

Westra, John

From: Brandi Horton [watermaster67@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, August 09, 2012 5:39 PM
To: Westra, John; Lester, Steve
Subject: East Fork Ditch.....still!

Morning!

More combative activities on the East Fork Ditch for you to know about. Kenneth Ward (one of the directors of East Fork Ditch) called me for the second time in four days, insisting that the East Fork Ditch has never before been reduced like this, and demanding to know why it has been done. I've tried to explain to him in detail both times what's going on, but I don't seem to be making any headway. I figured I'd relay today's conversation to you. He asked me how do I distinguish between Weiser River water and Lost Valley water. I explained to him that I take a look at the flows (there are no measuring devices) of the East Fork, West Fork (above Lost Creek), Middle Fork, and main Weiser River to decide how much water is available without Lost Valley. I then take a look at what's being released from the reservoir. I deliver the Lost Valley water to it's share holders and the remainder goes to the senior water users on the drainage. Currently there's not enough water in the river alone to cover all the user (precious few actually) and that is when the curtailments must be made. He then insisted that Lost Valley is the only reservoir in the state of Idaho that operates as it does. He tried to impress on me that so long as the reservoir is full at the beginning of the year, all of it's water should be delivered as if it were all the same stock. Lost Valley has A, B, and C stock...A being the oldest and therefore best, just like a priority date. When the reservoir level drops below the capacity of C stock those share holders are cut off, then the B stock when it's gone, and the last to go is A stock. Crane Creek Reservoir operates the same, and I may be mistaken but I'm pretty sure that's how most reservoirs are. At any rate, that's how it has always been here, and he's trying to tell me that a reduction to the East Fork Ditch has never been made before (at least, not this early in the year). I know this to be untrue, as I have spoken with Bosco and Jerry as previous watermasters. They both assured me that they had repeatedly year after year made reductions, and Jerry had them shut off completely 2 years running. I've done my best to leave extra water for everyone in the drainage each year if the system would tolerate it, and I'm beginning to regret being so lenient. I'm sorry to say I did lose my temper slightly with Mr. Ward in the conversation as he refused to believe the information I gave him. Upon his asking me for the fourth time why there wasn't enough water I told him that it's been 100 degrees for over a month, we had no snow last winter, and he should pick up a newspaper once in a while and realize that most of the United States is about to dry up and blow away, and we're no different. I know I shouldn't have gotten short with him, but it's difficult to maintain composure when being hounded for doing your job. Very likely you'll be hearing about this soon...

More fun with East Fork Ditch...outside our jurisdiction though. One of their stockholders is threatening to "end it one way or another" with another stock holder. Apparently Mark Briscoe isn't receiving as much water as he feels he should, and blames Rick Williams for "stealing all the water." I called Dick Thompson (president) and relayed the threats that were made. Dick went to Mr. Briscoe's diversion off the main canal and said that his allotment was being diverted at that point, which is the end of the ditch company's responsibility. I figure you'll either receive an angry phone call from Mr. Briscoe, or you'll see him in a booking photo on the news. Man it's getting tense up here!

I don't mean to keep bothering you with all our issues, but I know how much I hate being blindsided by these things, and the more information I can gather prior, the easier to handle each situation. I'm sure you feel the same!

Have a Great Day!