Office of the

UPPER BIG WOOD RIVER WATER USERS ASSOCIATION

HAILEY, IDAHO, JANUARY 22nd, 1927.

TO ALL WATER USERS OF UPPER BIG WOOD RIVER:

A most serious situation confronts the Upper Wood River Valley, in regard to the preservation of our pioneer water rights.

The Big Wood Canal Company, a Crevy Agricultural Company of Lincoln and Gooding Counties, has apparently adopted a policy which, if permitted to continue, may jeopardize the pioneer water rights of the water users of the Upper Big Wood River Valley, as guaranteed them under the Constitution of the State of Idaho.

It seems to be their intention but what the Big Wood River Water Users Association should be made to stand guard and protect the rights of the water users of this valley, but if accomplished it must have the hearty and unqualified support of every user of the water of Big Wood River. Our point of diversion is above the Shoshone Crossing.

It is believed by the board of directors of the Association that there is a considerable number of the water users who do not understand, but what the Association is, why it was formed and what it stands for, and that reason this circular is being sent to each water user and we urge you to carefully consider the matter.

In the month of June, 1919, a serious water shortage occurred, and the Big Wood River Water Users Association was then formed with H. B. French as president, and J. J. Sheehan as secretary, as a means of securing action. Much voluntary service was rendered and much good accomplished, but it became evident that a strong attempt should be made to enlist the whole community in behalf of the protection of our rights and the hazards of burning crops in July and August, and in January, 1920, the initial organization was merged in the "Wood River Valley Water Users Protective Association" with Mr. French as president and E. P. Armstrong as secretary. This latter association functioned during the distressful season of 1920.

During the year 1920, the so-called "By-Pass Canal" was constructed for the purpose of conserving water which naturally was lost to the stream by sinking in the gravel below the Glenn bridge. When the "By-Pass" was completed it was determined, after careful investigations by competent engineers, that there had been a saving or reclamation of 900 inches, by reason of the construction and diversion of water through the "By-Pass" during the low water season and winter months.

The principal cost of the construction of the "By-Pass" was financed by the Idaho Irrigation Company. After it was completed the construction of the "By-Pass" had resulted in the development of a valuable water right, it became necessary to have some legal organization to take title to and hold a portion of the water right so developed, consequently, on the 22nd day of March, 1922, a certificate of incorporation was duly issued to "The Upper Wood River Water Users Protective Association", that being the organization which is in existence now and for whose support we are now asking.

After considerable negotiation it was decided that the said 900 inches of reclaimed water should be divided as follows: Upper Big Wood River Water Users Association, 550 inches; Mutual Wood River Water Users Association (association of decedents below Magic Dam), 175.6 inches, and the Big Wood Canal Company, 163.8 inches, except that all said water during the winter months is to be stored in the Magic Reservoir.

Thereafter in the month of August, 1922, a decree was entered in the District Court of Lincoln County, confirming the said water right and the apportionment aforesaid, and decreeing that said developed water is the sole and exclusive property of the said parties, regardless of the date of appropriation. So you will see that this association is the owner of a prior right to 966 inches, which is under the control of the board of directors, and is a most valuable right, probably worth $250,000.00.

By consent of the board this 966 inches has, in the past, been given over to the watermaster, to be used with the consent of the board of directors. The total amount of our portion of said expense was placed on the county assessment roll, under certificate of the watermaster and collected from the users as ordinary costs of distribution are collected, thus every water user paid a just proportion of said costs.

The county collecting the money and turning it over to the association. A few members of the association had paid their assessments and these were reimbursed from the money received from the county.

A number of attempts to raise money to pay our portion of the cost of the construction of the "By-Pass" were found impracticable, raise sufficient money to meet our expenses, though the total cost of the \"By-Pass\" was approximately $22,000.00. It was found in our assessment roll, under certificate of the watermaster and collected from the users as ordinary costs of distribution are collected, thus every water user paid a just proportion of said costs.

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After it was decided to have our share of the cost of the "By-Pass" assessed aforesaid, on the 6th day of September, 1922, the board of directors decided that all of the users in District 7 B (Upper Big Wood River) should automatically become members of the association and paid the following to the user:

"That all water users in said district are hereby declared full members of this association with all the rights and privileges accruing to membership, as to vote for all directors and otherwise exercise their proper franchise in the conduct of the business of the association.

We ask you, as a member of this association, whether you are qualified to appraise yourself of the benefits of such membership, and of said "By-Pass" water, is up to you."

As stated above, this association is the owner of a very valuable water right, and if properly supported, cannot help but render most valuable assistance in solving some of the water problems that confront us, and in conserving and protecting our pioneer water rights.

As before stated, the board of directors must have your whole-hearted and united support, or the association, will be in vain, and will not accomplish anything.

It is proposed to call a meeting of the association in the near future, for the purpose of adopting and permanent constitution and By-laws to meet changed conditions brought about by the resolution of September 19th, 1922, making all users members of the association, and when you receive a notice of such meeting will you not make every effort to be present either in person or by proxy? A majority of such meeting will you not make every effort to be present either in person or by proxy?