VOL. I, NO. 5 · THURSDAY EDITION

IDAHO · MAGIC VALLEY · NATION

Feeding the Beast Brief

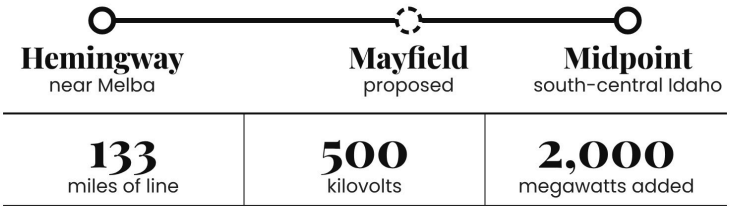
Daily news on power, land, data and liberty in Idaho

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2026 JEFFAPIERSON.COM 21 STORIES

TRANSMISSION IDAHO

PUC clears Idaho Power's 133-mile Gateway West line, cost cap secret

Staff backed the line with conditions but warned of likely overruns. The spending cap is in a confidential attachment.



The diagram is drawn from Idaho PUC Order No. 37231 and is not to scale. FEEDING THE BEAST BRIEF GRAPHIC. SOURCE: IDAHO PUC ORDER NO. 37231

BOISE: Idaho regulators on Nov. 18 approved Idaho Power's plan to build a 133-mile, 500-kilovolt power line across southern Idaho, the next piece of the Gateway West project. The spending limit they set is in a confidential attachment the public cannot see.

The Idaho Public Utilities Commission granted certificates to Idaho Power and Rocky Mountain Power for Segment 8 in Order No. 37231. The line runs from the Midpoint substation in south-central Idaho to the Hemingway substation near Melba and ties into Idaho Power's proposed Mayfield substation. It would add 2,000 megawatts of transmission capacity. Idaho Power would own 99% and Rocky Mountain Power 1%.

The order states no project cost. It sets a soft cap equal to an amount in a confidential attachment to the companies' reply. Spending above the cap will need more justification when the utilities seek to charge customers. Parent company IDACORP told investors in August that Idaho Power's share of the whole Gateway West project runs $900 million to $1.1 billion, including financing costs during construction.

Commission staff recommended approval with conditions. Staff saw a high likelihood of cost overruns. Staff also said "meaningful protections against cost overruns were lacking," the order says.

The Idaho Irrigation Pumpers Association argued that Idaho customers would be expected to pay almost all of the line's costs, and that a regional line's value does not by itself mean Idaho retail customers should carry them. The commission awarded the group $5,970.20 in intervenor funding, charged to the irrigation customer class.

Commissioners ordered Idaho Power to file confidential quarterly forecasts of all expected new load.

The order makes no finding that the spending is prudent. Each Segment 8 expense gets a full prudence review when the companies ask to put it in rates. The order was signed by President Edward Lodge and Commissioners John R. Hammond Jr. and Dayn Hardie.

Keywords: Gateway West, Idaho Power, transmission, Idaho PUC, Rocky Mountain Power
Sources: Idaho PUC Order No. 37231 · Idaho PUC Order No. 37010 (notice of application) · IDACORP investor presentation, August 2026

WHAT'S INSIDE

Idaho Legislature 4
4 stories · Idaho tops nation in imprisoning women, legislative audit finds

Idaho 5
3 stories · Hand counts match reported results in three audited counties

Magic Valley 5
2 stories · Declo data center developer warns it may not last another year

Regulators: IPUC, FERC, DEQ 6
3 stories · Idaho Power fixes error, growth share of new plant jumps to 42%

Nuclear and SMR 7
1 story · DOE Idaho chief says one AI-written safety analysis needed rework

Grid, Renewables and Transmission 7
3 stories · PUC clears Idaho Power's 133-mile Gateway West line, cost cap secret

Public Lands 8
3 stories · Groups petition Fish and Game to end wolf-pup kills and payments

AI 9
1 story · Oregon seeks $2 billion from OpenAI as Idaho's own suit waits

Liberty 9
1 story · Timberline football players sue Boise school leaders over discipline

Dates to Watch 2
The Broken Dictionary 4
The Wire: more links 10

CORRECTIONS

None today. To report an error, reply to the morning email.

KNOW YOUR CONSTITUTION

First Amendment

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

It bars Congress from making laws that limit worship, speech, the press, peaceful assembly or petitions to the government.

Source: National Archives

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DATES TO WATCH

Nov. 19	The Rural Health Transformation Committee meets at 9 a.m. in Room WW55. Health and Welfare gives a Year 1 recap.
Nov. 19	The Citizens' Committee on Legislative Compensation meets at 4:30 p.m. to set lawmaker pay.
Nov. 20	The Legislature's Medicaid Review Panel meets at 10 a.m.
Nov. 24	The State Board of Canvassers meets. The secretary of state releases the county-by-county audit report.
Nov. 25	PUC staff and intervenor testimony is due in IPC-E-26-07, Idaho Power's cost of service and large-load case.
Dec. 3	The Legislature's organizational session begins, with five budget committee seats to fill.
Dec. 14	Public comments are due on Idaho Power's class cost of service and large-load cost study, case IPC-E-26-07.
Dec. 15	The State Land Board meets at 9 a.m. in the Capitol's Lincoln Auditorium.
Dec. 17	Comments are due on the NRC rule shrinking its Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards, docket NRC-2025-0974. The rule takes effect Feb. 1 unless the NRC withdraws it.
Dec. 18	Comments are due on Idaho Power's new depreciation rates, case IPC-E-26-23.
Jan. 1	Idaho's 25 new Opportunity Zones, including downtown Twin Falls, take effect for federal tax breaks.
Jan. 8	Comments are due on Idaho Power's revised marginal cost pricing framework, case IPC-E-26-26. The order prints the year as 2026, an apparent typo.
Jan. 11	Mountain States Policy Center holds its 2027 Idaho legislative briefing and poll release at the Capitol.
Jan. 19	The PUC technical hearing opens in IPC-E-26-07, Idaho Power's cost of service case. It may run through Jan. 21.
Jan. 26	Bannock County's 180-day data center moratorium ends.
Feb. 1	Avista plans to file a combined Idaho electric and natural gas rate case by this date.
Aug. 31, 2027	Idaho Power and PacifiCorp ask for a PUC order by this date on their B2H asset trade, case IPC-E-26-31.
Oct. 23, 2027	TerraVolt's options on 1,077 acres near Declo expire, with one six-month extension available.

