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WATER RESOURCES
WESTERN REGION

2020 WD61D Watermaster Journal

January 13, 2020

Delivered 2019 Watermaster report to WD61D members and IDWR representative Rob Whitney. Re-elected as WD61D Watermaster for 2020 season. Option to enlist Tony or Rusty in my absence.

January 15, 2020

Leave for school in New Mexico. Begin remote Watermaster duties.

February 20, 2020

Phone call with Travis Williams. Asks to deliver water right 61-12192 stock water later this month. Put a call in to Rusty Trail.

February 24, 2020

Phone call with Rusty Trail. The quantity of water leaving the Trail Reservoir Diversion Dam is an unofficial amount of ~0.5cfs leaking through the gate boards. Video by Rusty Trail confirms some water leaving the diversion.

No water entering Trail Reservoir. Some water entering Morrow Reservoir.

Phone call with Paul Batruel. Resistant to Travis Williams' call for water. Concerned about the off-chance water does not enter Herron Ditch in the event of runoff after gate is adjusted. Interested in the details of the water right. Assures me this has "never been done".

February 26, 2020

Phone call with Paul Batruel. I explain that he can volunteer to make the adjustment at the Morrow Reservoir Diversion head gate, or I can enlist an assistant Watermaster to make the adjustment. Paul urges me to conduct further research about the legitimacy of Travis's request.

Phone call with Rob Whitney. Rob explains Travis's stock water right 61-12192 is three years older than 61-308 storage water right. Thus, Travis does have priority over Paul. Rob sent me a video of Herron Ditch ~3cfs. Down the creek ~0.5cfs.

Phone call with Travis Williams. I explain the exchange of information that had taken course since our first phone call on February 20th. Travis was returning home from Texas and would confirm the water availability below and above the rimrock.

February 27, 2020

Phone call with Paul Batruel. Paul explains that he is setting up a meeting with the BLM and IDWR to get further clarification.

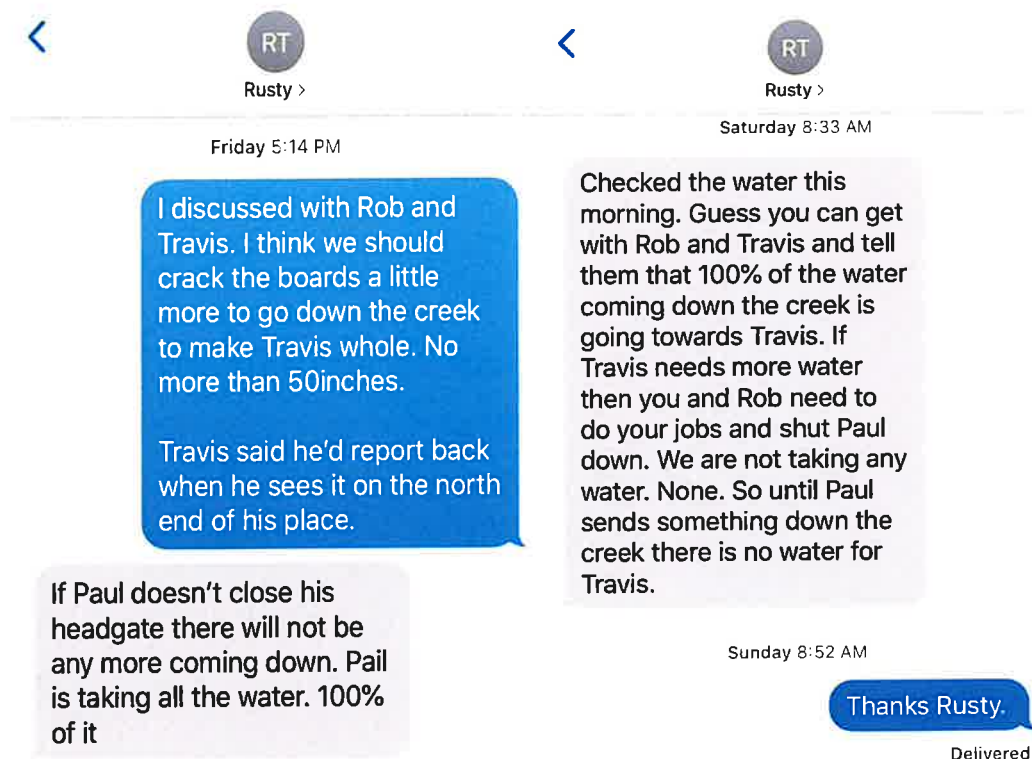
Phone call with Rob Whitney. Rob and I discuss the need for a measuring device at the top end of the diversion pond in order to conduct a water budget. The two reservoirs also need

fill gauges in order to define “full” clearly. Also discuss that what the Trail’s and Desert View have stored behind the gate prior to Travis’ call out cannot be used to satisfy the call out.

Phone call with Rusty Trail. I explain that if we do turn down Morrow Reservoir Diversion it is essential that Trail Reservoir not be taking any water. Rusty told me he’d be up there Saturday morning to shut his gate and see what water is coming into the diversion pond at the top end.

Phone call with Travis Williams. Travis explains that he did see some water at the north end of his property, likely due to springs. Travis told me to request the gate be opened further to send him water. I agree to send a text to Rusty to see if this is possible.

However, I knew there would be backlash because stored water prior to the call-out does not have to be used to satisfy the call-out. Our text conversation can be seen below.



March 2, 2020

Phone call with Rob Whitney. Rob explains that Travis William’s water right 61-12192 does not have a place of use on BLM. Rob had a meeting with Paul Batruel later that day. Rob had attached me to an email thread with Rusty about being the Assistant Watermaster. Later that day Rob explains that WR61-11447 is the stock water right associated with Travis Williams’ BLM allotment.

March 3, 2020

Through an exchange of emails Rusty is appointed assistant Watermaster of WD61D.
Emails shown below.

Wilder,

As we discussed, the WD61D water users authorized you to hire and request appointment of one assistant watermaster. Rusty Trail and Tony Ulrich were named as the two choices, unless the advisory committee approves otherwise. Based on our separate conversations with Rusty, it appears he is not interested in being appointed. This email is addressed to you and Rusty, so Rusty can decline for the record and you can request that IDWR appoint Tony.

Thank you both for your help!

Rob Whitney

It seems like both of you are wanting to pass the buck and not deal with Paul. I just said I'd like to stay out of it due to when I was water master Paul filed a tort claim against me and IDWR. If Wilder and you can't deal with Paul, what do you think his daughter's boyfriend can do? If IDWR will 100% stand behind me and be 100% positive on what they want, then I don't mind the appointment.

Rusty Trail

Rusty,

Glad to hear you are willing to assist Wilder. Your summation is mostly correct, except the part about dealing with Paul. We have been discussing the issue with Paul for a good part of the afternoon. Paul is going to reach out to you and Travis and propose ideas about how to satisfy the call for stockwater. If those discussions don't result in a remedy in the next couple days, IDWR may need to provide specific instruction(s) to the watermaster. In this case, the watermaster may need to rely on the assistant to make a delivery under his direction and consistent with IDWR instruction.

Please complete the attached oath and get it back to me or Nick, so IDWR can make the appointment.

Thanks,

Rob Whitney

Nick, Rob, and Rusty:

I, Wilder Jones, 2020 WD61D Watermaster, am appointing Rusty Trail as Assistant Watermaster during my absence for WD61D. Rusty will conduct Watermaster duties under the instruction of IDWR and myself. Rusty will be compensated for his efforts according to the WD61D budget established January 13, 2020. Please file this email.

Thank you,

Wilder Jones

March 4, 2020

Paul Batruel makes an adjustment at his head gate, forcing more water down the creek.

March 5, 2020

Rusty Trail informs me there is approximately 15 inches making it to the creek weir below the Trail Diversion gate.

March 6, 2020

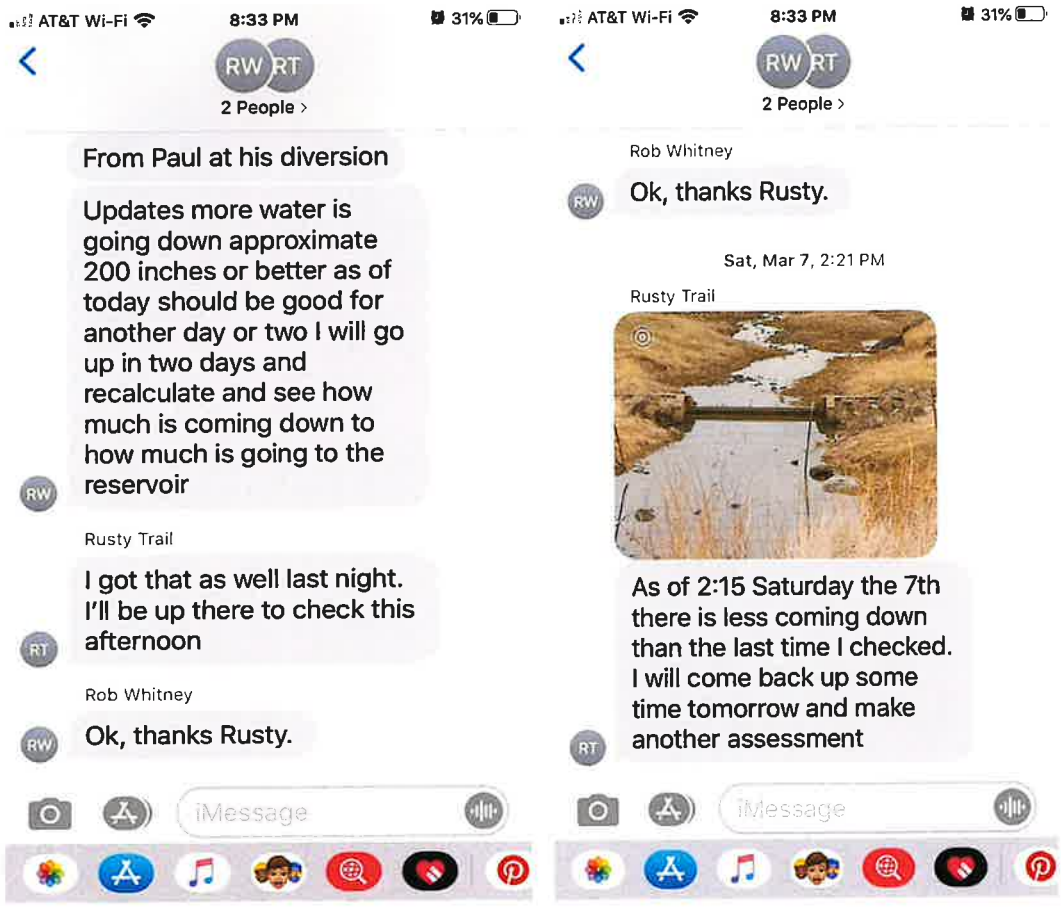
Paul Batruel makes a second adjustment, sending more water down the creek.

March 7, 2020

Video received via text of Paul standing at his diversion with “approximately 200 inches” headed down stream the day before (3/6/20).

Rusty sends picture to Rob Whitney and I at 2:15pm. No water is leaving the diversion down the creek from the Trail Reservoir Diversion gate.





March 8, 2020

As of 10:00am approximately 75-100 inches are passing the weir down creek at the Trail Diversion.

March 9, 2020

Water has still not made it to Travis Williams. Picture attached.

