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March 18, 2016

Idaho Department of Water Resources
Western Regional Office
2735 Airport Way
Boise, ID 83705

RECEIVED

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WATER RESOURCES
WESTERN REGION

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is being written to solicit comments regarding an application for a Confined Animal Feeding Operation Permit being submitted by the Reynolds Creek Calf Ranch. I am enclosing a property map for your information. The operation consists of two existing feedlots that are located at 12971 Bailey Road and 14000 & 14015 Upper Reynolds Creek Road, Melba, Idaho, and the facilities are being used to raise dairy steers and heifers. The permit is being submitted by John Hepton who is currently operating the facility and in the process of purchasing from J & M Cattle, currently owned by Jon Mortensen.

The newer of the two feedlots has a valid permit in place with the county. The older and smaller of the two feedlots does not have a permit in place. The purchasers are required to pursue a new permit as a requirement of the change of ownership to the new owners. As a result, the new owners are requesting a permit to house 35,000 head of dairy steers and heifers that range in weight from 80 pounds to 400 pounds. The calves come to the facility as day old calves and are fed milk until weaning in calf hutches (small, covered pens) until weaning at 60 days, or when they weigh about 140 pounds. From there they placed into small groups and are moved into transition pens, which are outdoor pens with shelter, where they are raised until they are about 200 pounds. From the transition pens they are placed into larger groups and placed into finishing pens until they reach 400 pounds. When they reach 400 pounds they leave the calf ranch and are moved to other feedlots.

Currently there are 22,500 calves on the site; the site is capable of housing additional animals. The older facility has never been permitted so the new owners are requesting a combining of both facilities into a single permit and expansion of the number permitted to allow the housing of 35,000 animals on site.

There is adequate space to house the additional animals, and the water rights with the property are adequate to provide the necessary water for the operation of the facility. The Idaho State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) has provided assistance in the design of the facility. ISDA has inspected the construction of the facility both during and after completion to insure that it met the design criteria. A waste management plan has been designed and submitted to ISDA by a certified nutrient management planner.

Runoff is contained on the facility and stored in earthen runoff containment structures where it will be evaporated or land applied, if necessary. Manure will be composted or applied as solid manure. The owner has cropland on which manure will be applied. Additional manure will be exported to neighboring farmers. Manure will be applied based on the uptake of nutrients by crops.

Water use beyond drinking water for the animals is minimal. The calves that are not yet weaned are fed milk received from dairies or processing plants. The milk that is used is determined to be not acceptable for processing. When there is not enough whole milk available for feeding the calves, a milk replacer will be used. Milk replacer is mixed with water prior to feeding. Water is also used for cleaning the bottles used for feeding the milk. Additionally, water is used for cleaning a small number of the calf hutches which were designed to be water cleaned in between groups of calves.

Feed will be provided from the cropland owned by the applicant and additional feed will be purchased and brought into the calf ranch by truck. The calves will be coming into and leaving the calf ranch by truck as well.

Older calves are fed a ration that consists of alfalfa hay and grain. Much of the hay is produced on cropland owned by the applicant. The remaining alfalfa and the grain will be imported to the calf ranch by truck using the State Highway 78, Upper Reynolds Creek Road and Bailey Road.

The calves housed in the outside pens will be bedded with long straw during times of wet weather. The straw will be imported to the calf ranch, again using the State Highway 78, Upper Reynolds Creek Road and Bailey Road.

Please submit any comments at your earliest convenience to:

Owyhee County Planning and Zoning Office:
PO Box 128
17069 Basey Street
Murphy, ID 83650
Telephone: (208) 495-2095

Please send a copy of your comments to:
Bob Ohlensehlen
O & H Associates
450 Falls Avenue, Suite 106
Twin Falls, ID 83301
Office: 208-736-6081 or Cell: 208-539-1279
Email: bob.ohlens@gmail.com

Thank you for your time and consideration.

