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WATERSHED OF THE RAINIER FOREST RESERVE,
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Mr. TURNER presented the following

SENATE PAPERS RELATING TO THE WATERSHED OF THE RAINIER FOREST RESERVE, IN THE STATE OF WASHINGTON, AS AFFECTED BY THE GRAZING OF SHEEP AND OTHER LIVE STOCK ON SUCH RESERVE.

JUNE 10, 1902.—Referred to the Committee on Public Lands and ordered to be printed.

RESOLUTION OF THE YAKIMA COMMERCIAL CLUB, MARCH 4, 1902.

Resolved, That the secretary of this club be instructed to address the honorable Secretary of the Interior of the United States, setting forth in his letter that it is the sense of the Commercial Club of North Yakima that the watershed of the Rainier Forest Reserve in the State of Washington is being materially and permanently injured by the grazing of sheep and other live stock on such reserve; that such injury has had and is having the effects of diminishing the flow of water in the streams which are being used for the purpose of irrigating the arid lands tributary to such streams, to the permanent injury of the agricultural interests of this section; and to petition the Secretary to prohibit the further grazing of sheep and other stock on the reserve; and be it

Resolved, That this resolution shall not apply or refer to stock grazing on said reserve for or during the year 1902, which is not protested against.

Adopted March 4, 1902.

Yakima Valley is one of the richest and most productive irrigated districts in the world. Government reports show there are 1,250,000 acres of irrigable lands in the country. The county assessors' returns show less than 40,000 acres now irrigated; this amount is only a garden spot, compared to what may be brought into cultivation by high-line canals.

The continual decrease in the water flow of these streams, having their sources on the eastern slope of the Cascades in the Rainier Forest Reserve, is causing a shortage of water in many places in Yakima Valley during the irrigating season, and this fact delays the building of higher line canals, upon which the future development of our county depends.

The Yakima Husbandry Association, consisting of 200 members, which are all farmers living along the eastern borders of Rainier Forest Reserve, and who use the waters of the different streams flowing out of this reserve, at a regular meeting held at North Yakima, Wash., on May 3, 1902, passed the following resolution:

Whereas we, who have lived along these streams and used their waters for the last twenty years to irrigate our farms and are familiar with the mountains, note the destruction being done to the watershed on which this county depends for irrigation; therefore be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of this meeting that sheep grazing be prohibited on Rainier Forest Reserve after 1902.

Our reasons are that the grazing of large bands of sheep are destroying native grasses and covering our hillsides with their sharp hoof-prints while traveling and close cropping of grass while grazing.

The sources of streams, that before these mountains were grazed by sheep, had their thick covering of moss, shrubbery, and other vegetation, are now almost barren. Nothing left to hold back the melting snow, the water comes down in early floods, thereby causing a shortage of water during the season when most needed.

The report of Sydney Arnold, Government hydrographer, shows the estimated flow of Yakima River for the month of June for the years 1897, 1898, 1899, and 1900. The estimated flow of June 1, 1897, in cubic feet per second of time, was 14,030; in 1898, 9,534; in 1899, 11,030; in 1900, 3,390.

The same authorities' report also shows a continual decrease in the water flow of the Natchez River, with exception of 1901, which shows a small increase, accounted for by the different months in which he took the measurement.

The above figures show conclusively that the water flow in these streams is steadily decreasing. Those who were familiar with the conditions before sheep grazed these mountains, and know the conditions that exist there now, view with alarm the wanton destruction of the watershed of this reserve by sheep grazing.

The settlers who have lived along these streams and irrigated their farms for the last thirty years, know that the water flow has been steadily diminishing during the last twelve years, and if sheep grazing is continued in the reserve, irrigation must soon cease in many places in Yakima County, thereby ruining hundreds of homes and farms.

We believe Rainier Forest Reserve, with its timber and watershed, should be preserved for the benefit of agriculture and the good of the whole people, and not for a favored few, who are mostly transient residents and have no interest in the development of our country.

We will quote from the report of the committee appointed by the National Academy of Sciences, upon the inauguration of a forest policy for the forest lands of the United States, to the Secretary of the Interior, May 1, 1897, which we heartily indorse as facts. On page 18 it says:

Nomadic sheep husbandry has already damaged the mountain forests in those States and Territories where it has been largely practiced. Great bands of sheep often owned by foreigners who are temporary residents of this country, are driven in the spring into the high Sierras and Cascade ranges, feeding as they travel from the valleys at the foot of the mountains to the upper Alpine meadows. They carry desolation with them. Every blade of grass, the tender growing shoots of shrubs and seedling trees are eaten to the ground. The feet of these hooved locusts crossing and recrossing the faces of the steep slopes tramp out plants that sheep do not relish, and loosening the forest floors produce conditions favorable to floods. Their

destruction of the undergrowth of the forest and the sod of the Alpine meadows, hastens the melting of snow in the spring and quickens evaporation.

