Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
Drinking Water Planning Grant
Letter of Interest and Rating Form
Fiscal Year 2028

Section I. Project Information

This funding is available only for the development of a planning document (also referred to as a facility plan) in accordance with *IDAPA 58.01.22*. Construction activities are not eligible for planning grant funding. See *Customer Handbook* for additional eligibility requirements.

Complete the form using accurate answers to receive the highest achievable rating. DEQ recommends working with engineering consultants involved with the project whenever possible. For assistance completing this form or for additional technical assistance options contact: *grants.loans@deq.idaho.gov*.

A. System Identification

Public Water System Number:		
System Name:		
System Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Is the system located wholly within incorporated city limits? ☐ Yes ☐ No		
What City?	County:	
System Phone:	System Email:	
Population Served:	Owner's Name:	
Owner's Phone:	System Ownership: ☐ For Profit ☐ Not-for-Profit	
Name/Title of System Contact (if different from owner):		
Contact's Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Contact's Phone:	Contact's Email:	

Do you have a licensed and designated responsible charge operator for your system as described in the "Idaho Rules for Public Drinking Water Systems" (*IDAPA 58.01.08.050*)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Name: _____ License Number: _____

B. Project Readiness			
Decide if your community is interested in pursuing a DEQ drinking water planning grant by answering the following questions. **At a minimum, the planning effort must address problems experienced by your drinking water system. Select all that apply:**			
☐ **1.**	Your system is current with the payments of fines, State Revolving Fund (SRF) loans, penalties, or fee assessments due to DEQ.		
☐ **2.**	If interested in receiving a planning grant, you will have the 50% required match funds available.		
If you did not select questions 1 and 2, you will not be placed on the new fiscal year's priority list. DEQ will notify you when the grants and loans process begins again next year. Do not complete or submit this form to DEQ.			
If you selected questions 1 and 2, complete all applicable sections of this form.			
3.	Describe the proposed planning grant project and any known problems that need to be addressed:		
4.	If you have already contacted an engineer licensed in the State of Idaho about your planning effort, indicate your status and provide contact information for the engineer (or firm): ☐ Discussed with engineer ☐ ained quote from engineer ☐ Signed contract with engineer		
	Engineer:		
	Address:		
	City:	State:	Zip:
	Phone:	Fax:	
	Email:		
C. Project Costs			
1.	What is the estimated cost to prepare your planning document? Total Planning Document Costs: $_____ DEQ Funding Request (50% of planning cost up to $45,000): $_____		

2.	If you plan to design or construct a project with SRF dollars, the State Environmental Review Process (SERP) may be required under the DEQ planning grant process. You may choose to opt-out of the SERP if your system plans to avoid using SRF design/construction funds. Contact DEQ's Grants and Loans Bureau for details. Completion of the SERP is considered grant eligible if you wish to prepare it as part of this planning process. You may also choose to defer the SERP until the SRF funding is in place.
	If this planning document will include a SERP, how much of the total planning budget provided above is the estimated cost (DEQ + your match) of preparing the SERP? $_____
	Note: *Initial SERP costs need not include agency consultations.*

Continue to Section II. Integrated Priority Rating System

Section II. Integrated Priority Rating System

"Rules for Administration of Planning Grants for Drinking Water and Wastewater Facilities" (IDAPA 58.01.22.020). Projects are identified for placement on priority lists by surveying eligible entities directly on an annual basis. Grant funds are awarded to projects based on priority ratings. Projects are rated by the department on a standard priority rating form using public health, sustainability, water quality criteria, and condition of the existing system.

Answer the questions below and provide the requested documentation. Applicants or their consultants are encouraged to contact DEQ prior to the submittal deadline for assistance in answering the questions. **Rating will be determined by the answers and documentation provided.**

A. Public Health Hazard

IDAPA 58.01.22.020.02.a. Public Health Hazard. Any condition which creates, or may create, a danger to the consumer's health, which may include one or more of the following: i. Documented unresolved violations of the primary drinking water standards including maximum contaminant levels, action levels, and treatment techniques (include maximum contaminant levels for acute and chronic contaminants); ii. Documented unresolved violations of pressure requirements; iii. Documented reduction in source capacity that impacts the system's ability to reliably serve water; or iv. Documented significant deficiencies (e.g., documented in a sanitary survey) in the physical system that is causing the system to not be able to reliably serve safe drinking water; documented unregulated contaminants that have been shown to be a hazard to public health.
Up to 100 points.