TOP STORIES

DATA CENTERS LOCAL

Declo data center developer warns it may not last another year

TerraVolt's quarterly report prices the Cassia County farmland at $30,000 an acre and lists $30,000 in Idaho political donations. Its land use plans have not yet gone to the county.

DECLO: TerraVolt Holdings, the California company planning a gas-powered data center campus near Declo, said in a quarterly report filed Nov. 16 that there is substantial doubt it can stay in business for another year. The report covers the period ending Sept. 30.

TerraVolt signed two option agreements with Wickel Land Company LLP covering about 1,077 acres in Cassia County at $30,000 an acre. The filing dates the agreements Oct. 23 in its notes and Oct. 26 in its management discussion. About 903.3 acres would be paid in cash. The other 174.1 acres would be paid with a convertible secured promissory note. At that price the land would cost about $32.3 million, by this brief's arithmetic.

The options expire Oct. 23, 2027, with one six-month extension. The filing says the option periods stop running during litigation or a governmental moratorium.

The land is zoned for multiple use. TerraVolt says it needs a zoning amendment to build an onsite power plant and the data center buildings. The company expects to file its studies in the first quarter of 2027 and hopes to have every approval by the second quarter.

TerraVolt reported $4.034 million in cash on Sept. 30 against $17.4 million in liabilities, with no revenue. It lost $1.659 million in the third quarter. It expects to spend its remaining unrestricted cash, about $4 million, over the next 12 months on zoning and permit work.

Among its project fees for the first nine months of the year, the company booked $30,000 of political contributions to state and local candidates in Idaho. The filing does not name the candidates.

A related-party lender, SFO IDF, holds a $16 million note due April 30, 2028. A Nov. 11 amendment gives that lender an estimated 31.7% of net proceeds when first-phase building sites are sold or leased to data center customers. Before gas flows, TerraVolt must post a letter of credit of up to $50 million for its gas supplier.

Chief executive Joel Stone told Declo residents at an open house that the campus itself would take 300 to 400 acres. "We want to do everything different," Stone said, East Idaho News reported Nov. 11.

The company's next step is to submit its land use plans to the Cassia County planning and development department, according to the filing.

Keywords: TerraVolt, Declo, Cassia County, data center, SEC filing
Sources: TerraVolt Holdings Form 10-Q, Sept. 30, 2026 (StockTitan copy of SEC filing) · East Idaho News · TerraVolt Holdings Form 10-Q, SEC EDGAR

IDAHO POWER IDAHO

Idaho Power fixes error, growth share of new plant jumps to 42%

A correction in the large-load cost study raises the share of recent investment tied to growth. Comments are due Dec. 14.

BOISE: Idaho Power has corrected a calculation in its large-load cost study that raises the share of recent generation and transmission investment tied to customer growth from about 24% to 42%. The company filed the correction Nov. 13 in case IPC-E-26-07, after discovery requests from the Idaho Irrigation Pumpers Association.

The case asks the Idaho Public Utilities Commission to study how Idaho Power divides its costs among customer groups and

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TOP STORIES *continued*

Idaho Power fixes error, growth share of new ..., continued

what new large-load customers should pay. The brief reported Nov. 17 on one formula in the study. The correction replaces the growth model exhibits behind the study's results.

The company found the error while answering the irrigators' sixth set of production requests, the filing says. The denominator in testimony by Idaho Power witness Connor L. Allen included investment outside generation and transmission. That understated the share caused by growth.

Idaho Power now compares all generation and transmission investment between its 2023 and 2025 general rate cases. It dropped the $2 million project cutoff it used before.

The growth share of peak production demand rose from 7.641% to 13.425%. For transmission demand it rose from 5.601% to 9.842%. The company replaced two charts of revenue changes by customer class and six spreadsheet exhibits. The filing does not restate the class results in its text.

Idaho Power says the corrected results remain illustrative and "are not proposed to inform rate or revenue allocation changes." It says its recommended methods do not change. Corporate counsel Megan Goicoechea Allen filed the errata.

Three public comments sat in the case file as of Nov. 18. Written comments are due Dec. 14. A technical hearing is set for Jan. 19, 2027, and may continue through Jan. 21, the commission said.

Keywords: Idaho Power, cost of service, large load, IPC-E-26-07, irrigators
Sources: Idaho Power errata, IPC-E-26-07 · Idaho PUC case file IPC-E-26-07 · Idaho PUC news release, Sept. 17, 2026

LEGISLATURE IDAHO

Idaho tops nation in imprisoning women, legislative audit finds

The Legislature's watchdog office says drug possession drove more prison growth since 2005 than any other offense. The oversight panel wants follow-up recommendations.



The Idaho Capitol in Boise, shown in 2019. The Joint Legislative Oversight Committee heard the incarceration report Nov. 18. QUINTIN SOLOVIEV / WIKIMEDIA COMMONS, CC BY 4.0

BOISE: By 2023, Idaho held women in prison at a higher rate than any other state, the Legislature's Office of Performance Evaluations reported Wednesday. Drug possession accounts for 39% of the growth in Idaho's prison population since 2005, more than any other offense, the report says on page 57.