The pasturage of sheep in mountain forests thus increases floods in early summer, which carry away rapidly the water that under natural conditions would not reach the rivers until late in the season, when it is most needed for irrigation, and, by destroying the seedling trees on which permanency of the forest depends, prevent natural reproduction and therefore ultimately destroy the forests themselves.

In Oregon and Washington the injury to the public domain by illegal pasturages is usually increased by the methods of the shepherds, who now penetrate to the highest and most inaccessible slopes and alpine meadows, wherever a blade of grass can grow, and, before returning to the valleys below in the autumn, start fires to uncover the surface of the ground and stimulate the growth of herbage.

Pasturage of sheep in the Sierras and Cascade forests, by preventing their reproduction and increasing the number of fires, must inevitably so change the flow of streams heading in these mountains that they will become worthless for irrigation.

Other parts of the country have suffered almost as seriously from the nomadic sheep industry. Great flocks winter on the plains and sheltered canyons of the range country, and in spring, spreading out through eastern Oregon and Washington, have destroyed the herbage of the valleys and threaten the forests on the mountain ranges. The actual loss this industry inflicts on the country annually is thousands of acres of burnt timber, and in ruined pasture lands is undoubtedly large, although insignificant in comparison with its effects on the future of mountain forests, the flow of streams, and the agricultural possibilities of their valleys.

Grazing conditions in Yakima present the sad spectacle of a ruined public range, and the agricultural interests are threatened by the rapid decrease in the water flow and destruction of the watershed. We will also quote from the report of Mr. Fred G. Plummer, in the report of Mr. Henry Gannett, geographer, in the Twenty-first Annual Report of United States Geological Survey on Rainier Forest Reserve, where he calls attention to the humus in retarding surface drainage.

On the eastern slope in the watershed of Yakima River the surface flow continues to feed the river for three months after winter rains and snows are over. This is of immense importance in irrigation, it being estimated that a fall of 1 foot in this river affects 300,000 acres of land.

We wish to call attention to the fact that this humus is what the sheep destroy, and a fall of 1 foot in the river will be quickly brought on by continued sheep grazing. Within the borders of Rainier Forest Reserve are all the tributary streams and sources of the Natches and Tietan rivers, upon which hundreds of farms are dependent for irrigation. Thousands of unoccupied acres of the best agricultural lands adjacent to North Yakima are awaiting the higher line canals to bring these waters to them, which will add hundreds of additional homes for our people. We see the reckless destruction being done to the watershed of Rainier Forest Reserve by sheep grazing; the total indifference shown by the officials in charge of this reserve in this State, who have never made the sheep herders obey the rules laid down by the Department governing the grazing of sheep, but they allow them to roam at will and continue their wanton destruction.

While the Department at Washington, D. C., may think that by limited grazing of sheep under careful restrictions no permanent injury will be done to the timber and waterflow, this is unquestionably a mistake, for wherever sheep graze it is a notorious fact that they destroy all native grasses and other vegetation, and it is next to impossible to regulate or restrict them, as the majority of sheep owners are only temporary residents and migratory inhabitants showing no interest in the preservation of the forests and waterflow, or the development of the country; they are here to-day and there to-morrow.

Therefore we feel that the future welfare of Yakima Valley demands

that sheep grazing be prohibited on Rainier Forest Reserve; that the reserve be enlarged at the headwaters of the smaller streams and along its eastern borders, and extended on the north to connect with the Washington Reserve, thereby including the entire watershed of Yakima River, thus forever protecting these waters for the use of irrigation for the people. This is the only salvation for Kittitas and Yakima valleys. We ask the Government not to allow it to be destroyed, that a migratory class of sheep owners may enrich themselves by robbing posterity of its inheritance.

DANIEL SINCLAIR, *President*,
E. B. MARKS, *Secretary*.

NORTH YAKIMA, WASH., *April 28, 1902.*

DEAR SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith copy of article prepared by me and published in the Seattle Times, November 9, 1901, giving full report of the Rainier Forest Reserve question.

The men interviewed were the leading citizens of the country in which the water is diminishing annually. They are ready to make oaths to the facts as set forth in that article if necessary.

I send you this, as I have heard from J. D. Medill that you were desirous of getting some data on the Rainier Forest Reserve controversy. The matter was taken up by me some months ago, and several news articles were prepared for papers for which I was correspondent.

