



Idaho Department of Water Resources Board

Chairman, Jeff Raybould
322 E. Front Street
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, Idaho 83720-0098

March 8th, 2021

Re: Elmore County's Water Development Efforts

Dear Chairman Raybould:

We are writing to communicate support from the City of Mountain Home for the extensive efforts that Elmore County has made to develop additional water supplies for the Mountain Home area and we are willing to support and pay our fair share of this project, if the amount is based on the fact that the City of Mountain only draws 5% of water from the aquifer for use by its citizens.

As you are aware, the Mountain Home area (hereafter described as the Mountain Home Plateau) has suffered from extreme water shortages caused by groundwater declines since the late 1970's. The Idaho Department of Water Resources recognized this problem and imposed groundwater management limitations on the area in 1981 (Groundwater Management Area and Critical Groundwater Area designations). Since those decisions, the groundwater level declines have continued. This has caused the need for extensive well deepening, irrigation limitation of productive farms, reduced pumping, as well as potentially interfering with commercial ventures in locating to the Mountain Home area.

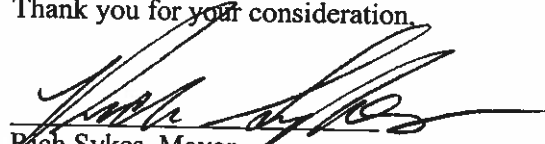
Faced with these problems, in 2015 the Elmore County Commissioners began an effort to reverse this long-term trend.

Fortunately, their efforts have produced results. They sought and obtained approval of a new water permit to allow the County to divert high flow waters from the South Fork Boise River for aquifer recharge and supplemental irrigation in the Mountain Home Plateau. They re-established a water right for aquifer recharge and obtained a new water permit to use in significant recharge gravel pits, adjacent to Canyon Creek. They sought and obtained funding assistance from the Water Board to install improved infrastructure for the diversion of water into these recharge pits. They sought and obtained written authorization from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the Idaho Transportation Department, and two private landowners to utilize their gravel pit facilities for the groundwater recharge project.

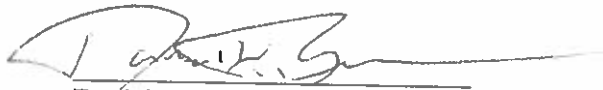
Because of the need to scientifically calculate the projected benefits to specific land areas from the County's water supply projects, Terry Scanlan of SPF Water Engineers has strongly recommended that the County seeks approval of the Water Board for the Idaho Department of Water Resources Technical Division to expand the development of the Treasure Valley numerical model to include the Mountain Home Plateau. We strongly support the County's effort to obtain this approval. We feel it is fundamentally important to scientifically and objectively ascertain which properties this project may or may not directly benefit, as representatives of the City of Mountain Home we feel this is inherently critical moving forward.

In conclusion, the City of Mountain Home supports the County's water development efforts and encourages the Water Board to support these efforts specifically by allowing the Department to expand the scope of the Treasure Valley Groundwater Model development to include the Mountain Home Plateau. Your favorable consideration of this request is deeply appreciated by the citizens of this area.


Thank you for your consideration.


Rich Sykes, Mayor


Matt Bundy, Councilmember


Daniel Brennan, Councilmember


Mike McCain, Councilmember


Brad Stokes, Councilmember

Copies to:
Governor Brad Little
IDWR Director, Gary Spackman
Elmore County Commissioners

Idaho Water Resource
Board Chairman, Jeff
Raybould
322 E. Front Street
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, Idaho 83720-0098

Re: Elmore County's Water Development

Efforts Dear Chairman Raybould:

I am writing to communicate the enthusiastic support of the Elmore County Rotary Club for the extensive efforts that Elmore County has made to develop additional water supplies for the Mountain Home area.

As you are aware, the Mountain Home area (sometimes described as the Mountain Home Plateau) has suffered from extreme water shortages caused by groundwater declines since the late e 1970's. The Idaho Department of Water Resources ("Department") recognized this problem and imposed groundwater management limitations on the area in 1981(Groundwater Management Area and Critical Groundwater Designations). Since those decisions, the groundwater level declines have continued.

This has caused the need for extensive well deepening, irrigation limitation of productive farms, reduced pumping and deepening of Mountain Home city wells, as well as turning away new commercial ventures from locating in the Mountain Home area, because of the inability to reliably supply significant water.

Faced with these problems, in 2015 the Elmore County Commissioners began an effort to reverse this trend. They have expended significant financial resources and invested huge amounts of time on a number of fronts since they started the effort.

Fortunately, their efforts have produced results. They sought and obtained approval of a new water permit to allow the County to divert high flow waters from the South Fork Boise River for aquifer recharge and supplemental irrigation in the Mountain Home area. They re-established a water right for aquifer recharge and obtained a new water permit to use in significant recharge gravel pits, adjacent to Canyon Creek . They sought and obtained funding assistance from the Water Board to install improved infrastructure for diversion of water into these recharge pits. They sought and obtained written authorization from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the Idaho Transportation Department, and two private landowners to utilize their gravel pit facilities for the groundwater recharge project.

In addition, the County has successfully negotiated and signed easement agreements with the property owner upon which its diversion pipeline must be located for the South Fork Boise water permit. It has also obtained the acceptance of a right-of-way application by the U.S. Forest Service to allow the diversion pipeline to cross portions of lands administered by that agency.

Now, with the likely development of the Anderson Ranch Dam Raise Project and a contract for a portion of new storage water resulting from the Project, the County is poised to dramatically

improve the water supply situation in the Mountain Home area. Based on these successes, the County now seeks additional cooperative assistance with the Water Board.

