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Primary Election
May 19, 2026



— OFFICE OF THE IDAHO —
SECRETARY OF STATE

Post-Election Audit Report

June 9, 2026

2026 Primary Election Audit Report

During the 2026 Primary Election, Idaho voters cast 312,140 votes, putting total voter turnout at approximately 30%. Idaho elections would not be possible without the dedication of the 44 county clerks, election officials, and poll workers across every county. The state's smooth election process is a testament to Idaho's commitment to secure, accurate, and accessible elections.

The Primary Election Audit Report focuses on the eight selected counties for audit:

- Ada
- Butte
- Canyon
- Franklin
- Gooding
- Lemhi
- Owyhee
- Power

This report provides further assurance of the integrity of the electoral process. Audits like these are critical for maintaining public trust by verifying the accuracy of vote counts and ensuring that processes adhere to established protocols.

Background

Idaho's decision to introduce audits in 2022 highlights its proactive approach to address election transparency and accuracy. Idaho's audits are designed to determine if tabulation methods are working correctly and counting votes accurately. By verifying whether tabulation systems accurately count votes, these audits serve as a mechanism for validating election outcomes and identifying potential areas for improvement.

All fifty states conduct some form of post-election audit, underscoring the widespread recognition of their importance. Idaho's audits demonstrate a commitment to accountability and supporting local election officials in refining their practices. This dual purpose of verification and continuous improvement strengthens the overall electoral process and helps to reassure voters about the legitimacy of election outcomes.

Idaho Code § [34-1203A](#) outlines the process of conducting post-election audits. In conjunction with directives from the Secretary of State, this code section provides county election administrators and the public with clear guidance on the audit process. The primary objectives of these audits are to:

- Validate the accuracy of election results.
- Ensure that election voting tabulators are functioning properly.
- Compare records of ballots cast to records of voters having voted.
- Confirm adherence to election policies and practices.

Audit Selection & Process

Audit Selection

After county boards of canvassers certify county election results, the State Board of Canvassers convenes to select counties for audit. On May 29, 2026, the Board of Canvassers, comprised of Secretary of State Phil McGrane, State Treasurer Julie Ellsworth, and State Controller Brandon Woolf, randomly selected eight counties and specific precincts within those counties for the post-election audit. 29 of Idaho's 44 counties were eligible for the Primary Election audit. To ensure all counties receive an audit over multiple elections:

- Smaller counties (under 25,000 registered voters) are cycled out of the pool after being audited until all comparable counties have been audited.
- Larger counties (25,000+ registered voters) remain eligible for every election cycle.

The counties exempt from this audit draw were Bear Lake, Bingham, Boundary, Cassia, Clearwater, Custer, Elmore, Fremont, Jerome, Latah, Madison, Minidoka, Payette, and Valley because they were among those audited in previous post election audits. Caribou County was also exempt from this audit draw due to a potential county-wide recount. Caribou County will be placed back in the audit selection for the next election cycle. The other two counties that were previously audited were Bannock and Canyon, which have over 25,000 registered voters and thus were eligible for the 2026 Primary audit draw. The counties drawn were Ada, Butte, Canyon, Franklin, Gooding, Lemhi, Owyhee, and Power.

Immediately following the audit draw, the Secretary of State's office sent impound orders to county sheriffs to secure the ballots until the audit. In addition, audit orders were sent to the county clerks to notify them of their county's selection. The Secretary of State determines which race is audited for each county. These orders ensure that legal protocols are followed and that ballots are properly handled before, during, and after the audit.

