



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
SOUTHWEST REGION
3101 South Powerline Road
Nampa, Idaho 83686

Received by: RECEIVED
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WATER RESOURCES
WESTERN REGION

Brad Little / Governor
Ed Schriever / Director

June 18, 2020

N. Miller, Western Regional Manager
Idaho Department of Water Resources
Western Region
2735 Airport Way
Boise ID 83705

Re: Protest of Water Appropriation Application-for-Permit No. 65-23867; Big Willow Ranch LLC

Dear Mr. Miller:

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game's (IDFG) mission is to protect, preserve, perpetuate and manage Idaho's fish and wildlife resources for the public interest (Idaho Code 36-103). Accordingly, IDFG has reviewed Application-for-Permit No. 65-23867 submitted by Big Willow Ranch, LLC to appropriate 40 CFS of public waters from the Payette River for irrigation on approximately 5,411 acres of previously unirrigated land for the purpose of growing crops.

IDFG's mission encompasses assessment of potential water appropriation effects on public interest fish and wildlife resources. IDFG is specifically concerned that the requested water diversion project may affect Payette River summer flows and sport fisheries within the affected river reach of the Payette River

Because the application contains limited information to assess fish, wildlife, and associated recreation effects, IDFG is filing this protest per Idaho Code §42-203A(4) to offer the Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) technical assistance with decision making and recommendations to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects on public interest resources (Idaho Code §42-203A(5)(e); IDAPA 37.03.08.45.01.e.ii).

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment. Please initiate Interagency Billing for the \$25.00 fee (PCA 11806; B799) to the attention of Tom Bassista (IDFG Headquarters, P.O. Box 25, Boise ID 83707). If information becomes available to alleviate concerns about potential adverse fishery and summer flow effects, IDFG may amend or remove this protest. For questions and to arrange informal follow-up discussions, please contact John Cassinelli (Regional Fisheries Manager) or Tom Bassista (Technical Assistance Program Coordinator) at 208-610-4032.

Sincerely,

Brad Compton
Southwest Regional Supervisor

Cc: Ann Vonde, Deputy Attorney General
Mr. J.G. Schwarz
M:/Mitigation