Because of the need to scientifically calculate the projected benefits to specific land areas from the County's water supply projects, Terry Scanlan of SPF Water Engineers has strongly recommended that the County seeks approval of the Water Board for the Idaho Department of Water Resources Technical Division to expand the development of the Treasure Valley numeric model to include the Mountain Home Plateau. We strongly support the County's effort to obtain this approval.

Besides the project benefits calculation, expansion of the numerical model to the Mountain Home Plateau will vastly improve groundwater management in recently created Groundwater Water District 161. Such a model will allow the Department to make validly supported management decisions to curtail improper water use and allow regulatory actions that will become necessary as future conflicts emerge. The expanded model effort will not only benefit future water management in Elmore County, but improve the reliability of the model for water management in eastern Ada County as development increases in that area.

In conclusion, the Elmore County Rotary Club fully supports the County's water development efforts and encourages the Water Board to support these efforts by allowing the Department to expand the scope of the Treasure Valley Groundwater Model development to include the Mountain Home Plateau. Your favorable consideration of this request is deeply appreciated by the citizens of this area.

Respectfully,



Barbara Fogelman
President of Elmore County Rotary Club

Copies

to:
Governor Brad Little
IDWR Director Gary Spackman
Board of County Commissioners of
Elmore County Commissioners

Idaho Water
Resource Board
Chairman, Jeff
Raybould
322 E. Front Street
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, Idaho 83720-0098

Re: Elmore County's Water

Development Efforts Dear

Chairman Raybould:

I am writing on behalf of Elmore County Farm Bureau to express our support of the efforts of the Elmore County Commissioners. Their work in developing additional water supplies for the Mountain Home area has been significant and very much appreciated.

The Mountain Home area has experienced draught over the past number of years. This in conjunction with increase use, has attributed a decline of the under-ground aquafer. This has been reported to affected many segments of our society/economy such as the City of Mtn. Home, Farming, Dairy's, Air Force Base. It is hard to see a segment of our economy the is not affected by this problem. As you probably know, ground water levels are not static and in fact are continuing to decline.

This has caused the need for extensive well deepening, irrigation limitation of productive farms, reduced pumping and deepening of Mountain Home city wells, as well as turning away new commercial ventures from locating in the Mountain Home area, because of the inability to reliably supply significant water.

Faced with these problems, in 2015 the Elmore County Commissioners began an effort to reverse this trend. They have expended significant financial resources and invested huge amounts of time on a number of fronts since they started the effort.

Fortunately, their efforts have produced results. They sought and obtained approval of a new water permit to allow the County to divert high flow waters from the South Fork Boise River for aquifer recharge and supplemental irrigation in the Mountain Home area. They re-established a water right for aquifer recharge and obtained a new water permit to use in significant recharge gravel pits, adjacent to Canyon Creek. They sought and obtained funding assistance from the Water Board to install improved infrastructure for diversion of water into these recharge pits. They sought and obtained written authorization from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the Idaho Transportation Department, and two private landowners to utilize their gravel pit facilities for the groundwater recharge project.

Now, with the likely development of the Anderson Ranch Dam Raise Project and a contract for a portion of new storage water resulting from the Project, the County is poised to dramatically improve the water supply situation in the Mountain Home area.

Because of the need to scientifically calculate the projected benefits to specific land areas from the County's water supply projects, Terry Scanlan of SPF Water Engineers has strongly recommended that the County seeks approval of the Water Board for the Idaho Department of Water Resources Technical Division to expand the development of the Treasure Valley numeric model to include the Mountain Home Plateau. We strongly support the

Besides the project benefits calculation, expansion of the numerical model to the Mountain Home Plateau will vastly improve groundwater management in recently created Groundwater Water District 161. The expanded model effort will not only benefit future water management in Elmore County, but improve the reliability of the model for water management in eastern Ada County as development increases in that area.

In conclusion, Elmore County Farm Bureau fully supports the County's water development efforts and encourages the Water Board to support these efforts by allowing the Department to expand the scope of the Treasure Valley Groundwater Model development to include the Mountain Home Plateau. Your favorable consideration of this request is deeply appreciated by the citizens of this area.

Respectfully,


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Copies

to:

Governor Brad Little
IDWR Director Gary
Spackman
Board of County
Commissioners of
Elmore County
Commissioners



Idaho Department of Water Resources
Board Chairman, Jeff Raybould
322 E. Front Street
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, Idaho 83720-0098

Re: Elmore County's Water Development Efforts

Dear Chairman Raybould,

The Mountain Home Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors is writing to express the continued support for Elmore County and the efforts they have made to develop additional water supplies for the Mountain Home area.

As you are aware, the Mountain Home Plateau has suffered from extreme water shortages caused by groundwater declines since the late 1970's. The Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) recognized this problem and imposed groundwater management limitations on the area in 1981 (Groundwater Management Area and Critical Groundwater Area designations). Since those decisions, the groundwater level declines have continued.

This has caused the need for well deepening, irrigation limitation of productive farms, as well as possibly turning away new commercial and industrial ventures from locating in the Mountain Home area, because of the inability to reliably supply significant water.

Because of the need to scientifically calculate the projected benefits to specific land areas from the County's water supply projects, Terry Scanlan of SPF Water Engineers has strongly recommended that the County seeks approval of the Water Board for the IDWR Technical Division to expand the development of the Treasure Valley numeric model to include the Mountain Home Plateau.

We believe this numerical and scientific study could help provide factual information regarding water supply levels for current and future Chamber of Commerce Business Membership. We strongly support the County's effort to obtain this approval.

Respectfully,

Julie Davis
Executive Director
Mountain Home Chamber of Commerce

CC: Governor Brad Little; IDWR Director Gary Spackman; Board of County Commissioners of Elmore County Commissioners