The Joint Legislative Oversight Committee heard the report Nov. 18, the day of its release, the Idaho Press reported. The committee then passed a motion asking the office for more research and possible recommendations for the session that begins in January, KBOI reported.

Idaho's custody population grew 43% from 2005 to 2025, reaching 9,324, according to page 7. The state's population grew 42% over that time, page 6 says. Idaho's rate averaged about 475 offenders per 100,000 residents, but its national rank climbed from 17th in 2005 to seventh in 2023 as other states cut their rates, pages 5 and 6 say.

Ada, Canyon, Kootenai and Twin Falls counties produced 87% of the growth from 2005 to 2025, counted by county of conviction, according to pages 38 and 39. Twin Falls County's custody rate rose 47%, the most among the six largest counties, page 40 shows.

The female custody rate rose 52% while the male rate fell 5%, according to page 43. In 2025, 22% of women in custody had only a single drug possession sentence, compared with 10% of men, the report says on page 65.

The custody rate for property crimes fell by half, page 49 says. In 2005, half of offenders in custody were under 35. By 2025 only a third were, according to page 41.

The office did not complete a cost analysis, citing time and data limits on page 21. The Department of Correction plans to ask lawmakers in January for about $45.3 million to furnish and operate three new facilities adding nearly 1,000 beds, the Idaho Capital Sun reported in September.

Sen. Dave Lent, R-Idaho Falls, questioned the women's figures. "I don't think the women in our state are the worst in the country," Lent said, according to KBOI. Correction Director Bree Derrick wrote in her response that failed retained jurisdiction and parole returns remain a central driver of admissions. Gov. Brad Little's letter urged lawmakers not to compromise public safety.

Recommendations could come early in the 2027 session, Boise State Public Radio reported.

Keywords: incarceration, Office of Performance Evaluations, women in prison, drug possession, Joint Legislative Oversight Committee
Sources: OPE report, Drivers of Incarceration (November 2026) · OPE report summary sheet · JLOC agenda, Nov. 18 · KBOI (idahonews.com) · Idaho Press · Boise State Public Radio · Idaho Capital Sun via East Idaho News

DID YOU KNOW

Idaho covers 83,557 square miles of land, 13th among the states in size.

Source: Idaho Blue Book, Idaho Secretary of State, p. 2

POP QUIZ

What is Idaho's largest lake?

Answer: Lake Pend Oreille, at 180 square miles.

Source: Idaho Blue Book, Idaho Secretary of State, p. 2

PLAIN ENGLISH

Acre-foot

The water it takes to cover one acre a foot deep. That is 325,851 gallons.

Source: U.S. Geological Survey, Water Science School glossary

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THE BROKEN DICTIONARY

Soft Cap *noun*

A limit on spending, kept in a confidential attachment so it can neither alarm the public before construction nor embarrass anyone after. Ratepayers learn the number the usual way, by paying past it.

Used in a sentence: "The board set a firm soft cap," said the clerk, "and locked it in a drawer so it would stay that way."

See also Intervenor Funding: money awarded to a group for arguing its members pay too much, collected from its members.

Suggested entry for Jeff's edit. Not found in the existing volumes. Source story

IDAHO LEGISLATURE

On the front page: Idaho tops nation in imprisoning women, legislative audit finds

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IDAHO

Felony theft line has sat at $1,000 since 1998, audit notes

Inflation has cut the dollar's value in half, so some thefts once charged as misdemeanors now draw felony penalties, the Legislature's watchdog says.

BOISE: Idaho's dividing line between misdemeanor and felony theft was set at $1,000 in 1998 and has not been adjusted since, according to a report the Office of Performance Evaluations released Wednesday.

Inflation has cut the value of the dollar in half since then, the report says on page 30. A $1,000 theft in 2026 equals a $500 theft in 1998. As a result, some thefts that were misdemeanors when the line was set are now punished as felonies, the report says.

Christopher Shank, who wrote the report, raised the point with the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee. "We haven't adjusted that threshold for inflation," Shank said, Boise State Public Radio reported.

The report calls this a case where a lack of action works like a penalty increase. Over two decades the Legislature passed more than 150 bills on sentencing and related steps, most of them raising penalties or creating crimes, according to page 28. Three bills from 2017 to 2019 would have let judges sentence drug traffickers below mandatory minimums, and all three failed, page 30 says.

The custody rate for property crimes like burglary and theft fell by half over the period, the office's summary sheet shows. Idaho Code 18-2407 still sets grand theft at property worth more than $1,000.

Keywords: felony theft, inflation, sentencing, Office of Performance Evaluations, 2027 session
Sources: OPE report, Drivers of Incarceration · OPE report summary sheet · Boise State Public Radio · Idaho Code 18-2407

TAXES IDAHO

Freedom Foundation pushes grocery tax repeal for 2027 session

The group's president also calls for ending property taxes on homes and pausing the 32-cent gas tax.

BOISE: Repealing Idaho's sales tax on groceries would save residents more than $400 million, Idaho Freedom Foundation President Ronald M. Nate estimated Nov. 17 in an essay for the group's 2027 agenda. The essay gives no source for that figure.

Nate argues the state's grocery tax credit on income taxes offsets only a fraction of what shoppers pay. Citing the Tax Foundation, he says Idaho is one of three states that fully tax groceries, along with Hawaii and South Dakota.

The essay also urges lawmakers to end property taxes on homes and businesses, starting with primary residences. Nate would pay for that by holding government spending growth to inflation and population.

He suggests pausing or cutting the state's 32-cent-per-gallon gas tax and allowing refineries in Idaho, which he says has none. He also cites a National Association of Home Builders estimate that regulations and permits make up 26.4% of a new home's price.

