

April 1, 1958

Seth Gordon, Director

Robert D. Montgomery, Regional Manager, Region II

STATUS OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION BOARD PROJECT ON UPPER TRUCKEE RIVER

As you know, the Wildlife Conservation Board on November 15, 1957, allocated \$6,500 for an erosion control project on the Upper Truckee River, El Dorado County. Prior to the time this allocation was made, Region II had verbal assurance from several property owners that they would sign the necessary agreements which would permit the Department to undertake the project.

In early January an attempt was made, without success, to obtain signatures from these same people. Various reasons for not signing were advanced by the property owners, the most important being that taxes were becoming so high on their property that it was going to be necessary for them to sell out. None of them wanted to put a cloud on his title by entering into an agreement with the State.

Mr. Nesbitt, Consultant to the Wildlife Conservation Board, was quite perturbed when he heard of our difficulties over the agreements and suggested that the allocation for the project be recovered by the Board. He stated further that it was very embarrassing to the Consultants (both Mr. Horn and himself) to be forced to admit to the Board that the project could not be undertaken. In our conversation with Mr. Nesbitt we urged that no hasty decision be made and asked for more time to continue negotiations with the property owners. Mr. Nesbitt agreed to this.

A few weeks later, in February, we discovered that the Scott property on the Upper Truckee River had been sold to a real estate developer, Mr. Larry Hall. We immediately got in touch with Mr. Hall and explained our plans for erosion control on the river. This new owner was very much interested in our project and indicated that he would give us permission to work on his property. He was furnished a copy of a proposed agreement for review by his lawyer (the form of this agreement had previously been approved by the Department of Finance). On March 5, 1958, Mr. Hall informed us that he had no objection to the agreement and requested that we send him the required number of copies for his signature. Mr. Nesbitt was advised of this new development.

Just when it appeared that all our difficulties had been resolved, an item appeared in the Lake Tahoe newspaper, dated March 20, which has upset our plans for the time being at least. We have attached a clipping for your information. The untimely statements made to the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors, attributed to Mr. Nesbitt in this column, have seriously jeopardized our chances for the project on the Upper Truckee River. Mr. Hall was very much distressed when he saw the article since, in effect, he was being accused of failing to cooperate with the Department. Because of his strong feelings in regard to this incident he has not signed the agreement and has made it very clear that he feels the Department has treated him unfairly. We are doing our best to placate Mr. Hall and we hope

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he sees fit to accept our apologies and to complete the agreement.

It is not the purpose of this letter to condemn Mr. Nesbitt for his actions in this matter, but rather to seek ways of preventing the reoccurrence of incidents of this kind. We feel strongly that every effort should be made for better understanding and closer cooperation between the Wildlife Board Consultants and Regional personnel. We would welcome any suggestions that you might have in this regard.

Robert D. Montgomery  
Regional Manager

attach.

GHW/bw