

DISTRICT COURT-SRBA
TWIN FALLS CO., IDAHO
FILED _____

2006 FEB 9 PM 3 42

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF THE
STATE OF IDAHO, IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF TWIN FALLS

In Re SRBA	)	SPECIAL MASTER'S REPORT AND
	)	RECOMMENDATION; FINDINGS OF
Case No. 39576	)	FACT AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW
	)	
_____	)	WATER RIGHT NOS.: 34-13686 AND
		34-13687

I. PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

Claims were filed by the United States Bureau of Land Management for the above listed water rights. The United States originally claimed these rights under both state law and as a federal reservation. The state-based portion of these rights was investigated by the Idaho Department of Water Resources ("IDWR") and reported in a *Director's Report*. IDWR did not investigate the federal reservation theory because those are based on federal law. I.C. § 42-1411A.

Objections were filed by the United States Bureau of Land Management. The *Objections* were resolved with the filing of *Standard Forms 5* on November 16, 2005. The United States BLM submitted an *Affidavit of Fredric W. Price*. An evidentiary hearing was held on December 21, 2005. At the hearing, the United States Bureau of Land Management withdrew the state basis for these claims and opted to pursue these rights solely under a federal reservation pursuant to Public Water Reserve 107 ("PWR 107"). Therefore, these claims are now uncontested claims based on federal law and may proceed under I.C. § 42-1411A.

II. STANDARD OF REVIEW

A. Federal Reserve Water Rights

A state has plenary control of water located within its territory. *Kansas v. Colorado*, 206 U.S. 46 (1907). A claim to a federal reserve water right is an exception to a state's plenary

control of water. *United States v. Rio Grande Dam and Irrigation Co.*, 174 U.S. 690 (1899). Reserved water rights may be express or implied. *United States v. New Mexico*, 438 U.S. 696 (1978). An express reservation of water is created by the explicit language in the act creating the reservation. *Id.* An implied reserved water right must be based on a reservation of land. *Arizona v. California*, 373 U.S. 546 (1963), and may be granted if the following three criteria are satisfied:

- (1) An implied reservation of water exists only if necessary to fulfill the primary, not the secondary, purpose for which the reservation of land was created, *United States v. New Mexico*, 438 U.S. at 702
- (2) Without water, the purposes of the reservation must be entirely defeated, *Id.*; and
- (3) The water claimed must be the minimum amount necessary to achieve the purposes of the reservation, *Id.* at 700.

B. Federal Reserved Rights Under Public Water Reserve 107

The United States Bureau of Land Management filed these claims for stockwatering based on alternative legal theories of beneficial use (pursuant to state law) and on the executive order Public Water Reserve 107 (April 17, 1926) (pursuant to federal law). All the claims at issue are for stockwater claims not to exceed 13,000 gallons per day.

The issue of whether PWR 107 created a valid basis for a federal reserved water right was previously designated in the SRBA as Basin-Wide Issue 9. *Order Designating Basin Wide Issue No. 9* (March 8, 1996). Judge Daniel C. Hurlbutt, Jr. held that PWR 107 did not create an express or implied reservation of water by the United States. *Memorandum Decision and Order Re: Basin Wide Issue*, (Subcase No. 91-00009, December 9, 1996) That decision was appealed to the Idaho Supreme Court. The Supreme Court reversed, holding that PWR 107 did create a valid basis for a federal reserved stock water right. *U.S. v. Idaho*, 131 Idaho 468, 959 P.2d 449 (1998)

C. Uncontested Claims Based on Federal Law

Idaho Code Title 42 sets forth the SRBA procedures for both state-based and federal-based water right claims in the Snake River Basin Adjudication. Claims which are brought pursuant to Idaho state law are investigated by the Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) which recommends the elements in a *Director's Report*. Claims which are brought pursuant to federal law are not investigated by IDWR, and IDWR does not make any recommendation for federal-

based claims. Instead, the claimed elements are placed on the docket sheet and reported along with the *Director's Report*.

The statutory provisions for federal-law claims are found in I.C. § 42-1411A. The statute takes into account the absence of an independent investigation into federal-law claims and requires a hearing for uncontested claims. I.C. § 42-1411A(14). Since no independent review is conducted of federal-law claims, the claimant bears the burden of going forward and the burden of persuasion.

