

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Payette Lakes Recreational Water and Sewer District Board Approves for Public Comment Consent Judgment to Resolve Permit Disputes and Advance Critical Storage Pond Liner Replacement

McCall, Idaho – October 21, 2026 – The Board of Directors of the Payette Lakes Recreational Water and Sewer District (the “District”) has approved for public comment a Consent Judgment with the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The Consent Judgment constitutes a proposed settlement action to resolve alleged violations of the District’s IPDES Permit and Reuse Permit related to the District’s wastewater storage pond without any admission of wrongdoing by the District. The DEQ public comment period remains open through November 5, 2026, at 5:00 Mountain Time.

Once approved, the Consent Judgment provides a clear, enforceable path forward to drain the storage pond, remove accumulated solids, and install a new synthetic liner. These repairs are essential to address historical seepage issues and recent weather-related damage, ensuring long-term integrity of the storage facility and continued protection of the North Fork of the Payette River.

The District remains committed to completing the liner project quickly and to minimizing impacts to the environment and the public. Importantly, the Consent Judgment provides a viable path for pond liner replacement in 2027. It also includes strong incentives—through a structured system of stipulated penalties and credits—for the District to perform the work well and on schedule.

“The Board’s decision prioritizes practical solutions that protect water quality while avoiding costly and uncertain litigation,” said District Board member Brian Renstrom. “Settlement of the DEQ litigation allows the District to focus resources on completing the liner replacement as efficiently as possible, with strong environmental safeguards in place throughout the process. Securing the path to 2027 construction and protecting the project’s funding were critical factors in the Board’s approval,” added Renstrom. Further delays or prolonged litigation could place in excess of \$5,000,000 in project grant and loan funding at risk and defer project completion.

Key elements of the Consent Judgment and accompanying Agreement Schedule include:

- A structured schedule of engineering reports, operational plans, biosolids management, temporary treatment system design and operations, and final documentation.

- Requirements for mobile treatment of any temporary effluent discharged to the North Fork of the Payette River during construction, along with rigorous effluent and upstream river monitoring and monthly reporting.
- A civil penalty framework consisting of a base penalty of \$75,980, with the remainder structured as stipulated penalties that can be reduced through timely milestone completion, enhanced construction measures beyond minimum requirements, and minimized phosphorus loading during any necessary discharge—creating clear financial incentives for on-time, high-quality performance.
- Provisions for force majeure events, monthly progress reporting, and ultimate termination of the Judgment upon successful completion and DEQ verification.

The District has worked cooperatively with DEQ throughout prior compliance efforts, including the 2020 Compliance Agreement Schedule, funding pursuits, master planning, and liner design. The Consent Judgment supersedes the prior schedule while preserving necessary groundwater monitoring and clarifying the path to full compliance.

The Consent Judgment reflects the District’s commitment to responsible stewardship of the District’s infrastructure and the surrounding environment. By resolving these matters through a negotiated Consent Judgment, the District can proceed with the necessary improvements in a predictable and transparent manner and safeguard the funding that makes this project possible.

The Consent Judgment is subject to final Court entry and any remaining public process requirements. Once effective, the District will begin implementing the Agreement Schedule milestones and will continue to provide regular updates to the community.

About Payette Lakes Recreational Water and Sewer District

PLRWSD provides wastewater collection and treatment services for the McCall area, operating a publicly owned treatment works under IPDES and Reuse permits. The District is committed to protecting public health and the water quality of the North Fork of the Payette River and the surrounding watershed.