

**WATER DISTRICT NO. 65**

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July 11, 1996

Mr. Bob Sutter  
Idaho Department of Water Resources  
1301 N. Orchard  
Boise, Idaho 83706

Dear Bob:

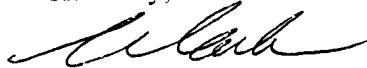
This correspondence is to suggest an alternative to the results of our July 3, 1996, meeting with representatives from your office, Idaho Power Company and the Bureau of Reclamation to set preliminary plans to account for the summer release of approximately 72,500 acre feet of storage water from Cascade, Deadwood and the Payette Lakes rented out of basin from our rental pool. It was brought out in our meeting that in delivering storage water during 1995, the river was operated at an average flow of 212 cfs at Letha, resulting in an average charge to irrigators of 77 cfs per day as operational loss (the amount of flow over the 135 cfs operational bypass flow at Letha). You stated that it was reasonable to assume that during 1996, the river would be operated in a similar fashion, and that we should charge any flows over 212 cfs, as calculated at Letha, to the fish flows from the rental pool. Therefore, if storage water rented out of basin passes through Letha for 45 days this summer, approximately 6,860 acre feet will be charged to irrigators as additional operational loss, over and above the traditional 135 cfs operational bypass flow, with the flows over 212 cfs charged to the rental pool as out of basin fish flows.

I have some concerns about charging irrigator's space for this additional operational bypass flow when the fish water passes Letha, since you suggested using last year as a benchmark for accounting purposes and last year was my first year as Watermaster. I believe I deserve more time to learn how the river operates in order to prove that the river can and will be operated with even more efficiency in the future. Another factor that should be considered in this argument is the addition of new measuring devices on the river, adding to the operational efficiency of the Payette River below Black Canyon Dam. Finally, during September of last year, the river was not allowed to drop below 500 cfs at Emmett. Several of the companies, as well as the USBR, donated stored water to maintain the Emmett flow at 500 cfs. This "donated" flow was simply charged as operational loss at Letha, artificially raising the average flow at Letha during September of 1995.

I would like to suggest that we reassess the average operational flow at Letha again this fall, after the September and October irrigation deliveries when no fish water will be released, in order that we may compute a more accurate operational flow at Letha than the 1995 average. Due to the abundant water year we are experiencing, I believe it would be prudent to wait until the end of the 1996 water year to account for these flows, as we have an excellent opportunity to gather additional data at Letha this fall.

If you have any questions or comments, please give me a call as soon as possible, in order that we may come to an agreement as to how the rental pool summer releases will be accounted for this year.

Sincerely,



Mark Limbaugh, Watermaster

cc: Dave Tuthill, IDWR  
Wilbur "Brick" Andrew, WD65 Chairman  
✓WD65 Advisory Board  
Rick Wells, USBR  
Sheryl Howe, IDWR  
Tim Brewer, Idaho Power Co.  
Nengjin Liu, Idaho Power Co.