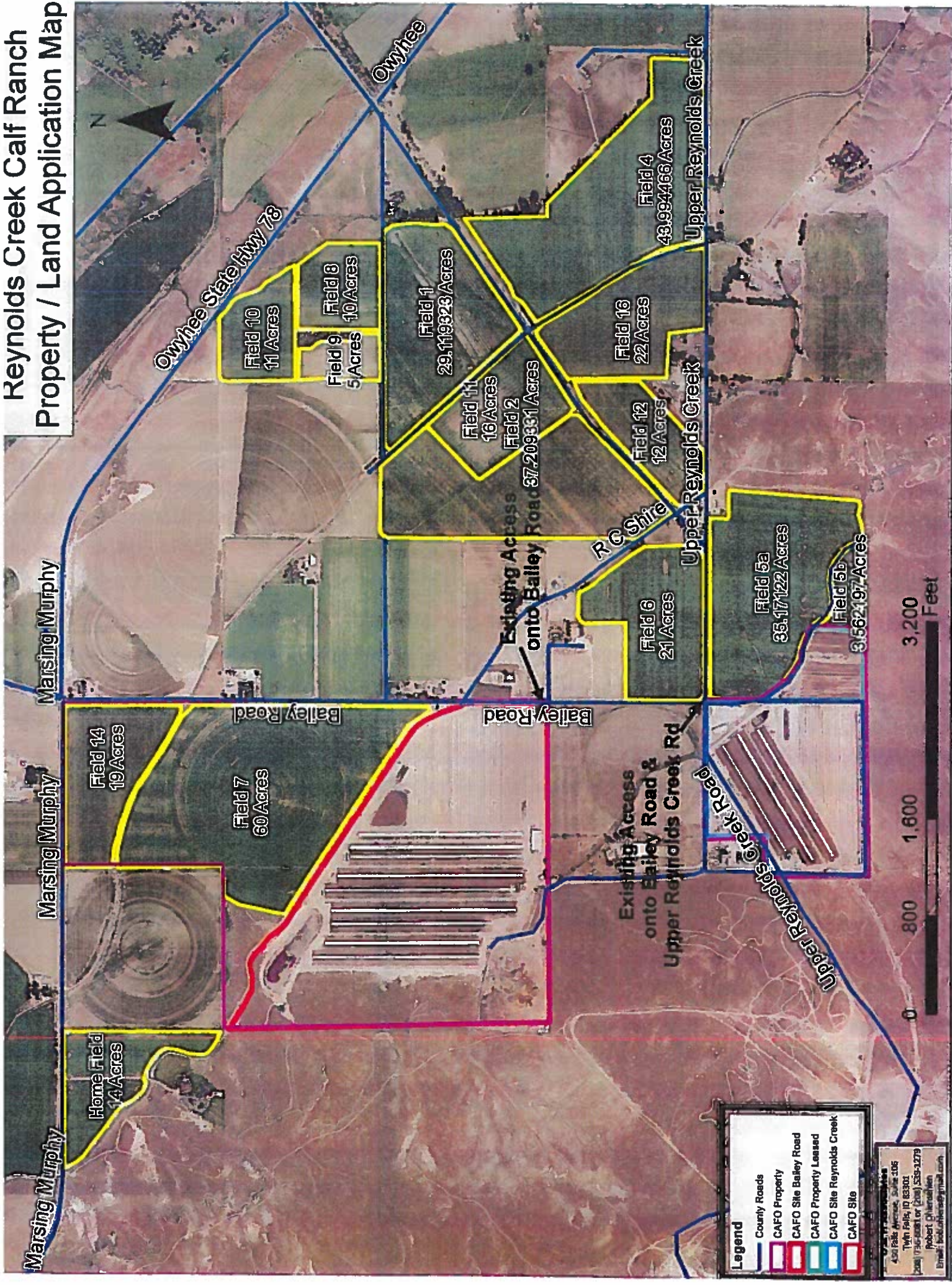
Sincerely,



Bob Ohlensehlen
O & H Associates

Enclosure

Reynolds Creek Calf Ranch Property / Land Application Map



Legend

- County Roads
- CAFO Property
- CAFO Site Bailey Road
- CAFO Property Leased
- CAFO Site Reynolds Creek
- CAFO Site

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