

PRESS STATEMENT

March 21, 2008
For immediate release

Contact: Idaho Rivers United
Kevin Lewis c) 208-830-4870



PO Box 633
Boise, ID 83701
800-574-7481
info@idahorivers.org
www.idahorivers.org

Executive Director
Bill Sedivy

Board of Directors

Jim Bradford
Lewiston

Buck Drew
Ketchum

Rick Eichstaedt
Spokane

Al Espinosa
Moscow

Peter Grubb
Coeur D'Alene

LuVerne Grussing
Juliatta

John Heimer
Boise

Tom Kovalicky
Grangeville

Jon Long
Rexberg

Andy Munter
Ketchum

Bronwyn Myers
Boise

Jackie Nefzger
Boise

Cathy Nuxoll
Boise

Jon Ochi
Idaho Falls

Keith Stonebraker
Juliatta

Tom Stuart
Boise

Idaho Needs Sound Water Policy – Not New Dams

BOISE — In a time of declining state revenues Idaho's tax dollars should not be spent on expensive studies for building new dams in Idaho. Dams bring dire environmental consequences to Idaho's rivers, streams and clean water. Before Idaho resorts to hasty construction of new dams, our leaders must look at reasonable water solutions — water conservation, efficiency, and a reevaluation of Idaho's water management policies.

New dams are not the best solution for water issues:

- Building dams does not create water. Idaho receives less precipitation now than in the past before existing reservoirs were constructed. Often, those reservoirs fail to fill completely. It makes little sense to construct new storage reservoirs when our existing reservoirs fall short. It would be better to re-evaluate the operating protocols for our existing reservoirs in response to changing runoff patterns to ensure that opportunities to store water are not being lost.
- New dams are destructive to Idaho's rivers, streams and clean water. The environmental cost of dams is tremendous. Dams degrade water quality, increase water evaporation, disconnect habitat, prevent nutrient transport and block the passage of sediment — all factors that have led to the decline of Idaho's salmon, steelhead, bull trout and other trout species. Building additional dams will only hasten species decline and possible lead to extinction.
- Building new dams should be the last option. New dams are extremely expensive. Before millions of taxpayer dollars are spent constructing dams, all other options must be exhausted — including water conservation and efficiency, water use options, and alternative storage options (such as aquifer storage).
- Enlarging existing storage reservoirs may be less damaging than constructing new dams — but these examples must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and only after less destructive options are considered. Water conservation and efficiencies, alternative storage options (such as aquifer storage) may be more viable and less costly alternatives.

Idaho Rivers United is dedicated to protecting and restoring the rivers of Idaho. For more information, visit www.idahorivers.org