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**Trump Administration takes steps to transfer federal water facilities to local ownership in Idaho**

**WASHINGTON -** The Bureau of Reclamation today notified Congress of its intent to transfer ownership of federal irrigation facilities and lands to two local irrigation districts that currently operate and maintain the southeastern Idaho’s Minidoka Project. The transfer to Minidoka Irrigation District and the A&B Irrigation District is the fourth set of water-related facilities transferred under a provision sponsored by Senator Jim Risch (R-Idaho) that was ultimately included in the [John D. Dingell Jr. Conservation, Management and Recreation Act](https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/47/text) (P.L. 116-9) signed by President Trump last year. The Act expedites the title transfer process for eligible projects, such as dams, canals and other water-related facilities.

“These title transfers fulfill the Trump Administration's goals to streamline bureaucratic processes and create local equity for infrastructure improvements,” **said Secretary of the Interior David Bernhardt.** “Transferring these facilities – which have been paid for, operated and maintained by the irrigation districts – saves American taxpayer dollars due to decreased federal operating costs and reduced liability”

“These proposed title transfers are the result of collaborative efforts in the local communities and give even greater control to the irrigation districts who have managed these facilities for generations,” **said Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Brenda Burman**.

“This title transfer is a prime example of cooperative federalism in action. I would like to thank President Trump, Secretary Bernhardt, the Idaho congressional delegation as well as the irrigation districts for their hard work to get this worthwhile transfer across the finish line,” **said Governor Brad Little.** “For years, Idaho water users have shown that they can responsibly manage these water systems to support Idaho’s thriving agricultural industry.”

“Water is the lifeblood of agricultural communities and the backbone of vital industries throughout the West. However, farmers and ranchers have long had to contend with overly prescriptive regulations dictating water use as they work to feed the country,” **said Senator James Risch.** “I was proud to introduce legislation to reduce the red tape surrounding Western water resources and am pleased to see its implementation in Idaho to give irrigation districts more control over the assets they manage and use daily. This is welcome news for Idaho’s water users, and I appreciate Secretary Bernhardt and Commissioner Burman’s work to transfer these titles.”

“President Trump’s signature on S. 47 was a major milestone in ensuring the long-term success of collaborative resource management efforts already underway in Idaho,” **said Senator Mike Crapo.** “Transfer of the Minidoka and A&B Irrigation District Title to local entities in Idaho will give water management control back to local communities, allowing them to have a say in the decisions affecting their livelihoods, while also continuing to maintain preservation measures.  This is welcome news for Idaho’s water users, and I am grateful for Secretary Bernhardt’s dedication to supporting the needs of those working on-the-ground in Idaho.”

“I applaud Secretary Bernhardt and his team at DOI for the tremendous time and effort they put into making these title transfers possible,” **said Congressman Mike Simpson.** “Agriculture is the backbone of Idaho’s economy and water is the ingredient that makes agriculture possible. The irrigators in Idaho have been managing these assets for years. Expediting the title transfers, while maintaining oversight from Congress, will give Idaho water users the local control they need to succeed. I also thank Senator Risch for making this possible through bipartisan legislation that was sign into law last year.

The Minidoka Irrigation District, located in Minidoka and Cassia counties, will take ownership of the facilities and approximately 403 acres of lands in support of the Project’s Gravity Division. MID serves approximately 77,214 acres of irrigable private land through canals, laterals, pipelines and drainage systems. It has been operating and maintaining these facilities since 1916.

“Title transfer will reduce regulatory burdens and open new opportunities for Minidoka Irrigation District,” **said Chairman of the Board of Directors for Minidoka Irrigation District Ronald Kowitz.** “We are excited to move forward as the owner of these irrigation delivery facilities. Reclamation has been a great partner, and we look forward to working with them to provide irrigation water to our users for many years to come.”

A&B Irrigation District, located near Rupert, Idaho, will take ownership of the facilities and approximately 1020 acres in support of the North Side Pumping Division. It serves approximately 82,600 acres of irrigated land and has been operating and maintaining these facilities since 1966.

“Today marks an epic milestone for all of those families who made the A&B Irrigation Project possible,” **said President of the Board of Directors for A&B Irrigation District Harold Mohlman.** “Because of the streamlined process in the Dingell Act, the District was able to complete title transfer in less than half the time it would have taken otherwise. Our local Reclamation staff worked tirelessly to assist with this effort, and without them, it would not have been possible. These collaborative relationships resulted in a model for future title transfers across the West.”

As required by the John D. Dingell Jr. Conservation, Management and Recreation Act, today’s action begins a 90-day congressional waiting period, after which the Department will complete the ownership transfer unless the Congress enacts a joint resolution disapproving the transfers within that time period.

The draft final title transfer agreement can be found at https://www.usbr.gov/pn/[programs](https://www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/title/index.html)/title/index.html.

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