

February 27, 2006

La Mar & Mona Cockrell  
RT 1 Box 9  
Salmon ID 83467

Dear La Mar & Mona,

In recent years the Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) has received third party inquiries and complaints regarding the diversion of water after the irrigation season within several water districts in the Upper Salmon River Basin. To alleviate the possibility of future complaints and to comply with Idaho water law, water district water masters need to assure that diversions are closed at the end of the irrigation season.

Most watermasters in the state are appointed for a term of service that extends until the end of the irrigation season. Some watermasters are appointed on a year-round basis depending on resolutions adopted by the water district. While some districts may adopt resolutions that limit the end of a watermaster's term of service or salary at a date prior to the end of the official irrigation season, IDWR expects water districts to provide sufficient budgets for watermaster's to properly control diversions through the end of the irrigation season. Late season diversions must be regulated to ensure that rates of diversion do not exceed the amounts authorized by water rights. Watermasters should also keep records of late season diversions and include them in the daily logbooks and annual reports sent to IDWR.

IDWR asks that this issue be considered at upcoming annual water district meetings. Districts should consider adequate budgets so that watermasters can record, regulate and control diversions through the end of the irrigation season. Budgets may already be sufficient in those districts that employ watermasters year-round or through the end of the irrigation season. A map showing the standard irrigation seasons in Idaho is attached to this letter for reference. Please note that some irrigation rights may have seasons of use that vary from the standard seasons depicted on the enclosed map.

Please contact me at the above location or phone number if you have questions or need assistance concerning this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Luke".

Tim Luke  
Water Distribution Section

Cc: Bob Foster, IDWR Field Office, Salmon  
IDWR Eastern & Southern Regions

Attachment: Irrigation Season of use map