



State of Idaho
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

1301 North Orchard Street, Statehouse Mail, Boise, Idaho 83720 - (208) 327-7900

CECIL D. ANDRUS

GOVERNOR

R. KEITH HIGGINSON

DIRECTOR

September 7, 1989

The Honorable Steve Symms
United States Senator
482 C Street, #305
Idaho Falls, ID 83401

Dear Senator:

Thank you for sending me a copy of the letter you received from Mr. C. P. Hamilton of Arco, Idaho relative to the water supply situation in the Lost River Valley area. He is one of many of the local residents from whom we have heard this last year who have expressed concerns over the need to redrill or deepen existing domestic wells in the area from Moore to Arco. His problem is caused, in part, by the drought conditions which have existed in the valley during the last three summer seasons. That condition is aggravated by the pumping of water for irrigation purposes throughout the valley.

Mr. Hamilton describes a meeting which we held in Moore for the purpose of providing opportunity for anyone to tell us what problems they were experiencing and to suggest solutions. If Mr. Hamilton was present he did not make that fact known by signing the attendance sheet on which we asked everyone to register and on which he could have indicated a desire to make a statement. The people who spoke at the meeting were not picked by me but were called from those who indicated a desire to be heard when they signed in. At the end of the meeting I asked several times if there were any present who wanted to say something who had not had the opportunity. I continued this request until no more volunteered. Only a very few people left early. Mr. Hamilton may have been one who did. I am sorry that Mr. Hamilton may have felt that we used "hand picked speakers" but that is simply not true. Also the meeting was announced as starting at 7:30 p.m. and we were within 2 or 3 minutes of that time when I began.

It is obvious that Mr. Hamilton is looking for something, but I fail to see what his needs are. If he is asking for public funds to assist him in redrilling his well to follow the declining water table because of the drought then perhaps you can provide a federal subsidy of some kind.

With regard to the water master and the canal ditch riders. It is not required of them to actually "ride along the canals". They visit the various river diversion points and canal headgates to assure that the available water supply is being delivered in accordance with existing water rights. The water master also controls the release and delivery of storage water from the Mackay reservoir. I am not surprised that Mr. Hamilton has not seen them riding along the canal through his property.

The Honorable Steve Symms
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September 7, 1989

I have organized a representative committee from the area with whom I am meeting to explore options for water management which will result in conjunctive use of both surface and ground water. There is adequate water available for all present and projected future needs. However, the relationship of the surface and ground water of the valley is such that use of one affects the other and a conjunctive management scheme must be developed to assure that rights and interests are protected. Use of the shallow ground water by domestic wells is part of the concern. Between Moore and Arco the water table declines sharply at times as it dips to join the Snake Plain aquifer. In dry years the dip is steeper thus causing a lowering of water levels in shallow wells. If we had shut off all the irrigation pumps this last year, that action would not have prevented the domestic wells from going dry.

We are working on the matter and only hope that concerned people like Mr. Hamilton will assist us in arriving at an acceptable solution.

Sincerely,



R. KEITH HIGGINSON
Director

RKH:dc

United States Senate

August 25, 1989

Department of Water Resources
1301 N. Orchard
Statehouse Mail
Boise, Idaho 83720

ATTN: Keith Higginson, Director

Our previous inquiry to I.F. office on July 10 has not been
To be fully responsive to my constituents' answered.
inquiries and concerns, the attached is
referred to you for such consideration and
action as may be warranted.

A full and timely report, in duplicate,
should be sent to me at the address checked
below. The outside envelope only should
be marked ATTENTION: THELMA WELKER.

Your prompt attention to this is appreciated.



STEVE SYMMS
United States Senator

REPLY TO:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Boise Office	Lewiston Office	Moscow Office	Coeur d'Alene Office
Box 1190	301 D Street #103	105 Federal Building	305 Federal Building
Boise 83701	Lewiston 83501	Moscow 83843	Coeur d'Alene 83814
(208) 334-1776	(208) 743-1492	(208) 882-5560	(208) 664-5490
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Idaho Falls Office	Pocatello Office	Twin Falls Office	
482 C Street #305	207 Federal Building	401 2nd St. N. #106	
Idaho Falls 83401	Pocatello 83201	Twin Falls 83301	
(208) 522-9779	(208) 236-6775	(208) 734-2515	

August 17, 1989
arco, Idaho 83213

AUG 22 1989

The Hon. Steve Symms:
482 Constitution Way
Id. Falls Id. 83402

RECEIVED
SEP 01 1989

Dear Sir;

The Water Resources Department has completely ignored our telephone calls and our correspondence. However, The Head of The Department got the message and they held a meeting at The L. D. S. Stake Church which turned out to be, or was a complete farce. The meeting was supposed to be at 7:00 P.M. but by the time they got there picked local speakers brain washed, the meeting didn't start until close to 9:00.