Nate notes the top income tax rate fell from 7.4% in 2015 to a flat 5.3%, and he urges more cuts. Lawmakers convene for their organizational session Dec. 3.

Keywords: grocery tax, Idaho Freedom Foundation, property tax, gas tax, 2027 session
Sources: Idaho Freedom Foundation · Idaho Education News (organizational session date) · Idaho Radio (Nate's title)

MEDICAID IDAHO

Lawmakers' Medicaid contract panel meets Friday

The review panel was created in 2024 to look over Medicaid contracts. Its agenda was not yet readable online.

BOISE: The Legislature's Medicaid Review Panel meets at 10 a.m. Friday, Nov. 20, according to a notice posted Nov. 18 on the legislative calendar. The agenda file would not open early Thursday, so the topics are not known.

The panel reviews Medicaid-related contracts under Idaho Code 56-270, which Senate Bill 1355 created in 2024, the committee page says. Sen. Julie VanOrden and Rep. John Vander Woude are co-chairs. Its last listed meeting was Sept. 24.

The Rural Health Transformation Committee meets a day earlier, at 9 a.m. today in Room WW55. Health and Welfare Director Juliet Charron is set to give a Year 1 recap and plans for Year 2. Today's meeting streams on Idaho in Session, the agenda says.

Keywords: Medicaid, Medicaid Review Panel, Health and Welfare, rural health, interim committees
Sources: Idaho Legislature meeting notice, Nov. 20 · Medicaid Review Panel page · Rural Health Transformation Committee agenda, Nov. 19

FROM THE ARCHIVES *"... that government of the people by the people for the people, shall not perish from the earth."* **Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg Address (Nicolay copy), Nov. 19, 1863**

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IDAHO

ELECTIONS IDAHO

Hand counts match reported results in three audited counties

Bannock, Caribou and Oneida counties' audit counts lined up with election night totals. The state releases its full audit report Nov. 24.

POCATELLO: Hand counts in Bannock, Caribou and Oneida counties matched each county's reported Nov. 3 results, the Idaho State Journal reported Wednesday. The three were among eight counties drawn at random Nov. 13 for post-election audits.

In Bannock County, auditors counted the attorney general race Tuesday. One precinct came up one ballot off at first, and a recount showed the auditors had miscounted, the Journal reported. Five election-night write-in ballots had been filed by precinct instead of by batch, and the county plans to change how it files them.

Caribou County auditors also counted the attorney general race Monday. They missed overvotes or undervotes three times and found the ballots each time on a second pass, the paper reported. Oneida County's count of the 2nd Congressional District race matched as well. "Idaho has a good election system," said Oneida County Clerk M. Lon Colton.

State law, Idaho Code 34-1203A, requires the hand-count audits. Audits in Latah, Gem, Adams, Benewah and Washington counties ran Monday through Wednesday, the Secretary of State's schedule shows. The office had posted no results from those counties by early Thursday. It will release a full report with county-by-county findings when the State Board of Canvassers meets Nov. 24, the Journal reported.

Keywords: election audit, hand count, Bannock County, State Board of Canvassers, Secretary of State
Sources: Idaho State Journal · Idaho Secretary of State audit page · KBOI (idahonews.com)

WATER IDAHO

Upper Snake reservoirs sit at 44% of normal heading into winter

Refilling them would take a snowpack well above normal, a federal water manager told the state's fall water summit.

BOISE: Reservoirs in the Upper Snake River Basin averaged 19% full this fall, or 44% of normal, Brian Stevens of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation told the 2026 Idaho Fall Water Summit at Boise State University on Nov. 17. Refilling them next year would take a snowpack of 110% to 120% of normal, he said.

Troy Lindquist, chief hydrologist with the National Weather Service, said precipitation was near normal but warmer temperatures changed how much of it was stored as mountain snow. Erin Whorton of the Natural Resources Conservation Service said the coming El Nino could be the strongest since 1950. Boise State professor Alejandro Flores said its effect on Idaho's winter is hard to predict, East Idaho News reported.

A Salmon River Canal Company board member, J.D. Messner, said his canal had only 42 days of water this year. He said "every single acre was a crop insurance claim."

The Idaho Department of Water Resources declared a statewide drought emergency April 13. Cassia County adopted its own drought emergency resolution, No. 2026-05, dated March 30.

Keywords: water supply, Snake River, reservoirs, drought, Idaho Fall Water Summit
Sources: East Idaho News · Idaho Department of Water Resources · Cassia County public notices

FISH AND GAME IDAHO

Fish and Game commissioner quits after plea, Little seeks successor

Brody Harshbarger agreed to plead guilty to two misdemeanor hunting charges. Two days earlier, the governor's office said he remained on the commission.

IDAHO FALLS: Idaho Fish and Game Commissioner Brody Harshbarger resigned Wednesday, and Gov. Brad Little accepted it effective immediately, the Idaho Capital Sun reported. He had agreed to plead guilty to two misdemeanor hunting charges.

"Accordingly, your service on the commission is concluded, effective immediately," Little's chief of staff, Zach Hauge, wrote to Harshbarger, according to KMVT. On Monday, Little's office had said Harshbarger remained a member and that the governor had not asked him to resign.

He agreed to plead guilty to misdemeanor charges of hunting without a valid tag and shooting from or across a public highway. The Capital Sun reported he signed the plea agreement Nov. 5. The Idaho Statesman reported it was filed in court Nov. 9. Prosecutors agreed to drop five other charges, including two counts of unlawfully taking or killing a big game animal.

The case began with a Dec. 20, 2025, poaching hotline complaint near the Spring Hollow boat ramp in Fremont County. Rep. David Leavitt, R-Twin Falls, posted Wednesday that he had asked Little to remove Harshbarger.

