

Report: Charles Huggins
Lower River area
January 28, 1996

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Department of Water Resources
Eastern District Office

My area of commitment to the Big Lost River Recharge Committee can be easily identified as the area south from the Arco Diversion dam south to the Arco gage station.

One river-stream-bed, a natural slough, and two man-made canals are the means of recharge within this area. Both canals basically bypass the green belt section of this area due to the fact that each canal ends up south of the Arco gage-station. Some leaching and seepage in addition to application of water to the soil would be a logical conclusion but the fact that the river ran at flood levels early in the spring and is still delivering thousands of inches to the Department of Energy lake has to be considered the primary recharge source.

The main recharge area (Ferris Slough) was never subjected to artificial or natural water supplies and in fact this natural stream has been plugged in its center by the farming practices of the owner of this wetlands property. The Department of Water Resources has been notified of this manmade blockage with no remedy action taking place on their behalf.

Once again there is no absolute data as to recharge by this stretch of the river.

but it was and still is significant as well-levels have risen substantially.

My conclusion is from head to mouth of Basin 34, ~~is~~ that the natural river and all of its tributaries should be filled prior to any artificial recharge. This action would aid to salvage the entire Big Lost River Valley.

To approve Water rights Nos. 34-07571 And 34-07573 without a stipulation of permanent stream flow from top to bottom of Spring Creek would only accomplish number eleven (11) of the applicants' stated, expected basin-wide benefits: i.e., reduce or eliminate the need to curtail existing ground-water rights.

Allowing six (6) representatives (chosen only from among original applicants) would hold the valley's water hostage with no recourse.

An example: ~~is~~ the stated fact that dictates Spring Creek landowners form a committee and beg these water brokers for any water that might be placed in this natural channel. To hold the valley hostage, thus making people beg for recharge-water as they (the applicants) ~~to~~ hold ownership interest with no owned ownership of any delivery system (owned by Big Lost River Irrigation District) would result in irreparable harm to the large majority of people living in the Lost River valley. Recharge water has been, and should continue to be, controlled by Big Lost River Irrigation District and Basin 34's Watermaster.

Charles D. Huggins

1-18-1996

① Chairman Report

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Charles Huggins
Chairman: Recharge
Committee

JAN 29 1996

Department of Water Resources
Eastern District Office

As chairman of the Temporary Artificial Recharge Committee for Big Lost River Valley I feel it to be imperative that I write my personal observations and conclusions as to its effectiveness.

The first of the three meetings held by the committee was one of hope and promise to all in attendance. It seemed that expectations for recharge benefit ran high. All sections of water Basin 34 were divided up by areas and every committee member obligated himself to meet with the people of his area to access ideas and obtain permission to use any means available toward the goal of obtaining a significant water recharge for the entire Basin. A plan of attack was to be prepared by each committee member and cooperation of all members was the goal.

The second meeting was held with all ten committee members in attendance and, in my opinion, had little if any value toward the groups' goal because only Dave Nelson and C. P. Traugher reported any followthrough on their plan of solving the recharge problem. In these two cases, however, only one (Dave Nelson) was provided the necessary water supply to recharge his area fully. Spring Creek was chained and locked so as to restrict its flow-potential. The result of this action provided great fluctuation as to number of inches of water induced, with the net result being the streams' failure to reconnect with the river.

② Chairman Report

at its mouth. No data as to recharge sites or inches of water being delivered into recharge channels was made available. "Fumbling" replaced cooperation and not only the means, but the recharge ends desired, varied with some of the committee membership. The tone of this session was ~~that~~ some hostility prevailed with goals and the means to achieve them changing. Additional meetings were requested by a minority of members, but this interest even waned as a result of actual recharge practices and committee member cooperation. I sensed that uniform goals perished during the continuation of ~~the~~ meeting (2nd) and that each person had his own agenda. Members individually made request for water distribution but, to the best of my knowledge, little if any action by those with the power to divert water to these diversion points being requested was supported.

It is my opinion that by July of 95 the recharge committee was split widely in opinion and goal.

The original goal (basin 34 recharge) became secondary to the goals of small factions groups and in some cases even a single individual's needs.

Then came the request for a final committee report from the Department of Water Resources, and with requirements and criteria, to meet again. This third and final meeting was held with seven of the now ten member committee in attendance. Only Dave Nelson, not in attendance, provided the point of diversion and the number of inches placed back in the aquifer in his area.

(3)
Chairman
Report

The Watermaster gave verbal testimony in reference to diversion points and the number of inches that had been distributed to each point. No deduction was mentioned for the water flowing past the Arco gaging station. The figures void of documentation and verbally presented by other members inclined to report such, like the watermaster's report were not in written form, are highly suspect and lacked accurate data substantiation.

In spite of the disarray by the committee members and support elements (Big Lost River Irrigation District) the valley recharge was great. Mother Nature with her short period of high waters forced most channels of water distribution to be filled to full capacity and cooperation of all government agencies working with both public and private groups to minimize damage in the valley. Once water was placed in any channel, it has continued to a lesser degree to stay in such this season even as I write this report. Many abandoned domestic wells and natural springs once again have ample water supplies but feelings as to water and its usage is still a major issue that demands state action ~~and~~ local cooperation with continued recharge effort by all.

Charles D Huggins
Committee Motion enclosed: