved to continue to investigate surface water storage to help meet future water needs in the Treasure Valley in accordance with the Idaho State Water Plan and HJM 8, and encouraged the Corps to coordinate with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) to leverage resources for the development of multi-purpose water projects, and to coordinate with cities, counties and other entities to develop projects that reduce flood risk in the Treasure Valley; and

WHEREAS, at the request of the IWRB and based on the results of the Corps’ Boise River storage studies, the Corps and Reclamation identified potential smaller raises to the existing dams on the Boise River (Anderson Ranch, Arrowrock and Luck Peak Dams) that may be cost effective and provide additional water storage capacity; and

WHEREAS, the Reclamation has authority under the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, P.L. 111-11 to study projects that address water shortages in the Boise River system and which may include execution of a Memorandum of Agreement and fifty percent (50%) federal cost-share to complete a feasibility study of additional surface water storage with a non-federal partner; and

WHEREAS, Reclamation is also pursuing approval under the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act as another potential option to authorize and fund both investigation and construction of affordable water storage infrastructure projects that support water supply, hydropower, flood control, and fish and wildlife in the Treasure Valley; and
WHEREAS, the total estimated cost to perform a feasibility study of the three smaller dam raises is $6 million, fifty percent of which ($3 million) is the responsibility of the IWRB as the non-federal partner; and

WHEREAS, a portion of this amount can be satisfied with the funds remaining from the Corps' Boise River Feasibility Study, in the amount of $1.05 million in the Revolving Development Account; and

WHEREAS, the IWRB budgeted $1 million in its Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Resolution for storage studies in the Boise River basin from the Statewide Water Sustainability and Aquifer Stabilization, and the Secondary Aquifer Planning, Management, and Implementation Fund; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the IWRB authorizes the expenditure of the remainder of the funds appropriated for the Corps' Boise River Feasibility Study, $1.05 million from the Revolving Development Account, for the completion of Reclamation’s Boise River Feasibility Study.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, for the completion of Reclamation’s Boise River Feasibility Study, the IWRB authorizes expenditures not to exceed $1 million from the Secondary Aquifer Planning, Management, and Implementation Fund’s Fiscal Year 2018 budget, and authorizes expenditures not to exceed a total of $1 million from the Secondary Aquifer Planning, Management, and Implementation Fund in Fiscal Year 2019, subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the IWRB authorizes its chairman or designee to execute the necessary agreements with Reclamation to carry out the Boise River Feasibility Study, but reserves the option to terminate the study prior to completion at the IWRB’s discretion.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the IWRB encourages Reclamation to coordinate with the Corps to leverage resources and information generated in previous studies to complete the new Boise River Feasibility Study, and to coordinate with cities, counties and other entities throughout the study process to evaluate and develop projects that address water supply needs and reduce flood risk in the Treasure Valley.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the IWRB encourages Reclamation to pursue an extension to the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009, P.L. 111-11 and to pursue authorization and funding under the WIIN Act to achieve the greatest support for development of multi-purpose water projects in the Treasure Valley.

Dated this 24th day of October 2017.

ROGER W. CHASE, Chairman
Idaho Water Resource Board

Attest: Vince Alberdi, Secretary
Idaho Water Resource Board