Audit Process

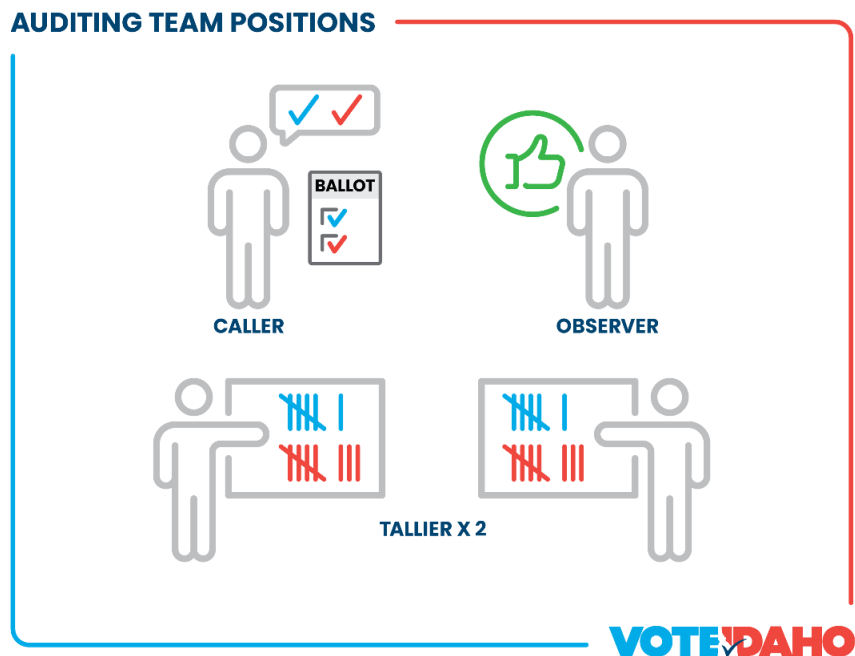
Between May 30 and June 6, 2026, audit teams were deployed to the selected counties. To bolster audit resources for this cycle, the Secretary of State partnered with Boise State University's accounting department. Student and faculty members of the accounting

department formed the audit teams responsible for hand-counting and tallying ballots, with each team being led by the Secretary of State's elections employees.

The following are the key steps of the audit:

- **Ballot Review:** Teams manually counted and verified all ballots within the designated precincts.
- **Voter Verification:** The number of audited ballots was compared to the number of voters recorded as having voted in each precinct.
- **Results Comparison:** Auditors independently reviewed the official county canvass of results to ensure consistency with the hand count findings.

The Secretary of State's office utilized four individuals and a team lead to comprise audit teams. The team positions are shown in the figure below:



Team Lead

The Team Lead is a Secretary of State Elections Division employee and is responsible for ensuring the integrity and transparency of election audits at the county level. Their duties include:

1. Oversight of Audit Procedures

- Leading election audit processes onsite at the county.
- Ensuring compliance with election laws and directives.

2. Comparison of Results

- Verifying that canvassed results align with audit hand count outcomes.
- Investigating, documenting, and resolving discrepancies that may arise between the two sets of results.
- Providing recommendations to the county for process improvement.

3. Communication

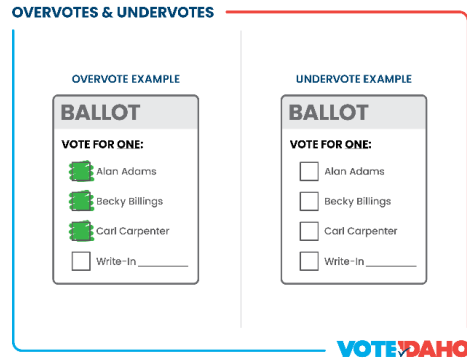
- Serving as the primary point of contact for county election officials to provide guidance and address inquiries.
- Responding to public and media queries to promote understanding and trust in the audit process.
- Preparing the county audit report for election officials, the Board of Canvassers, and the public.

Caller

The Caller calls out the voter's choice on the ballot. This role was also facilitated by a Secretary of State Elections Division employee. Responsibilities of the role include:

1. Reading Voter Intent

- Clearly announcing the voter's intent on each ballot for the tallying team. Voter intent means understanding and counting a voter's choice on a ballot, even if it isn't marked perfectly according to the instructions.
- Sorting ballots into organized stacks based on markings, such as candidate selections, write-ins, undervotes (no selection), or overvotes (multiple selections).



2. Organizing Ballots with Colored Indicators

- Placing a colored piece of paper on each hashed stack of ballots once the talliers verify the hash aloud. This enables the teams to quickly recall a group of ballots if there is a discrepancy between the talliers.