I sent all the clippings and what information I had gleaned to the Secretary of the Interior, who acknowledged receipt, and stated in the many letters that they had been referred to the Commissioner of Public Lands.

When the matter came up for consideration I am informed that it was represented that I had prepared the petitions (which was correct), and that I was only a newspaper correspondent (which was correct). I am proud of the fact that I am a newspaper correspondent, and wish to state right here that I would not exchange positions with any sheep man or his political protectors in the whole world. Money making at the expense of the people never was considered a laudible ambition with me; hence I have not so much wealth as some political parasites, but I am an American citizen, and have a perfect right to petition any power in the United States when I see the people trampled upon by protected foreign corporations.

I have no connection with the cattle men; never attended a meeting; never have been given a postage stamp or assurance of anything in any shape, manner, or form. It is not a fight between sheep men and stockmen, but a fight of the people for their homes and farms. Not one man has even donated a stamp for my work, and I never have asked anyone for assistance. I am not a paid lobbyist in any sense. I alone am the man who has prepared the articles and sent to the Secretary of the Interior, and did it solely in the interest of the people, without even consulting any class of individuals. I own my home, which is more than many sheep men do.

Since my writings have been published the Yakima Husbandry Association has been organized for the purpose of trying to get the forest reserve protected. These men are not cattle men, but farmers, who are interested in preserving their homes.

In politics I am a Republican (or always have been in the past); have edited Republican newspapers and was for a long time agricultural editor of the *Irrigation Age*. I have seen the humbuggery of this forest reserve business, and have attempted to inform the proper officials, with the result that I am dubbed "an agitator and dangerous man." I have no political aspirations and do not attend caucuses of any nature. At the present time I have no politics except that of the people.

The fact has been established beyond any question of doubt that sheep injure the forest reserve. It has also been shown, by the report of the Government hydrographer, that the water has decreased over one-half. The testimony of scores of old farmers can be added to this. Yet, in the face of the whole thing, Republicans, with Congressman Jones at the lead, say that the forests are not injured by sheep grazing, and the matter will have to be settled by experts.

An expert is regarded here as a sheep pimp. They come here and are met by sheepmen, entertained by sheepmen, and stuffed with the water subject by sheepmen. I attempted for nearly one whole day to have an interview with Coville when he was here, but the sheepmen kept him away from everybody not favorable to that industry. A. J. Splawn had a short talk in the Hotel Yakima with Coville, and left him to a half dozen sheepmen. I was trying to catch him, and heard the sheepmen telling him that Splawn was an agitator and cattleman, interested only on the range for himself.

The whole thing is a perfect farce and humbug from start to finish. Rangers are employed by the Government, at from \$60 to \$90 per month, to watch the country allotted free to sheepmen, and keep away farmers' stock. R. K. Nichols, the supervisor, even asked permission to impound farmers' stock found on the reserve—the people's heritage.

Even if the watershed was not being destroyed, why should a lot of sheepmen be given free range on the property of the people to grow Government-made mutton and Government-made wool, to ship East in competition with farmers who raise sheep and wool on lands costing them \$100 an acre?

The Western Congressmen and Senators are asking national aid for building reservoirs and putting dangerous devices in the canyons to break and destroy the lands below, when all the people want or need is the protection of the natural forests. If you sift the irrigation bills to the bottom you will find they are mere subterfuges to hide the real fact that the entire irrigated West is being destroyed by the free grazing of nearly 25,000,000 highly protected sheep owned generally by foreign syndicates and wealthy barons who care nothing for farmers or their water supply.

Please excuse me for this long sermon on the Cascade Mount, but I have investigated it so thoroughly for the past fifteen years in this and other States, that I find it the greatest humbug ever perpetrated on the American people to give all the Western watersheds over to the sheepmen for complete destruction and then ask the Government for aid to build enigmatical reservoirs which are nothing but makeshift failures.

I hope you will continue to assist the people as you have been doing and hope to meet you sometime so that you may become personally acquainted with that "newspaper correspondent, dangerous man, and

agitator," which my very dear Republican friends have the audacity to honor me in giving me such distinguished titles.

Most respectfully, yours,

JOEL SHOMAKER.

Hon. GEORGE TURNER,

Washington, D. C.

The Rainier Forest Reserve is being denuded of vegetation, and the water supply of the eastern slope of the Cascades is diminishing annually through sheep grazing. Five hundred farmers residing on the Cöwiche, Atahman, and Wenas creeks have entered protests against the destruction of their homes and farms. Petitions have been sent to the Secretary of the Interior, asking for relief and the closing of the forest reserve against sheep grazing. The actual home builders of the entire county of Yakima are indignant over the continued action of those who should be forest reserve protectors. One quarter million head of sheep have been given free pasturage on the reserve for three months during the year, and rangers have been employed to keep farmers from trespassing on the lands allotted to shepherds.

