IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 22

BY WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

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

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

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

WHEREAS, the Idaho Department of Lands has expressed that earlier winter snowpack melt contributes to drier landscapes and longer wildfire seasons, allowing wildfires to spread on private, state, and local lands when they start; and

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

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

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

WHEREAS, in Idaho, warmer temperatures for longer periods of time each year translate into more precipitation in the form of rain rather than snow, as well as earlier last frost dates and later first frost dates, which translate into potential extended irrigation, angling, and river recreation seasons; and

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

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

WHEREAS, Idaho's forests, rangelands, parks, lava fields, waters, public lands, fish, and wildlife are a part of Idaho's natural heritage and represent critical elements of Idaho's history, development, customs, and culture.

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

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

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

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