



Big Wood Canal Company
American Falls Reservoir District #2
409 N. Apple St., Shoshone, I83352
P: (208) 886-2331 * F: (208) 886-2010



To: All Water Users and Agricultural Partners of AFRD #2

From: AFRD2 and Bigwood Lower Users

Date: June 5, 2026

Subject: URGENT DROUGHT NOTICE – WATER SUPPLY SHORTAGE & SHORTENED RUN TIME FOR 2026 SEASON

Based on our estimated allocations and a rigorous analysis of this year's depleted water supply, we are issuing a formal notice of a severe water shortage for AFRD2 and Bigwood Lower users. Due to a combination of storage reductions and a complete lack of natural flow, the available water supply for the 2026 irrigation season will be heavily restricted.

We are advising all users to immediately review their operational plans to account for a significantly shortened watering window.

The Numbers: Normal Year Allocation vs. 2026 Reality

To understand the severity of this season's shortage, it is important to look at how our standard volume has been impacted:

- **Our Full Storage Water Right:** In a normal water year, our district receives a full storage water right of **393,550 acre-feet**.
- **The Evaporation Discount:** After accounting for evaporation losses at the American Falls Reservoir, we typically have around **373,550 acre-feet** of usable storage water to run.
- **The 2026 Drought Estimate:** This year, we are estimating that we will only receive an estimated **353,000 acre-feet** of usable water.

This **20,550 acre-foot deficit** to our usable pool is a direct result of a **Common Pool Reduction**, which is automatically triggered during severe drought years to distribute the shortage across the system.

The Critical Absence of Natural Flow

Compounding our reduced reservoir storage is a complete failure of the system's hydrology to provide early-season relief.



Big Wood Canal Company
American Falls Reservoir District #2
409 N. Apple St., Shoshone, ID 83352
P: (208) 886-2331 * F: (208) 886-2010



In a normal year, our water users benefit from **1 to 2 months of natural flow**. This natural flow is vital because it satisfies system demand early in the season without drawing a single drop from our 373,550 acre-feet of reservoir storage.

This year, **our district received zero natural flow**. Every gallon of water delivered to your fields from day one has had to come directly out of our already diminished 353,000 acre-foot storage supply.

Operational Impact: A Restricted 140-Day Run Window

The math of a Common Pool Reduction paired with zero natural flow leaves us with a stark operational reality. We will not be able to sustain our typical season length.

- **Average Historical Run Time:** 180 days
- **2026 Projected Run Time:** 140 days

We are facing a **40-day reduction** in our standard irrigation season.

Because our run time is capped at approximately 140 days, late-season crops and high-water-demand varieties will face severe stress before reaching full maturity. We strongly advise all users to manage their remaining allocations with maximum efficiency and plan your late-summer harvest and cutting schedules around an accelerated shut-off date.

Sincerely,

Tyson Scott General Manager