3. Flagging Ambiguities or Irregularities

- Identifying ballots with unclear voter intent or improper markings (e.g., stray marks, incomplete selections).

Observer

The Observer's role is critical to the quality control of the audit process by preventing any inaccuracies from progressing through the audit. Their responsibilities are as follows:

1. Monitoring Accuracy

- Carefully listening to ensure the Caller accurately announces the voter's selection as marked on each ballot.
- Cross-checking the Caller's announcement with the actual markings on the ballot.

2. Stopping Errors

- Intervening immediately if the Caller states an incorrect name, selection, or interpretation of the voter's intent.
- Ensuring that any mistakes are corrected before the tallying process continues.

Talliers

There are two Talliers on each team. They are responsible for accurately recording the voter choice called by the Caller. Their duties include:

1. **Marking Tally Sheets**

- Recording each selection as announced by the Caller on the official hand-count tally sheets provided by the Team Lead.
- Ensuring every mark corresponds correctly to the Caller's announced vote for each ballot.

2. **Announcing Synchronization**

- Upon reaching increments of five tallies (e.g., 5, 10, 15), both talliers will audibly and simultaneously announce "hash" to confirm their counts.
- Maintaining perfect alignment throughout the tallying process.

3. **Resolving Discrepancies**

- If a synchronization issue arises (e.g., one tallier misses or misrecords a tally), they will pause and review the ballots from the most recent synchronized "hash" to correct errors and resume the count.

4. **Summarizing Results**

- At the end of the tallying process for a precinct, or when a tally sheet is full, both talliers will independently total their sheets.
- The totals will include the number of votes for each candidate, write-ins, undervotes, and overvotes.
- Talliers will compare their totals to ensure consistency and accuracy, resolving discrepancies before submitting the results.

This manual review process further underscores Idaho's commitment to election security, accuracy, and public trust.

Audit Findings Summary

The following is a summary of each county's audit findings.

Ada County

Audit Date: Wednesday, June 3, 2026

Contest Audited: Governor

Precincts/Batches Audited: 1610, 1801, 1802, 1804, 2102, 2104, 2110, 2113, 2220, 2221, EV 7-2, AB Batch 26, AB Batch 35, AB Batch 36, AB Batch 73, AB Batch 84, AB Batch 95, AB Batch 99

Tabulation Method: Precinct & Central Count Scanners

Findings: For the canvassed results, Ada County reported 3,136 ballots cast within the selected precincts/Batches audited. The audited results compared to the canvassed results for the selected contest are as follows:

County Canvass Ballots Reported	3,136
Total Ballots Audited	3,136
*Election Day Ballots Audited	1,752
*Election Day Voter History	1,753

*Ada County data for voter history is only available for precinct-level data. Ada County does not sort its absentee or early voting ballots by precinct but by batches. As a result, the only voter history data that could be audited was the distinction between election-day voters and election-day check-ins.

<i>Party</i>	Candidate Names/ Type of Votes	Hand Count Audit Tally	Canvassed Results
<i>REP</i>	Mark Fitzpatrick	507	507
<i>REP</i>	Lisa Marie	57	57
<i>REP</i>	Daniel C. Fowler	31	31
<i>REP</i>	Sean Calvert Crystal	59	59
<i>REP</i>	Justin R. Plante	76	76
<i>REP</i>	Ethan Giles	49	49
<i>REP</i>	Brad Little	1,012	1,012
<i>REP</i>	Ron James	42	42
<i>DEM</i>	Chanelle Torrez	57	57
<i>DEM</i>	Maxine Durrand	174	174
<i>DEM</i>	Terri Pickens	725	725
<i>DEM</i>	Jill C. Kirkham	140	140
<i>LIB</i>	Paul Sand	5	5
<i>LIB</i>	Melissa-Sue Robinson	5	5

N/A	Under Vote	88	88
N/A	Over Vote	3	3
N/A	Ballots Without Audited Contest	106	106
Total Votes		3,136	3,136

Discussion:

The audited ballots matched those reported in the canvass.

