

STOCKHOLDERS SUBMIT ANSWERS TO SENATE IRRIGATION COMMITTEE

Reports Contrasted of Board of Directors, and Report of Stockholders to Be Submitted Over Signature of the Individual Land Owners

There has been a feeling ever since the public conference was held in Klamath Falls, November 9, that the answers submitted to the questions of the Senate Committee on Irrigation were unfortunately not representative of the sentiment of the land owners, and that in some respects they were entirely misleading. This impelled business men of Klamath County and land owners who, as water users, are vitally concerned, to frame the answers now to be offered for signature of the individual members of the Water Users' Association. In order to admit of easy comparison the two reports, together with the letters of transmittal accompanying each, are herewith published in parallel columns.

Mr. Water User and Land Owner, which of these reports do you consider most worthy of your approval, and which conveys the true impression of the Klamath Falls Irrigation Project?

Question 1. Is the existing reclamation law satisfactory, and if not, in what respect should it be amended?

Ans. 1. If fairly interpreted the present law is satisfactory. If we understand Sec. 4 of the Reclamation Act the estimated cost of construction should be announced and considered an official announcement when the Secretary deems a project practical. And no private lands should be asked to subscribe for stock until given a definite price per acre for irrigation. As we understand Sec. 6 of the said act the estimated cost mentioned in Sec. 4 should include operation and maintenance and it should not be separated as is done by the U. S. R. S. into two charges and the cost deferred until completion of project, because the act distinctly says in Sec. 4 "the charges shall be determined with a view of returning to the Reclamation Fund the estimated cost of constructions."

Question 2. Are your local laws governing the appropriation and use of water for irrigation satisfactory in their application to lands being reclaimed by the government, or through private enterprise, and if not, what amendments are required?

Ans. 2. As far as ascertainable at the present time the local laws are fairly satisfactory.

Question 3. Is the administration of the law by the Reclamation Service satisfactory, and if not, what are the objections and what remedy is proposed?

Ans. 3. As to the first clause, we answer NO. Our objections, in the main, are these: It has often been unsatisfactory and unfair, as the facts will show. When the first survey was made, and land holders were urged to sign up their lands, officials stated publicly that their estimates showed a cost of \$18.60 per acre; and we were assured that the average cost would not exceed \$20 an acre, and it was with this understanding that we signed up our lands. Some years later other estimates were made, when it was announced that the cost would not be less than \$30 an acre. And it is now urged, that shareholders will be compelled to pay this added 50 per cent. This seems unjust, and we solemnly protest against it. As one remedy to meet unsatisfactory conditions, we affirm that Oregon has not had its just apportionment of the funds. If this were given her the project might be completed at an early date. Also, because the shareholders for four years have been at an expense for keeping up the Water Users' Association, without results to us. As a remedy complete the project as soon as possible. We ask your committee to investigate all the reasons for the increase of the estimated cost of the project, and we further ask that the officials of the Water Users' Association be placed in direct communication with the Secretary of the Interior.

Question 4. Is your water supply adequate for both irrigation and domestic uses?

Ans. 4. The water supply is adequate. The U. S. R. S. does not supply water for domestic purposes. It is desired in this project continuously for domestic use from the first of April to freezing time, or about January first.

Question 5. Is your canal and distributing system satisfactory, and if not, what are the defects, what caused them, and what remedy is proposed?

Ans. 5. It is not PRIME CAUSE—inefficient service on part of Reclamation officials, business and executive ability of present project engineer satisfactory; PRIME REMEDY—Good business men at the head of projects; more power to be given to the men in charge of the project and less in the hands of Supervising Engineer. DEFECTS—Poor construction and always behind time. REMEDY—Practical man in charge of the various construction and engineering work—NOT BOYS—but men with some practical knowledge of irrigation and farming.

Question 6. Can the cost of maintaining and operating the canal and distributing system be reduced, and if so, in what way and to what extent?

Ans. 6. Canal and distributing system generally satisfactory; some complaint because of leakage, due to banks being new and unsettled. In the opinion of practical irrigators canals and laterals would have been better adapted for irrigation purposes if made wider and not so deep, thereby lessening leakage and danger of breaks and making it easier to maintain turnout and gates for placing water upon the land.

Question 7. Owing to poor construction the cost of operation and maintenance is very high and can not be made lower without large expense in enlarging and strengthening main canal and laterals—banks are too low and narrow—boxes too high—checks and boxes located in wrong places. Reduce force after irrigation season is over instead of keeping them all on the pay roll as seems to have been done in the Klamath Project.

Question 8. Can the water users, by employing reasonable industry and economy, promptly make all payments required by the existing law?