March 11, 2020

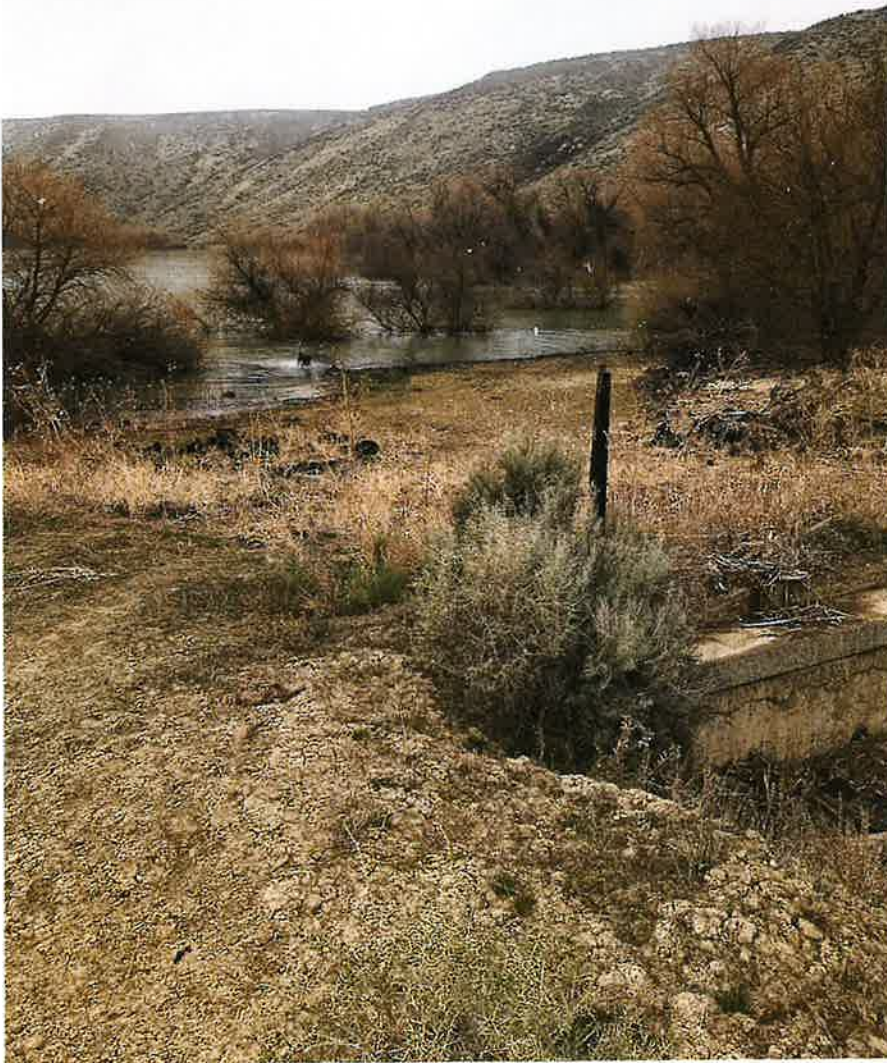
Water finally reaches Travis Williams. Picture attached.

March 23, 2020

I arrive back in Glenns Ferry due to COVID-19 school closure.

March 25, 2020

I inspect the volume of Morrow Reservoir. Above the tree line but below the spillway. Picture attached.



March 28, 2020

I inspect the flow meters of Trails and Pearson. Pictures attached.



April 6, 2020

Pearson Ranch begins irrigating.

April 8, 2020

Pearson Ranch stops irrigating due to inadequate water supply.

April 9, 2020

Adjustment at Trail Diversion gate made in order to send more water down creek to Trail Farm and Pearson Ranch. Pictures attached.





April 10, 2020

Adjustments made at Trail Diversion gate and at Morrow's head gate (Heron Ditch). Bolt cutters used to remove lock. Keys I had were outdated. Replaced with new lock. Pictures attached.



Heron Ditch Before ~ 18.9 cfs

Heron Ditch After ~ 3.85 cfs

Creek 1.4 cfs

April 11, 2020

Further adjustment onto Morrow's head gate. (Heron Ditch).

Creek 3.68 cfs

Trails 3.61 cfs

April 16, 2020

Adjustments made at Trail Diversion gate. Increase creek flow and reduce Trail Reservoir flow.

Creek Before 4.93 cfs

Creek After 5.46 cfs

Trails Before 1.38 cfs

Trails After 1.57 cfs

Pictures attached.



