

Myrle Hildreth Steele
101 Woodland Drive
Soda Springs, Idaho 83276

To Whom It May Concern,

I married Val Steele of Lago, Idaho. Val and his father Harry Steele purchased the Sorenson Farm in the 1920's. When I married Val, I moved onto the farm and we worked there all of my husbands life. We turned the farm over to our children who still live and work there now. We had the oldest farm in Lago. We had the largest water right in the Trout Creek.

John Sorenson (1870) and his family went to the head of Trout Creek and built ditches to bring the water down to our farm. He had livestock and many acres of hay. He told us about how he used horses and ditch diggers to make the ditch. There were large rocks that had to be removed and he would hook chains onto the rock and drag it out of the way. He would wrap the chains around the willow and hawthorn bushes to drag them out of the way. They hired men to help with the work and they would stay in the extra two homes on the farm. John had built a barn in 1870 and had teams of horses used in constructing the canal. The big home was built in 1894. He was well known and respected.

The Sorenson ditch was a great accomplishment. It brought water to land that made it very valuable. In 1959, my husband was given a grant by the ASC to put the water into a pipeline with gravity flow. That meant that we didn't have to pump anymore. It also meant that Val didn't have to flood irrigate as he had in the past. This was a great day for us. It gave Val more time to do other things. This was a very expensive venture for us. It also meant conserving water for the government.

I have first hand knowledge of this because I was there. I well remember helping Val by holding a flashlight to set new dams late at night or early in the morning. Val never let one drop of water go to waste. He forfeited many family times to go irrigate by setting new dams.

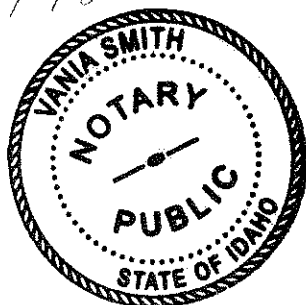
We had 350 cows and calves and 350 yearlings besides numerous bulls and horses. They drank the water brought through the farm from the Sorenson Ditch. I know the ditch benefited the neighbors in the same way. There were many small dairies that used the ditch for their animals. They used to ciphen the water to their ditches.

I remember that the water right was older than the State of Idaho. I wondered how that worked, as I worked for the US Government as a GS7 until retiring.

All of this was from firsthand knowledge.

Sincerely,

Myrle Hildreth Steele



*State of Idaho
County of Carbon
before me on this 16th day of May, 2007.
Commission Expires 8/10/10
Vania Smith*