



Water Rights Committee Report
Karl Davis, Committee Chairman
karld@bigelkmeadows.org

Written and submitted by: Karl Davis

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Charter: To protect the water rights that are decreed to Big Elk Meadows.

Committee Members: Karl Davis as Chairman, Members as Victoria Darling, Roy McCutcheon, Bill Tolle, Paul Flanagan, Alan Hatfield, Patrick F. Gill, Selina Davis

Irrigation season, June/July update

I brought the lake level in Sunset so it stopped flowing over the outlet then closed the gate. Its leaking about .5 CFS and will completely drain the lake. Right now water is entering Sunset Lake at 3 CFS which is about 6 acre feet per day. The water flow into Sunset should slow to a trickle soon. The afternoon rain must stop first. The plan is to drain Sunset and run water over the Willow Lake spillway for as long as possible. We could drain Sunset anytime starting in about one month and leave the gate open until next Spring at the start of the runoff.

I am working with Riverglen in getting a contract in place for 2022 to 2032 to transfer water from the Ish Reservoir back to the Little Thompson river. We have agreed on the price structure. The contract is being updated.

A volume of water under .5 CFS is still running around the lower flume. Repairs will be needed when we can get heavy equipment into the area. We need the flume to handle 2 feet of water running through the flume and stay intact. A river running to the side of the flume should handle the volume beyond 2 feet or 8.866 CFS.

I made a 4.8 acre foot return flow release from the Ish Reservoir. I have an augmentation and return flow release scheduled next weekend. We still have an average of 8 acre feet running over our spillways each day. This summer has been easy so far. The water should slow to a trickle and we will need to release water from BEM to keep a live stream. In the mean time, we will keep releasing water from Ish and keep our lakes full.

How are augmentation plans beneficial?

Augmentation Plans are a broad category of water operations designed to increase the supply of water available for beneficial use. Commonly, an augmentation plan authorizes out of priority diversions for beneficial use to the extent that a replacement supply of water is made available to substitute for the otherwise diminished amount of water available to supply other water rights. **This allows the junior diversion to operate without injury to senior vested water rights.** Augmentation plans allow for flexibility and maximum utilization of water while protecting senior rights in over-appropriated stream systems throughout Colorado. Augmentation Plans must be approved through a decree of the water court. While an application for an augmentation plan is pending before the water court, a substitute water supply plan may allow for operation of the project until the water court approves (decrees) the augmentation plan.