

8/19/94
Glen Waterusers
Randy Smith
Box 3
Glen, MT 59732

The Honorable Marc Racicot
Governor, State of Montana
Capitol Station
Helena, MT 59620

Governor:

We are concerned ranchers on the Big Hole River. We rely on irrigation from the Big Hole and its tributaries to maintain our living, our lifestyle and our tax base in southwest Montana.

Continued drought is placing hardship on the ag users and stress on the riparian qualities of this river valley. The legislative Water Policy Committee, the Lt. Governor and the river users have met to address this situation. Irrigators have cut their use to less than half their needs and the river keeps dropping. Closing the river to fishing is a possibility. This brings us great concern. Even though the river has dropped to flows as low as 70 CFS in the past, Dick Oswald of the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks feels 150 CFS is critical. We saw this river drop to this flow today.

It has become evident in order to meet the demands placed on the Big Hole, that long term practical solutions be found which are based on factual data. With this in mind we ask for your help by supplying technical assistance to a local working group to help define this problem and design a solution. We recognize there are a number of interests in our valley that will have to be included in this process and we intend to include all those interests that demonstrate they will responsibly participate in a process to achieve practical and reasonable remedies to this dilemma.

Sincerely,

Randy Smith

Maynard Smith

Bill Garrison

Frank Richards

Gunnar Kalsta

Jim Hagenbarth

cc. Dick Oswald