Harshbarger represented the Upper Snake region, the Idaho Statesman reported. The governor appoints commissioners. Little spokeswoman Emily Callihan said the office is actively looking to recruit a qualified person for the seat.

Keywords: Fish and Game Commission, Brody Harshbarger, Brad Little, plea agreement, poaching
Sources: Idaho Capital Sun via East Idaho News · KMVT · Idaho Statesman via Yahoo News

MAGIC VALLEY

On the front page: Declo data center developer warns it may not last another year

BY THE NUMBERS **133** **MILES** Length of the 500-kilovolt Gateway West line the PUC approved Nov. 18.

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MAGIC VALLEY *continued*

TAX BREAKS LOCAL

Downtown Twin Falls lands one of 25 new Idaho tax-break zones

Treasury approved every Opportunity Zone Idaho asked for. The designations start Jan. 1.



The Perrine Bridge spans the Snake River canyon at Twin Falls, seen from the canyon floor in 2024. The new tax-break zone is in downtown Twin Falls, near Main Avenue and Shoshone Street. GREENTEASALSA / WIKIMEDIA COMMONS, CC BY 4.0

TWIN FALLS: Downtown Twin Falls, near Main Avenue and Shoshone Street, is one of 25 Idaho areas the U.S. Treasury announced Nov. 17 as Opportunity Zones, where new development can qualify for federal tax breaks. The designations take effect Jan. 1, 2027.

Treasury approved every area Idaho requested. The zones sit in 14 counties, with the most in Ada County and the next most in Canyon County. Nine of the 25 count as rural and qualify for larger breaks, the Idaho Capital Sun reported.

The Twin Falls area was home to Idaho's first Opportunity Zone project, a food hall.

Gov. Brad Little said in a press release that "Idaho is committed to encouraging private investment, creating good-paying jobs."

Congress created the program in the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act and made it permanent last year in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. Results from the first round are hard to measure. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Scott Turner said in 2025 that 700 housing units were built and 4,000 jobs created in Idaho zones. That first version had no reporting requirements, according to the Idaho Department of Commerce.

Keywords: Opportunity Zones, Twin Falls, tax breaks, Treasury, Brad Little
Sources: Idaho Capital Sun via East Idaho News

PROFILE

Bernard F. Fisher

Died 2014, Air Force pilot and Medal of Honor recipient

On March 10, 1966, about 2,000 North Vietnamese troops attacked a U.S. Special Forces camp in the A Shau valley. Maj. Dafford Myers, a fellow A-1E Skyraider pilot, was shot down and crash-landed on the airstrip. Fisher landed under hostile conditions and evacuated Myers. President Johnson presented him the Medal of Honor in 1967. He died in Boise in 2014 and was buried at the Idaho State Veterans Cemetery.

Source: Air Force Medical Service

REGULATORS: IPUC, FERC, DEQ

On the front page: Idaho Power fixes error, growth share of new plant jumps to 42%

IDAHO POWER IDAHO

Idaho Power seeks $32.3 million more a year in depreciation

The new rates would start Jan. 1, 2028, and reach bills through a later rate case. Comments are due Dec. 18.

BOISE: Comments are due Dec. 18 on Idaho Power's request for new depreciation rates that would add about $32.3 million a year to the expense now built into customer rates. The Idaho Public Utilities Commission set the schedule in Order No. 37233 on Nov. 13.

Depreciation spreads the cost of plants, lines and other equipment over their useful lives, and customers repay it through rates. The proposed rates come from a study of the company's electric plant as of Dec. 31, 2025, and would take effect Jan. 1, 2028.

Idaho Power is not seeking a change in retail rates in this case, the notice of application says. The company plans to fold the new rates into a 2027 general rate case or a separate 2027 filing. Neither notice gives a bill effect for a typical customer.

The company also asks for accounting treatment for new accounts created under FERC Order No. 898. Micron Technology has intervened, along with the Idaho Irrigation Pumpers Association and the Industrial Customers of Idaho Power.

Cross-replies are due Jan. 12, 2027. Idaho Power's reply is due Jan. 22, and the company wants an order by mid-February 2027.

Keywords: Idaho Power, depreciation, IPC-E-26-23, rate case, Idaho PUC
Sources: Idaho PUC Order No. 37233 · Idaho PUC Order No. 37160 (notice of application) · Idaho PUC case file IPC-E-26-23

AVISTA IDAHO

Avista plans combined power and gas rate case by Feb. 1

North Idaho's electric and gas utility gave regulators notice Nov. 18. New rates could start no sooner than Sept. 1, 2027.

BOISE: Avista told Idaho regulators Nov. 18 that it will file a combined electric and natural gas general rate case on or before Feb. 1, 2027, with new rates taking effect no sooner than Sept. 1, 2027.

The notice of intent, signed by Patrick Ehrbar, vice president of regulatory affairs, says the company will use a test year of the 12 months ending June 30, 2026. It gives no dollar amount or percentage for the increase Avista will seek.

The Idaho Public Utilities Commission opened case AVU-E-26-14 for electricity and AVU-G-26-07 for gas. Avista also has a separate case for its proposed 115-kilovolt Carlin Bay line to serve the east side of Lake Coeur d'Alene. Written comments in that case closed Nov. 17.

Keywords: Avista, rate case, natural gas, North Idaho, Idaho PUC
Sources: Avista notice of intent · Idaho PUC case AVU-E-26-14 · Idaho PUC case AVU-G-26-07 · Idaho PUC news release, Oct. 26, 2026

DID YOU KNOW

Five manuscript copies of the Gettysburg Address are known. The Library of Congress holds two.

Source: Library of Congress

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NUCLEAR AND SMR

NUCLEAR IDAHO

DOE Idaho chief says one AI-written safety analysis needed rework

Bob Boston, who runs the Energy Department's Idaho Operations Office, spoke at a national nuclear conference this week.

