

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 22

BY WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1
2 STATING FINDINGS OF THE LEGISLATURE AND AUTHORIZING THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
3 TO APPOINT A COMMITTEE TO UNDERTAKE AND COMPLETE A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS
4 OF CLIMATE VARIABILITY ON IDAHO'S STATE AGENCIES THAT ARE RESPONSIBLE
5 FOR RESOURCE MANAGEMENT.

6 Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

7 WHEREAS, as noted in the 2012 Idaho State Water Plan, evidence suggests
8 that climate variability will likely be an important factor in developing
9 and implementing updated flood-risk assessments, determining environmental
10 impact mitigation strategies, and determining the costs and benefits of ad-
11 ditional water storage; and

12 WHEREAS, the Idaho Department of Lands has expressed that earlier win-
13 ter snowpack melt contributes to drier landscapes and longer wildfire sea-
14 sons, allowing wildfires to spread on private, state, and local lands when
15 they start; and

16 WHEREAS, the occurrence and intensity of storms, floods, droughts, and
17 wildfires have increased, affecting many Idaho communities with documented
18 monetary and social costs; and

19 WHEREAS, fire seasons are an average of seventy-eight days longer today
20 than they were in the 1970s; and

21 WHEREAS, climate variability results in more frequent and more ex-
22 treme weather events than have traditionally occurred in Idaho, including
23 increased periods of drought, leading to less available water for all the
24 beneficial uses to which it has been appropriated as well as beneficial roles
25 water plays in Idaho's watersheds; and

26 WHEREAS, in Idaho, warmer temperatures for longer periods of time each
27 year translate into more precipitation in the form of rain rather than snow,
28 as well as earlier last frost dates and later first frost dates, which trans-
29 late into potential extended irrigation, angling, and river recreation sea-
30 sons; and

31 WHEREAS, Idaho's complex system of water management relies on not only
32 the prior appropriation doctrine but also multiple natural flow and storage
33 water systems, both physical and accounting, that have been developed over
34 more than a century's worth of water resource development; and

35 WHEREAS, seasonal variability affects the customary range of dates of
36 allocation across Idaho, impacting water management and water availability
37 at all times of year; and

38 WHEREAS, Idaho's forests, rangelands, parks, lava fields, waters, pub-
39 lic lands, fish, and wildlife are a part of Idaho's natural heritage and rep-
40 resent critical elements of Idaho's history, development, customs, and cul-
41 ture.

42 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of the First Regular Ses-
43 sion of the Sixty-fifth Idaho Legislature, the House of Representatives and

1 the Senate concurring therein, that the Legislative Council is authorized to
2 appoint a committee to study the effects of climate variability on Idaho's
3 state agencies that are responsible for resource management, including the
4 Department of Water Resources, the Department of Lands, and the Idaho State
5 Department of Agriculture, and to make recommendations on the prevention and
6 mitigation of the effects of climate variability in Idaho. The Legislative
7 Council shall determine the number of legislators and membership from each
8 house appointed to the committee and shall authorize the committee to re-
9 ceive input, advice, and assistance from interested and affected parties who
10 are not members of the Legislature.

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any advisors to the committee who are not
12 legislative members shall not be reimbursed from legislative funds for per
13 diem, mileage, or other expenses and shall not have voting privileges re-
14 garding the committee's recommendations and proposed legislation.

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee shall report its findings,
16 recommendations, and proposed legislation, if any, to the Second Regular
17 Session of the Sixty-fifth Idaho Legislature.