Mayor Tammy de Weerd
City Council Members:
Keith Bird
Luke Cavener
Ty Palmer
Joe Borton
Genesis Milam
Anne Little Roberts

June 10, 2016

RECEIVED
JUN 16 2016
DEPARTMENT OF
WATER RESOURCES

Gary Spackman
Director
Idaho Department of Water Resources
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83702-0098

Subject: West Ada Area of Drilling Concern

Dear Director Spackman,

We are writing in support of the proposed West Ada Area of Drilling Concern (WAADC). The proposed WAADC includes 100% of the City of Meridian's Area of City Impact as well as areas to the east and south, which provide Meridian's water supply. The City feels that the proposed additional requirements of the WAADC are needed in order to prevent contamination and waste of the public water supply, and to protect public health

Our Public Works Department currently supplies over 3.5 billion gallons of domestic water to over 90,000 residents, thousands of businesses and their employees, and numerous visitors to our community every day. The water is provided through 23 ground water wells which are rigorously tested to provide clean, safe drinking water to the community. We invest a significant amount of time, money and effort to ensure the water we deliver is the most healthy product for our community and this should not be jeopardized by the actions of others. Specifically, unsealed wells can allow surface containments and natural contaminants to move within the aquifer system – bypassing protective layers which essentially render our actions useless.

A detailed ground investigation was completed by the City of Meridian in 2015. The following conclusions are a result of this effort:

1. Some aquifers underlying the Meridian area are contaminated by naturally occurring arsenic and uranium, as well as human introduced contaminates including nitrate, pesticides, herbicides, chlorinated solvents, bacteria and other pathogens.
2. Current well industry practices are insufficient to protect the ground water quality. Specific well drilling, construction, and sealing methods are necessary to protect ground water resources.
3. The designation of the Area of Drilling Concern is necessary to protect the deeper aquifers used for municipal water supplies.

These scientific findings are the basis upon which the City of Meridian has asked for the creation of the WAADC which will provide better, more responsible well drilling and abandonment practices.

Water is our most valuable resource in Idaho and we must do everything we can to protect it – a responsibility everyone must share. In order to accomplish that goal there needs to be a system in place to prevent contamination of our vital groundwater resource. The creation of the WAADC is an essential step in this process.

We applaud the City's Public Works team for taking a proactive step for our community in requesting the WAADC. Further, we urge the Idaho Department of Water Resources to take the necessary steps to implement the WAADC. As our area continues to grow, time is of the essence and it's our duty as leaders who serve the people of Idaho to do everything we can in order to protect our drinking water and public health for generations.

Sincerely,

Tammy de Weerd Mayor	Keith Bird City Council President	Joe Borton City Council Vice President
Luke Cavener Council Member	Anne Little-Roberts Council Member	Genesis Milam Council Member
Ty Palmer Council Member		

cc: Jeff Peppersack, Hearing Officer, Idaho Department of Water Resources