PHOENIX: One applicant's preliminary safety analysis required rework because it was generated by artificial intelligence and not checked, Energy Department official Bob Boston told a national nuclear conference this week.

Boston manages DOE's Idaho Operations Office. He spoke in a fireside chat with ANS President Mark Peters that closed Tuesday's plenary at the American Nuclear Society Winter Conference in Phoenix, ANS Nuclear Newswire reported Nov. 18. The account did not name the applicant or the reactor.

The remarks came as he discussed DOE's Reactor Pilot and Nuclear Energy Launch Pad programs, under which several companies have brought test reactors to criticality, ANS reported. In March, DOE's Idaho office approved the safety design agreement for Oklo's Aurora powerhouse at Idaho National Laboratory, World Nuclear News reported. Nothing in the ANS account ties the AI-written document to Oklo.

Boston also said some rules are still missing, ANS reported, including rules for moving small factory-built reactors once they are irradiated. DOE regulatory reform has removed more than 1,100 pages of requirements, according to the same account.

Keywords: Idaho Operations Office, Reactor Pilot Program, artificial intelligence, nuclear safety, INL
Sources: ANS Nuclear Newswire · World Nuclear News

GRID, RENEWABLES AND TRANSMISSION

On the front page: PUC clears Idaho Power's 133-mile Gateway West line, cost cap secret

BOARDMAN TO HEMINGWAY IDAHO

Idaho Power, PacifiCorp ask to trade lines tied to B2H

Idaho Power would give up $25.1 million in assets for $69.7 million from PacifiCorp and track Bonneville's share of costs in a regulatory asset account.

BOISE: Two utilities that will own the Boardman to Hemingway line asked Idaho regulators Nov. 17 to approve a trade of transmission assets. Idaho Power would give up assets with a net book value of $25,073,177 and receive PacifiCorp assets valued at $69,693,865.

Idaho Power would hand over part of its ownership in southern Idaho lines, including the Midpoint to Hemingway 500-kilovolt line, testimony in case IPC-E-26-31 says. It would gain 200 megawatts of two-way capacity over the Four Corners facilities and capacity to serve Bonneville Power Administration load near Goshen.

The trade takes effect when B2H is energized, with an estimated in-service date in late 2027. BPA decided in 2022 to buy transmission service from Idaho Power instead of owning part of the line. Idaho Power now holds about 45% and PacifiCorp about 55%.

Idaho Power wants an accounting order to track, in a regulatory asset account, the gap between transmission revenue from BPA and BPA's share of the line's revenue requirement. Courtney Waites, an Idaho Power regulatory projects coordinator, testified that customers will not be harmed and BPA's transmission payments should offset the added cost in about seven years.

The applicants asked for an order by Aug. 31, 2027. IDACORP told investors in August the whole line will cost about $1.5 billion to $1.7 billion.

Keywords: Boardman to Hemingway, Idaho Power, PacifiCorp, Bonneville Power Administration, transmission
Sources: Idaho Power and PacifiCorp application, IPC-E-26-31 · Ellsworth direct testimony · Waites direct testimony · Idaho PUC case file IPC-E-26-31 · IDACORP investor presentation, August 2026

GEOTHERMAL IDAHO

Geothermal bidders offer $7.9 million for 23 Idaho lease parcels

Parcels in Twin Falls, Cassia and four other counties drew winning bids at BLM's Nov. 17 sale. BLM may issue the leases after review and payment.



The Raft River geothermal plant in Idaho, photographed for the Energy Department in 2012. It is an existing plant and is not one of the parcels leased in the Nov. 17 sale. U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, PUBLIC DOMAIN, VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

BOISE: Bidders won 23 federal geothermal lease parcels in Idaho at the Bureau of Land Management's Nov. 17 online sale, with winning bids totaling $7,924,129, the agency said.

The parcels cover nearly 71,411 acres in Cassia, Clark, Elmore, Owyhee, Twin Falls and Washington counties. In September, BLM planned to offer 35 parcels on about 113,330 acres in eight counties, idahonews.com reported. ThinkGeoEnergy reported that all 23 parcels offered on sale day drew winning bids.

The top bid, about $1.2 million at $810 an acre, came from Bennett Creek Resources for a parcel in Elmore County, ThinkGeoEnergy reported. Eight companies won parcels. Bighorn Resources won seven, the most of any bidder. Invenergy Geothermal Development won four.

The U.S. Treasury shares the money with the state and with the counties where the parcels sit. A lease does not by itself allow any ground disturbance. BLM reviews drilling and other proposed work under the National Environmental Policy Act.

BLM may issue the leases after it finishes its review and receives payment.

Keywords: geothermal, BLM, lease sale, Twin Falls County, Cassia County
Sources: BLM news release · ThinkGeoEnergy · idahonews.com

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PUBLIC LANDS

WILDLIFE IDAHO

Groups petition Fish and Game to end wolf-pup kills and payments

A petition filed in Lewiston would close wolf hunting and trapping from April through July. The director says the question belongs to lawmakers.

LEWISTON: Eight groups and three individuals filed a petition with the Idaho Fish and Game Commission on Nov. 17 to ban killing wolf pups and their mothers. Dallas Gudgell of the International Wildlife Coexistence Network submitted it hours before the commission's public hearing in Lewiston that evening, the Lewiston Tribune reported.

The petition asks the commission to close wolf hunting and trapping statewide from April 1 through July 31, 2027, while a permanent rule is written. It would bar killing wolves at occupied dens and end payments from commission or department funds, or programs partnered with them, for killing pups or nursing females. It leaves hunting outside the denning and early pup-rearing period alone, according to Western Watersheds Project.

