BEFORE THE DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

OF THE

STATE OF IDAHO

IN THE MATTER OF THE BOISE FRONT LOW TEMPERATURE GEOTHERMAL RESOURCE GROUND WATER MANAGEMENT AREA	)	ORDER ESTABLISHING A MORATORIUM

On June 15, 1987, the Director of the Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) designated the Boise Front Low Temperature Geothermal Resource Ground Water Management Area (Boise Front) in Ada County due to reported declines in aquifer water levels and pressure. On January 22, 1988, Boise Warm Springs Water District (BWSWD) petitioned IDWR to:

1) Establish a moratorium on further development pursuant to Section 42-1805(7), Idaho Code, and Rule 7 of the Department's Water Appropriation Rules and Regulations,

2) Designate the Boise Front as a critical ground water area pursuant to Section 42-233(a), Idaho Code, and

3) To stop further development in the Boise Front pursuant to management authority provided by Sections 42-233(b) and 42-237(b), Idaho Code.

The IDWR staff has reviewed the present status of use and development of the low temperature geothermal resource in the Boise Front area and based upon this staff review, the Director has determined that:

1) Water levels or pressures in the Boise Front continue to decline at an estimated rate of six (6) to seven (7) feet per year in all or part of the Boise Front.

2) Pending applications and undeveloped permits could increase the annual withdrawal from the aquifer several fold if developed.

3) Protection of existing rights require additional management of the resource.

4) A moratorium on further development which will increase the rate of depletion from the Boise Front is required to insure compliance with the provisions of Chapter 2, Title 42, Idaho Code.

5) Additional hydrogeologic data is needed to adequately

evaluate the characteristics of the aquifer to prevent over appropriation of the resource, to stabilize depletions and to adequately assess the potential of long term declines.

6) By maintaining a ground water management area designation, the Director is authorized to require right holders to report withdrawals of ground water and other information to determine the ground water supply and its usage.

7) The Director is charged with the protection of existing water rights while allowing reasonable use of the resource.

8) Section 42-1805(7), Idaho Code, and Rule 7 of the Water Appropriation Rules and Regulations provide for the establishment of a moratorium on further development.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to Section 42-1805(7), Idaho Code, and Rule 7 of the Water Appropriation Rules and Regulations, it is hereby ORDERED in connection with the Boise Front Low Temperature Geothermal Resource Ground Water Management Area designed on June 15, 1987 that:

1. Effective with the date of entry of this order, further development or additional use pursuant to undeveloped or partially developed permits is prohibited until the permit holder shows to the satisfaction of the Director that further development or additional use: a) will not increase depletions from the aquifer; b) will not increase pumping lift or decrease pressure to existing prior users; and c) will not reduce temperature to existing users causing systems operating at reasonable efficiency to no longer operate.

2. Pending and future applications will be rejected unless information is provided to demonstrate the use: a) will not cause additional depletion of the aquifer; b) will not increase pumping lift or pressure reduction to existing users or undeveloped permit holders; and c) will not reduce the temperature of the resource to existing users or undeveloped permit holders below the temperature necessary for a system operating at reasonable efficiency to operate.

3. The Director retains the designation of the Boise Front as a Ground Water Management Area and DENIES the petition of the Boise Warm Springs Water District to designate the Boise Front a Critical Ground Water Area.

4. The provisions of this order are effective upon issuance and remain effective for a period of five (5) years unless rescinded, modified or extended by subsequent order of the Director.

5. Service and publication of this order shall be made in accordance with the provisions of Rule 7 of the Water

Appropriation Rules and Regulations.

6. Any person aggrieved by this order shall be entitled to a hearing before the Director for the purpose of contesting the order. A request for hearing must be filed with the Director within fifteen (15) days after receipt of a copy of the order by certified mail, or within fifteen (15) days after completion of the publication of the order for three (3) consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation, whichever is earlier. The hearing shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 52, Title 67, Idaho Code, and the rules of Practice and Procedure of the Department of Water Resources.

Dated this 10TH day of June, 1988.

R. KEITH HIGGINSON
Director