

NOV 25 2005

Department of Water Resources

Morgan Creek Water District 72 F
HC 82 Box 4023 Challis, Idaho 83226

November 21, 2005

Karl J. Dreher
Idaho Department of Water Resources
322 E Front St
PO Box 83720
Boise, Idaho 83720-0098

Dear Karl,

On behalf of the Morgan Creek Water District 72 F I would like to offer the following comments relative to the "super" watermaster for the Salmon River Basin. Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments. Ours follows:

- 1) It is our understanding of the agreement reached between IWDR and the FS that there needs to be a "super" watermaster to gather the records of water use, etc. in the Salmon River Basin. Our concern lies in what seems to be the proposal from your office. That proposal calls for several deputy watermasters to oversee the various sub basins in addition to the one overall watermaster. This effectively adds another layer of government and additional costs to the water user. It is our belief that our current water masters and those yet to be appointed can collect the required data and report it to the "super" watermaster. This process has been on going in the active water districts in the area for years, the only change being we will report to someone here rather than to Twin Falls or Boise.
- 2) Another concern deals with the method(s) used to collect the necessary data. Technology is great, but to require technology for technology sake only adds to the cost of doing business for the water user. Current methods of measuring water have sufficed for years and until the cost of doing business by remote satellite or other such forms of remote reading compares with the hiring of local watermasters to collect the data we encourage the full use of the later.
- 3) A number of water right holders do not lie in an organized water district. We would encourage the expedient formation of new water districts in those areas that petition to do so such as the East Fork and Stanley Basin. In the formation of these districts we would encourage you to look beyond the "normal" boundary of a drainage when forming a water district. Much as our petition to expand the boundary of Water

District 72 F dated May, 2005 these districts should include all the logical water users in an area rather than just those in a drainage such as Morgan Creek or Challis Creek or Garden Creek. This would lessen the total cost to the water users in the district and would minimize the number of water district reports and oversight duties for the "super" watermaster.

- 4) As mentioned above, there are several water right holders who are not in an organized water district. In most instances they do not have a "lockable" measuring device and a phase-in period needs to be in place to bring everyone and everything into compliance. This should not be forever, but 2-3 years would seem reasonable.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment. We have been and plan to continue to be active in the steering committee charged with developing resolutions for the new Salmon River Basin Water District.

Sincerely,

James N. Hawkins, President
Morgan Creek Water District 72 F