The Rainier Forest Reserve includes a large area of the Cascades in central Washington. The eastern slopes are the headwaters of many streams supplying water for irrigating Yakima Valley. By a wise order from Congress the country occupied was set apart by Grover Cleveland as a heritage for the people. Fifty-two such reserves have been created, and it is reported that of that number only three are used for private herding grounds of sheepmen. In California, Utah, Colorado, and other irrigated districts, forest supervisors have excluded sheep from all sections of the forest reserve where the mountains are the headwaters for irrigating streams. In the management of the Rainier Reserve the opposite course is pursued. Sheep are given the eastern slopes, where they can and do destroy the watershed, and are kept off the western section, where water is not needed for the purpose of irrigating the lands.

Yakima Valley comprises one of the richest and most productive irrigated districts of the world. The Government reports show that there are 1,250,000 acres of irrigable lands in the county. The county assessors' returns indicate that only 45,398 acres have been tilled and improved. Of this area at least 15,000 acres are used for wheat lands in the Horse Heaven country, and not irrigated. The irrigated fields upon which water is applied from canals and artesian wells do not exceed 40,000 acres, and, judging from the assessors' books, are even less than 30,000 acres. In this irrigated belt are approximately 17,000 people, dependent entirely on agricultural products that can be grown only by the aid of irrigation. The average rainfall is less than 8 inches annually, and the moisture is not sufficient without artificial irrigation to produce any of the fruits or cereals for which Yakima is noted.

A quarter of a century ago the streams flowing through the Yakima Valley were bank full of water all the year. The high waters of summer came during the first two weeks in July, and then the rise of rivers and creeks was gradual. In 1886 and 1887 several large bands of sheep were driven in by strangers and grazed on the eastern slope of the Cascades. During these years the country was burned over,

and forest fires were visible everywhere. Some of the fires, it is alleged, were kindled for the purpose of burning off the country for ranges the following year. Other fires came from the desire to destroy the range to prevent others coming in. In many places the fires were permitted to rage through the forests from actual carelessness. The country was burned over and made desolate. Vegetation and timber were destroyed, and the snow left the mountains so quickly in 1889 that some of the streams were perfectly dry throughout the summer months.

Since the beginning of sheep grazing and the consequent natural destruction of the grasses, small trees, and the burning of the forest, the water supply has diminished until litigation has ensued, some lands have been deserted, and the homes of the people have been in danger. The water supply is befouled by careless bedding of sheep, the throwing in of dead carcasses, and the washings from the mountain slopes into the streams carrying water to the farmers below. Many of the most dreaded diseases in other lands are attributed to these results of sheep grazing, and the residents of the valleys near the Cascade Mountains believe that the health of their families is endangered by the use of such water for culinary purposes. The decrease of water has been so noticeable that two canal companies have forces of men employed in sinking the head gates of their canals and building dams across the river Naches in order that any water can be obtained next year.

The Yakima Republic published under date of June 15, 1900, the following statement, taken from the report of the Government hydrographer:

Sydney Arnold, Government hydrographer, has prepared a comparative statement showing the estimated flow of the Yakima River for the month of June in the years 1897-1899 and a part of this month. There is a suggestive disparity in the flow of the present June 1 and the same day for the previous years. The estimated flow on June 1, 1897, was in cubic feet, per second or second-feet, about 50 California miners' inches: was in 1897, 14,030; in 1898, 9,534; in 1899, 11,030, and in 1900 only 3,390. On the 7th day of June it was only a flow of 4,351 cubic feet per second, and Mr. Arnold believes there will be but little additional rise owing to the absence of snow in the mountains. There is food for reflection in these figures, and storage reservoirs may in time become a general necessity.

The farmers of the Wenas, Cowiche, and Atahnam valleys became alarmed at the rapidly decreasing supply of water for irrigating purposes every year. Those having prior claims to appropriations sought the protection of the courts, and general litigation ensued. In former years, before the country was burned over and the grasses destroyed, the water came gradually into the streams and increased in flow until the middle of July. During the past few years the snow has melted so quickly, because of no shade or protection, as to send down the high waters in April and May, and last spring the freshets were in March. When a warm day comes in January the snow melts and swells the streams, because there is nothing left to hold back the moisture. The conditions became so alarming that in May, 1901, the following petition was forwarded to the Secretary of the Interior:

We, the undersigned farmers, property owners, citizens, and voters of Yakima County, Wash., hereby request that the Secretary of the Interior prohibit sheep grazing on the Rainier Forest Reserve, at the headwaters of the Cowiche, Atahnam, and Wenas creeks. Our reasons for asking this are that the range is being destroyed by sheep grazing, and the actual settlers are robbed of the privileges that should be theirs—of feeding their stock on the Government range contiguous to their farms; the watershed is being denuded, so that the snow is melted away in early spring and

the water supply is short during the summer months, when most needed, and the litigation over water rights is very burdensome to the people. These conditions have been increasing every year since sheep grazing was permitted on the Cascade Mountains, and have become alarming to our people. The sheep pull up and destroy the arid grasses and lay waste the entire country wherever they are permitted to graze.

