

EASTERN IDAHO
WATER RIGHTS COALITION

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P.O. Box 50125 ♦ Idaho Falls, ID ♦ 83405-0125

Executive Committee:

18 April 2011

*Stan Clark,
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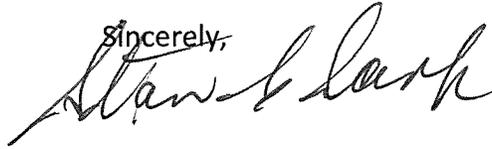
RE: Proposed Changes to CMR 50

Dear Mr. Rigby:

The Eastern Idaho Water Rights Coalition represents a broad spectrum of water users in Eastern Idaho, including groundwater users. We are gravely concerned about anything that threatens the ability of our members to utilize their water rights, and the ability of the region to grow and prosper economically. The proposed change to Rule 50 (CMR 50) of Idaho's Rules for Conjunctive Management of Surface and Ground Water Resources (IDAPA 37.03.11) represents just such a threat. The proposal would change the status of many existing and future wells north and east of Rexburg. This area has long been important to the economy of Idaho because of its strong agriculture and recreational opportunities. The presence of Brigham Young University Idaho makes the region a bright spot of hope for ongoing economic development in the region. All this is threatened by the proposed change.

The stated hydrologic criterion of CMR 50 is that "The Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer supplies water to and receives water from the Snake River" (CMR 050.01.a). The coalition's technical consultants indicate that the Rexburg Bench does not meet this criterion. The presence of faults, a strong groundwater gradient, and a region of low transmissivity in the calibrated aquifer model all indicate that the Bench cannot receive water from the Snake River. And further, the University of Idaho indicated in 2004 that when considering model boundaries, adding areas to the model might be appropriate "*if the resulting boundary does not cross a hydrologic barrier*" (Model Boundary, Allan Wylie, 2004, Idaho Water Resources Research Institute). As you can see from the enclosed letter, our consultants indicate that the Rexburg Bench also fails this criterion.

We strongly urge you to retain the current definition of the Area of Common Ground Water Supply under CMR 50, and reject the proposal to consider a change in the rules.

Sincerely,


Stan Clark
President, EIWR

Enclosure: