

GENERAL AFFIDAVIT

RECEIVED

DEC 12 2023

IDWR/Preston

STATE OF Idaho
COUNTY OF Bear Lake

PERSONALLY came and appeared before me, the undersigned Notary, the within named Robert Boehme, who is a resident of Bear Lake County, State of Idaho, and makes this his/her statement and General Affidavit upon oath and affirmation of belief and personal knowledge that the following matters, facts and things set forth are true and correct to the best of his knowledge:

As a 69-year resident of Bear Lake County and of Thomas Fork valley, I familiar with the activities going on in the properties at the south end of the Thomas Fork creek. As a Rancher and irrigator, I have been involved irrigation practices in this part of the valley for at least 58 years. I am also currently the President of the Thomas Fork Ditch Company. Our land is north of the Thomas Fork Unit that the Fish and Wildlife Service manages. Prior to the Fish and Wildlife Service owning it I knew it as the Dwight Feller place and the Walters ranch before that.

The Thomas Fork unit that the fish and wildlife service own's is lower in elevation and has many sloughs and wetland ponds on it. The irrigation water and spring melt water flows north to south, and since the Thomas Fork Unit is one of the last properties before the creek enters into the Bear River, they have always received much of the tailwater, and spring runoff from the properties to the north. To the best of my recollection this area has always captured water when runoff was high enough to do so. Since water can be sparse some years it was a common practice to flood up these fields with runoff prior to the irrigations season. This water was also nutrient rich, so it benefited to use the water in meadows to improve growth. Since my family and I have been part of the Thomas Fork irrigation ditch company for a longtime, I am aware of the irrigation practices that occurred around us. The refuge has always tried to maximize water levels for ducks and geese. It is my understanding is this why they also allowed haying, to improve habitat for birds.

Since the refuge land was acquired in 1990's the priorities changed from grazing and haying to duck and geese management. To this end the refuge continues the practice of capturing runoff, and enhanced this where they could by improving dikes and water control structures. These lands are typically too wet to hay until mid to late August.

DATED this the 30 day of Nov, 2023 Robert Boehme Signature of Affiant

SWORN to subscribed before me, this 30 day November, 2023

Seilina Gull

NOTARY PUBLIC My Commission Expires:

June 4, 2026

SEILINA GULL
COMM. NO. 20201997
NOTARY PUBLIC
STATE OF IDAHO