

**IDAHO GROUND WATER APPROPRIATORS, INC.**  
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**Water Curtailment Order Lifted For East Idaho Farmers**  
*Farmers Will Get Back to Work Without Further Penalty*

Idaho Falls, Id. – Groundwater irrigators and surface water irrigators have completed a deal that saves 330,000 acres of Idaho farmland from being dried up and averts economic catastrophe in the state.

A mitigation agreement for 2024, brokered by Governor Brad Little and Lt. Governor Scott Bedke, has now been signed by all parties and has been submitted to the Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) for approval. When the deal is approved, IDWR will lift the curtailment for all nine ground water districts whose patrons irrigate with groundwater from the ESPA.

“This is a huge relief to our members, who have had their livelihoods threatened over the past month,” said TJ Budge, attorney for Idaho Ground Water Appropriators. “We want to thank Governor Little, Lt. Governor Bedke, Senator Van Burtenshaw and, especially, all of our groundwater district members for their sincere and significant efforts to get a deal done before it was too late.”

Though this agreement allows farmers to continue growing crops in 2024, it does not fix the underlying issues with the way Idaho is managing the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer (ESPA). Groundwater districts are putting considerable trust in the state to fulfill promises that a more pragmatic and effective management plan will be implemented before the next growing season.

“We have learned that the way the Idaho Department of Water Resources currently goes about managing the ESPA is not working,” said IGWA chairwoman Stephanie Mickelsen. “Without meaningful change to how water resources are managed over the coming months, we will find ourselves right back in this same position and all of Idaho will end up paying the price. We look forward to working with state leaders to chart a path that is in the best interest of the state moving forward.”

Ground water districts are committed to developing a ground water management plan that avoids massive water curtailments and protects farmers who have already planted crops for the season from sudden changes in their access to water.

The curtailment was ordered after IDWR projected a 74,100-acre-foot shortfall of surface water to the Twin Falls Canal Company, a senior water right holder in the Magic Valley. The new plan mitigates for that shortfall and continues the commitment of IGWA members to recharge the Eastern Snake River Plain Aquifer.