

Luke, Tim

From: Shelley Lish [lishshel@isu.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2009 10:01 AM
To: Luke, Tim
Subject: Re: Portneuf River district

Thank you for your response. I want to join the majority in saying the proposed new district is, in my opinion, too big. I realize the majority of us are small water users, which makes your job harder, I'm sure. You are dealing with little water and many people.

As you know, Rapid Creek is already a separate water district also, so perhaps reactivating the Rapid Creek district, along with reactivating the Marsh Creek district would help solve some of the problems. I would also prefer a new district stay within the confines of Marsh Valley.

Another alternative suggestion is to reactivate the Marsh Creek district, expanding it to include all tributaries like Goodneuf, Bell Marsh, Walker Creek etc. on the west side of the valley to where it dumps into the Portneuf near Inkom. Then expand the Rapid Creek district to include the Portneuf River and tributaries from McCammon to Inkom, including Indian Creek. I believe that would be more manageable. I think our area needs to stay small since there are so many people involved, and really no huge acreages like there are in other parts of the state where they have thousand acre farms, and big water districts.

Thanks for your time and effort,

Shelley Lish

5/20/2009

Luke, Tim

From: Luke, Tim
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2009 12:01 PM
To: 'Shelley Lish'
Subject: RE: Portneuf River district

Thank you for your comments.

For clarification, Marsh Creek is already a separate water district but it unfortunately has been inactive for many years. IDWR did not propose putting Marsh Creek in the water district that we proposed and discussed last week because we were also concerned that it may make the district too big - so I think we may be in agreement on that issue. We also agree that Marsh Creek does need to become active again but we can do that on a more informal basis since a district was once created for that drainage. Nothing more formal needs to be done there in terms of creating a district unless we want to propose consolidating that district with Garden Creek and Birch Creeks which are currently separate districts but we have not discussed that as an option. We would like to start working with the users on Marsh Creek to reactivate the district after formalizing the order to create the other district. So as a result, the area that we did propose to include in a district last week at the hearing is the Portneuf River from roughly McCammon (downstream of Goodeneough Ditch and Harkness Creek) to the boundary of Fort Hall reservation (near Chubbuck), including tributaries except Pocatello Creek. That area has about 500 water rights, but about 70 to 75 percent of those are domestic and stock water rights, and/or a combination of those uses with irrigation of 5 acres or less. Although that area may seem fairly large geographically, it is smaller than many other districts in the state both geographically and in terms of the number of water rights. It is also larger than some others - I would probably view it as medium size district relative to other areas or districts.

Thanks again for your comments - I view your comments as useful input towards the process or reactivating the Marsh Creek water district. Again, part of the reason for proposing the other district was due to complaints and delivery calls on several of the tribs in that area, as well as complaints or suggestions about unauthorized pumps in the Portneuf River. I have not been aware of complaints on Marsh Creek myself although I suspect there are some problems as your message seems to indicate. I did hold a public meeting in Arimo about ten years ago regarding re-activation of the Marsh Creek district because Birch Creek users had petitioned for a separate district. Many Marsh Creek water users turned out and voiced opposition to the proposal. We did not pursue activation at that time because the Marsh Creek rights had not yet been decreed in the Snake River Basin Adjudication. However, those rights have since been decreed and we agree it is time for the district to become active again - that will be a goal over the coming year.

Regards,

Tim Luke
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Boise, ID 83720-0098
208-287-4959

From: Shelley Lish [mailto:lishshel@isu.edu]
Sent: Sunday, May 17, 2009 7:05 PM
To: Luke, Tim
Subject: Portneuf River district

Dear Mr. Luke,

I am strenuously opposed to the proposed new water district boundaries in the McCammon to Fort Hall proposal. It would make much more sense to make a new district to include Marsh Creek since it is a major tributary to the Portneuf River. My proposal is for the new district to run from Arimo (including the Marsh Creek) to Indian Creek. Pocatello and Fort Hall could be a separate district.

5/18/2009

There are 2 bigger users that have water rights, and are using both the Marsh Creek and the Portneuf River. They are Little Creek Ranches and Henderson Ranches. It does not make sense that they are regulated in one place and not the other. They both have shares in the McCammon Ditch.

I believe that the only reason the district that Steve Hebdon oversees seems to work is because the majority of right holders belong to one of several "canal companies". Each of which hires their own ditch rider. We do not have canal companies in the area you are proposing. It would take several people to oversee the many creeks in our area, many of which are not shown on the map your department sent each of us. That is one major reason the area you are proposing is way too large.

I agree that there needs to be some control, but what you are proposing is, in my opinion, unreasonable and does nothing about the many unregulated, and a few illegal pumps in one of the major tributaries, the Marsh Creek.

We are all aware of Pocatello's problems with having low water in the Portneuf, and of Roger Chase's attempt to buy as much water as he can. We do not want to get tied into their mess. After all, the water rights are intended for irrigating our land and in turn replenishing our aquifer, not to flush Pocatello's waste.

Please consider cutting the size of the proposed district, and including Marsh Creek.

Thank you,
Shelley Lish