1995 BIG LOST RECHARGE COMMITTEE

JANUARY 18, 1996

RE: FORMAL REPORT ON ARTIFICIAL RECHARGE EFFORTS IN THE BIG LOST RIVER BASIN -- WATER RIGHTS # 34-07571 -- & -- # 34-07573

This meeting was called to order at 9:00 AM by Chairman Charles Huggins on January 18, 1996 at the Farm Service Bureau -- 1525 South Water Street -- Arco, Idaho.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Charles Huggins -- Bret Williams -- Juel Aikele -- Charles Traughber -- Seth Beal -- Watermaster of Water District # 34 Doug Rosenkrance -- Ray Boyack represented the Big Lost River Irrigation District. C.P. Traughber left at 11:30 AM

CONCERNED WATER USERS PRESENT

Ray Boyack -- Lawrence Babcock -- Reva Walker -- Larman Anderson

REPORT BY AREAS

WATERMASTER OF WATER DISTRICT # 34 -- DOUG ROSENKRANCE

NO DOCUMENTED REPORT

BIG LOST RIVER IRRIGATION DISTRICT -- RAY BOYACK

NO DOCUMENTED REPORT

AREA ABOVE MACKAY RESERVOIR -- DAVE NELSON

(Written Report Enclosed)

BUTTE COUNTY -- SETH BEAL

NO DOCUMENTED REPORT

SPRING CREEK -- C.P. TRAUGHBER

(Written Report Enclosed) -- Photos of successes and failures were also shown to committee and are enclosed with this report.

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BIG LOST RIVER RECHARGE COMMITTEE MEETING

JANUARY 18, 1996

Chairman, Charles Huggins reports that in the final five minutes of the meeting, a motion was made by Seth Beal and seconded by Juel Aikele that reads as follows;

"Move the Big Lost River Recharge Committee accept these applications for water rights -- We support the recharge application 34-07571 and 34-07573 recognizing the benefits of the recharge effort in 1995. We recommend these permits to be administered by Basin 34 in General."

5 in favor

1 abstained

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BIG LOST RIVER RECHARGE COMMITTEE

JANUARY 16, 1996

RE: FORMAL REPORT ON SPRING CREEK AREA

When we first started to work on recharging Spring Creek, everything was very upbeat and we received cooperation from the ditch rider, Mr. Williams. Our main recharge area was feeding the Felton Ranch from the Eastside Canal, which eventually started to fill the lower channel of Spring Creek. It was soon evident that we would never get enough flow from this source to fill Spring Creek. The other false feed was on Sowards lane and it was restricted by a smashed culvert that runs underneath the Eastside canal. It has been ignored by I.D.W.R. and B.L.R.I.D. Another diversion at this point was restricted by a 14 inch culvert that was installed under a private driveway.

The biggest failure for Spring Creek was at the Moore Diversion where the natural stream channel has been destroyed and Spring Creek at this point is fed from a ditch known as the Eastside Canal. From this point downstream Spring Creek is in such deplorable condition, despite all efforts, flows were never adequate to get enough water to connect upper Spring Creek Channel to the Lower Spring Creek Channel.

What we didn't realize was that after almost a decade without water, Spring Creek was almost totally destroyed, it was plugged with garbage in some areas, filled with silt and debris from fallen trees. In other places it has even been plowed and planted.

Culverts in some areas have been smashed or are too small to carry enough water to fill the Spring Creek Channel, and as a consequence Spring Creek, although it only runs about 10 to 15 miles was never revived as a viable stream in 1995. Properly taken care of Spring Creek could have very well been the circuit breaker that could have softened or stopped the destruction of the Big Lost River Channel, during the floods of 1995, as well as recharge the Lower Lost River Basin.

I am in favor of a recharge system, but only if it will stand the scrutiny of of our present water laws, and only after all Natural Channels and Tributary Channels of Big Lost River, namely the East Fork of Big Lost River called (Spring Creek) have been returned to their natural integrity. It will require a very extensive and well planned program to accomplish this task so as to not have a recharge snafu in the lower valley, such as we had this year. It should also be controlled by the local irrigation district as a single water right for Water District # 34. If two different water rights are approved to recharge the Big Lost River Basin, in my estimation it would add to the chaos that already grips the Big Lost River Basin.

If we fail to restore our Natural Stream Channels in the Big Lost River Basin we will violate almost all of the 12 objectives in these recharge applications.

CHARLES P. TRAUGHBER

Charles P. Traughber