Voter history records matched the audit totals in all precincts except for 1 in precinct 1610. Based on county documentation, they reported that a voter in precinct 1610 was issued a non-partisan ballot but then abandoned the polls without casting their ballot, which made the total ballots cast and the voter history check in numbers off by 1.

Recommendations:

The Secretary of State’s office has no recommendations.

Butte County

Audit Date: Thursday, June 4, 2026

Contest Audited: House Representative Seat B, Legislative District 30

Precincts Audited: All

Tabulation Method: Precinct Tabulators

Findings: For the canvassed results, Butte County reported 513 ballots cast within the county. The audited results compared to the canvassed results for the selected contest are as follows:

County Canvass Ballots Reported	513
Ballots Audited	513
Total Voters Recorded	513

<i>Party</i>	Candidate Names/ Type of Votes	Hand Count Audit Tally	Canvassed Results
<i>REP</i>	Ben G. Fuhriman	195	195
<i>REP</i>	Julianne Young	266	266
<i>DEM</i>	Bree Buckingham	35	35
<i>N/A</i>	Undervote	14	14
<i>N/A</i>	Overvote	0	0
<i>N/A</i>	Ballots Without Audited Contest	3	3
Total Votes		513	513

Discussion:

The audited ballots matched those reported in the canvass.

Voter check-ins matched the total ballots cast in all precincts audited.

Recommendations:

The Secretary of State's office has no recommendations.

Canyon County

Audit Date: Wednesday, June 2, 2026

Contest Audited: United States Senator

Precincts Audited: 1010, 1410, 2812, 3412, 4613, 4923

Tabulation Method: Precinct & Central Count Scanners

Findings: For the canvassed results, Canyon County reported 3,396 ballots cast within the selected precincts audited. The audited results compared to the canvassed results for the selected contest are as follows:

County Canvass Ballots Reported	3,396
Ballots Audited	3,396
Election Day Voters Recorded	3,398

<i>Party</i>	Candidate Names/ Type of Votes	Hand Count Audit Tally	Canvassed Results
<i>REP</i>	Joe Evans	336	336
<i>REP</i>	Jim Risch	1,813	1,813
<i>REP</i>	Josh Roy	418	418
<i>REP</i>	Denny LaVe	85	85
<i>DEM</i>	Nickolas 007 Bonds	26	26
<i>DEM</i>	David Roth	243	243
<i>DEM</i>	Brad Moore	112	112
<i>LIB</i>	Matt Loesby	12	12
<i>N/A</i>	Undervote	191	191
<i>N/A</i>	Overvote	0	0
<i>N/A</i>	Ballots Without Audited Contest	160	160
Total Votes		3,396	3,396

Discussion:

The audited ballots matched those reported in the canvass.

Precincts 1410 and 4923 each had one more voter check-in record than ballots cast. In Precinct 1410, poll workers reported that a voter checked in but left without casting a ballot. In Precinct 4923, poll workers reported that a ballot was spoiled outside of the E-Poll Book process.

Recommendations:

The Secretary of State's Office recommends poll worker training on E-Poll Book procedures, including proper voter check-in and ballot spoiling processes, to help ensure accurate voter history and ballot accounting.

Franklin County

Audit Date: Monday, June 1, 2026

Contest Audited: State Senate, Legislative District 28

Precincts Audited: 01 Preston, 02 Preston, 03 Preston, 05 Preston, 06 Banida, 07 Clifton, 10 Franklin, 11 Mapleton, 12 Mink Creek, 13 Cleveland, 14 Treasureton, 15 Weston, 16 Whitney, 17 Worm Creek

Tabulation Method: Central Count Scanner

Findings: For the canvassed results, Franklin County reported 2,105 ballots cast within the selected precincts audited. The audited results compared to the canvassed results for the selected contest are as follows:

County Canvass Ballots Reported	2,105
Ballots Audited	2,105
Total Voters Recorded	2,104

Party	Candidate Names/ Type of Votes	Hand Count Audit Tally	Canvassed Results
REP	David Worley	945	945
REP	Jim Guthrie	961	961
DEM	Mandy Peace	45	45
N/A	Under Vote	90	90
N/A	Over Vote	2	2
N/A	Ballots Without Audited Contest	62	62
Total Votes		2,105	2,105

Discussion:

The audited ballots matched those reported in the canvass.

