

# CITIES

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## Stakeholder Perspectives on Recharge

Idaho Water Users Association Annual Convention  
January 21, 2020

Robert L. Harris

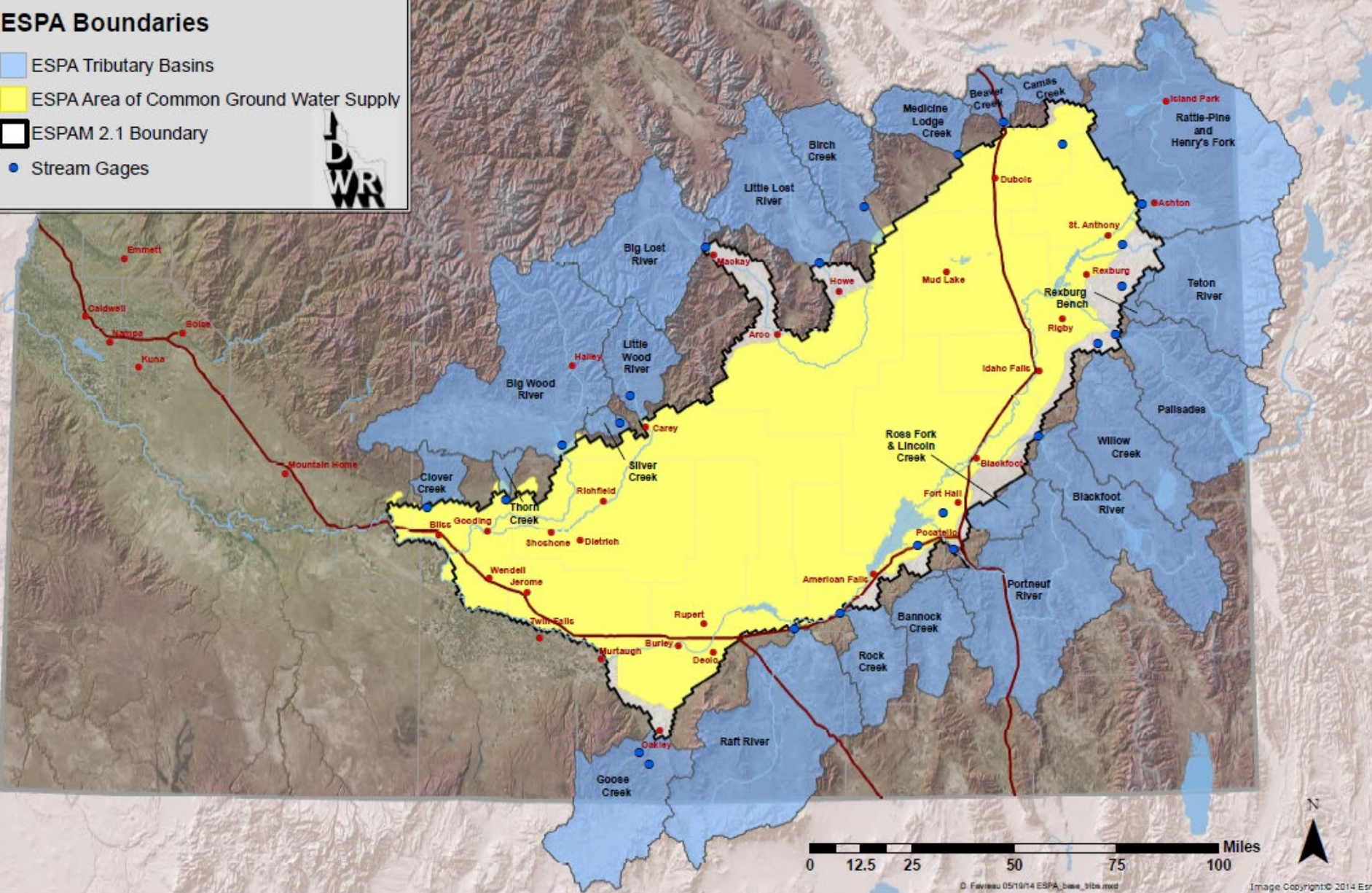
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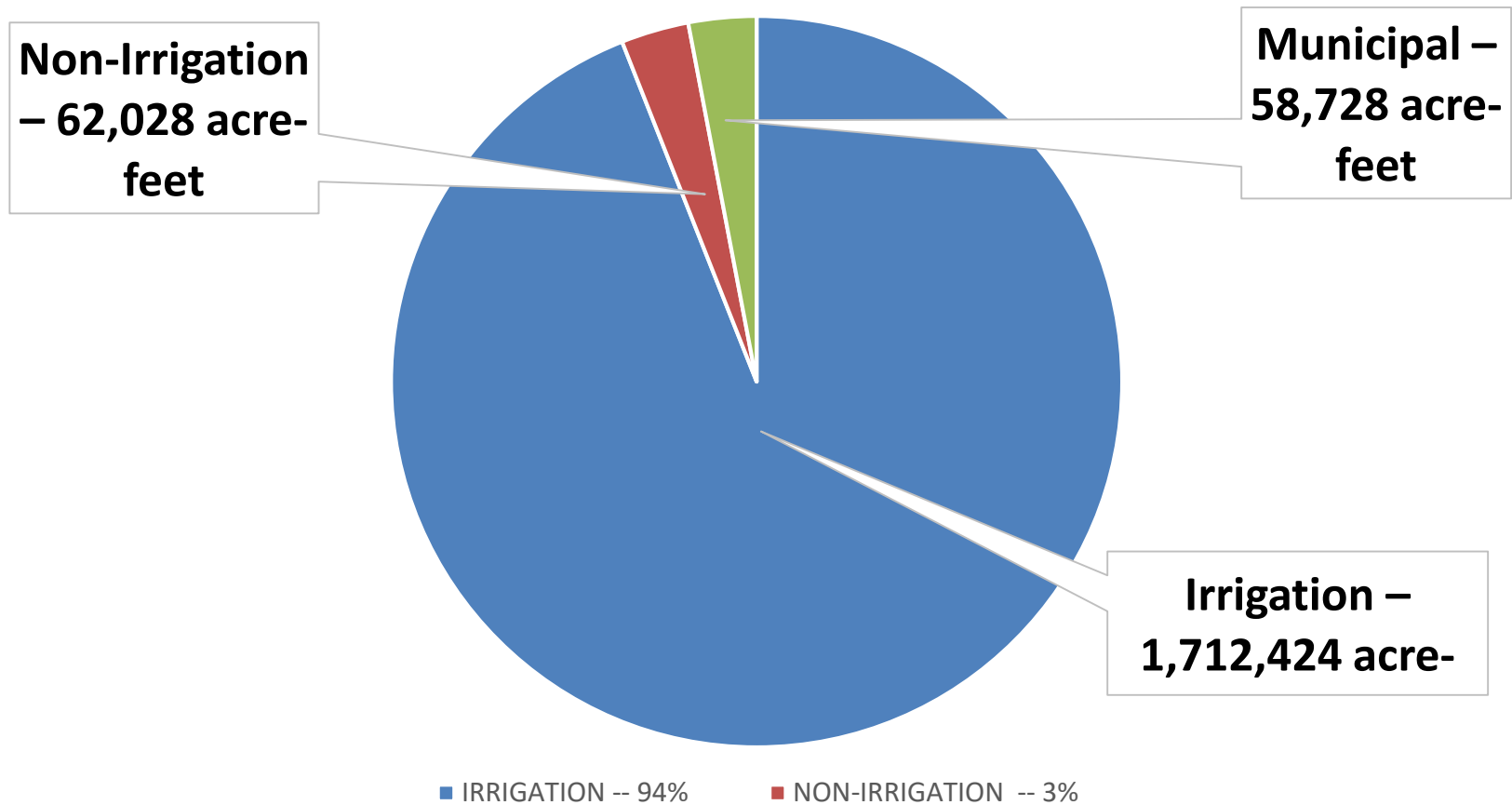