The petitioners cite state mortality records. Hunters killed 12 wolf pups in northern Idaho on April 25, 2026, six in game unit 6 and six in unit 10A. Each kill qualified for a $2,000 payment through the Foundation for Wildlife Management, Western Watersheds Project said.

The foundation reimburses trappers for their expenses. It offers up to $2,500 for wolves taken where livestock attacks are common and up to $2,000 where elk are struggling, the Tribune reported. Foundation Executive Director Justin Webb thanked commissioners at the hearing and did not directly address the payments.

Director Jim Fredericks said after the meeting that the state's new contract with the foundation bars state funds from reimbursing kills in May and June, the denning season. He said the practice is still legal. He said a 2021 law largely took away the commission's power to regulate wolf hunting and trapping. "Essentially what the petitioners are looking for is really a matter of legislation," Fredericks said.

The commission's Nov. 18 business meeting also listed a separate petition from Protect the Wolves for a 50-kilometer Sacred Resource Protection Zone around national parks. The group's attached release puts the zone within 31 miles of Yellowstone and Grand Teton. Staff made no recommendation and offered sample motions to deny it or open negotiated rulemaking. The department had posted no results from the Nov. 18 meeting by early Thursday.

The petition was filed under Idaho Code 67-5230, and the commission must begin rulemaking or explain in writing why it will not, Western Watersheds Project said. Suzanne Asha Stone, executive director of the International Wildlife Coexistence Network, wrote that the commission takes up the petition at its January 2027 meeting.

Keywords: wolves, Idaho Fish and Game Commission, Lewiston, Foundation for Wildlife Management, petition for rulemaking
Sources: The Spokesman-Review (Lewiston Tribune) · Western Watersheds Project · Idaho Fish and Game commission agenda · Idaho Fish and Game goldsheet 5-B, Sacred Resource Protection Zone petition · Suzanne Asha Stone, Substack

PUBLIC LANDS IDAHO

Idaho group asks Congress to block Interior land sale plan

Conservation Voters for Idaho backs a bill to bar most federal land sales. Interior's new strategic plan calls for a smaller federal estate.



Crews plant sagebrush seedlings in the Bureau of Land Management's Twin Falls District in April 2015. Interior's new strategic plan calls for a smaller federal estate. BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, PUBLIC DOMAIN

BOISE: An Idaho conservation group is asking Congress to stop the Interior Department from selling federal land, after the department put out a 2026-2030 strategic plan last week that calls for a smaller federal estate. Ryan McGoldrick, executive director of Conservation Voters for Idaho, made the call in a report the Idaho Business Review published Nov. 18.

The plan, which the Idaho Business Review says was released Nov. 10, says Interior will work to decrease the size of the federal estate by offering states, localities and tribes the chance to buy federal land. It also calls for land exchanges and direct transfers to support energy production.

McGoldrick backs the bipartisan Public Lands in Public Hands Act, which would ban the sale or transfer of most public lands managed by Interior or the U.S. Forest Service. "It's up to Congress to step in and show leadership here," he said.

Interior officials said part of any sale proceeds would go to the buyer for conservation elsewhere, the Associated Press reported. Newsweek reported the plan says sales would decrease federal taxpayers' financial responsibility to manage federal lands.

Wyoming Gov.-elect Eric Barlow called a wholesale fire sale unacceptable, the Cody Enterprise reported Nov. 19. Rep. Ryan Zinke, R-Mont., remains firmly opposed to the sale or transfer of public lands, according to his office.

Keywords: public lands, Interior Department, strategic plan, Conservation Voters for Idaho, land sales
Sources: Idaho Business Review (subscription) · East Idaho News (AP) · Newsweek via Yahoo News · Thermopolis Independent Record (Cody Enterprise)

WILDLIFE IDAHO

Chronic wasting disease turns up in a new Idaho hunting unit

A mule deer buck taken along the Snake River near the Oregon line tested positive. Fish and Game says the find will feed its disease strategy.

BOISE: A mule deer buck harvested along the Snake River in Unit 13 has tested positive for chronic wasting disease, Idaho Fish and Game said Nov. 18. It is the first detection in that hunting unit.

The site lies about a half mile from the Oregon border, near an earlier detection in Unit 18. Until now, deer and elk had tested positive in five other Idaho hunting units, the department said.

Fish and Game has tested more than 3,500 deer and elk for the disease so far in 2026. Hunting

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PUBLIC LANDS *continued*

Chronic wasting disease turns up in a new ..., continued

season in Unit 13 has already closed.

The find came as the Fish and Game Commission met in Lewiston. Its Nov. 18 agenda listed adoption of pending rules on CWD management restrictions and a disease update from wildlife health program coordinator Stacey Dauwalter.

The department and the commission will weigh the new detection in their overall CWD management strategy. The department asks the public to report road-killed deer and elk and animals found dead.

Keywords: chronic wasting disease, Unit 13, mule deer, Idaho Fish and Game, Snake River
Sources: Idaho Fish and Game · Idaho Fish and Game commission agenda

AI

AI LAWSUITS IDAHO

Oregon seeks $2 billion from OpenAI as Idaho's own suit waits

Oregon's attorney general sued OpenAI over ChatGPT and children on Tuesday. Idaho filed a similar case in Ada County in October.

PORTLAND, Ore.: Oregon Attorney General Dan Rayfield sued OpenAI on Tuesday, Nov. 17, seeking at least $2.035 billion over ChatGPT's risks to children, KLCC reported. Idaho Attorney General Raúl Labrador filed his own case against the company Oct. 14.

Oregon's 53-page complaint says OpenAI broke the state's Unlawful Trade Practices Act. The state says the company knew ChatGPT lacks guardrails to protect minors and kept marketing it to them.