Select all that apply:

1.	Does your system have documentation of unresolved violations of primary drinking water standards including maximum contaminant levels (MCLs), action levels, and treatment techniques (including MCLs for acute and chronic contaminants) as described below?	
	☐ **a.**	Unresolved acute contaminant violations or conditions requiring a Tier 1 (24-hour) public notification, not including monitoring or reporting violations. *30 points*
		Note: *Examples include Escherichia coli (E. coli), nitrate, or nitrite MCLs, surface water rules or groundwater rule treatment technique violations; new source designated groundwater under the direct influence of surface water; or a chronic contaminant deemed acute by DEQ.*
	☐ **b.**	Unresolved chronic contaminant violations or conditions requiring a Tier 2 (30-day) public notification, not including monitoring or reporting violations. *15 points*
		Note: *Examples include violations of chemical or radiological MCLs or maximum residual disinfection levels.*

	c.	Surface water treatment technique violations (including groundwater under the direct influence of surface water). *15 points* **OR** A newly discovered/designated water source without filtration (not yet a violation within 18 months of discovery). *15 points*
		Description:
2.	Your system documented three or more unplanned pressure recordings less than 20 pounds per square inch (PSI) or complete loss of pressure documented through complaints in the past 24 months requiring a Tier 1 public notification. *30 points*	
	Provide copies of public notices that are required by the Idaho Rules for Public Drinking Water Systems (*IDAPA 58.01.08*) and any related documentation.	
3.	Loss of source or reduction of source capacity necessitating water rationing or other documented management measures. **Attach documentation.** *30 points*	
	Note: *Source capacity does not include pump-related issues.*	
4.	Your system has defects that cause a risk to health or safety or that could affect the reliable delivery of safe drinking water (e.g., an unresolved significant deficiency documented in the most recent sanitary survey). **Attach documentation.** *20 points*	
	Description:	
	Note: *Applicants are encouraged to discuss these problems with their DEQ regional office before Selecting question 4.*	
5.	Documented unregulated contaminants that have been shown by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to be a risk to public health. **Attach documentation.** *15 points*	
	Description:	
	Note: *Examples include unregulated contaminants on EPA Contaminant Candidate Lists or secondary contaminants with EPA-established health advisories such as manganese.*	

B. General Conditions of Existing Facilities		
IDAPA 58.01.22.020.02.b. General Conditions of Existing Facilities. Points shall be given based on deficiencies (which would not constitute a public health hazard) for pumping, treating, storing, and delivering drinking water. Up to 60 points.		
Select all that are true but do not rise to the level of drinking water public health hazard as in Section II.A. Each item must be addressed by the proposed study to receive points. Give brief descriptions of each item marked YES. If available, attach documentation other than a sanitary survey (e.g., engineer's evaluation). **Label each attached document Section II.B, part number(s).** Each specific deficiency can only receive points in one category.		
Select all that apply – Up to 60 points:		
1.	Treatment deficiencies (Does not include voluntary disinfection):	
	a.	Water treatment facilities do not meet the requirements of the "Idaho Rules for Public Drinking Water Systems" (*IDAPA 58.01.08*) (other than MCLs). *15 points*
		Description:
	b.	Treatment facilities have inadequate capacity and cannot reliably meet current demand without extraordinary operational procedures. *15 points*
		Description:
2.	There are documented source deficiencies, such as a reduction in source capacity, that are not significant deficiencies or are otherwise accounted for in Section II.A or in this section. *10 points*	
	Description:	
3.	Distribution system has deficiencies that do not constitute a public health hazard and are not otherwise accounted for in Section II.A or this section. *10 points*	
	Description:	

4.	The proposed study will address source redundancy or system reliability and resiliency. *10 points*
	Description:

C. Sustainability (Green) Infrastructure Efforts

IDAPA 58.01.22.020.02.c. Sustainability Efforts (e.g., prospective efforts at energy conservation, water conservation, extending the life of capital assets, green building practices, and other environmentally innovative approaches to infrastructure repair, replacement, and improvement). Up to 50 points.

Answers to the following questions can improve your overall rating. If you earn Priority List points for your responses in this section, you or your project engineer will need to evaluate or complete each item under the terms of the planning grant agreement.

Although only 50 points maximum can be awarded under Section II.C, DEQ will incorporate all sustainability items selected below into the scope of the grant agreement for inclusion in the planning document. All the items selected shall be addressed in the planning document.

Select all that apply – 5 points each (unless otherwise noted), up to a maximum of 50 points.

