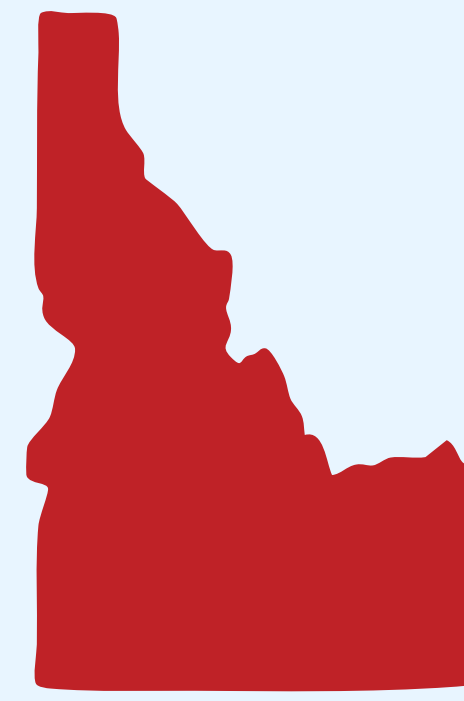


DATA CENTERS IN IDAHO: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

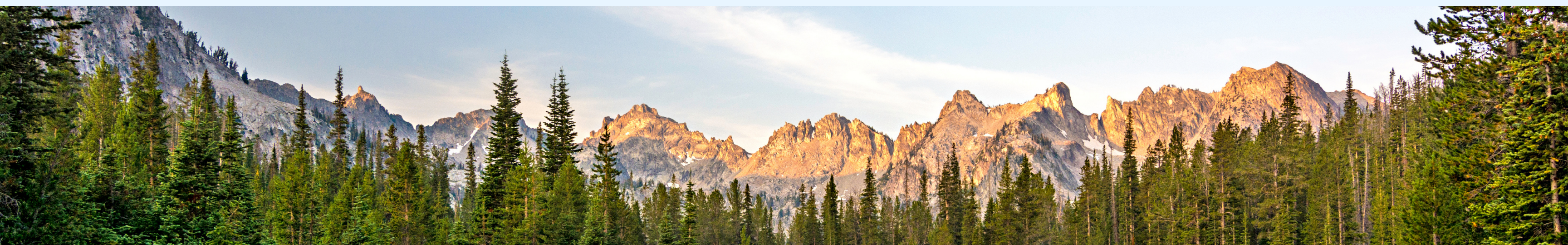
TAXPAYERS
PROTECTION
ALLIANCE



Recently, data center operations and proposed projects have received a significant amount of attention from Idaho policymakers, pundits, and economic analysts. A 2025 report in the *Idaho Statesman* [notes](#), “Meta is now at ‘peak construction’ of its \$800 million data center in Kuna ... 1,400 construction workers are now on site, 200 more than was anticipated for peak construction when the center was announced in 2022.” The data center is expected to be completed by the end of 2026, and an [additional data center project](#)—which will result in more than \$1 billion in local investment—is in the works.

PROPOSED AND PASSED RESTRICTIONS ON DATA CENTERS

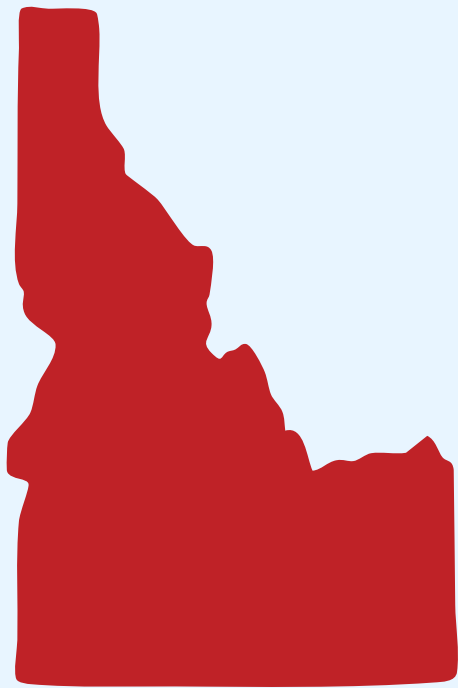
- * On July 30, the Bannock County Board of Commissioners [enacted](#) a 180-day emergency moratorium on new data center permit applications within unincorporated county land. Running through January 26, 2027, the temporary freeze was initiated to give planning staff time to study the localized impacts of large-scale facilities, particularly regarding high water consumption, power grid burdens, ambient noise levels, and overall zoning suitability.
- * Sponsored by state Reps. Mike Moyle (R) and Britt Raybould (R), [Idaho House Bill 895](#) applies to data centers that begin construction on or after July 1, 2026. It prohibits those facilities from using water for cooling as a consumptive use—meaning water that is evaporated or otherwise not returned to its source—unless the water is supplied by a municipal, water district, or public water and sewer system. In practice, the law encourages developers relying on non-municipal water supplies to adopt closed-loop, non-consumptive cooling systems. It also requires the Idaho Department of Water Resources to consider whether new water-right applications for data centers are consistent with the public interest, water conservation, and protection of local watersheds. The bill was signed into law in April.
- * Sponsored by state Reps. Stephanie Mickelsen (R) and Rep. Michael Veile (R), [Idaho House Bill 911](#) requires public utilities to obtain approval before providing electric service to new large loads of 50 megawatts or more (measured as an increase in cumulative power demand over a 60-month period). Ostensibly to protect existing residential and commercial ratepayers, the required service contract must satisfy a “no harm test,” ensuring the new customer bears the costs of serving its load rather than shifting those costs onto existing customers. The bill was signed into law in April.



