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UNITED STATES

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INDIAN FIELD SERVICE

Southern Navajo Agency,
Fort Defiance, Arizona
June 12, 1931.

Mr. H. C. Neuffer, Supervising Engineer,
Fifth Irrigation District
Albuquerque, N. M.

Dear Mr. Neuffer:

A few days ago Mr. Zeh of the Forestry office, and Mr. Womack of the Irrigation Service, visited this agency and discussed with me the problems of water development and range control. Special attention was given by us in determining the type of development which should be undertaken in consideration of our needs and funds.

I am of the opinion that the construction of reservoirs will be very practicable, provided that these reservoirs are deep, and that proper spillways are built. They must be deep enough, and have sufficient capacity to last from one season to the next. The construction of such dams would, in my opinion, necessitate the use of tractors rather than Indian teams. The type of reservoir which could be built with Indian teams would be of such temporary and uncertain value as to be practically worthless. The small teams, even the best of them, cannot pull dirt to the top of a high dam. If the purpose of the expenditure of our money was to furnish employment to Indians, this type of construction would probably be advisable. However, as I understand it, the purpose is to develop permanent water, and if this is done heavy equipment will be required. I do not believe that the Indians generally will object to the use of tractors, for they realize that the matter of great importance is to develop water, and not furnish employment.

There will, no doubt, be locations where Indian teams can be used to some extent. There will also be opportunity to employ quite a number of Navajos in the riprapping work required, and also in digging the shallow wells throughout the territory developed.

Rather than spend the money in shallow reservoirs built by Navajos, I think it would be highly advisable to purchase necessary equipment for drilling deep wells, and expend the available funds in carrying on such a program of work. However, our problem is to

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make the greatest possible area of range lands available for use in the shortest possible time, and in view of limited funds it appears that constructing deep reservoirs and digging shallow wells would be the advisable plan to follow at this time. Whenever water is developed so as to make the different sections of the range available I am quite certain that very little difficulty will be encountered in regulating the movement of stock over the range. The Indians, through their Chapter organizations, are very definitely realizing the need of concerted and immediate action in this matter.

It is believed that the greatest need for water development on this jurisdiction exists in the southwestern section, and it is the plan, as developed by Mr. Zah, Mr. Wennck and myself, to concentrate our efforts in developing adequate water through that country during the first year's work.

Very truly yours,

(Sgd.) JOHN G. HUNTER

John G. Hunter,
Superintendent.

JGH-FHH

cc: Mr. H. J. Hagerman,
Mr. Wm. H. Zah,
Mr. A. H. Wennck.

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