

Orr Affidavit

Exhibit 46

RECEIVED

OCT 19 2009

DEPARTMENT OF
WATER RESOURCES

Letter from Idaho Governor Robert Smylie to
U.S. Secretary of Interior Stewart L. Udall
(Dec. 7, 1966)

Fourth Orr Affidavit
Exhibit 16:

**Letter from Robert E. Smylie, Governor
of Idaho, to the Honorable Stewart L.
Udall, Secretary of the Interior
(Dec. 7, 1966)**



ROBERT E. SMYLIE
GOVERNOR

STATE OF IDAHO
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
BOISE

December 7, 1966

Honorable Stewart L. Udall
Secretary of the Interior
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

This is the official reply of the State of Idaho to your letter of September 2, 1966 requesting comments on the June 1966 feasibility report of the U. S. Bureau of Reclamation on the Southwest Idaho Water Development Project. Public hearings have been held by the Idaho State Reclamation Engineer in each of the counties directly affected by this proposed project and the report has been approved by the Idaho Water Resource Board.

I am happy to inform you that the project has virtually unanimous support of the people in this area. Unanimity has been reached on the principle of water exchanges between river basins after several years of negotiations. The present plan integrates the flows of the Snake, Boise and Payette River Basins to provide for more efficient utilization of the water resource for multi-purpose development for irrigation, municipal, industrial, flood control, fish and wildlife and recreational uses. This comprehensive approach supplants the previous piecemeal planning efforts undertaken in the separate river basins.

There are, however, certain items which we request be considered and made a part of future studies and operational plans for this project. These are as follows:

- (1) Idaho has tremendous potential for irrigation development. Part of this potential lies in the Upper Snake River Basin above Milner Dam. Several projects have been proposed or authorized in this area including Ririe Dam, Lower Teton (Fremont), Lynn Crandall, Salmon Falls, ground water recharge, and projects connected with the proposed enlargement of American Falls Dam. We feel that these potential projects are feasible provided the water supply of the Southwest Idaho Water Development Project is not dependent upon spills past Milner Dam. We are

INFORMATION CO

#5

December 7, 1966

assured by Region 1, Bureau of Reclamation that inflows below Milner are sufficient to meet Southwest Idaho Project requirements.

(2) The water permits issued to the Bureau of Reclamation by the State of Idaho for the Guffey Dam and diversions contain the following language: "Provided that appropriators withdrawing water for irrigation of lands upstream or downstream of the Guffey Dam will not be required to reimburse the Bureau of Reclamation for the consequent loss of energy and also providing that the diversion of the waters of the Snake River and the construction, maintenance and operation of the storage and diversion works shall not in any way impede, interfere with or impair the use, operation and maintenance of the pumping plant of Gem Irrigation District of Marsing, Idaho." We feel that any required alteration of the pumping facilities of the Gem Irrigation District should be included as project costs.

(3) The Weiser River basin is subject to repeated flooding. The feasibility study for the Weiser Division should include a re-evaluation of the Goodrich Dam for flood protection as well as irrigation of lands not included in the initial reconnaissance report of Region 1, U. S. Bureau of Reclamation.

(4) A major portion of the potential irrigation development under the Garden Valley Division is outside of the Payette River basin. Local Payette River interests have requested that present studies and plans for out-of-basin diversion be limited to 600,000 acre feet annually. We are assured by officials of Region 1, Bureau of Reclamation that this limitation will not interfere with development of the Willow Slope and Initial Butte units of the project. Additional amounts above the 600,000 acre feet will be the subject of a further feasibility study.

(5) Studies of the irrigation features of the Garden Valley Division should include an investigation of the feasibility

December 7, 1966

of draining the bottom lands of the Payette River below Black Canyon Dam for expansion of irrigation development.

(6) The Garden Valley Reservoir will inundate a major part of the privately owned agricultural lands of Boise County, which carry a substantial portion of the local tax load. Local interests have suggested that these measures be explored:

(a) Purchase by the displaced individuals of comparable federal lands;

(b) Provision for granting of concessions at developed recreational areas;

(c) Waiving of the normal acquisition by the United States of all lands within 300 feet of the maximum water surface to allow private ownership of the waters edge over part of the shoreline for recreation and summer home use; or

(d) Direct compensation to the county for loss of tax base as a project fixed cost.

(7) There are some 1,400,000 acres of arable dry land within the project area although about 900,000 acres are located at elevations where a water supply is not immediately available. Because of recent successful high-lift pump projects along the Snake River, future studies should consider the extension of the proposed Mountain Home, Guffey, Bruneau and Initial Butte Unit facilities.

(8) We are concerned that the project might be delayed because of the controversy over studies of importation of water to the Colorado River basin. If it is held up for political reasons, I fear that the people of Idaho will interpret the move as proof that the Southwest states want to take water that we could utilize, not merely that in excess of our needs.

Idaho gives unqualified endorsement of the Southwest Idaho Water Development Project as described in the June 1966 feasibility report. Consideration of the items mentioned above will not affect the feasibility of the project and should not prevent early authorization and appropriation of funds to begin construction. I would like to point out that there are many individuals

Honorable Stewart L. Udall

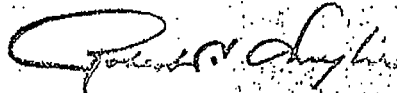
-4-

December 7, 1966

who are willing to undertake private development of lands in the project area which are withdrawn for reclamation purposes. In the event that there is any prolonged delay in authorization of the project because of political considerations, I favor release of these lands to allow some development with private capital.

I urge your full support in recommending this project to the Congress.

Sincerely yours,


GOVERNOR

RES:c

cc: Honorable Len B. Jordan, United States Senator
Honorable Frank Church, United States Senator
Honorable George V. Hansen, Member of Congress
Honorable Compton I. White, Member of Congress
Honorable James McClure, M.C.-elect
Honorable Keith Higgenson, State Reclamation Engineer
Honorable Carl Tappan, Water Resources Board
Honorable George Crookham, Caldwell, Idaho, Chr. Water Board
Honorable W. W. Gartin, Chr. Southwest Idaho Water Development Ass'n.
c/o Terteling Co., First Security Bank Building, Boise, Idaho

Idaho State Historical Society
AR 2.0024, Robert E. Smylie
Accession no. 20019012
Subject Files: United States,
General - WICHE, 1961-1965
Box: 23
Folders: Water Resource
Boxed 1965-1966

-end 4561e -