All they did was try to discourage the honest citizens from further action. The act was not even convincing, and most of the over 200 got up, and walked out. They treated us like dumb cattle. I was one of the first.

By the way, you only saw one of my editorials, I had five.

Everyone I talked to lately said

The time. The irrigation pumps belong to the church, and some of the domestic well owners do too.

They are all upset over us peons that are trying to get enough water to flush our toilets, have drinking water, and water for our animals. (Gardens too!)

Almost all had to take money out of their savings, or get loans to pay for their wells at an average of $\$3,000^{00}$ per.

It will be interesting to see what they have to tell you. If they do.

It boils down to one thing. The Water Resources Dept is all political and then appointed jobs. The Water Master, and the so-called ditch riders. I have never seen one. The Arco Canal runs right thru our property. so if there is a ditch rider he is invisible.

In talking to the older (over 70), citizens, I find that they all concur with the facts that Water Masters, and ditch riders for this district don't have to take a test to qualify and most were

JUL 10 1989

7-6-89

Dear Sirs:

Thanks you again for your help in
getting Mary's SSI making her eligible for medicare.

She has had an operation on her hands and doing
all right. Next they will try to fix her neck bones.

Now a bunch of us have water problems. Most
of us can not move so it is drill a deeper well or haul
water.

Please see if some of your lawyer friends have some
ideas

C Hamilton

The Honorable Steve Symmes;

7-6-89

JUL 10 1989

WHAT A DIRTY SHAME!

ABOUT TWO MONTHS AGO, MRS ^{DAVID} DAVE BLEAK WROTE

A STORY ABOUT THE LACK OF CONCERN OF THE "LOST

RIVER IRRIGATION DISTRICT. WATER MASTER AND DITCH RIDER,
IN THE "ARCO ADVERTISER"

THE ARTICLE MADE A LOT OF SENSE TO ME, AND

OTHERS FROM MOORE, ID. TO ARCO ID., SO I DECIDED TO

CHECK ON OTHER FAMILIES WHO HAVE HAD TO SPEND A

LARGE SUM OF MONEY TO HAVE THEIR DOMESTIC WELLS

DRILLED DEEPER. MOST HAD TO HAVE NEW WELLS, DUE

TO THE OLD CASINGS RUSTY, AND BRITTLE, COULD NOT BE USED.

SOME HAD TO BUY NEW PUMPS, AND RE-PLUMB THEIR

SYSTEMS, WHICH WAS EXPENSIVE TOO, DUE TO MANY TRIPS

TO TOWNS THAT HAVE THE HARDWARE, AND PUMPS.

AS I DROVE THROUGH THE COUNTRY SIDE FROM

THE MOORE DIVERSION TO ARCO, I NOTICED THE TREES

THAT ARE DEAD, AND DYING DUE TO THE LACK OF

GROUND WATER ALONG THE DRY RIVER BED, & DRY CANALS.

WE ALSO NOTICED THAT HARDLY ANY DITCH WATER WAS

BEING USED FOR FLOOD IRRIGATION. NO SIBIRIAN ETC

THE IRRIGATION WELLS ARE PUMPING THE WATER INTO THE CANALS. SOME OF THE PUMPS ARE NOT PUMPING AT FULL CAPACITY DUE TO THE LOW GROUND WATER LEVEL. THEY ARE PUMPING OUR DOMESTIC WELLS DRY. THIS HAS TO STOP.

THE WATER IS RUNNING FULL DOWN THE ARCO CANAL, THEN UNDER THE HIGHWAY ON THE OTHER SIDE OF BUTTE CITY, THEN OUT ON THE DESERT WHERE IT DISAPATES, EVAPORATES, AND THAT EXCESS AMOUNT RUNS BACK INTO THE BIG LOST RIVER WHERE IT IS LOST FOR OUR USE.

DOES ANY ONE KNOW WHAT CAN BE DONE TO REMEDY THE OUTLANDISH DISCRIMINATION? THE GOOD CITIZENS WHO DEPEND ON OUR DOMESTIC WATER FOR DRINKING WATER, TAKING BATHS, AND SHOWERS, WATERING, OUR ANIMALS, AND WATERING OUR GARDENS, SO WE CAN RAISE SOME GOOD FOOD?

Respectfully C. P. Hamilton

C. P. HAMILTON
ROUTE 1 BOX 476
ARCO, IDAHO 83213

208-527-3495