We further ask that the proposed opening of two townships on the Rainier Forest Reserve for settlement be not permitted, as the lands are situated at the heads of the streams used below for irrigation purposes, and there is practically no agricultural lands that may be used as homesteads. The people need the entire benefits of the reserve as a natural water preserver. Our farming lands are utterly worthless without plenty of water for irrigation purposes. The forest reserve, if properly preserved, is sufficient to give all the reservoirs we need, and we insist upon this being held as sacred ground, for the benefit of the actual settlers making their homes on the streams fed by the snows of this reserve.

For the relief, as above mentioned, we, your petitioners will ever pray.

The petition was signed by 95 per cent of the actual settlers living on the C owiche Creek; 97 per cent of those living on the Abtanum, and 70 per cent of the farmers of the Wenas Valley. Names were appended without any political significance, and Republicans and Democrats joined in the effort to save their homes from destruction. To make the petitions more secure affidavits were made by well-known residents of each district to the effect that the signatures were genuine and the people were bona fide residents of those valleys. The papers were sent to Washington, but no action was taken on them and no acknowledgment of their filing was received by the senders. It is now alleged that one of the officials from this State guaranteed, in payment of a political debt, that the petitions should be pigeonholed and not acted upon by the Department.

In response to inquiries made in Washington, The Times correspondent is informed that after due investigation permits were given for the sheep grazing on the Rainier Forest Reserve in May, 1901. The report of R. K. Nichols, of this city, a deputy supervisor of the Rainier Reserve, is to the effect that 257,000 sheep, 5,652 cattle, and 240 horses were grazed during the season which closed October 1, 1901. There were 81 leases made to sheepmen last May and 62 made to owners of horses and cattle. The sheepmen represent temporary rangers, and the horse and cattle men are actual farmers, residing in Yakima County. Applications for cattle ranges are made by men owning from 5 to 450 head, the majority being farmers with less than 50 head of stock. If proper investigations had been made the supervisors would have discovered that the real farmers were never consulted as to the denuding of the forests or destruction of the range.

Frederick V. Coville, an expert from the Department of Agriculture, recently made a tour of investigation through this county for the alleged purpose of learning facts concerning grazing conditions. He was met at the Hotel Yakima by a delegation of sheepmen, who gave him the desired information. The Times correspondent attempted to interview him, but he was spirited away by the secretary of the woolgrowers' association and kept until night in looking over the artesian wells of the Moxee. At night he was taken into the country with the president of the woolgrowers and kept until time to take the train for other fields. Several farmers attempted to get a glimpse of the man who was from the Department of Agriculture, but he was in ambush. I. A. McCrum, of Portland, is an officer in charge of the forest reserve. He came here several months ago and announced that he intended inspecting the Rainier Forest Reserve. The snow was

perhaps 6 feet on the reserve and he returned, after a consultation with sheepmen. Thus the evil effects of sheep grazing have been duly inspected and reported to the Secretary of the Interior.

The Times has been making some investigations of the forest-reserve conditions and the effects of sheep grazing on the farmers of Yakima Valley. For that purpose a number of the oldest and most respected citizens have been interviewed by a special representative. They are selected among the many because of their varied interests and differing politics. The statements made by these men can be confirmed by many hundreds of representative farmers, fruit growers, hop ranchers, and others engaged in respectable business in the county of Yakima. Their experiences extend over a period of thirty years and must be of value in reporting on the conditions of the forest reserve.

A. J. Lewis is one of the oldest farmers on the Cowiche Creek. He says:

I have resided in this county for twenty-six years and have the same opinion now that I have always entertained. Sheep grazing is ruining the country, spoiling the watershed, and creating disease. The sheep kill the grass so that it never comes again. Horses and cattle bite off the grass and it comes out again. The water supply is failing every year and is getting lighter all the time. The high waters come much earlier every spring. There is more of it at a time and it gets away quicker. I do not believe that the Cowiche will ever be entirely deserted by farmers, but if the present conditions keep up for a few years the working people—those who depend on their farms for a living—will have to leave. I am not engaged in the range business and have neither cattle nor sheep to feed on the Government land. They say that we need the taxes of the sheepmen. If the present condition is kept up there will not be grass or water for the sheepmen or farmer. Let us protect the watershed.