1.	**Management-based/Innovative Efforts:** These efforts could include the following:	
	a.	As part of the planning effort, cyber-informed engineering (CIE) principles will be incorporated, critical systems will be identified, and plans to integrate the CIE methodology in future projects will be developed. CIE resources are found in the *Grants and Loans Program Customer Handbook* or at the *Idaho National Laboratory page for Cyber-Informed Engineering*. *20 points*
	b.	As part of the planning effort, an ongoing capital improvement plan will be developed or updated and supported by a capital improvement plan budget.
		Note: *If you are interested in receiving technical assistance to help develop a capital improvement plan, please reach out to DEQ at grants.loans@deq.gov.idaho to discuss possible opportunities.*
	c.	As part of the planning effort, a rate study will be completed or updated. The rate study is based on consumption-based full-cost pricing for drinking water supported by a capital budget (submit documentation). This means that (1) utility rates must be based on the metered usage and (2) utility rates must generate revenue sufficient to cover both operating and capital costs. Identify the professional (or organization) preparing the rate study: _____
		Note: *If you are interested in receiving technical assistance to help develop a rate study, please reach out to DEQ at grants.loans@deq.gov.idaho to discuss possible opportunities.*

	d.	A formal asset management system has been or will be implemented and updated routinely.
		Description:
	e.	System is currently an EPA Green Power Partner (submit certification). **OR** System will evaluate becoming an EPA Green Power Partner as part of the planning effort. **Submit documentation that the system uses a minimum of 100,000 kilowatts annually or points will not be awarded.** (*EPA Greenpower website*)
	f.	System will evaluate consolidation with another water system. The system must be reasonably nearby (normally within five miles), and analysis should consider the demand of each system, the cost of merging, and any administrative or operational changes that would result. At least one inquiry must be made to the other system.
		Identify which system(s) will be evaluated:
	g.	System will implement the recommendations of a professional energy audit.
		Identify the auditor: _____
	h.	Planning effort will analyze preparing for adaptation to the long-term effects of climate variation, extreme weather, or drought.
		Description:
	i.	Planning effort will evaluate significantly reducing or eliminating the use of chemicals in treatment.
	j.	Planning effort will evaluate significantly reducing or minimizing the volume or toxicity of residuals.
	k.	Planning effort will evaluate capital improvements that provide significant source water protection benefits, such as fencing around existing unprotected well or spring sources.

2.	**Green Efforts:** Green efforts could include, but are not limited to, the following**:**	
	a.	Use of recycled materials for facility construction (not including standard construction practices, such as reusing fill from excavations).
		Description:
	b.	Trenchless or low impact construction technology.
3.	**Water Conservation Efforts:** Water conservation efforts could include, but are not limited to, the following:	
	a.	Install water meters in unmetered areas, if rates will be based on metered use.
	b.	Replace existing broken water meters, upgrade to smart meters, or install leak detection equipment, if rates will be based on metered use.
	c.	Install water-efficient fixtures (may include lead service line replacement funding) that would provide a savings in water or energy consumption.
	e.	Retrofit or replace existing irrigation systems with more efficient systems.
4.	**Energy Conservation Efforts:** Energy conservation efforts could include, but would not be limited to, the following:	
	a.	Variable frequency drive (VFD) pumps.
	b.	Energy-efficient motors that meet National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA) premium specifications.
	c.	High-efficiency lighting/lighting controls.
	d.	On-site energy generation such as methane clean combustion, fuel cells, solar, or wind.
	e.	Supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) system installation.
Examples that have been accepted for Idaho projects are found in the *Grants and Loans Program Customer Handbook*.		
D. Consent Order, Compliance Agreement Schedule, or Court Order		
IDAPA 58.01.22.020.02.d. Consent Order, Compliance Agreement Schedule, or Court Order. Points shall be given if the system is operating under, and in compliance with, a Consent Order, Compliance Agreement Schedule, or Court Order and the proposed construction project will address the Consent Order, Compliance Agreement Schedule, or Court Order. Up to 30 points.		
Select the level of drinking water noncompliance this project is addressing:		
1.	**Moderate-Level Noncompliance:** Includes a first state or EPA warning letter, notice of violation, or equivalent that will be evaluated by the proposed planning effort. *10 points*	

☐ **2.**	**High-Level Noncompliance:** Includes a second state or EPA warning letter, compliance agreement schedule, consent order, or equivalent that will be evaluated by the proposed planning effort. *10 points*	
	☐ **a.**	**If High-Level Noncompliance:** The system has avoided formal litigation actions, court filings, or civil or federal court orders by negotiating compliance actions described in D.2 with DEQ and/or a federal agency to address violations that are directly related to the planning effort. *10 points*
	☐ **b.**	**If High-Level Noncompliance:** The system has satisfied all deadlines, milestones, and submittals to date associated with the compliance actions described in D.2. *10 points*

E. Bonus Points/Incentives

IDAPA 58.01.22.020.02.e. Incentives. Bonus points shall be awarded to systems that promote source water protection, conservation, economy, proper operation maintenance, and monitoring. Up to 10 points.