Each claimant of a water right established under federal law has the ultimate burden of persuasion for each element of a water right. Since no independent review of the notice of claim has occurred as provided for water rights acquired under state law in a director's report, a claimant of a water right established under federal law has the burden of going forward with the evidence to establish a *prima facie* case for the water right established under federal law. All such proceedings shall be governed by the Idaho Rules of Civil Procedure and Idaho Rules of Evidence.

I.C. § 42-1411A(12).

III. FINDINGS OF FACT ON ELEMENTS

A. Ownership of the Water Right

The claims assert that the owner of these water rights is the U.S. B.L.M. The record contains the following evidence regarding ownership:

I have reviewed the official business records of BLM and compared the above captioned subcases to BLM's MTPs [Master Title Plats] and HIs [Historical Index]. I was able to determine that the above captioned subcases are located on unreserved federal public domain as of April 17, 1926.

Affidavit of Frederic W. Price at 5, ¶ 7.

There are no remaining objections to the claim of ownership by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. There is "substantial evidence" that the United States is the owner of these rights.

B. Priority Date

These water rights were claimed based on PWR 107 with a priority date of April 17, 1926. That is the day an executive order known as Public Water Reserve 107 was signed by the President of the United States. There is "substantial evidence" that the priority date is April 17, 1926.

C. Source

The claims assert various sources for these water rights. No objections were filed to the source element. The record explains that “the water sources described by the above captioned subcases were confirmed by field investigation.”

Affidavit of Frederic W. Price at 5, ¶8. There is “substantial evidence” of the individual sources for these rights.

D. Quantity

The quantity claimed for these water rights is 13,000 gallons or less per day. The *Affidavit of Frederic W. Price* states, “Based upon the field verification and my review of the field investigation documents for each of the above captioned subcases, there is sufficient surface water at these sites for consumptive use by livestock.” *Affidavit of Frederic W. Price*, at 5, ¶9. In addition, IDWR investigated the quantity element for each right and submitted a *Director’s Report*. There is “substantial evidence” of the quantity for these rights.

E. Point of Diversion

The claims by the United States asserted points of diversion that were expressed with a legal description. In addition, IDWR investigated the point of diversion element and submitted a *Director’s Report*. There is “substantial evidence” of the points of diversion for these rights.

F. Purpose of Use

The claimed purpose of use for each of these rights is “stockwater.” The United States asserted that the field investigation showed sufficient surface water at these sites for consumptive use by livestock. *Affidavit of Frederic W. Price*, at 5, ¶9. There is “substantial evidence” that purpose of use is “stockwater” for these rights.

G. Period of Use

The claimed period of use for each of these stockwater rights is January first to December 31st. IDWR investigated the period of use for the state-based theory and submitted a *Director’s Report* recommending a year round period of use. There is substantial evidence of the period of use.

H. Place of Use

Each claim asserted a place of use that was set forth in a legal description. In addition, IDWR investigated the places of use under the state basis. The *Director’s Report* for these rights concluded that the claimed places of use were correct. There is “substantial evidence” of the

claimed places of use for these rights.

IV. CONCLUSION

Therefore, based on the files for these subcases and the record contained therein, IT IS RECOMMENDED that these water rights be **decreed** with the elements set forth in the attached *Special Master's Recommendations for Partial Decree*.

DATED: February 9, 2006.



BRIGETTE BILYEU
Special Master
Snake River Basin Adjudication

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF THE
STATE OF IDAHO, IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF TWIN FALLS

DISTRICT COURT - SRBA
TWIN FALLS CO., IDAHO

In Re SRBA)
) PARTIAL DECREE PURSUANT TO
) I.R.C.P. 54(b) FOR
Case No. 39576)
)
) Water Right 34-13686

FILED _____

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NAME AND ADDRESS: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
USDI - BLM
1387 SOUTH VINNELL WAY
BOISE, ID 83709-1657

SOURCE: SPRING TRIBUTARY: SINKS

QUANTITY: 0.02 CFS

THE QUANTITY OF WATER UNDER THIS RIGHT SHALL NOT EXCEED 13,000
GALLONS PER DAY.

