

REPORT OF WATER COMMISSIONER

WATER DIVISION IV DISTRICT 14

OCTOBER 1, 1999 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2000

**FARREN B. JOHNSON
MOUNTAIN VIEW, WYOMING**

The 2000 water year was unusual in that the winter season left the Uinta Mountains quite short on both snow and water content. The saving feature was a cool, although dry, spring. This caused the runoff to be slow and steady. There was virtually no high water run off in all of the drainages on the Henrys Fork. This caused many requests early in the season for regulation. However by cooperation and some rotation among the ranchers very little regulation was actually put in place in the early part of the season. As the irrigation season progressed and water got tighter the irrigators with lake storage began to use storage water and that took a lot of pressure off the streams. The ground was so dry that many ditches took several days to soak seal so that they could carry the full measure of water that was allotted at the head gate. The first release from Hoop Lake took a full 48 hours to reach the Neilson head gate then the shrink was about 35 %. This % of shrink was not unusual all summer long. Many ranchers made the decision early in the season to eliminate some lands from irrigation in order to have enough water to guarantee a crop on other fields.

RESERVOIRS

HOOP LAKE;

Hoop Lake started the season full to capacity. The first release was 5/10 of 10ft for Earl Hanks. This gave us just a taste of what the summer would be like as it took two days to deliver the water to Hanks. The first shrink was about 35% and this proved true for most following releases. Every user used all of their shares of Hoop lake water and the decision was made to drain the remaining water to inspect the valve and make any need repairs. The repairs were made and the Lake began filling late in September. There was no carry over.

BEAVER MEADOWS / ISLAND LAKE

The Interstate Canal users have for the past several years controlled both beaver meadows and Island Lake. Each year the reservoir is drained completely, then Island Lake is turned on giving the Interstate a few days more water. This has always been a concern for the rest of the Burnt Fork Irrigators. They contend that they always get shorted when this happens as the delivery is by way of the creek and no one really knows just how much water is in the lake or how much actually reaches the Interstate head gate. This resulted in a trip to Island Lake to assess the situation. This was 5 days after the lake was opened and the flow was nearly over.

My recommendations are;

1. Beaver Meadows be controlled more like Hoop Lake with someone other than the canal co. making the releases.
2. Island Lake be released sooner in the season to allow for better use of the stored water.
3. Staff gauges are installed at appropriate places to better measure flows from both reservoirs.
4. Repairs are made at the dam to stop leaks and repair the head gate to make it easier to control.

REGULATION

As reservoir releases automatically bring a stream into regulation Beaver creeks were in regulation since early when the first release was made.

Burnt Fork was in regulation On 5/31.

Henrys fork request for regulation was denied Peoples canal users after extracting water on land inundated by the gorge. No further requests were made.

ACCOMPOLISHMENTS

Met with Peoples canal and toured the system. Started a dialog with them that has set the stage for a meeting with the canal board and Jade to iron out existing confusion as to the amount of water that they are allowed.

Contacted Jeff Lewis and Blue Bell ditch co. about controls on the ditch. After some debate and study, the have agreed to install a control and measuring device before next Irrigation season. Jeff is designing the plans.

Jeff Lewis is also working on a plan to put baskets in the Burnt Fork at the split in the creek to control erosion and help measure the flow in both channels. As soon as he has the drawings formulated we will call a meeting of the users below the Split and present the plan to them.

Many irrigators in my district have expressed a desire to have a class in water measurement. I have contacted the WWC Valley Learning Center and set up a class in water law and measurement. This class will be held at the boardroom of the Mountain View School and will be open to the public. The class will be held from 10 am until 2 pm on February 24, 2001 WWC, VLC will cover registration and expenses. There will be a \$10 fee to attend.