



IDAHO WATER RESOURCE BOARD

CLOUD SEEDING COMMITTEE

DRAFT Notes 2-26

Springhill Suites
Teton Room

1177 S. Yellowstone Hwy., Rexburg, Idaho 83440

Brad Little
Governor

Jeff Raybould
Chairman
St. Anthony
At Large

Jo Ann Cole-Hansen
Vice Chair
Lewiston
At Large

Dean Stevenson
Secretary
Paul
District 3

Dale Van Stone
Hope
District 1

Albert Barker
Boise
District 2

Brian Olmstead
Twin Falls
At Large

Marcus Gibbs
Grace
District 4

Patrick McMahon
Sun Valley
At Large

August 5, 2026

Chair Marcus Gibbs called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Agenda Item No. 1: Introductions and Attendance

Attendees included Idaho Water Resource Board (IWRB/Board) Cloud Seeding Committee Chair Marcus Gibbs and Committee members Pat McMahon, Al Barker, and Jeff Raybould.

IWRB members in attendance were Jo Ann Cole-Hansen, Brian Olmstead, Dale Van Stone, and Dean Stevenson. Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) staff members in attendance were Brian Patton, Cynthia Bridge Clark, Wesley Hipke, Nick Banish, Caitlyn Swanson, Mary Condon, Steve Stubner (Consultant), and Milin Ream.

Others in attendance included Max Jones with Rainmaker Technology Corporation (RMTC), Derek Blestrud with Idaho Power, Marty and Connie Owen with Let it Snow, Justin Beard with the City of Rexburg, Tammy Scardino with IPTV, Blair Dance, Lori Ringel, and Tammy Egber with Freemont County HCRC&D, Greg and Lisa Shenton, Jerome Hansen, and Johnathan Jennings with the State of Utah Division of Water Resources (online).

Agenda Item No. 2: Cloud Seeding Overview Report

IDWR Cloud Seeding Program Manager Nick Banish provided a PowerPoint presentation providing an overview of the IWRB's Cloud Seeding Program (Program) with attention to current operations, basin coverage, partnerships and stakeholder collaboration, as well as, provided further details on the Program's priorities.

Next, Derek Blestrud with Idaho Power provided an informational update on their cloud seeding operations, followed by Marty and Connie Owen with Let it Snow, sharing a recap of their season of activities and operations.

Agenda Item No. 3: Authorization and Reporting Criteria

Addressing the Committee, IDWR Cloud Seeding Program Manager Nick Banish provided an overview of the updated Idaho Water Resource Board Cloud Seeding Authorization and Reporting Criteria, the guiding document for the Cloud Seeding Program. Mr. Banish's presentation included examples of the Request for Authorization to Conduct Cloud Seeding Operations form and the monthly reporting table template.

Following review and discussion, Chairman Gibbs entertained a motion.

Mr. Barker moved to recommend the Board approve the updated Cloud Seeding Authorization and Reporting Criteria at its September meeting, as presented. Mr. McMahon seconded. **Voice Vote:** Four ayes. Motion carried.

Agenda Item No. 4: Bear River Basin Year 2 Pilot Project Proposal (2026-2027 Season)

Introducing the agenda item, IDWR Cloud Seeding Program staff member Caitlyn Swanson provided an overview of the Bear River Basin, including a brief recap of the Year 1 Pilot Project and Northern Utah's cloud seeding projects. Ms. Swanson also presented the proposed Year 2 Pilot Project, including proposed cloud seeding target areas.

Following questions and discussion, Ms. Swanson invited Max Jones, Government and Water Policy Affairs Manager with RMTTC to review their Year 2 budget revision, and discussion continued.

At the conclusion of the agenda item discussion, Chairman Gibbs entertained a motion.

Mr. McMahon moved to recommend the Board consider approval of the proposed Bear River Basin Year 2 Pilot Project Proposal with the caveat that language be added to the proposed resolution stating that authorized funding is contingent upon the Board retaining an opportunity to provide direction regarding cloud seeding operations, particularly as they relate to Bear Lake. Mr. Barker seconded. **Voice Vote:** Four ayes. Motion carried.

Agenda Item No. 5: 2026-2027 Season Upper Snake Cloud Seeding Budget

Water Projects Manager Wesley Hipke reported that staff are presenting a resolution to the Committee for recommendation to the Board regarding an additional aircraft to be added for the 2026-2027 collaborative cloud seeding season in the Upper Snake River Basin—in response to current water supply conditions and the outlook for the 2026-2027 winter season. A statewide assessment conducted by the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) identified strong potential for aircraft cloud seeding in the Teton and Salt River Ranges.

Mr. Hipke further advised that IDWR staff will also identify available funding sources within the Fiscal Year 2027 Secondary Aquifer Planning, Management, and Implementation Fund (Secondary Fund) and present proposed budget amendment to the Board at its September meeting reflecting the verified project costs and recommended funding allocations

Mr. Raybould moved to recommend the Board consider adopting resolution approving funds for the support of cloud seeding in the Upper Snake River Basin. Mr. McMahon seconded. **Voice Vote:** Four ayes. Motion carried.

Agenda Item No. 6: Public Comments

Chair Gibbs announced that several public comments had been received via email by the Board Administrative Assistant. The comments will be compiled and provided to the Committee and Board for review and maintained as part of the public record.

Mr. Gibbs then invited those in attendance to provide public comments. Mr. Jerome Hansen addressed the Board and expressed his appreciation for the Board's support for cloud seeding, noting that he is a cloud seeding operator in eastern Idaho.

Agenda Item No. 7: Other Items

There was no other business to come before the Committee.

Agenda Item No. 8: Adjourn

Chair Gibbs adjourned the meeting at 7:57 PM

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

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