

Division of Water Rights; State of Utah.

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WATER RIGHTS
ALTERATION

Mr. Kent Jones; State Engineer.

I appreciate the opportunity to attend the meeting in Looe on November 8, 2018 to discuss the groundwater policy for the Rush Valley Basin. As was evident at the meeting there is great concern by the attendees and residents of Rush Valley regarding any change of policy that may impair the existing rights of citizens.

I have spent my entire life in Rush Valley (76 years) and have been observant of the water situation in the area for many years. I think there is great concern with both quantity and quality of water. Most wells are used for culinary or livestock watering purposes and are rather shallow and have very low flow rates (3-20 gallons per minute).

Johnson Land and Livestock LLC is a ranching entity owned by my family and we have water rights which include irrigation rights on Clover Creek, stockwatering rights on the same, natural springs in the vicinity and wells for domestic and stockwatering use. In 1977 a pressurized irrigation system was installed using long term flow rates to engineer the system and over the last several years only 1 year have we been able to use 100% of our average flow with the past 2 years being 15% and 10% respectively. Springs for stockwater have diminished flows which have necessitated

the installation of solar pumping systems to provide water for livestock. I realize we are experiencing drought conditions but I also think we are lacking the recharge necessary for many wells in the area, it has been said that wells only need to be drilled deeper but that only seems to provide brackish water that is unfit for consumption by humans or animals. Many of the residents of Rush Valley are on fixed incomes and would not be able to afford the cost of drilling deeper wells.

As stated by you in the Toole meeting it appears that the USGS study has some flawed information as to recharge and available water and in my opinion should require further study to verify the numbers. Any change of policy may need to be postponed until ~~the~~ further study is needed. It seems the current policy of 4.73 acre feet should be continued until better information is made available.

I think the proposal to subdivide Rush Valley into 3 areas is a good idea because of the difference in the recharge conditions and it will allow each area to be more closely observed for future development.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to provide input because it is a concern of everyone in our community.

Sincerely
Darrell Johnson