

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR RE: 385

UNITED STATES INDIAN FIELD SERVICE

Uintah Irrigation Project
Myton, Utah
June 8, 1931

George M. Bacon, Engineer
State of Utah
State Capitol Building
Salt Lake City, Utah

Dear Sir:

Mr. Colton, Acting Water Commissioner on the Uintah, Lakefork, and Whiterocks rivers, showed me a copy of a letter written by Mr. C. A. Thompson of La Point, in which he makes certain accusations against the Government which are very far from being true and for this reason I would like to take the liberty of answering that letter.

You no doubt know that the water supply is extremely short in the rivers this year and for this reason the Government project through this office, at the sanction and instruction of the District Office, voluntarily, without request from the defendant companies, reduced our duty one-third so that the defendant companies might obtain enough water to get by. This was purely and simply a gift of approximately 150 second feet to the defendant companies inasmuch as the rivers were merely supplying Government duty before the reduction in the duty. The result has been more or less of a hardship upon the Government water users. However, they are just able to get by under these present conditions.

I see that Mr. Thompson made the specific charge that the Government is wasting $13\frac{1}{2}$ second feet at the Whiterocks School heading. He apparently has not looked this matter over at all inasmuch as there was undoubtedly $13\frac{1}{2}$ second feet flowing down the channel to the diversion of the Whiterocks School. The point Mr. Thompson failed to see apparently is the fact that any water not used at the School flowed down in the river channel to be used at our Deepcreek Canal. This water is all confined to one channel, is a regular river channel, and is shaded so that the loss could not be considered excessive any more than any of the other channels on this Project. Therefore, Mr. Thompson is entirely wrong in his charge in this case, inasmuch as the water is not wasted nor lost as it is diverted in our Deepcreek Canal which water must be carried down this river, which of course, is the Whiterocks River.

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Mr. Thompson goes on to state that his canal is only receiving 12 second feet which, of course, is culinary duty. This again is a gift from prior rights to the later rights and particularly this year a good share of the time this water was taken directly from the Government water duty inasmuch as the rivers were not supplying Government water duty and culinary water.

He makes the statement that 135 second feet were turned down the River for the Moffat ditch, the Colorado Park ditch, and the Henry Jim, and that half of this was wasted. Had Mr. Thompson known what he was talking about he would have known that on that particular date he was referring to there were only 120 second feet in the river according to the U.S.G.S. gauge, which information Mr. Colton has furnished me. Of this 120 second feet, water was supplied to the Farmcreek, U. S. Whiterocks, U. S. Deepcreek and Whiterocks Canal Company's canal. The Moffat ditch was probably only carrying about 25 second feet, the Colorado Park about 5, and the Henry Jim 23 second feet, for which there was probably turned into the river or allowed to go past the upper headgates, not to exceed 60 to 65 second feet, the difference being about the loss of the channel between those points which loss, of course, it is impossible to avoid.

In all justice to Water Commissioner Colton, I will state that I have only heard the best of remarks in reference to Mr. Colton's work. I personally know that he is on the job every day and all day long, doing everything in his power to distribute this water with a minimum of loss and as far as I know all of the defendant companies are well satisfied with Mr. Colton's work and for the Government I can say that it is entirely satisfied with the work which Mr. Colton has been doing. This has been an extremely difficult year without precedent in this Project, to distribute the water. Mr. Colton, of course, is working under the handicap that this is his first year, which has made it extremely hard for him.

If you are going to be in the Basin this summer, I would very gladly go over these canals with you and in a great many cases I could show you where the Government and some of the defendant companies have done quite a little work this year in order to save all water possible, so that I feel that Mr. Thompson's letter is entirely unjust to the Government, Mr. Colton, and the defendant water users. Also, Mr. Thompson has shown that he knew nothing of the actual facts in the matter regardless of the fact that he states he has made an investigation.

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Of course Mr. Colton will reply to this letter but inasmuch as the charges of Mr. Thompson were so erroneous I felt in all fairness to this Project and to Mr. Colton, as well as certain of the prior-right companies, that I should also make answer to Mr. Thompson's letter.

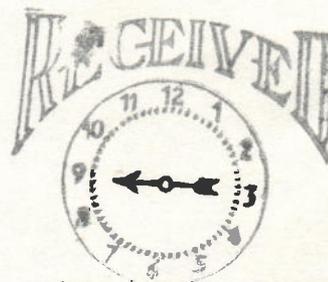
Very truly yours,

Paul F. Henderson

Paul F. Henderson
Engineer

PFH:V

cc: B. O. Colton, Jr.



JUN 11 1931
State Engineer's Office