The suit was filed in Multnomah County Circuit Court, the Oregon Capital Chronicle reported. Rayfield announced it at a news conference in Portland. "OpenAI knows that ChatGPT is harming children," he said in a statement.

After the October suits, an OpenAI spokesperson pointed to parental controls and break reminders. Spokesman Drew Pusateri issued a nearly identical statement Tuesday, saying OpenAI wants AI policies that apply to the entire industry.

Idaho's suit sits in the Fourth Judicial District Court in Ada County and rests on the Idaho Consumer Protection Act. Labrador's office says the suit seeks to compel OpenAI's compliance with that law and to stop what it calls dangerous activities.

Eight states sued OpenAI in state courts on Oct. 14, Idaho among them, according to OpenClassActions.

Labrador's newsroom shows no November release on the Idaho case. Idaho's complaint seeks civil penalties of up to $5,000 per violation, the OpenClassActions summary says.

Keywords: OpenAI, ChatGPT, Oregon, Labrador, consumer protection
Sources: KLCC · Oregon Capital Chronicle via Lookout Eugene-Springfield · Idaho Attorney General · OpenClassActions · Idaho Attorney General newsroom

LIBERTY

DUE PROCESS IDAHO

Timberline football players sue Boise school leaders over discipline

Four students say administrators denied them due process after their Snapchat messages about a classmate became public. They seek damages from the officials personally.

BOISE: Four Timberline High School football players have sued Boise School District leaders, saying the district violated their constitutional due process rights when it disciplined them over Snapchat messages, Boise State Public Radio reported Nov. 17. The students filed the suit under pseudonyms earlier this month.

The suit names Superintendent Wendy Johnson, Deputy Superintendent Nick Smith, Timberline Principal Chad Wright and two unnamed administrators. All are sued in their individual capacity, so any damages would come out of their own pockets instead of the district's.

The suit says administrators suspended the students for 17 school days, with several extensions. Two were moved to alternative schools for the rest of the semester and a third until the end of the school year. The fourth student's placement was still undecided when the suit was filed, according to the complaint as described by the station.

The students do not deny sending the messages, which the station described as violent. The suit calls the messages "merely a criticism" of a female student who they say harassed a friend.

The suit seeks damages and asks that the students return to Timberline with their records expunged. It also asks the district to admit wrongdoing. District public affairs administrator Dan Hollar declined to comment on pending litigation and said a formal response is expected to be filed soon.

Keywords: due process, Boise School District, Timberline High School, student discipline, lawsuit
Sources: Boise State Public Radio

DID YOU KNOW

The federal debt stood at $40.71 trillion on Nov. 17, 2026, by the Treasury's daily count.

Source: U.S. Treasury, Debt to the Penny (Fiscal Data)

POP QUIZ

How old must a person be to serve as a U.S. senator?

Answer: 30. A senator must also have been a citizen for nine years.

Source: National Archives, Constitution transcript

THEY SAID IT

"We haven't adjusted that threshold for inflation"

Christopher Shank, author of the legislative audit, on Idaho's $1,000 felony theft line

Source: OPE report, Drivers of Incarceration

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THE WIRE

Links that did not make the cut today

GEORGIA COUNTY OKS OPENAI DATA CENTER PLAN, DELAYS MORATORIUM

IDAHO AND MAGIC VALLEY

State lends $9.4 million for Boise County mountain water system
[Idaho Press (Idaho Capital Sun)]

Nampa moves 12 officers to patrol after $5 million levy fails [Idaho Press]

State rethinks collecting and releasing school salary schedules [Idaho Education News]

PUC staff petitions to update utility safety and accident rules [Idaho PUC]

CenturyLink asks to drop Idaho eligible carrier status [Idaho PUC]

Kuna School District files data breach notice with the state [Idaho Attorney General]

Married music teachers lead Boise chapter of PauseAI US
[Idaho Education News]

DATA CENTERS, POWER, NUCLEAR

Utah lawmakers float data center rules without a statewide pause [KUER]

FERC's See says customers driving grid costs should pay them [Utility Dive]

PUC sets Jan. 8 comment deadline on Idaho Power pricing framework
[Idaho PUC Order No. 37234]

PUC weighs Intermountain Gas bid to defer temporary LNG costs [Idaho PUC agenda]

Minneapolis mayor faces Thursday deadline on data center rules
[FOX 9 via Yahoo News]

NRC shrinks reactor safety panel, takes comment through Dec. 17 [Federal Register]

Column: Jim Jones asks Idaho to rethink nuclear campus bid [Bonner County Daily Bee]

Idaho utilities must keep paying 4% interest on deposits in 2027
[Idaho PUC Order No. 37228]

SURVEILLANCE, COURTS, AI, CYBER

Santa Ana votes 6-0 to end Flock plate-reader contracts
[GovTech (Los Angeles Times)]

Oshkosh, Wis., council votes 5-2 to ban plate-reader cameras [NBC26]

Utah draft bill would require quarterly internal plate-reader audits [KSL]

After Chatrie ruling, courts test warrantless plate-reader searches
[Journal of Law & Cyber Warfare]

Justices to weigh reporter's bid to shield sources Dec. 4
[SCOTUSblog]

New York forms unit to enforce its frontier AI law starting Jan. 1
[New York Attorney General]

Intelligence chief tells Congress string of tech outages unrelated
[The National News Desk via KBOI]

CISA gives agencies three days to patch research database flaw [SecurityOnline]

THEY SAID IT "meaningful protections against cost overruns were lacking" Idaho PUC staff, as summarized in Order No. 37231 approving Gateway West Segment 8

About this brief. How stories are chosen: each must touch Idaho or set a precedent that will reach it, put law, rates, land, water, rights or money at stake, be new, and have a source anyone can read free. Stories carry their sources. Links marked (subscription) may be paywalled.

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