



United States Department of the Interior

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IN REPLY
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Title - Instream Flow Negotiations - Snake River - Jacksonhole, Wyoming

Issue - a) During drought years, when the Bureau of Reclamation is exercising the storage rights to fill the contracted space in Jackson Lake Reservoir, the reduced flows in the Snake River below Jackson Lake Dam and the effects on downstream fishery are the issue.

b) Negotiation activities for "Wyoming Compact Water".

Status - a) The State water right allows storage of the entire Snake River at Jackson Lake Dam.

b) The Bureau of Reclamation and waterusers are committed to maintaining at least a 100 cfs release from Jackson Lake Dam during drought years like 1977, 1987 and 1988. During more favorable water years, the releases are substantially higher.

c) There is 33,000 acre-feet of space in Palisades Reservoir which is identified as "Wyoming Compact Water". This space was originally identified as space, the State of Wyoming could purchase for the storage of water to compensate downstream waterusers, if further development in Wyoming were to affect senior water rights downstream. To date, the State of Wyoming has not purchased this space.

d) The Bureau of Reclamation has received the authority to negotiate with the State of Wyoming for this 33,000 acre-feet of space. ~~If, that negotiation is successful, the Bureau will work with the contract spaceholders to arrange an exchange of Jackson and Palisades space. This action would move the 33,000 acre-feet upstream to Jackson Lake.~~ Water accruing to that space would be used to enhance stream flows below Jackson Lake Dam.

e) The first meeting to begin negotiations has not been set. However, the negotiations are anticipated to start later this summer.

Department of Interior Position -

a) To provide the highest winter release possible to enhance downstream conditions and still meet contractual obligations regarding water supply and flood control and other project functions
^A meet obligations for

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- b) When negotiations are complete and transfer is in place, to release water from the 33,000 acre-feet of space according to recommendations of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. ~~If the water is not used,~~ it will be held in the reservoir until such time as it is needed.

Position of Major Constituents -

- a) To obtain releases from Jackson Lake Dam to maintain optimum fishery conditions during the winter months.
- b) To not jeopardize water supply of contractual water users.

Issue Background - During drought years such as 1977, 1987, and 1988, the Bureau of Reclamation has reduced releases to 100 cfs in order to store water in Jackson Lake Reservoir. These actions are in accordance with Wyoming State Water Rights and contractual arrangements with the spaceholders owning the Jackson Lake Space.

As recreational activities increase, the value of a better fishery as an attraction to the Jacksonhole area and as a means of ^{attraction} income to the local community has increased tremendously. Increased fishing pressure requires a better fishery to sustain its attraction.

The drought years and subsequent reduced releases below Jackson purportedly have been detrimental to the fishery. Higher flows would ^{purportedly} be better for the fishery.

The question as to how to provide more flow without unduly damaging the spaceholder has brought us to the concept of negotiating and exchanging the Wyoming compact space to hopefully reach that goal.

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