Ans. 8. A man with small means can not come into the Klamath Project, purchase land partly on time, make improvements, and live and pay the water charges. This explains why the Klamath Project is not filling up with farmers, and largely why the excess lands can not be sold at prices now asked. A large part of land owners would not be able to meet the payments, that is at \$3 per annum and \$0.75 maintenance per acre according to the present law. By deferring the first two or three payments farmers might possibly be able to pay out on the water charge.

Question 9. What additional terms and conditions, if any, should be

imposed on those who default in payment? ?

Ans. 9. Graduated payments or an extension of time to twenty years, allowing the first year of free water or at a nominal fee.

Question 10. What are your principal crops, where do you market them, and what, if any, organized effort is being made to put your crops into the market under the most favorable conditions? ?

Ans. 10. Alfalfa and grain. Home consumption.

Question 11. What are your present transportation facilities, and are they adequate and satisfactory?

Ans. 11. Branch line of the S. P. Ry. Co., and it is not satisfactory at present, shipping rate 50 per cent too high, but we hope to have better shipping facilities and markets in the near future.

Question 12. What is the reasonable present average value per acre of land in your project, exclusive of water right, the value being computed on the basis of productive capacity, interest being computed at 6 per cent per annum; and what was the value thereof exclusive of water right, prior to the construction of the Reclamation works?

Ans. 12. Land now under ditch \$50 at present and prior to coming of the Reclamation Service. Prices not affected by the Government irrigation.

Dry land yields—	Cereals Kind	Amount Per Acre	Profit	Value of Land at 6 Per Cent
	Rye	12 bu 3	bu or \$1.68	\$28.00
	Wheat	15 bu 3 1/2	bu or 2.10	35.00
	Oats	25 bu 6 1/4	bu or 2.00	33.33
Average value of dry land at this time and prior to coming of Government.....\$32.11				

Question 13. Are non-irrigable public lands available for pasture contiguous to or in the vicinity of your project, and if so, to what extent and under what conditions are the same now available for the stock owned by water users?

Ans. 13. Yes.

Question 14. What suggestions have you to offer for legislation to make public pasture lands in the vicinity of your project available for the use of those cultivating the irrigated lands?

Ans. 14. We favor the placing of all adjacent non-tillable lands into a reserve for the exclusive use of the settlers for grazing purposes.

Question 15. Is the farm unit of your project, as established by the Secretary of the Interior, satisfactory, and if not, would the objection be removed by the addition of pasturage rights as suggested by the foregoing question?

Ans. 15. Yes, we should have the pasturage rights as suggested above. The unit rule should be enforced without question.

Question 16. What is your source of supply for fuel and building materials, and the average cost thereof?

Ans. 16. Timber on government or state land. Lumber at \$12 to \$30 per M.

Question 17. To what extent have you been aided in your farming operations by information acquired from the work of agricultural experi-

ment stations and demonstration farms established on the irrigation projects?

Ans. 17. None. Experiment station so far has accomplished nothing. Frequent application for Soil Expert's Report upon the soil of the project denied. Lands for experimental purposes given to the Government free of charge with no results from the use of said land.

Question 18. What are your funds provided?

Ans. 18. Good. Provided by general taxation and the Irreducible School Fund.

Question 19. Now, in your opinion, can Congress best promote the general welfare of the water users and carry out the purposes of the Reclamation Act?

Ans. 19. (a) Enforce unit rule; (b) Remove resident restrictions; (c) Extend payment to twenty years, or graduated payments; (d) Interpret act as per our answer to the first question; as for an example the Engineers estimated the cost of the project at \$18.60 per acre and finally raised it to \$30 per acre. Private capital would have irrigated it for \$15.

(e) Have Water Applications to comply with acreage and original survey made by the government to avoid confusion in acreage;

(f) We desire to have a special agent appointed by the Secretary of the Interior to visit the projects at least once a year to investigate existing local conditions relative to each project. As the local officials of the Klamath Project have in many instances acted unfair towards the land owners and we have been unable to get any redress;

(g) We desire an itemized statement of the expenditures of the Klamath Project from inception to date.

(h) Reclaimed lakes and swamp lands should all pay their proportion of costs for drainage of same and be considered a part of the whole project;

(i) Furthermore, it is proposed by the U. S. R. S. to survey a very low line ditch near the Clear Lake site, to avoid going through rocks, and then put in pumping plants at various places to raise the water to the land under the preliminary survey, which altogether cheaper, will add greatly to the maintenance cost, and as cut estimates were made on the basis of the high line ditch, we would object to same.

