



United States Department of Agriculture

Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services
Risk Management Agency

March 14, 2002

TO: Ross J. Davidson, Jr.
Administrator

FROM: Dave P. Paul /S/ *Dave P. Paul*
Director

SUBJECT: Regional Irrigation Assessment for Spokane Region

This Regional Irrigation Assessment is provided in accordance with instructions in the Loss Adjustment Manual, FCIC-25010. The Regional Office Director is required to share information about areas suspected of having inadequate water for irrigation with regional insurance providers.

Parts of Southeast Idaho are experiencing severe drought conditions. The U.S. Drought Index lists abnormally dry conditions in three basins of southeastern Idaho. Precipitation totals and snow water content in these three basins (Big and Little Lost Basin, Snake Basin Above Palisades and Bear River Basin) are 65 to 71 Percent of average as of March 14, 2002. These areas remain entrenched in long-term precipitation deficits. Two and 3 year totals through February 2002 were among the lowest in 107 years of record in parts of Idaho despite the current presence of near normal or above normal snow water content.

We have reviewed and continue to track summaries of the streamflow forecast probabilities, basin area reservoir supplies, and SNOTEL data from the Water and Climate Center of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Based on the review of data available as of March 14, the following Idaho counties are identified where there is a suspected lack of irrigation water:

Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Bonneville, Butte, Caribou, Clark, Custer, Franklin, Fremont, Jefferson, Madison, Oneida, and Power.

Insured crops under an irrigated practice may be affected by the suspected lack of irrigation water in the identified counties. Irrigated crops for the applicable counties are identified on the actuarial documents and on our website at <http://www.rma.usda.gov>.



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We will continue to track summaries of the streamflow forecast probabilities, basin area reservoir supplies, and SNOTEL data from the Water and Climate Center of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and inform the Administrator's Office of any deteriorating conditions. We encourage insurance providers to notify the Spokane Regional Office immediately of any other counties or areas of suspected irrigation water shortages.

If you have questions, please call our office at 509-353-2147.

