

## Graves, Lori

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**From:** Lester, Steve  
**Sent:** Friday, May 03, 2002 3:19 PM  
**To:** Graves, Lori  
**Cc:** Spackman, Gary  
**Subject:** Little Weiser Water District

**Importance:** High

Lori:

I got a call today from Roy Schwenkfelder, who irrigates land in the lower end of 67A. He talked about a perennial problem which he says is this: users on upper end of district have been spreading water for many years, causing earlier calls for reservoir water. Some users on lower end cannot get enough of their water for successful irrigation. That is why Roy & others have turned to supplemental wells etc. He mentioned that Isaac Ward of reservoir board fame can't get enough of his storage water to his lower end place so has purchased some Lost Valley shares instead.

Approval of the increased storage permit for the reservoir is fine, Roy said. But his sense is that upper end users are going to resist paying for adding storage when they get plenty of water and irrigate far more acres than authorized, shorting the lower end folks. Roy said this has been happening ever since the reservoir was built in the 1930s.

He is very frustrated and losing big dollars, he said. When he complains about it during the height of the season, nothing happens or it is too late to do anything about it. He is looking for help from IDWR but is also worried about being a "trouble maker."

I probably should have just given you the call since I am more or less out of the 67A picture ... but sometimes it doesn't work out so neatly, I guess. We discussed the problems of large scale enforcement of water rights (he said the guilty parties are not just 1 or 2 irrigators), the limits of watermaster control over how water is used, the difficulty of an NOV approach on such a big scale etc.

Roy said he intended to have Limbaugh come and talk to 67A while he was 65 watermaster but never pulled it off. He wondered if District 65 - watermaster &/or advisory board - might offer some ideas about tackling this problem. Roy also wondered what we could do, if anything. I told him I would pass it on to you for discussion with Gary. I suggested 67A advisory committee, chairman and maybe reservoir board might want to throw in together and approach the department with a request for help.

Please visit with Gary and plan for one/both of you to call Roy at 208-257-3591 to follow up with this depending on what Gary thinks. This sounds big if Roy is even partly accurate in his story. What he said does sound likely. I recall the prevailing attitude of "we've got plenty, everything is reservoir water once we turn it on." That's fine as long as everyone has enough water but the lower end folks have complained in one way or another over the years about being on the short end of the stick. Roy seems to think the watermaster gets his advice from the upper end point of view and does not understand the lower end situation. Roy summarized it this way: "we (lower folks) have plenty of shares but can't drag the water through the system because the upper enders are spreading it all over the place."

Well, there you have it. Good luck.

Steve