W. G. Griffiths has been a resident of the Ahtanum since 1879. He says:

During my residence of twenty-two years on the Ahtanum and Cowiche creeks I have noticed that the water has diminished and the high periods have come much earlier. Ten or fifteen years ago we had plenty of forest fires. The whole country seemed to be on fire. We had very few fires this year because there was nothing to burn. The whole country has been burned over and timber destroyed. The only thing there is to keep back the snow in the mountains is the cold, backward spring. If we have a warm day in March the water comes down and there is none left for summer. Three days ago I went over the mountains to Louis Christensen's ranch at the head of the Cowiche and never saw a sprig of bunch grass. The country is now entirely barren, where ten years ago it was covered with plenty of grass. My opinion is that the forest reserve will soon be destroyed if present conditions are kept up. I think the reserve should be extended down the mountain for 10 miles, and then protected from sheep grazing.

J. J. Wiley has been engaged in general farming and stock raising on the Ahtanum for the past twenty years. He says:

My father homesteaded on the Ahtanum over thirty years ago. I was raised there and have been engaged in farming and stock raising for nearly a quarter of a century. Last year we took a band of 800 stock into the Okonogan country, because the Rainier Forest Reserve was so nearly exhausted that there was no feed left. I can take a man who wants to see the effects of sheep grazing and show him where we formerly wallowed in grass there is nothing at present but dry sand, the country being perfectly bare and worthless. Where once there was plenty of bunch grass the country is now bare and nothing can live on the desolate range. We never had any trouble over the water until 1889, two years after the country was burned over by forest fires and the grass was killed out by sheep grazing. Where there was in former years great snow banks in July the snow is now gone in April. The Ahtanum is probably the worst sufferer from such grazing, as it is a short stream and the head waters are not very high up in the Cascades. There should be greater efforts made to preserve the water supply on this stream because of the short course it runs. Reservoirs, about which some people delight to talk, are not practicable on the head waters of the Wenas, Ahtanum, or Cowiche. I know this because I tramped all over

the country a few years ago as a guide for William Ham Hall, the noted California irrigation engineer. We were looking for sites for reservoirs for the Sunnyside Canal people and could not find any at the head of these streams. Reservoirs are not practicable and the only way to get water is to protect the forest reserve.

P. L. Zirkle has made his home on the Cowiche Creek for the past eight years. He says:

Eight years ago I bought 182 acres of land from "Uncle George Taylor." We investigated the water supply in August and found there was an abundance. At that time there was at least 100 miners' inches flowing by my place. Since then the water decreased until there is absolutely none within 5 miles of my place in August. Mr. Taylor saw the way the water had decreased and that my land was not worth what it was supposed to have been at the time of our contract, and he deducted \$1,200 from the principal and at least \$1,000 from the interest, as he did not wish to cheat me in the deal. I am a comparatively new man on the creek, but I do know that the water supply has been failing every year since I purchased my land.

V. D. Ritter has been a resident of the Wenas Valley for twenty-two years, and is engaged in general farming. He says:

In June, 1884, we put a dam in the Wenas Creek and took out a ditch for irrigating purposes. At that time there was an abundance of water. We could swim a horse in the creek and spare water for everybody. Now the court has ordered that we stop using water in June as there is not enough for the first appropriators. Ten years ago the headwaters of the Wenas were covered with a dense growth of timber; now it is a dry burn. The country was then covered with grass and sunflowers; now it is barren and worthless. We have our high waters early in the spring, and have even a rise in the creek in January, due to the barrenness of the country. A few years ago a sheep man was two hours in passing through a small basin in the Wenas because of the high grass making it difficult for his sheep to get through. Now it is a dry, barren spot, covered only with sand and perfectly worthless. A few years ago I camped for two weeks at the head of the Wenas, in the Cascades, and saw plenty of game, including four bear and some deer. This year I camped at the same place and saw nothing. The country is so eaten out and destroyed that game can not live. This is due to sheep grazing.

H. D. Winchester has been a resident of Yakima County since 1883. He says:

I have neither sheep nor cattle and am in no way interested in the grazing question of the forest reserve. I am interested in the water supply, however, and can say this: If you want to destroy the watershed entirely, let the same course of sheep grazing be continued for the next ten years, and there will be no water for the use of anyone. I have traveled a great deal in the mountains and have seen the forest fires and the effects of sheep grazing.

