

Sept. 19, 1989

Dear Keith,

Others have voiced their opinion to you concerning the water situation in the Lost River Valley, so I am also. I served as a director on the Big Lost River Irrigation District for eighteen Years. I was not re-elected last December and I have not been sorry because of all of the contention. A good number of the people who are not happy with water going out on the flat have wells and can pump to irrigate their farms. One of the most vocal ones sold his well to someone out on the flat several years ago and now in the drouth years do~~es~~ not have enough water.

One farmer in the valley complains that he had to let part of his farm lay idle because of the shortage of water, But said he did not see any acres on the flat idle. In my opinion he could have pumped and watered all of his farm.

If some of the well are shut off or restricted, I do not think that would make any more decreed or storage water available to any others, but would further hurt the economy of the valley by reducing their means to raise a crop.

The irrigation wells likely have some effect on the underground water, but I do not think it is the cause of the lowered water table. In other dry cycles before there were wells the water table went down. According to the crostwaite Studies a high percent of the water goes out of the valley underground all of the time.

I live a mile south of Moore, we had to dig a new house well a year ago. At that time it was 45 feet to water, this spring it had risen to 37 feet now it is at 50 feet. Four miles south of where I live at Merlin Phillips it is 20 feet to water. Three miles east of Leslie it is 17 feet to water. Between Leslie and Mackay at Cleon Landon's place it is 8 feet to water. There have been a lot of wells deepened. My water supply and crops raised have been poor for two years because of the drouth, our valley has a history of having dry cycles.

If we did not have any irrigation wells in the valley it would be a desolate place now.

I was not able to attend the meeting at the Moore Church held about a moth ago. I read in the newspaper there had been a meeting in Arco recently. I hope the comittee to try and decide how to make changes in water management is not made up of very many of the contentious group.

If the water we do have was put in the river for a minimum stream flow I doubt that it would have reached the rising water in the river west of Arco and it would do no good at all except to look at.

I hope that the problems can be worked out without any major changes. All we need is an end to the dry cycle, which will come sooner or later. I am confident that it will not always be dry.

Respectfully
James S. Babcock

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