In Precinct 05 Preston, the total number of ballots cast was one higher than the voter history count. Poll workers reported that, at one point during the day, ballots were sticking together when being issued to voters. Election officials believe that a voter was accidentally given two ballots and the extra ballot was not returned, which could explain the discrepancy between the ballot count and voter history.

Recommendations:

The Secretary of State's Office recommends continued poll worker training on ballot issuance procedures and providing poll workers with rubber finger grips to help prevent multiple ballots from being inadvertently issued to a voter.

Gooding County

Audit Date: Monday, June 1, 2026

Contest Audited: State Senate, Legislative District 24

Precincts Audited: P2 Gooding City, P3 Gooding Rural, P4 Wendell City, P5 Wendell Rual, P7 Hagerman

Tabulation Method: Precinct Tabulators

Findings: For the canvassed results, Gooding County reported 2,376 ballots cast within the selected precincts audited. The audited results compared to the canvassed results for the selected contest are as follows:

County Canvass Ballots Reported	2,376
Ballots Audited	2,376
Total Voters Recorded	2,376

<i>Party</i>	Candidate Names/ Type of Votes	Hand Count Audit Tally	Canvassed Results
<i>REP</i>	Brent D Reinke	1,197	1,197
<i>REP</i>	Glenneda Zuiderveld	864	864
<i>DEM</i>	Mary Jo Durfee	175	175
<i>N/A</i>	Under Vote	91	91
<i>N/A</i>	Over Vote	1	1
<i>N/A</i>	Ballots Without Audited Contest	48	48
Total Votes		2,376	2,376

Discussion:

The audited ballots matched those reported in the canvass.

There were instances where ballots were incorrectly sorted into the wrong precincts. Those sorting issues were identified and all ballots were found and counted during the audit. All voter history and ballot cast numbers matched.

Recommendations:

The Secretary of State's office recommends reviewing the precinct-sorting process established in the county and updating or revising them as needed.

Lemhi County

Audit Date: Monday, June 1, 2026

Contest Audited: House Representative Seat B, Legislative District 31

Precincts Audited: All

Tabulation Method: Precinct Tabulators

Findings: For the canvassed results, Lemhi County reported 1,826 ballots cast within the county. The audited results compared to the canvassed results for the selected contest are as follows:

County Canvass Ballots Reported	1,826
Ballots Audited	1,826
Total Voters Recorded	1,828

<i>Party</i>	Candidate Names/ Type of Votes	Hand Count Audit Tally	Canvassed Results
<i>REP</i>	Karey Hanks	617	617
<i>REP</i>	Rod Furniss	1,000	1,000
<i>DEM</i>	Wendy Norman	115	115
<i>N/A</i>	Undervote	58	58
<i>N/A</i>	Over Vote	1	1
<i>N/A</i>	Ballots Without Audited Contest	35	35
Total Votes		1,826	1,826

Discussion:

The audited ballots matched those reported in the canvass.

In the three precincts, Iron Creek, Salmon, and Brooklyn, there was a difference of 1 check-in vs ballots cast in the absentee ballots for these precincts. This was likely due to a process error when accepting returned absentees.

In precinct Junction, all ballots were accounted for, but voter history showed one extra voter check-in. This suggests the discrepancy may have resulted from a poll worker check-in error.

Recommendations:

The Secretary of State's Office recommends that the county conduct a thorough review of its absentee ballot receiving processes and review them with county election officials. The county should also reinforce proper voter check-in procedures through poll worker training.

