

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

RS30267C1 / H0183

In 1992, the Legislature established the Big Payette Lake Water Quality Council (“Council”) pursuant to Idaho Code Title 39, Chapter 66. The primary responsibility of the Council was to authorize scientific studies as well as collect scientific and other data on Big Payette Lake (“Lake”). Based on such information, the Council had the further responsibility to make recommendations to appropriate local, state, and federal regulatory agencies to take actions to improve the water quality in the Lake. The recommendations were contained in a Lake Management Plan (“Plan”). The Council did not have regulatory authority of any type.

The Council consisted of representatives of certain governmental agencies and interest groups, including representatives from the City of McCall, Valley County, land managers, logging, grazing, irrigation, and commercial interests, as well as two at-large members.

As resident and visitor populations continue to grow, environmental pressures on the Lake and watershed also increase. Eutrophication, sediment and shoreline erosion, pollution, defense and control of non-native and invasive species, and algal growth are all environmental problems facing the Lake, which is the sole source of drinking water for thousands of Idahoans.

The University of Idaho is conducting a shoreline erosion impact and related nutrient pollution in a new study of the Lake. The study, which is slated to be released in 2023, will provide vital new data that will need to be incorporated into the Plan. As currently there is no Council due to its sunset in 2005, there is an urgent need to re-establish the Council through new legislation to incorporate new data into the Plan and, as appropriate, update the Plan.

This legislation re-establishes the Council, adds two new additional members to the Council, provides for a process to incorporate the new study into the Plan, creates a technical advisory committee, removes legislative approval of the Plan by eliminating that the Plan has the force and effect of law and provides that the Council sunsets seven (7) years from July 1, 2023.

FISCAL NOTE

There is no fiscal impact to the general fund or to any other state or local government tax revenue source. Funding for the Council’s activities will come from private, non-governmental sources as it has in the past. Funding for the University of Idaho study has come from private and local contributions.

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DISCLAIMER: This statement of purpose and fiscal note are a mere attachment to this bill and prepared by a proponent of the bill. It is neither intended as an expression of legislative intent nor intended for any use outside of the legislative process, including judicial review (Joint Rule 18).