# ESPA Boundaries

- ESPA Tributary Basins
- ESPA Area of Common Ground Water Supply
- ESPAM 2.1 Boundary
- Stream Gages



# 3%: 2010-2014 WMIS Pumping Data



# RECHARGE

- Total irrigation pumping on ESPA is approximately 1,700,000 AF per year.
- Total cities' pumping is around 3% of the total ESPA pumping.
- As water users on the ESPA, cities fully support managed ground water recharge.

# RECHARGE

- Effective January 1, 2019, certain ESPA cities entered into a settlement agreement with the SWC and IGWA.
  - <https://idwr.idaho.gov/files/legal/swc-igwa-cities-settlement/SWC-IGWA-CITIES-Settlement-20190101-Cities-Settlement-Agreement-with-signatures.pdf>
  - **22 Cities Covered:** Ammon, Atomic City, Blackfoot, Bliss, Burley, Carey, Declo, Dietrich, Firth, Gooding, Hazelton, Heyburn, Idaho Falls, Iona, Jerome, Paul, Pocatello, Rexburg, Richfield, Rupert, Shoshone, and Wendell.
  - Agreement allows additional cities to be added.
- Unlike the SWC-IGWA Settlement Agreement, no replacement water from cities to the SWC is required.
- Instead, **aquifer enhancement activities** are required.