Matt Stanton is one of the oldest and most respected citizens of Yakima. He came to the valley in 1869 and has witnessed all the changes of water and forest reserve. He says:

When I first came here I spent much of the time in the mountains. There was plenty of water for all purposes and to irrigate the entire county. The high waters came down into the valleys then about July 1 to 15, just at the time when a good supply was most needed. In 1886-87 the sheepmen came into the country and burned off the timber. Since then the high waters have come in April and May, when not needed for irrigation purposes. This year the high water came the last week in March, and the water ran away before the people could use it. The underbrush of the mountains is all gone and there is nothing to hold the moisture. I want to predict that if this sheep grazing is not stopped, in ten years there will not be any farmers in the Wenas, Cowiche, or Ahtanum valley.

J. F. Marks has been a resident of the Ahtanum Valley for thirty years and is known as one of the respected citizens. He says:

I have been a resident of this valley thirty years the 15th of last July. I have traveled back and forth over the mountains of eastern Washington and have traveled over the mountains of Washington, Idaho, and Oregon in the past forty-eight years. Have been a farmer all the time, and raise grain, hay, cattle, dairy cows

and pigs, and fruits. During the period of from 1871 to 1887-88 the streams of the Yakima Valley ran bank full from early spring until the last of July, and there was plenty of water the remainder of the year. Since 1888 the streams have been decreasing in the flow of water. During the years from 1871 to 1888 I had to swim the Ahtanum River on horseback to cross the stream; now it is quite different. Both the Yakima and Natches rivers flow less every year. I predict that when the available lands of the Yakima and tributary streams are irrigated, the channel of that big stream will be as dry at Prosser as the streets of North Yakima, and the country will have more typhoid fever than it can stand. Yet in the face of these conditions it seems strange that some people who claim to be citizens will say that there was more water in the Yakima Valley streams this year than ever before. The natural supposition is that such statements must emanate from selfish motives. Men who make these statements know that the decrease of water supply is due to the destruction of the watershed of the eastern slope of the Cascades done by sheep grazing and burning the timber.

The sheepmen say there were no fires in the mountains during the past summer. The reason for this is that there are very few bodies of timber left that can be burnt, and every man who has ever investigated the matter knows the sentiment of the farmers on the proposition. Any man who has taken special notice of sheep ranges can see and does see that all the moss and fine leaves and litter on the ground that formerly formed a coating and held water and snow back until late in the summer, has been tramped to dust or lays in windrows like a hayrake had been worked on it. The springs have gone dry every summer since these conditions have existed, and the brush thickets and small groves around the springs are dead. I ask where will the million population that the Yakima country could support in good health, with all the blessings it was once endowed with and then protected, turn to when they are all destroyed and the country becomes a sickly barren waste? The Yakima country must be irrigated or it is worthless, and unless we protect and improve our watershed the water will fail entirely.

The grass range in the mountains is of secondary consideration to farming and cattle raising, for without water we can not raise feed for winter use. Egypt is a desert country by reason of the natural blessings of that country being destroyed. The Arabian countries and a large part of Russia charge most of their desert conditions to the destruction of the forests and grasses, and Germany is spending millions of dollars every year in reforesting.

The timber supply in Yakima and Kittitas counties is a matter of grave concern to the people. From 1870 to 1885 we thought there was an ample supply on the hills adjacent to the valleys, but since that time all the best of it has been swept away by fire, and sheep herding on the land prevents the young trees from growing or even sprouting. There is no chance to grow up or improve a forest while sheep are grazed where the timber should grow.

Hon. A. J. Splawn, member of the State fair commission, is one of the oldest and most respected residents of Yakima County. He says to the Times correspondent:

I am a resident of Cowiche Valley and am familiar with the Rainier Forest Reserve. I know the conditions existing before the reserve was created and know the present conditions. The setting apart of this mountainous region as a reserve was one of the wise things done by our Government, for without this watershed Yakima County would be a barren waste. Those living along the smaller streams are even now face to face with the fact—a shortage of water for irrigation. The same condition applies to larger streams, though not so noticeable at present. Those using water from the Yakima and Natches rivers have for several years past run their wing dams further out in the stream to get water into their ditches, where formerly they had only to open their headgates and the water rushed in. People who have not been here long do not know that every year for the past ten the water has been decreasing, but such is true. Having lived in this county for the last forty years, I know of what I speak. It is time the people were awakening to the danger that threatens their watershed.

What has brought about this sad state of affairs? The grazing of sheep on the Rainier forest reserve which was set apart for the protection of timber and our watershed. Why should this be permitted year after year, and a few sheepmen, very few of whom have any homes or farms in our county, or are identified with any enterprise, or assist in any way in upbuilding the country, be allowed to cause this destruction, which will render valueless thousands of homes and farms? How much longer will the Secretary of the Interior be deceived by officials in charge of this reserve? Let us hope no longer.

