



IDAHO WATER RESOURCE BOARD

CLOUD SEEDING COMMITTEE

DRAFT Notes 1-26

Idaho Water Center
Conference Rooms 602 B-D
322 East Front Street, Boise, Idaho 83720

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At Large

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Vice Chair
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Dean Stevenson
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District 2

Brian Olmstead
Twin Falls
At Large

Marcus Gibbs
Grace
District 4

Patrick McMahon
Sun Valley
At Large

July 21, 2026

Chair Marcus Gibbs called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Agenda Item No. 1: Introductions and Attendance

Attendees included Chair Marcus Gibbs, Pat McMahon (online), Al Barker, and Jeff Raybould.

Idaho Water Resource Board (IWRB, Board) members in attendance were Jo Ann Cole-Hansen (online), Brian Olmstead (online), Dale Van Stone (online), and Dean Stevenson (online). Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) staff members in attendance were Brian Patton, Ann Yribar (online) Cynthia Bridge Clark, Wesley Hipke, Nick Banish, Caitlyn Swanson, Matt Anders, Jake Vermas (Online), and Milin Ream.

Others in attendance included Jared Smith and Max Jones with Rainmaker Technology Corporation (RMTC) and Johnathan Jennings with the State of Utah Division of Water Resources.

Agenda Item No. 2: Public Comment

Having received no requests for in-person public comment, Chair Marcus Gibbs inquired whether there were any additional speakers. Board Administrative Assistant, Milin Ream, announced that one written public comment had been received via email from W. Cossette and would be entered into the record.

Agenda Item No. 3: Senate Bill 1269

Agenda Item No. 4: Authorization and Reporting Criteria

IDWR Cloud Seeding Program Manager Nick Banish provided a PowerPoint presentation outlining the key updates to Senate Bill 1269 and the associated authorization and reporting criteria, staff's plan to meet the Code, and address operator reporting requirements.

Mr. Banish discussed staff's coordination with legal counsel, stakeholders, the IWRB, and IDWR management to develop reporting metrics and requirements that comply with the statute while remaining practical and effective.

Following a short question and answer session, Mr. Banish advised that the complete reporting criteria would be presented for Committee review at the August 5, 2026, meeting in Rexburg.

Agenda Item No. 5: Bear River Cloud Seeding Update

Introducing the agenda item, IDWR staff and Cloud Seeding Program personnel IDWR's Caitlyn Swanson introduced Jared Smith of RMTC, who presented the Year 1 results of the Bear River Basin Cloud Seeding Pilot Program. Mr. Smith reviewed the pilot program's primary objectives, program implementation, lessons learned, and planned technical improvements for future operations.

Following the question-and-answer session, Ms. Swanson provided an update on the Bear River Basin Third-Party Analysis, including proposed revisions to the contract and scope of work. She explained that the study will evaluate the effectiveness of UAS-based cloud seeding and compare projected precipitation outcomes with traditional aircraft and ground-based silver iodide (AgI) seeding methods. Ms. Swanson noted that the revised scope of work will provide staff with a more comprehensive evaluation of the seasonal effectiveness of drone-based cloud seeding, rather than relying on a single year of partial operational data.

Ms. Swanson then presented an in-depth overview of the Bear River Basin system. Her presentation included a review of cloud seeding activities within the basin's target areas, including the Uinta Mountains, Salt River Range, and Bear River Range. She concluded with an overview of the basin's water distribution and the downstream states that benefit from the additional water generated through cloud seeding.

At the conclusion of the agenda item presentations, the Committee agreed to hear Agenda Item No. 7 before No. 6 to accommodate the travel schedule of an RMTC representative.

Agenda Item No. 7: Bear River Basin Year 2 Pilot Project Proposal (2026-2027)

Ms. Swanson introduced Jonathan Jennings, Meteorologist, with the Utah Division of Water Resources, who provided an overview of Utah's Year 2 Pilot Project request. Mr. Jennings discussed Utah's interest in maintaining a basin-wide approach to cloud seeding across state boundaries, advancing cloud seeding technologies, supporting continued research to inform program management, and request for a \$1.2 million contribution from the State of Idaho to help fund Year 2 of the Pilot Bear River Basin Cloud Seeding Program.

Continuing the agenda item, Max Jones, Government and Water Policy Affairs Manager with RMTC, then presented the proposed 2026–2027 Year 2 Pilot Project. His presentation addressed the rationale for continued operations, target area, atmospheric seedability, validation metrics, projected yield, project timeline, operational assets, and the proposed project budget summary.

Following the presentation and subsequent question-and-answer discussion, no formal action was taken. The Committee directed IDWR staff to develop recommendations for consideration at the August 5, 2026, Committee meeting. Chair Gibbs noted that the Committee's recommendations would be presented to the Idaho Water Resource Board for consideration at its August 7, 2026, meeting.

Agenda Item No. 6: State of Utah Cloud Seeding Update

Jonathan Jennings, Meteorologist with the Utah Division of Water Resources, provided an informational presentation on Utah's Bear River Basin Cloud Seeding Program. Topics included program funding, the significance of the Bear River Basin, climate variability within the Great Salt Lake Basin, lessons learned during the 2026 season, priorities for 2027, ongoing operational challenges, and the broader impacts of the program.

Agenda Item No. 8: Other Items

There was no other business to come before the Committee.

Agenda Item No. 9: Adjourn

Chair Gibbs adjourned the meeting at 3:06 PM

Committee Members: Chair Marc Gibbs, Jeff Raybould, Al Barker, and Pat McMahon.

Respectfully submitted by Milin J. Ream, Administrative Assistant to the Board.

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