# RECHARGE

- **Main Provisions of the Settlement Agreement:**
  - **How much aquifer enhancement do cities need to provide?** All participating cities collectively provide **7,650 acre-feet per year**; Amount can increase to 9,640 acre-feet per year if IGWA's 240,000 acre-feet per year reduction obligation increases to 340,000 acre-feet per year or more.
  - **How long is the agreement for?** The earlier of (1) 35 years; or (2) until participating cities' collective pumping exceeds 120,000 acre-feet on a five-year rolling average.



# RECHARGE

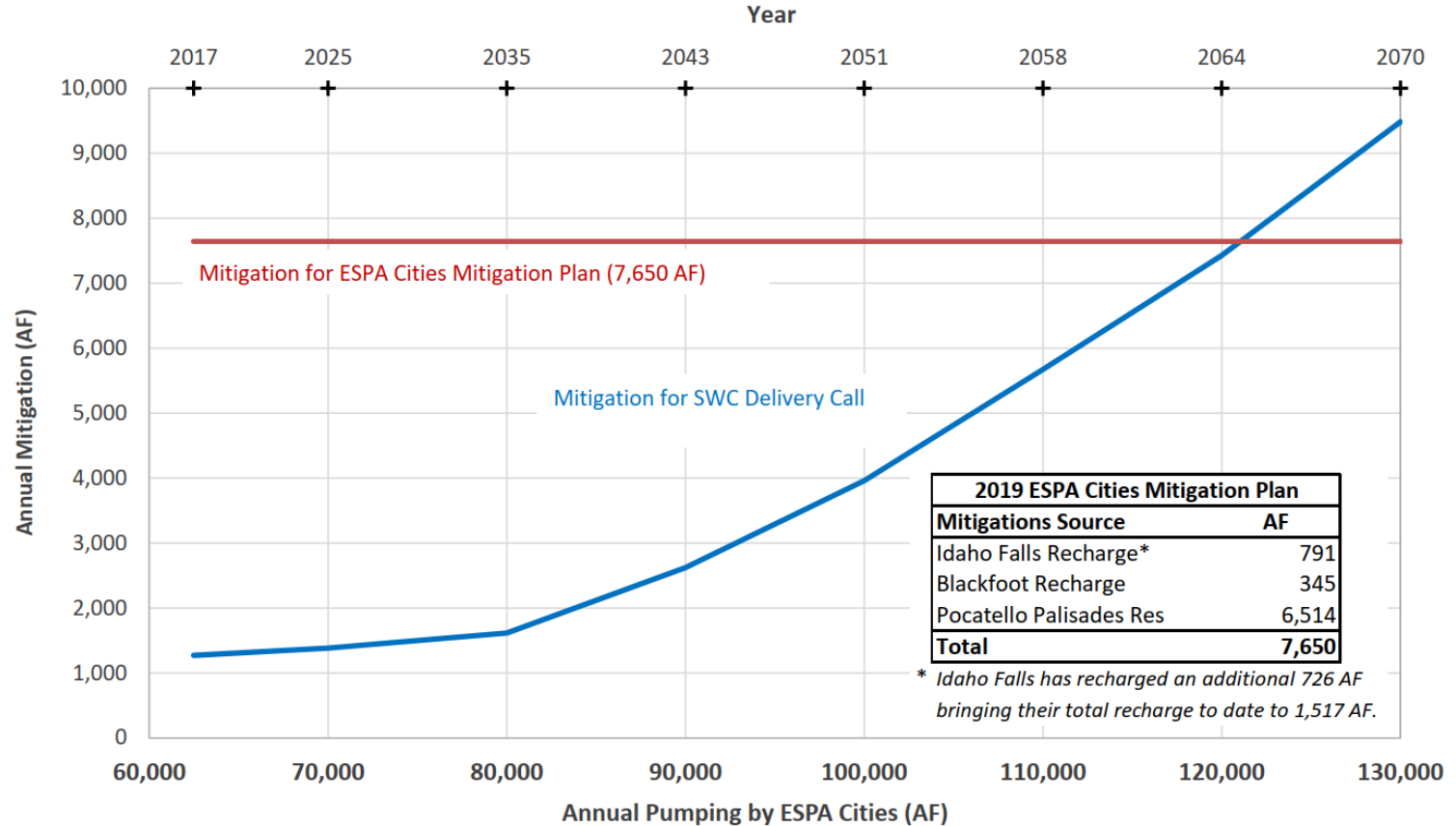
- **Main Provisions of the Settlement Agreement:**
  - **What aquifer enhancement activities are authorized?**
    - Delivery of water to the IWRB for **recharge** (cities are responsible for renting storage water and other associated costs (wheeling fees, etc.));
    - **Recharge** performed by cities (with some limitations on recharge sites);
    - Ground water to surface water conversions;
    - Temporary or permanent dry up of irrigated lands within ESPA; or
    - Other activities agreed to by the parties to the settlement agreement.

