

# Hould FeedLot & Bull Center

Bruce & Linda Hould

HC 72 Box 7310

Malta, Mt. 59538

International Joint Commission,

July 27, 2004

Dear Joint commission members,

My name is Bruce Hould; I am from Malta Montana. I am a fourth generation farmer rancher, feedlot operator, and businessman. I have lived in Phillips Co. my entire life and on the same ranch west of Malta on the Milk River my entire life. The Milk River Basin is my life and my livelihood. I am here to urge you to carefully review the 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty between the United States and Canada. I am not asking that the whole treaty be changed I am asking that we the (United States) be given our fair share of the water that was designated to by that treaty in 1909. I would like to share with you one of the many devastating impacts that have occurred to our family operation because of the lack of water. As I mentioned I operate a small livestock feeding business that is custom oriented. I feed my own cattle but I also custom feed cattle for other ranchers. This is a business that has been going on for several years. During the spring and summer of 2001 due to excessive drought we were allocated only enough water to irrigate one third of our acres one time. I have a customer base that relies on our operation to care for their livestock. Without water that means no feed for livestock. I decided rather than not feed cattle for these producers I would have to buy additional feed to take those already committed livestock through the winter. Our operation annually produces an estimated 20,000 tons of feed. That year our feed costs went from an average of \$40,000 to well over \$250,000. Would the amount of water we are talking about in the 1909 treaty to make our share equal have made a difference? Probably not a huge difference but if it were to be put in the perspective of an additional five to ten percent of my acres that could have been irrigated I feel it would have amounted to an additional 800-1000 ton of feed that I would not have had to have purchased. Which in dollars equals \$50,000. It might not seem like a lot of water that we are talking about here but given the drought years we have been through every little drop helps us all survive until next year. Again I am not asking for additional irrigated acres, and I am not asking for more than our share I am asking for our share. Thankyou all for taking the time to address this issue.

Sincerely,

Bruce D. Hould

