

# Idaho Washington Aquifer Collaborative (IWAC)

Scope: Regional Watershed

Location: Northern Idaho & Eastern Washington

## CONTACT INFORMATION:

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## SCOPE:

- IWAC is a collaborative of Idaho and Washington drinking water and reclaimed water purveyors. Spokane Valley Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer (the Aquifer) is a drinking water source for over 600,000 people in northern Idaho and eastern Washington.
- Collaborative efforts between water and wastewater purveyors, government agencies, and nonprofits within the Spokane Valley Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer region.
- IWAC's Goal is to facilitate regional dialogues, studies and initiatives facilitating stewardship of the Spokane Valley Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer and the Spokane River Watershed.

## COLLABORATIVE FORMATION:

- In 2009, the Idaho Water Resource Board sponsored a 50-year aquifer management plan (CAMP) for the Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer (RP-CAMP)
- An advisory committee comprised of local citizens created the RP-CAMP. One objective of the RP-CAMP was to create a bi-state organization working towards a regional aquifer management approach.
- In 2012, IWAC was created from meetings between Idaho and Washington water purveyors, the Spokane Aquifer Joint Board, Coeur d'Alene Tribe, Avista Utilities, Spokane River Forum, Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, WA Department of Ecology, University of Idaho, Washington State University and nonprofits.

## STRUCTURE/FUNDING:

- IWAC is a 501c3. It is funded by annual membership dues. IWAC officers include President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Past President. All officers serve as volunteers. The length of IWAC officers' terms is not specified, however a balance of two officers from ID and two officers from WA is established in the bylaws. An Administrative Assistant (AA) supports IWAC officers. The IWAC AA is Program Manager for the Spokane Aquifer Joint Board (SAJB) and is partially funded as a contribution from SAJB. IWAC reimburses SAJB for AA services over a set contribution agreement.
- IWAC meets monthly on the second Tuesday of the month from 1:30 -3:30 pm. Meetings are open to the public.
- In addition to dues, members have provided special funds to complete specific initiatives.
- Grant funding has been awarded from the Kootenai County Aquifer Protection District, and Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) Source Water Protection.

## MEMBERS:

- Avondale Irrigation District
- Bar Circle S Water Company
- City of Coeur d'Alene Water Department
- City of Post Falls Water and Sewer
- City of Spokane Water Department
- Consolidated Irrigation District No. 19
- East Greenacres Irrigation District
- Hayden Area Regional Sewer Board
- Hayden Lake Irrigation District
- Liberty Lake Sewer & Water District No. 1
- Millwood Municipal Water District
- Model Irrigation District No. 18
- Modern Electric Water Company
- North Kootenai Water & Sewer District
- Spokane Aquifer Joint Board
- Spokane County Water District No. 3
- Spokane County Environmental Services
- Vera Water and Power
- Whitworth Water District No. 2

## WATER CONCERNS:

The following water concerns are being addressed by numerous agencies in WA and ID. IWAC works to stay informed and support the work of these agencies. IWAC initiatives focus on aquifer protection through the first two bullets below.


- **Protection and conservation of the Spokane Valley Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer (SVRP), a sole source of drinking water.**
  - Efficient summer water use to ensure water availability for the Spokane River and growing communities in Idaho and Washington. Summer water use increases by three to four times.
  - Stormwater and summer lawn watering runoff that can carry auto fluids, herbicides, pesticides and other toxins into surface and ground water caused by inefficient and poorly maintained lawn irrigation systems.
  - Nitrogen from septic systems infiltrating area lakes and the aquifer. 1985 Post Falls, ID water treatment replaced 7,000 septic systems. Spokane Valley, WA replaced over 40,000 septic systems when the Spokane County Water Treatment Facility was built in 2012. Fernan Lake, ID is an example of the impact of nitrogen and phosphorus on lake water quality and toxic algae blooms. Lake Spokane, WA is an example of invasive aquatic plants that impair water quality.
- **Protecting the Spokane River Watershed and Area Lakes.**
  - Coeur d'Alene (CDA) Lake is impacted by the Bunker Hill Superfund site, often referred to as the Coeur d'Alene River Basin Cleanup Site. The Superfund site is located in northern Idaho and eastern Washington where early mining and milling methods led to environmental contamination from lead, cadmium, zinc, and arsenic that were released into the CDA river and are deposited at the bottom of CDA Lake. Water from CDA Lake flows into the Spokane River and provides 89 million gallons per day into the Spokane Valley Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer. IWAC supports CDA Lake efforts by the CDA Tribe and IDEQ to monitor issues and develop public awareness.
  - Aquatic Invasive species are an issue of great concern to our waterways. To date intensive boat inspections in both ID and WA have limited the presence of invasive mussels but increases in species of invasive fish and water plants are being measured and monitored.

## STRATEGIES:

- Provide safe, clean drinking water to residents within the SVRP aquifer extent.
- Coordinate regional messaging and initiatives across state lines.
- Provide discussion forums regarding aquifer and wellhead protection, conservation, and protection of associated Water Rights.
- Develop education and awareness media campaigns, videos and related materials.
- Support the efforts of partner agencies, non-profits and universities to protect our waterways.

## RESULTS:

- Created an extensive website including mission statement, objectives, meeting agendas and minutes, area lakes, river and aquifer specifics, education and outreach videos, and contact information.
- Created an 11minute video on the [Spokane Valley Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer](#).
- Created [Drippy the Water Drop A Water Cycle Adventure](#) for elementary students. [Hands on Activity](#)
- Received grant funding from Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) to develop [Efficient Irrigation and Landscape Design Standards](#) Guidelines.
- Promote the regional [Spokane Kootenai Waste Directory](#) for proper waste disposal.



**Information current as of November 2020. Please check with the Collaborative contacts (or website if available) for the most up to date information. To find other source water collaboratives across the U.S. or to add yours to the list, visit the Source Water Collaborative's [How To Collaborate Toolkit](#)**