# RECHARGE

- Individual city aquifer enhancement obligations are internally allocated to each participating city based upon consideration of total city pumping and water right priority dates.
- Use of storage water for recharge is transacted through the WD01 Rental Pool Procedures.
  - Presently, most cities have opted to meet their aquifer enhancement allocation by recharge through the IWRB.
  - Idaho Falls has elected to meet a portion of its aquifer enhancement obligation by performing private recharge.



## Comparison of Annual Mitigation Requirement for ESPA Cities to Amount That Would Be Required Under the SWC Delivery Call



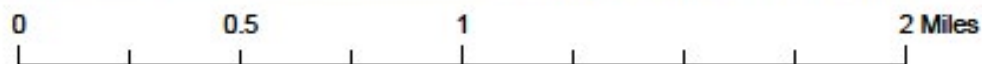
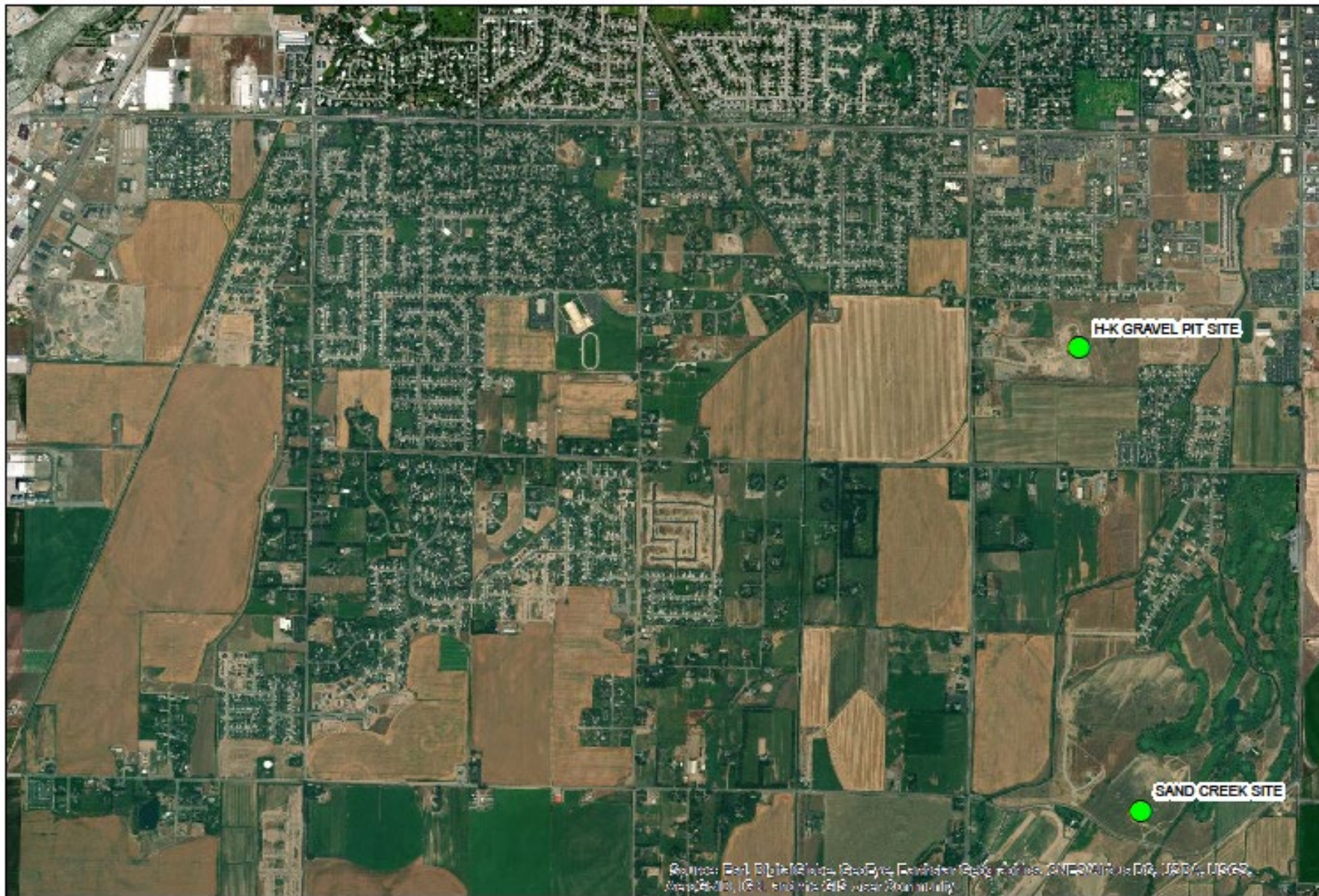
**Notes:**

- (1) ESPA Cities pumping assumed to increase at 1.4% annual rate.
- (2) The July 1, 1982 curtailment date is the date to which IGWA pumping would need to be curtailed in order to require 240,000 af/y of mitigation in the SWC Delivery Call.

