



SPENCER J. COX
Governor
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Lieutenant Governor

State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Division of Water Rights

JOEL FERRY
Executive Director

TERESA WILHELMSSEN
State Engineer/Division Director

3 July 2023

T. W. Jones and Sons
3224 South 1000 East
Beryl, UT 84714

RE: GROUNDWATER USE IN THE ESCALANTE VALLEY

Mr. Mason Jones and Mr. Steven Jones:

We appreciate every effort made in this state to conserve water. Commercial irrigators are among our greatest assets as we look forward to a more responsible use of water in the future.

We commend your use of metering to monitor your actual water diversion. Our calculations for allowed diversions for irrigation applications are based on average duty values established for individual areas of the state. We understand that actual diversions may vary, but the duty values are a necessary tool when accounting for the various conditions irrigators throughout the state face in every region.

Statute clearly states that “[b]eneficial use [is] the basis, the measure and the limit of all rights to the use of water in this state.” (Utah Code § 73-1-3) Accordingly, considerations regarding the full use of your water rights will be made based on the number of irrigated acres unless a change application is approved to track using a different method. Diversion of a lower volume of water due to more efficient irrigation techniques does not affect the validity of a water right. Such activity is actually encouraged, such as in the Beryl Enterprise Groundwater Management Plan, which states, “If during any phase of the plan it is determined that safe yield has been reached, future reductions will not be implemented.” Reducing diversions and increasing efficiency in irrigation is an excellent way to work our way closer to the safe yield volumes. Related to the diversion of water and increased efficiency, however, is the total depletion of water. Care must be taken when implementing any irrigation process to account for depletion and its effect on the aquifer. In some circumstances, although diversion is decreased due to increased efficiency, it may be that the amount of depletion has increased and therefore the impact to the aquifer is negative. This may or may not be true in your case, but we need to be careful to track accurately.

We appreciate your concern and dedicated efforts in conserving our crucial water resources in this area.

Cordially,

Tim Austin for:

Nathan Moses, P.E.
Regional Engineer
Southwestern Regional Office

TW Jones and Sons
3224 South 1000 East
Beryl, Utah 84714

Teresa Wilhelmsen, State Engineer
Utah Division of Water Rights
PO Box 146300
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-6300

May 16, 2023

Ms. Wilhelmsen,

We are alfalfa farmers in the Escalante Valley and have concerns with the many proposals for correcting our decreasing water table. Before the 2022 growing season, we chose, at our own expense, to install meters on each of our pivots. This allows us to track both our underground usage as well as surface water usage separately. We read these meters weekly and have extensive data from the 2022 growing season. We also choose to turn off pivots and pumps for a 24 hour period each Sunday and pumps and pivots are off an average of 10 days every crop harvest, 4 times each summer. We have turned our pumps off for a 24 hour period each Sunday since 2011 but records of usage were not kept until 2022. Our company owns 4763.988 acre feet of under ground water in addition to shares in the New Castle Reservoir Company. By using this tracking method, we find that we actually used significantly less water then is allocated. We understand these numbers will vary from season to season but we feel our efforts have shown significant water savings and work as well as other methods currently recognized by your office (LEEPA, etc.)

Attached, please find the record of our 2022 annual water use which shows that we saved 1239.188 acre feet of underground water. It is our wish that our results be recognized by your office. According to Todd Terry, the water commissioner in our district, we are on record for over irrigating. However, our meter readings show that with our underground water and reservoir shares, we actually saved 1498.0351 acre feet of water in the 2022 growing season.

We would hope that all methods of conservation would be considered in the water plan for our area. Because this was our first year of tracking usage and the variables involved from year to year, we know that the numbers will not remain constant, but we are committed to continue metering our water and keeping and reporting accurate data. Because this is truly conserved water, not water transferred for use on other acreage, we need assurance that any water we save will be protected for our future use.

We would appreciate a response from your office concerning our current method of conservation.

Thank you,

Mason Jones, President
Steven Jones, Sec/Treasurer
TW Jones and Sons



cc: Southwestern Regional Office of Water Rights, Cedar City, Utah
Todd Terry, Water Commissioner

RECEIVED
MAY 30 2023
WATER RIGHTS
CEDAR CITY

2022 Underground water use totals

Total Underground Acre Feet Used for 2022

HP 1	278.8
HP 2	305.6
HP 3	347.8
HP 4	297.5
HP 5	286
HP 6	313.7
Charlie's	335.3
NC 1	271.4
NC2	264.6
NC 3	343
NC 4	287.3
Church	193.8

3524.8 total af used underground

Under ground water

4763.988 af to use for 2022

3524.8 af used for 2022

1239.188 af left over for 2022 (saved)

309.797 acres saved of underground water

2022 Reservoir Water Use Totals

Total Reservoir Acre Feet Used for 2022

Tullis Field	324.7
NC 1	59
NC 2	59
Church Field	13.3

456 af reservoir used

Reservoir water

680.576 af	original af allotment
34.2711 af	additional af allotment
714.8471 af	Total acre feet allotment available for 2022

456 Total reservoir acre feet used in 2022

258.8471	af left over for 2022 (saved)
64.711775	acres saved of reservoir water