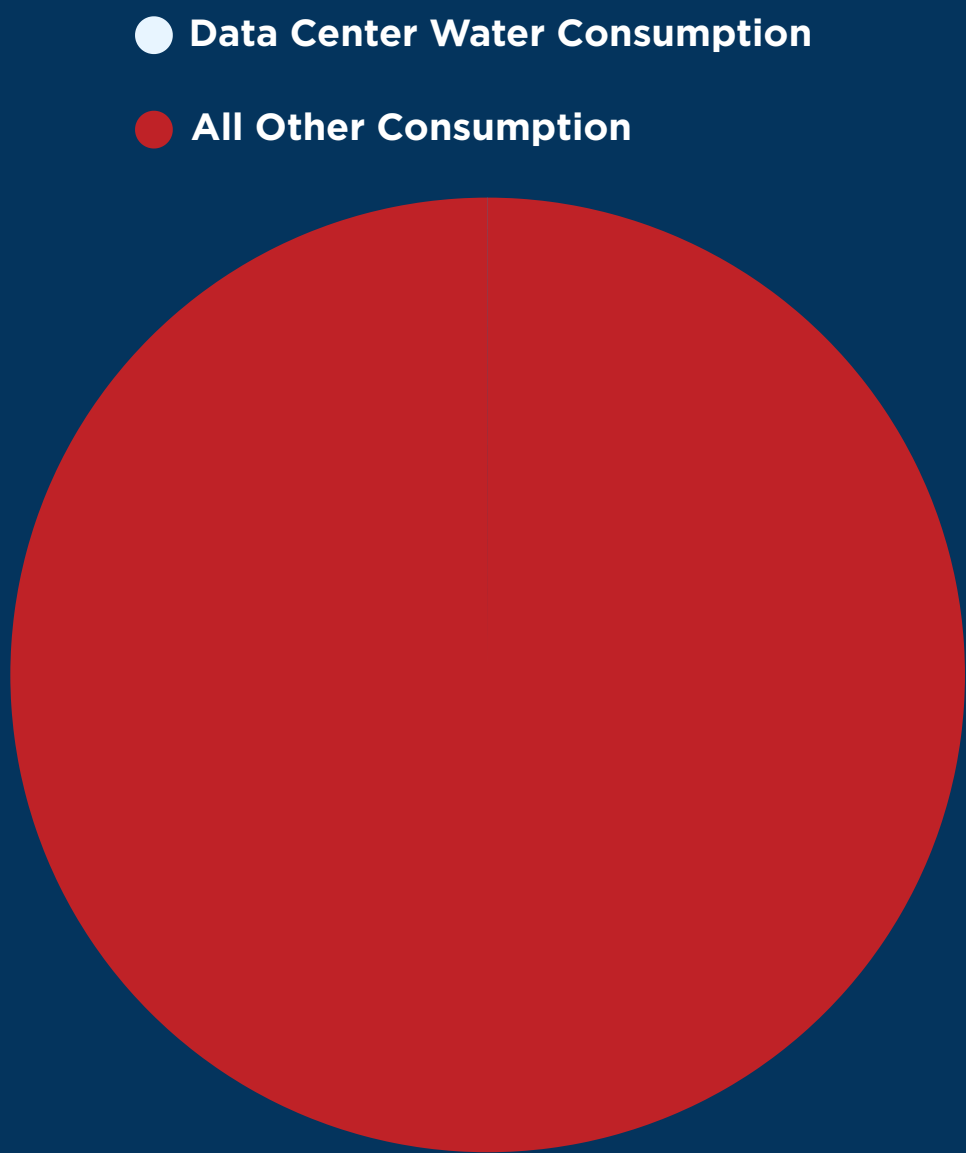
DATA CENTER DANGERS SIGNIFICANTLY OVERSTATED

Advocates of bans or restrictions often cite supposedly excessive water or electricity consumption by new data center operations. The HB 895 purpose statement reflects some of these concerns, [stating](#) that data centers, “have a great need for cooling in order for their equipment to run efficiently ... this can result in tremendous consumption of water. As a largely high-desert state, Idaho’s water resources are both limited and critical for many uses, including agriculture.” The truth is data centers account for a small proportion of water and electricity use in Idaho.