PRIORITY DATE: 04/17/1926

* THIS WATER RIGHT IS ISSUED BASED ON FEDERAL LAW WITH *
* AN APRIL 17, 1926, DATE OF PRIORITY PURSUANT TO AN *
* EXECUTIVE ORDER SIGNED THE SAME DATE AND KNOWN AS *
* PUBLIC WATER RESERVE 107. *

POINT OF DIVERSION: T07N R20E S18 SENWNE Within Custer County

PURPOSE AND PERIOD OF USE:	PURPOSE OF USE	PERIOD OF USE	QUANTITY
	Stockwater	01-01 TO 12-31	0.02 CFS

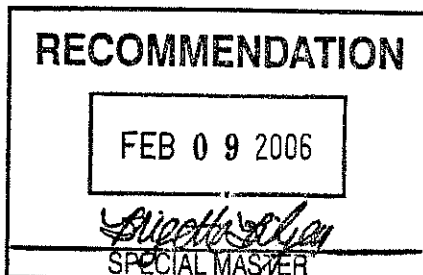
PLACE OF USE: Stockwater Within Custer County
T07N R20E S18 NWNE

OTHER PROVISIONS NECESSARY FOR DEFINITION OR ADMINISTRATION OF THIS WATER RIGHT:

THE QUANTITY OF WATER DECREED FOR THIS WATER RIGHT IS NOT A
DETERMINATION OF HISTORICAL BENEFICIAL USE.
THIS PARTIAL DECREE IS SUBJECT TO SUCH GENERAL PROVISIONS
NECESSARY FOR THE DEFINITION OF THE RIGHTS OR FOR THE EFFICIENT
ADMINISTRATION OF THE WATER RIGHTS AS MAY BE ULTIMATELY
DETERMINED BY THE COURT AT A POINT IN TIME NO LATER THAN THE
ENTRY OF A FINAL UNIFIED DECREE. I.C. SECTION 42-1412(6).

RULE 54(b) CERTIFICATE

With respect to the issues determined by the above judgment or order, it is hereby CERTIFIED, in accordance with Rule 54(b), I.R.C.P., that the court has determined that there is no just reason for delay of the entry of a final judgment and that the court has and does hereby direct that the above judgment or order shall be a final judgment upon which execution may issue and an appeal may be taken as provided by the Idaho Appellate Rules.



John M. Melanson
Presiding Judge of the
Snake River Basin Adjudication

FIELD

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STATE OF IDAHO, IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF TWIN FALLS

In Re SRBA)
Case No. 39576)
_____)

NOTICE OF ISSUANCE OF
SPECIAL MASTER'S
RECOMMENDATION

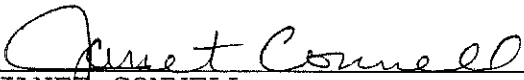
Water Right(s): 34-13686
34-13687

On February 09, 2006, Special Master BRIGETTE BILYEU issued a SPECIAL MASTER'S RECOMMENDATION for the above subcase(s) pursuant to SRBA Administrative Order 1 (AO1), Section 13a.

Pursuant to SRBA Administrative Order 1, Section 13a, any party to the adjudication including parties to the subcase, may file a Motion to Alter or Amend on or before the 28th day of the next month.

Failure of any party in the adjudication to pursue or participate in a Motion to Alter or Amend the SPECIAL MASTER'S RECOMMENDATION shall constitute a waiver of the right to challenge it before the Presiding Judge.

DATED February 09, 2006.


JANEY CONNELL
Deputy Clerk

DISTRICT COURT-SRBA
TWIN FALLS CO., IDAHO
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IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF THE
STATE OF IDAHO, IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF TWIN FALLS

In Re SRBA)

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

Case No. 39576)
_____)

Water Right(s): 34-13686
34-13687

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I certify that a true and correct copy of the SPECIAL MASTER'S REPORT, SPECIAL MASTER'S RECOMMENDATION FOR PARTIAL DECREE and NOTICE OF ISSUANCE OF SPECIAL MASTER'S REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION were mailed on February 09, 2006, with sufficient first-class postage prepaid to the following:

DIRECTOR OF IDWR
PO BOX 83720
BOISE, ID 83720-0098

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Represented by:
US DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
ENVIRONMENT & NATL' RESOURCES
550 WEST FORT STREET, MSC 033
BOISE, ID 83724


JANET CONNELL
Deputy Clerk

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

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