(j) The erection of wooden flumes and bridges as they have been made under the first unit of this project will add greatly to the maintenance of same.

(k) The method of forwarding money to the General Land Office, which in this project is Lake View, is cumbersome and expensive. This could be avoided by having the money paid into the United States Depository within the limits of this project or into the Water Users' Association, or directly to the Disbursing Agent of the United States Reclamation Service. We ask that all commissions be dispensed with and that Sec. 5 of the Reclamation Act of June 17, 1909, be amended so as to comply with the conditions mentioned above.

Respectfully submitted,
BOARD OF DIRECTORS KLAMATH WATER USERS' ASSN.

By (Sgd) ALBERT E. ELDER, Secretary.

LETTER OF WATER USERS

In submitting the foregoing answers to your committee the Board of Directors of the Klamath Water Users' Association desire to call your attention to a few of the facts which have materialized in this project, and ask that you consider the same in connection with the answers above referred to.

The Klamath Basin under what is known as the first unit at the time the United States Reclamation Engineers were endeavoring to secure the land for the purpose of putting in a system under the Reclamation law, had, at that time, private irrigating systems which irrigated approximately 15,000 acres, and which could have been enlarged so as to irrigate approximately the 30,000 acres, which are included under the first unit of the Klamath Project and for which water may be had by making application to the Reclamation Service. At the same time a private company was in the field and had undertaken construction of an irrigating system which would cover many thousand acres, and their contracts were given for \$15 an acre. At the present time under what is known as the first unit, will cover something like 10,000 acres, and apparently no more land is placed under irrigation than we formerly had under our old system of private irrigation. In order to induce the settlers of the Klamath Project to take up the irrigation under the Reclamation Act, Mr. R. H. Newell, then Chief Engineer, now Director of the Reclamation Service; J. B. Lippincott, Supervising Engineer, and T. H. Humphreys at that time termed Project Engineer, held public meeting in this county, and after what they termed an extensive survey, announced to the people that reclamation of the lands under the Government system would not cost less than \$10 nor more than \$20 per acre, and induced our settlers to sign up contracts to the Water Users' Association on those representations, and feeling that the county would be generally benefited by having a much larger amount of land placed under irrigation, the settlers who were able to get water at the less price, agreed to pay more, that is, not less than \$10 nor more than \$20, and thereby authorized the Reclamation Service to begin the reclamation of land under the Klamath Project. According to the representation of the Engineers of the Reclamation Service, pre-

liminary surveys were made and apparently from these surveys estimates were made which were given out by Mr. Newell, etc., and were not less than \$10 nor more than \$20 per acre. With this understanding the Water Users' Association was organized under the direction of the Reclamation officials and the capitalization of stock fixed at \$20, and immediately the engineers commenced the Reclamation Project.

In doing this certain purchases were made at prices which the people feel were two or three times the value of the rights purchased, and certain concessions given which the Board of Directors is unable to find authorized by the Reclamation Act. For instance, S. C. & R. S. Moore in consideration of certain rights on Link River, (which affidavits in our possession show were valued at approximately \$15,000), were given between nine and eleven hundred perpetual horse-power delivered at about a mile further down the river than the location of their former rights. We fail to find any provision in the Reclamation Act whereby anybody can get perpetual rights for power.

Again negotiating for the so-called Ankeny ditch, the Reclamation officials give to Mr. Ankeny and Mrs. Henley, owners of said ditch, a perpetual water right for 1799 acres of land and here too, we fail to find any provision in the Reclamation Act whereby the Secretary of the Interior or any of his subordinates are authorized to allow anybody or give anybody a water right for more than 160 acres of land. The purchase of the Clear Lake dam site was made at a price of \$187,000, and we have affidavits in our possession which establish the fact that the said dam site was placed in a man's hands for sale at the price of \$35,000, and he was to get a five per cent commission on that price. Again, in the purchase of the so-called Adams ditch, known as the Little Klamath Ditch Co., purchase was made for \$100,000. The Adams ditch irrigated practically 10,000 acres of land, which would mean \$10 per acre—a very reasonable sum, and this board is unable to ascertain why it is that the lands under that ditch are not compelled and called upon to pay \$30.00 since very little additional expense has been made in supplying water to the land under the Adams ditch. The land owners were offered water rights under the Adams ditch for \$10

school facilities, and how are school funds provided?

Ans. 18. Good public school system, supported by general taxation and interest from State Irreducible School Fund.

Question 19. We would ask Congress to provide funds for the immediate completion of all projects and have the Reclamation Service proceed with the work as speedily as possible, thereby relieving the settlers of long wait and extra cost.