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IDAHO FARM BUREAU FEDERATION
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Pocatello, Idaho 83205-4848 • (208) 232-7914
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April 24, 2000

USDA - Forest Service/CAET
RE: Unified Federal Policy for Watersheds
Building 2 Suite 295
5500 West Amelia Earhart Drive
Salt Lake City, UT 84116

Dear Sirs:

The Idaho Farm Bureau Federation representing 50,000 member Idaho families is concerned with the Unified Federal Policy for Watersheds. (UFP).

We note that 65 organizations and individuals joined with the Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts in a court challenge of the Clean Water Action Plan as being an overstep of authority and an invalid method of classifying watersheds into priority areas. The Idaho Farm Bureau Federation specifically object to the use of terms such as "vulnerability to degradation" and "extent of public interest" as being subjective, non-scientific and totally in-appropriate for classifying watersheds. We feel that the document makes no distinction between federal, state and private lands and fails to recognize water rights that are a vital part of Idaho law and private property rights in this state.

We are specifically concerned that this program continues to advance when it is under a court challenge and we feel this is both inappropriate and could lead to costly overreach of program authority that will be set aside by the court.

We are also concerned that this policy implementation is a far reaching mandate that will dictate water policy in this state and it is being pursued outside of the Congressional intent of the Clean Water Act. We feel there is no authority for this administration to instigate such far reaching water policy and that it is being done at the expense of multiple uses which is a vital part of this states heritage and economic well being.

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Branch Office: P.O. Box 167 • 500 W. Washington Street • Boise, Idaho 83701-0167 • (208) 342-2688

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The Idaho Farm Bureau Federation respectfully request that the Unified Federal Policy for Watersheds be withdrawn and that any proposed policy be totally within the mandates of the Clean Water Act.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please keep us informed regarding this proposal.

Sincerely,

Frank Priestley

Frank Priestley, President
Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

cc: IFBF Officers, Directors & Staff
County Presidents
IFBF Water Committee

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