

May 9, 2005

State of Idaho Dept of Water Resources
Allen Merritt, PE
1341 Fillmore St, Suite 200
Twin Falls, ID 83301-3380

Dear Mr. Merritt,

Thank you for your letter dated May 4. I appreciate your efforts to improve the management of the water in Clear Creek and Raft River, and for your timely communication with Rick Neff. His report to you "that since April 16 he had been delivering water as requested down to the Warr property..." obviously differs from my first-hand observations which I reported to you as summarized below:

When I attended your meeting on April 26 in Malta, I observed that the Raft River was flowing at one of the highest levels I have ever seen except for the flood years. When I learned that the water master would not let my people use the water I made a special trip to visit with Rick Neff at his place of business to learn why. He told me that the water needed to flow down the river for a few more days. I responded by telling him that I observed 30 cfs or more going to waste past the last point of diversion. He then told me that if he let the farmers upstream have water there might not be enough for the downstream users. I asked him why the downstream farmers were not using the water when there was so much going to waste. He then explained how the electric power billing works, and that the downstream users were going to wait until after the first of the month before they would turn on their pumps. He also told me that he thought the upstream farmers would want to do likewise.

I told Rick that it is very wrong to waste water when farmers upstream are coaxing him for their water, especially in a critical water area. After I had spent an hour or so arguing with him I drove over to speak with Nolan Branch (chairman of the advisory committee). Nolan had essentially the same view as Rick.

Again, thank you for your help.

Sincerely,



Reid S. Stewart