April 21, 2020

Rocky calls to inquire why his head gate to Trail Reservoir had been decreased. I assure him that it is not “500 inches” leaving down the creek and that I made the adjustment because Pearson ranch has had inadequate water delivery. I make a slight adjustment to send Trail Reservoir more water. Measurement to reservoir after adjustment 4.82 cfs.

June 3, 2020

Pearson pump had been cavitating. Inspect creek at the Trail Diversion. Measurement down the creek 5.19 cfs. despite adequate water leaving the diversion. Not enough water makes it past Trail's pump.

June 19, 2020

Zoom meeting with Kellie Smith to learn about Survey123

January 6, 2021

Photos of Pearson Ranch flow meter (left) and Trail's creek flow meter (right).



Summary 2020

This year, Little Canyon Creek did not experience the kind of robust water years it has in the past. Morrow's Reservoir was nearly full, but Trails Reservoir was not even close to half full. A lean water year always makes for harder delivery and tenuous relations. Having a water master operating remotely is not ideal for many reasons.

Travis Williams will likely continue to use his stock water on his BLM allotment. Delivery to his range will take at the very least 7 days after an adjustment is made at Heron Ditch diversion. The cooperation of other water users in WD61D is paramount, always, but especially in my absence.

Recapping on the events this spring; Paul Batruel was reluctant to deliver water to Travis because of his incorrect summation of the priority dates. Paul made it clear that he was not happy and that he was losing valuable water for filling his reservoir. His reluctance forced me to appoint an assistant water master because no progress was being made to deliver Travis Williams his water. Eventually Paul made several adjustments to send water down the creek. This was, however, after I appointed Rusty Trail as the assistant water master. The creek undoubtedly needs a water master present to deliver water if cooperation can not be achieved amongst water users. Paul's lack of cooperation ultimately cost the district \$500.00 because no one could be held accountable to deliver water effectively and an assistant had to be appointed. Although Rusty did not physically have to adjust head gates, he was crucial in disseminating information to myself and Rob Whitney.

The head gate at Heron Ditch was built incorrectly. The diversion to Morrow's will always take the flow from the creek's natural channel. This creates a situation where the head gate needs to be regulated seemingly constantly if water is to be conserved and delivered effectively. The investment to build this diversion was likely a substantial cost; however, the dilemmas, extra trips there, use of time and lost water will ultimately cost the district and its users more than the original investment. The Heron Ditch diversion should be fixed, and an accurate measuring device should be installed.

Being a water master and irrigator creates its own dilemmas and advantages. I would like to see every user have all the water they need, but, our district does not operate that way. Delivering water to Pearson Ranch was difficult because of the Trail's irrigating schedule and demands. Their intermittent irrigating, along with the creek's intermittent reduction of flow, makes it very difficult to conserve water yet deliver it to Pearson Ranch. I never asked the Trails to turn off for me to irrigate even though Pearson Ranch has priority. The adjustments I made in order to circumvent them having to turn off and me waiting for more water to arrive could be seen as an abuse of water master privilege. However, I assure you that delivering water down this creek is a lot easier in theory than it is in practice. If Travis Williams irrigates his land in the future along with Trail's and Pearson it will require a large head of water that may leave Morrow's and Trails Reservoir short of water.

It should be noted that as water master I am not responsible for removing beavers or beaver dams from the creek. I have received multiple calls both this year and last year asking me

to remove dams in Glenns Ferry. This is not the responsibility of the water master. The water master delivers water based on priority dates. Beavers are a critical component of watersheds, and I am the last person that will be tampering with their necessary work.

Western Construction company used the creek at Dan Hall's farm headquarters. It did not affect anyone's water availability because it was after October 7th.

Another year has passed without enough progress being made on updating measuring devices.

- The head of the diversion at Trails needs a weir in order to conduct a water budget.
- Each reservoir needs a fill gauge in order to objectively determine the reservoirs volume rather than subjectively interpret its volume.
- Trails two-step weir should be turned into an accurate Cipolletti weir.
- The creek weir needs an even stilling pool and adjusted weir edge.
- Heron Ditch should have a weir on King Hill Rd.

I am thankful for having the opportunity to serve WD61D and look forward to more abundant water years.

Wilder Jones

1/11/2021