DATA CENTER MYTH V. REALITY



IDAHO WATER USAGE, 2025



MYTH:

Data centers are using up a significant percentage of water.

REALITY:

In Idaho, data centers accounted for **0.01 percent** of all water consumption in 2025.

Brookings Institution data center water use estimates; Baxtel data center count; U.S. Geological Survey state-level aggregate water consumption figures.

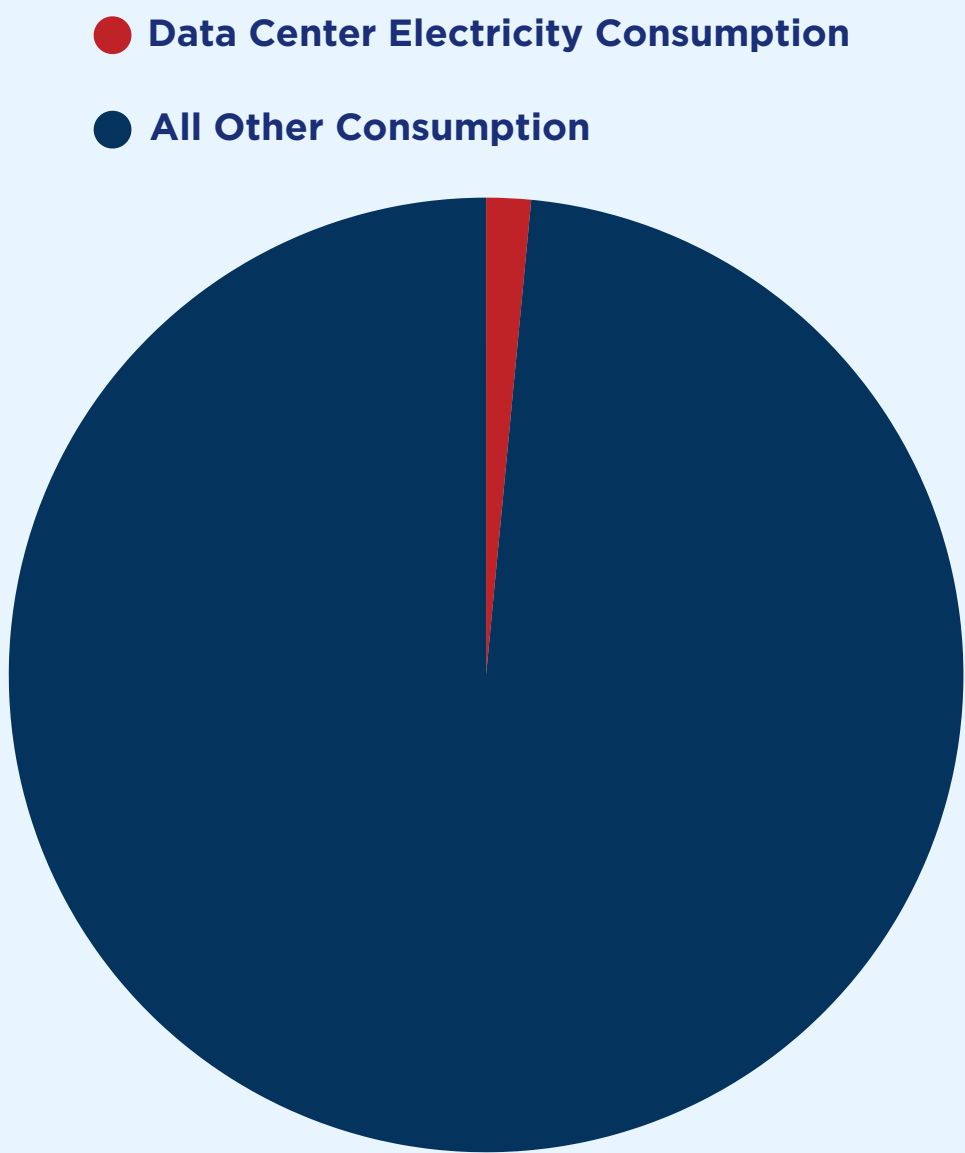
IDAHO ELECTRICITY USAGE, 2025

MYTH:

Data centers are using up a significant percentage of electricity.

REALITY:

In Idaho, data centers accounted for **1.5 percent** of all electricity consumption in 2025.



Electric Choice data center power consumption figures; U.S. Energy Information Administration state-level net generation figures.

To learn more about the long-term projected water and electricity demands of data centers, visit the Q&A section at protectingtaxpayers.org/datacenters

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