Select all that apply: 2 points each, up to a maximum of 10 points:

☐ **1.**	You have a DEQ-certified source drinking water protection plan that is less than five years old. Date of plan: _____ If so, will the plan be implemented on this project? ☐ Yes ☐ No
☐ **2.**	**Cross-connection:** Community Water System: You have an active cross-connection control plan. Provide a copy or link to this plan. Link to plan: _____ **OR** ☐ Noncommunity Water System: Your most recent sanitary survey does not note any potential backflow or cross-connection issues. Provide date of and most recent sanitary survey. Date: _____
☐ **3.**	The system was free of significant deficiencies in its last sanitary survey. **OR** ☐ The system has completed all corrective actions identified in the last sanitary survey.
☐ **4.**	You have a designated and licensed "Substitute Responsible Charge Operator" for your system as described in *IDAPA 58.01.08.552* Name: _____ License Number: _____
☐ **5.**	Your system has completed all DEQ-required monitoring and sampling in the last five years and is free of Failure to Monitor violations for all monitoring schedules.
☐ **6.**	In the past year, all of the active members in your controlling government body (i.e., city council, water board, etc.) have completed at least three professional development credits. **Include documentation of professional development credits.**

F. Affordability / Disadvantaged Status			
IDAPA 58.01.22.020.02.f. Affordability. Points shall be given when current system user charges exceed state affordability guidelines. Up to 50 points.			
Provide information for Section II.F. If you qualify as a disadvantaged community, you will receive 10 points.			
1.	How many equivalent dwelling unit (EDU) connections does your system serve? _____		
2.	What is the current average user rate? $/month/EDU_____		
	Type of rate structure: ☐ Flat Fee - Fee amount: $_____ ☐ Consumptive Use - Description: _____ ☐ Other: _____		
3.	What is the most recent date that user rates have been increased: _____		
4.	**Disadvantaged Community:**		
	This section is intended to assist lower-income communities. Principal forgiveness and other potential loan adjustments are available to communities that demonstrate that they are disadvantaged according to *IDAPA 58.01.12.021.01*. Contact the DEQ's Grants and Loans staff if you have any questions.		
	a.	Median household income calculation instructions:	
		i.	Go to the *Census Reporter website*.
		ii.	Either select "Use your current location" or enter an address for any residence or location in your community and select the choice provided by the application.
		iii.	Hover your cursor over each item in the list on the left of the screen and view the corresponding green area represented on the map.
		iv.	Click on the smallest and most representative area for your community either on the map or in the list for the data.
		v.	Scroll down to economics and enter the MHI: $_____ **If there was N/A for median income, choose the next largest area from the list.**
		vi.	Provide the data to DEQ. Either take a screenshot of the data (label attached documents as "Section II.F, part number(s)") and include it with your application or provide the citation (scroll to the bottom of the page and copy/paste the information after "Citation") here:

	b.	Income Survey Results: If the MHI listed above in Section F.4.a.v does not reflect your community's income, provide alternative MHI based on DEQ approved income survey. Income Survey MHI: $_____
		Note: *To conduct an income survey, contact the DEQ Grants and Loans Bureau (grants.loans@deq.idaho.gov) for additional information prior to submitting this LOI.*
	c.	If the system's MHI is at or below the state MHI listed on *censusreporter.org/profiles/04000US16-idaho* as of January 8, 2027, the system will qualify as disadvantaged. **Or** if the system's MHI is equal to or less than 125% of the state MHI it may still be deemed disadvantaged if at least one of the following also apply: • System's poverty rate is higher than state average • Unemployment rate is above state average • Has stagnant or declining population • User rates exceed 1.5% of MHI
Label attached documents as "Section II.F, part number(s)".		

Continue to Section III. Authorized Submitter

Section III. Authorized Submitter	
Are you willing to allow us to share your LOI with other federal funding agencies?	☐ Yes ☐ No
☐	**I understand that if awarded funding, costs incurred prior to the award are not eligible for reimbursement unless a written request and justification are submitted to and approved by DEQ.**
I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, all information provided here is valid and correct: Submitter Name: _____ Title: _____ Company: _____ Date: _____	
If the submitter is different from the system contact, does the submitter have the authority to submit this LOI on behalf of the system contact?	☐ N/A ☐ Yes ☐ No

Return completed form by January 8, 2027, to:

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
Attn: Katelyn Faretra
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Boise, ID 83706
grants.loans@deq.idaho.gov
Phone: (208) 373-0249 Fax: (208) 373-0576