



University
of Idaho

New Assessment Released by the McClure Center Highlights Climate Change Challenges and Opportunities for Idaho's Economy

Moscow, Idaho – December 14, 2021 — The impact of climate change in Idaho will present challenges and opportunities to all sectors of our economy – from agriculture to recreation and tourism, energy, human health, infrastructure and land – according to a series of reports prepared by Idaho researchers in an effort led by the James A. and Louise McClure Center for Public Policy Research at the University of Idaho and just released to the public.

The reports are part of the Idaho Climate-Economy Impacts Assessment, a nonpartisan, science-based resource to help Idaho business leaders and policy makers plan for a resilient Idaho economy. All assessment content is available online at the website www.uidaho.edu/iceia.

Changes in temperature, precipitation, and snowpack will impact Idaho's major economic sectors. For example, warmer temperatures and variation in precipitation likely will lead to agricultural stress for some crops and regions, but also may present opportunities to explore new crop varieties better suited to future climate conditions. Understanding the most current information and predictions can help Idahoans plan and adapt for the future.

Over the last two years, researchers from the University of Idaho, Boise State University and Idaho State University have synthesized available data on projected changes to Idaho's climate and have assessed how these changes may impact Idaho's economy, focusing on six major sectors: agriculture, energy, human health, infrastructure, land (forests and rangelands), and recreation and tourism. This research effort connects the latest science on Idaho's changing climate with possible economic risks and with economic opportunities for innovation and economic development. The assessment also features data on climate, water and wildfire smoke.

“As a global food and agriculture company, we know the impact that events like wildfires, hot, dry summers and a diminished water supply can have on our business, our state and our way of life,” said President and CEO Garrett Lofto, J.R. Simplot Company. “This important, science-based work will help us better understand the potential impact of climate change on Idaho and our economy and help us continue to drive technological advancements to solve large-scale problems and bring future opportunities that benefit us all.”

“Micron is proud to be one of many Idaho organizations funding this important research, which will help all Idaho businesses understand how to address climate change,” said Micron Executive Vice President of Global Operations Manish Bhatia. “Action is urgently needed, and Micron is committed to addressing climate-related risks. Adopting renewable energy; increasing waste recycling, water recycling and water conservation; and reducing water usage are just some of the steps we are taking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to a sustainable future for all.”

In addition to providing Idaho-specific research and information on economic impacts and opportunities, the assessment includes tools and resources for further exploration.

“The Idaho Climate-Economy Impacts Assessment is unlike any other resource available in Idaho,” said U of I President Scott Green. “More than 50 researchers from the University of Idaho, Boise State University and Idaho State University collaborated with each other and other experts to reveal how the changing climate impacts Idaho’s financial health and provide resources that will help Idaho’s economy continue to thrive. The assessment is a strong example of Idaho’s higher education institutions’ dedication to working together to serve Idaho in long-lasting and impactful ways.”

The assessment seeks to inspire new collaborations, commitments and ongoing forums to leverage resources, encourage innovations and spur investments in Idaho solutions. The assessment’s website is designed for broad use by business leaders, policy makers, nonprofit organizations and Idahoans to meet the economic challenges and recognize the economic opportunities connected to the changing climate.

The assessment was funded by a consortium of businesses, nonprofits, governments and foundations: J.R. Simplot Company, The Nature Conservancy, Idaho National Laboratory, HP Inc., Micron Technology, Micron Foundation, American Lung Association, Idaho STEM Action Center, Idaho Chapter of the Wildlife Society, Idaho Forest Group, Idaho Water Resources Research Institute, Idaho Conservation League, City of Boise, Idaho Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, Manulife Investment Management Forest Management Inc., D.L. Evans Bank, Outdoor Industry Association and Molpus Woodlands Group. The work was supported by in-kind contributions from Idaho’s research universities and an advisory board with forty leaders from industry, nonprofit and government organizations. Details about financial support, the advisory board and research leads are available on the assessment’s website www.uidaho.edu/iceia.

About the University of Idaho

The University of Idaho, home of the Vandals, is Idaho’s land-grant, national research university. From its residential campus in Moscow, U of I serves the state of Idaho through educational centers in Boise, Coeur d’Alene and Idaho Falls, nine research and Extension centers, plus Extension offices in 42 counties. Home to more than 11,000 students statewide, U of I is a leader in student-centered learning and excels at interdisciplinary research, service to businesses and communities, and in advancing diversity, citizenship and global outreach. U of I competes in the Big Sky and Western Athletic conferences. Learn more at www.uidaho.edu.

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