Owyhee County

Audit Date: Friday, June 5, 2026

Contest Audited: Governor

Precincts Audited: All

Tabulation Method: Hand Count & Precinct Tabulators

Findings: For the canvassed results, Owyhee County reported 1,443 ballots cast within the county. The audited results compared to the canvassed results for the selected contest are as follows:

County Canvass Ballots Reported	1,443
Ballots Audited	1,443
Totals Voters Recorded	1,443

<i>Party</i>	Candidate Names/ Type of Votes	Hand Count Audit Tally	Canvassed Results
<i>REP</i>	Mark Fitzpatrick	417	417
<i>REP</i>	Lisa Marie	23	23
<i>REP</i>	Daniel C. Fowler	17	17
<i>REP</i>	Sean Calvert Crystal	12	12
<i>REP</i>	Justin R. Plante	28	28
<i>REP</i>	Ethan Giles	9	9
<i>REP</i>	Brad Little	759	759
<i>REP</i>	Ron James	13	13
<i>DEM</i>	Chanelle Torrez	14	14
<i>DEM</i>	Maxine Durrand	19	19
<i>DEM</i>	Terri Pickens	63	63
<i>DEM</i>	Jill C. Kirkham	20	20
<i>LIB</i>	Paul Sand	4	4
<i>LIB</i>	Melissa-Sue Robinson	1	1
<i>N/A</i>	Under Vote	18	18
<i>N/A</i>	Over Vote	0	0
<i>N/A</i>	Ballots Without Audited Contest	26	26
Total Votes		1,443	1,443

Discussion:

The audited ballots matched those reported in the canvass.

Four voters who completed same-day registrations had addresses that were not built into the E-Poll Book system prior to the election, so E-Poll Book check-ins show some variance due to

this. However, these check-ins were recorded on a paper source and accounted for. This resulted in a match with check-ins vs ballots cast.

Recommendations:

The Secretary of State's office recommends reviewing address information prior to election day. However, external notes were taken which is the recommended process if this course of action is required.

Power County

Audit Date: Thursday, June 4, 2026

Contest Audited: State Senate, Legislative District 28

Precincts Audited: All

Tabulation Method:

Findings: For the canvassed results, Power County reported 1,706 ballots cast within the county. The audited results compared to the canvassed results for the selected contest are as follows:

County Canvass Ballots Reported	1,706
Ballots Audited	1,706
Total Voters Recorded	1,706

<i>Party</i>	Candidate Names/ Type of Votes	Hand Count Audit Tally	Canvassed Results
<i>REP</i>	David Worley	457	457
<i>REP</i>	Jim Guthrie	888	889
<i>DEM</i>	Mandy Peace	163	163
<i>N/A</i>	Under Vote	59	58
<i>N/A</i>	Over Vote	1	1
<i>N/A</i>	Ballots Without Audited Contest	138	138
Total Votes		1,706	1,706

Discussion:

The audited ballot counts matched the canvass results in all precincts except Precinct 01. In that precinct, one vote originally counted for Jim Guthrie was determined during the hand count to be an undervote. All ballots remained fully accounted for.

A review of the ballot found that it was an absentee ballot with a fold crease running through Guthrie's oval. The crease created a dark mark within the oval, causing the tabulator to record the vote for Guthrie. During the hand count, the ballot was correctly identified as an undervote.

To help prevent similar occurrences, it is recommended to review ballot designs to ensure absentee ballot fold lines do not run through voting ovals before ballots are sent to voters.

Voter check-ins matched the total ballots cast in all precincts audited.

Recommendations:

The Secretary of State's Office recommends that counties use test ballots during ballot design and development to verify that absentee ballot fold lines do not run through voting ovals before official ballots are printed and distributed.

Conclusion

The 2026 Primary Post Election Audit demonstrates Idaho's commitment to maintaining the integrity and security of its electoral process. This audit has reaffirmed the reliability of the state's voting systems and procedures, providing Idahoans with confidence in the accuracy of their elections.

The audit identified minor process discrepancies in some counties, with these findings being addressed with tailored recommendations to improve future election protocols. This proactive approach highlights the collaborative efforts of the Secretary of State's office and County Clerks to uphold the highest standards of election administration.

By continuing to conduct post-election audits, Idaho reinforces its dedication to accessible, secure, and transparent elections. These efforts ensure that every Idahoan's vote is accurately counted and properly recorded, strengthening public trust in the democratic process.