

**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 Carey Act company of Lincoln and Gooding counties, has apparently adopted a policy which, if permitted to continue, may jeopardize the pioneer rights of the water users of the Upper Big Wood River Valley, as guaranteed them under the Constitution of the State of Idaho.

There seems to be no question but what the Upper Big Wood River Water Users Association is the organization best equipped to guard and protect the rights of the water users of this valley, but to be successful it must have the hearty and unqualified support of every user of the water of Big Wood River, whose point of diversion is above the Stanton 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 just what the association is, why it was formed and what it stands for, and for that reason this circular is being sent to each water user and we urgently invite your most careful consideration of the same.

In the month of June, 1919, a serious water shortage impended and the Big Wood River Water Users Association was formed with R. B. French as president, and Chas. Sheehan as secretary, as a nucleus for arousing 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 gravels 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 determined that the construction of the "By-Pass" had resulted in the development of a valuable water right, it became necessary to have some legal organization, duly incorporated, 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 Big Wood River Water Users 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, 561.6 inches; Mutual Wood River Water Users Association, (association of decreed users below Magic dam), 174.6 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 561 inches, which is under the control of the board of directors, and is a most valuable right, probably worth \$25,000.00. By consent of the board this 561 inches has, in the past, been given over to the watermaster, to be by him distributed where it would do the most good to the greatest number, and with its use many thousands of dollars worth of crops have been saved to the farmers of this valley.

A number of attempts to raise money to pay our proportion of the cost of the construction of the "By-Pass" were made, but it was found impracticable to raise sufficient funds by assessment, so with the consent of the Board of County Commissioners, 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 various water users in the same proportion as ordinary costs of distribution are collected, thus every water user paid a just proportion of said cost. 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 re-imbursed from the money received from the county.

After it was decided to have our share of the cost of the "By-Pass" assessed as aforesaid, on the 16th 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 passed the following resolution: "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.

So Mr. Water User, you will see that you ARE a member of this association and whether you desire to avail yourself of the benefits of such membership, and of said "By-Pass" water, is up to you.

As shown 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 heretofore intimated, the board of directors must have your whole-hearted and united support, otherwise their efforts, and the efforts of this 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 necessary amendments to the charter and by-laws to meet changed conditions brought about by the resolution of September 16th, 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, and help us make this association a power for good in the Wood River Valley?

By order of the Board of Directors,
UPPER BIG WOOD RIVER WATER USERS ASSOCIATION,
By: D. J. HOWES, President.
T. J. KLINGLER, Secretary.