



## Water Rights Committee Report

August 15, 2022

Purpose: To protect our Water Rights, operate our exchanges, and remain in compliance with the State Department of Water Resources

Co-Chairs as Pat Sorenson and Karl Davis; members as Roy McCutchen, Paul Flanagan, Ryan Sommers and Selina Davis

What a green lush wet past month or so we have seen in BEM! Recent precipitation has brought lake levels up almost keeping pace with evaporation and downstream releases. As of the morning of this report with more rainfall coming, we are seeing the following lake levels:

Meadow – About 1' below crest

Mirror – Near crest and running through outlet structure control gate

Willow – Near crest

Rainbow – Near crest

Sunset – Near crest

Little Deer – Not required to be measured. Level is runoff dependent.

Division 1, District 4 water commissioner, Jean Lever, paid a visit to Big Elk Meadows on the morning of July 19, 2022. Her visit was to meet Patric Sorenson and Paul Flanagan to go over requirements for our operational procedures during this very dry summer when we release water to meet our augmentation and return flow obligations. We also discussed the percentage of water loss we will incur when we release our 4.38 af of return flow through the summer. We agreed on a 25 percent loss which brings the total for the summer to 5.48 af. This is a savings of 10.48 af if we were to release our full share of return flow. This season we only have to make releases for the subsurface portion.

Jean also suggested we track inflow and outflow through the entire spring-summer-fall “non-ice-over” periods continuously. This should not have very much demand to staffing or volunteers, will also help BEM with proactive maintenance of the measuring flume facilities and may be good information to have on hand for any downstream water user concerns that could come up in the future. The meeting was also attended by Karl and Selina Davis, Roy McCutchen, Curt Loomis, and Dan Wray.

The Water Rights committee, including our water engineer, have been meeting directly with our water commissioner and indirectly with our division water commissioners. We have demonstrated our ability to maintain a continuous stream between BEM and Pinewood Springs while monitoring its effect on our water quality and supply to the community.

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We ran a test towards the end of June when the “river” had 2 cfs running through BEM and we

increased the flow to 5 cfs for two days. The state reported they were able to measure this flow of water 16 miles downstream at the recording station located near the base of Rabbit Mountain. We repeated the test at the end of July where the natural flow was reduced to .4 cfs and we increased the flow to 3 cfs for another 2 days. Pinewood Springs reported that the water made it to them; however, it did not make it to the recording station. This is typical at this time of year. Our district commissioner is very happy with these results and has confirmed from Pinewood Springs that their water needs are being met. We plan to continue to “trickle” stream flow into August and September as we were able to do last year.

cc: Mr. Paul McDaniels, Board VP & Committee Chair for Water Quality  
Committee courtesy copy to Mr. Jared Dains, PE, Applegate Group  
Committee courtesy copy to Mr. John Dingess, Esq., HROD