

BLUE MOUNTAIN OPERATING CONCERNS

MARCH 13, 2000 ANNUAL MEETING

We discussed with them the possibility of making the system inactive because there is really not much that the commissioner does and there is not much of a report prepared that really gives any information worth the effort. We thought that perhaps the water users could do the job more cheaply if they just hired a water master themselves. At first the idea seemed to be reasonable to them but as they talked they became more convinced that they needed to have a commissioner and to have our office involved even if the commissioner's duties were very limited. They brought out the following needs they have on the system:

The head gates need to be set each year sometime during the early part of the season. They are concerned that if this is left to the water users there will be disagreement among themselves that the gates have been set correctly. They are also concerned that if a commissioner is not appointed by the state engineer, the water users will not recognize the person's authority and they will have trouble with water users changing the gate settings.

They have trouble with trash collecting in the headgates during the season. The commissioner may clean the headgates out so that he can set the gate correctly but after that it is the responsibility of the canal companies to keep their headgates cleaned out so that water comes down to them.

They felt that it would be difficult for them to set up and maintain an organization to assess and make collections to pay a water master - it probably would not work. They would like to keep the commissioner also because our assessment and collection process is already in place.

The duties of the commissioner were discussed and it was decided that he needed to keep an eye on the runoff situation at the beginning of the year so he would know when the water was starting to run so it could be turned to the Pioneer Ditch (which has the highest priority on the system). He also needs to watch the stream as the flows increase so he would know when to turn on the other water users. South Fork starts to flow about the first of April and North Fork starts to flow about the first of May. After the headgates are set for the season - when the flows have settled down - there is not much for the commissioner to do except check every so often to make sure the gate settings have not changed. There really does not need to be much of a report kept or made for the state engineer - **(we will have to see how that will work - a report might be needed even if it is short to document exactly what the commissioner did and justify it to the water users)**