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IDAHO FISH & GAME

PANHANDLE REGION
2750 Kathleen Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83815

Department of Water Resources

Dirk Kempthorne / Governor
Steven M. Huffaker / Director

August 29, 2003

Mr. Robert Haynes
Idaho Department of Water Resources
Northern Region
1910 Northwest Blvd, S 210
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814

Encompass
9/11/03

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IDWR/North

Dear Mr. Haynes:

REFERENCE: #98-1827 MELLINGER WATER RIGHT APPLICATION

Jeffrey W. Mellinger has requested 1.21 acre-feet from an un-named spring for recreation. Section 6 of the application indicates that the water would be stored in an on-stream pond. The name of the stream is not provided.

We have no objection to issuing the water right if your calculations indicate that the withdrawal will not reduce stream volume or flows below those needed to support fish and other aquatic species. However, we believe that some clarification of the actual location and design of the diversion and proposed impoundment is required to fully assess the environmental impacts.

We recommend against conferring the right to construct a pond on the stream or within a seasonal channel, should you approve the water right. Even small perennial, intermittent and ephemeral streams serve many important biological functions that deserve protection. An in-stream impoundment on a stream may contribute to elevated stream temperatures, impede migrations of amphibians and other wildlife, reduce the timing or amount of recharge to downstream waters, and have other potentially adverse impacts on water quality and stream function. We recommend that the applicant should be required to provide an off-stream storage alternative.

Finally, we note that the applicant intends to create recreational storage for fish. The applicant should be informed that a permit is required prior to stocking private ponds with fish. In addition, unless the fish to be stocked are delivered by a commercial hatchery (required for trout), the applicant must acquire a fish transport permit to bring fish to the pond. Both permits are readily available from Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Charles E. Corsi
Regional Supervisor

CEC:RH:kh

C: Tracey Trent, IDFG Boise
Jeffrey Mellinger (Rte 1, Box 1798, Bonners Ferry, ID 83805)

File: IDWR #96-9124 twete wr

Keeping Idaho's Wildlife Heritage