# CITY OF IDAHO FALLS RECHARGE SITES



**Legend**  
● Recharge Locations





# CITY OF IDAHO FALLS SAND CREEK RECHARGE SITE

**Legend**

- Recharge Locations
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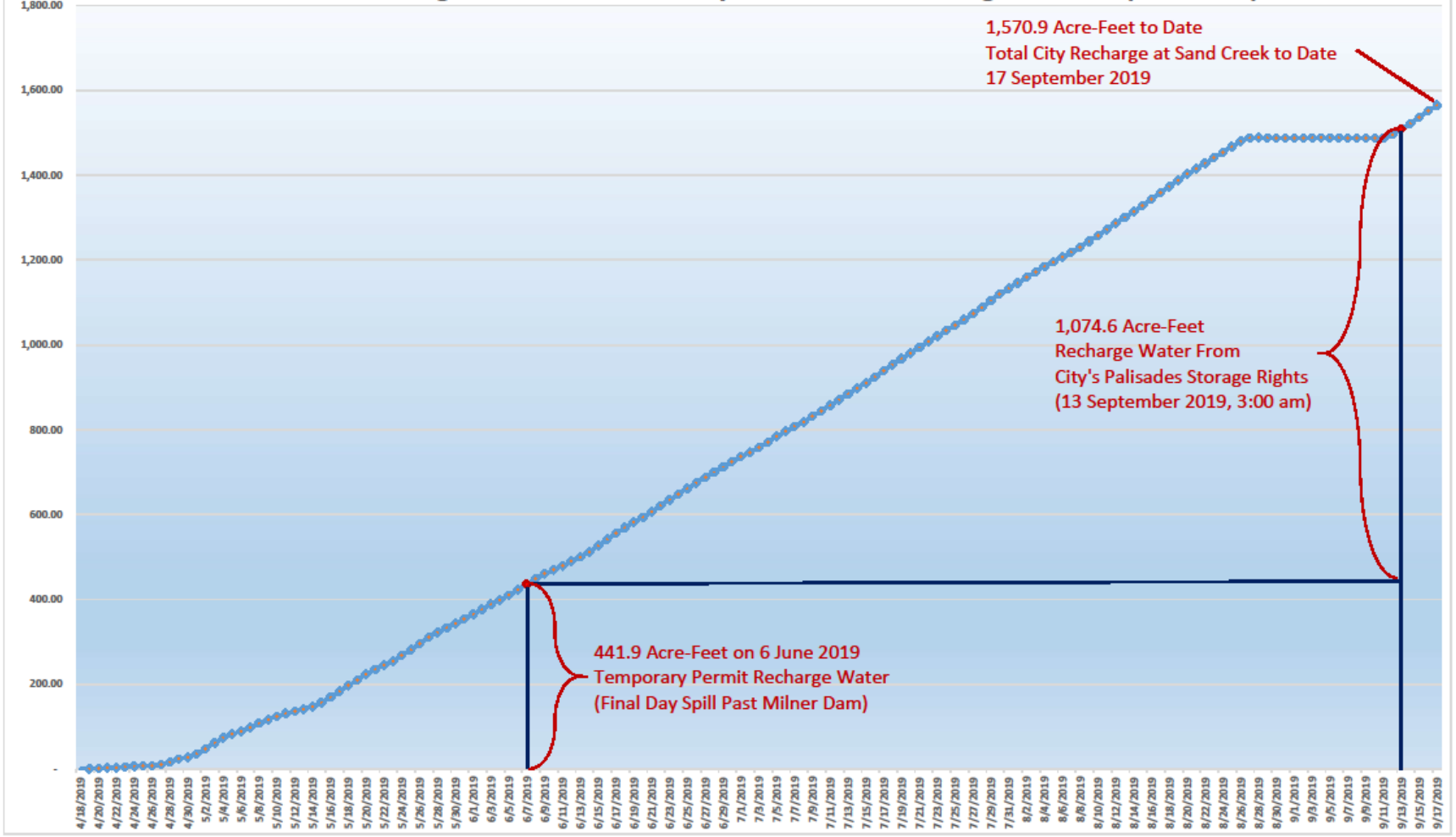








## Sand Creek Recharge Station - 2019 Daily Cumulative Recharge Volume (acre-feet)



# RECHARGE

- For cities, ground water recharge is considered a critical water management tool used to enhance aquifer storage and improve surface water reach gains to the Snake River.
- From cities' perspective, we need to improve recharge process by reducing red tape in order to find consistent water supplies for ground water recharge.
- Governor Brad Little:  
<https://gov.idaho.gov/cutting-red-tape/>



# RECHARGE

- Some water users—including cities—have retained canal company shares or paid assessments within an irrigation district for irrigation water on lands that were historically farmed but are no longer farmed.
- Water allocated to these entitlements is often left in the canal unused.
- Is it possible to find ways to allow this water to be used for ground water recharge purposes without impact to the operation of the canal companies/irrigation districts, and perhaps even without the need for IDWR or other governmental authorization?

# LEGISLATIVE SOLUTION?

- Legislation could exempt the requirement to amend a canal company/irrigation district natural flow water right where water diverted under such right is used for ground water recharge purposes, subject to specific requirements.
- Has something like this been done before?
  - Yes. In 2016, Idaho Code § 42-201(9) was added to exempt the requirement for a canal owner to obtain a new hydropower water right for water that is transported down the canal if the canal owner wanted to install a hydropower facility.

# QUESTIONS?