What were the conditions before this was set apart as a reserve? The mountains

and hillsides were covered with timber and native grasses, the sources of the streams, which have a basin-like formation, were covered with a thick carpet of grass, moss, and other vegetation, which held back the water. Alas, the change. Now those same mountains and hillsides are barren of grasses, the reserve is being grazed to death, and its water supply is diminishing year by year. Sheep grazing is killing the native grasses by eating and trampling them out by the roots, while the grazing in the forest kills thousands of young trees.

The mountain slopes present a sad spectacle, completely tramped out, and for miles can only be seen the sheep trails, leaving the bare hillsides. The consequence is a sudden melting of the snow, the water rushes down, causing floods instead of furnishing a gradual and steady water supply during the irrigating season.

But few places on the Rainier Forest Reserve can one find grass sufficient for a saddle horse save perhaps where some sheep herder has guarded a sacred spot for his own horses, but before leaving camp he grazed that off also.

One thing is very noticeable. Instructions from the Interior Department plainly state that sheep must not be corralled within 500 yards of living springs or running water. This part is completely ignored and sheep herders make a practice of bedding their sheep on these spots. D. B. Shellar, superintendent of the reserve, was asked by sheepmen regarding this particular clause of instructions, and he said, "The instructions read not to corral, which does not imply that you can not bed your sheep there." This hint was sufficient.

Some of our local papers state that the grazing season has ended very satisfactorily and farmers have no complaints. Allow me to say that those editors are not looking for facts or they are willfully misrepresenting the situation, for 95 per cent of the actual settlers living on the Cowiche Creek, 97 per cent living on the Ahtanum, and about 70 per cent living on the Wenas Creek—those streams having their sources in the Rainier Forest Reserve—have signed petitions to the Secretary of the Interior asking that sheep grazing be no longer allowed at the source of these streams. To these petitions are affixed about 500 names and all live in the immediate vicinity of North Yakima, the farthest not more than 20 miles away.

I notice in the report of Supervisor R. K. Nichols that he recommends the taking up and selling of stray stock that may be found on the Rainier Forest Reserve. Surely Mr. Nichols is ready for empire. For monumental nerve and gall that proposition stands unparalleled. Surely the American people have not lost their rights. I sincerely hope his recommendations will not be considered, for he would allow 30 or 40 sheep owners to totally destroy the whole forest reserve and close his eyes to facts that he should report to the Government; but he would be on the alert for anything out of line from some poor farmer who can not pasture his stock and turns them on the public domain and by chance they should stray on the reserve. Let us look for justice and fair dealing from a higher authority.

In the face of all the facts submitted, and many more evidences that come from every disinterested farmer, fruiter, hop grower, gardener, and other agriculturist who has investigated the forest reserve and water supply, the Government officials report that sheep do not injure the reserve. D. P. Shellar and R. K. Nichols, who have the reserve in charge, have been highly praised by the sheep men in a set of complimentary resolutions for their efforts in behalf of that class of reserve grazers, but the farmers have never consented to such statements that the reserve has been handled satisfactorily. It is generally considered as one of the worst political humbugs ever perpetrated upon the people of Yakima County to permit politicians to lease out the forest reserve, free of rental, to a favored few, and permit them to destroy the watershed and ruin the country.

The farmers are led to believe that the reserve is conducted as a political machine for a favored few by the fact that the petitions have never been acted upon and no effort has been made to remedy the evils which threaten to depopulate Yakima Valley, which should be one of the richest agricultural sections of the world.

Congressman W. L. Jones, to whom the matter was referred, last May, on his return from Washington, was interviewed for the Yakima Republic, and has this to say:

With regard to the discussion over injury to the forest reserve through stock grazing I would say that I had heard nothing of the matter until I was within a

short distance of home. In Washington the Department seems to be well satisfied with the experience of previous years and the reports of its inspectors and Supervisor Shellar. Of course, whether the water supply is endangered is a question of fact to be determined solely by engineers and specialists from Washington. As I say the Department seems to be of the opinion that the present restrictions are sufficient to insure protection of the watershed.

The people who have resided here for the past quarter of a century and witnessed the decrease of water, the abandoning of lands because of the loss of water, the denuding and devastation of the country by sheep grazing and forest fires know more about actual conditions than experts sent from Washington. When engineers and experts come here and talk to sheep men they naturally learn all about the watershed and the destruction of grasses on the forest reserve. When they come in the winter and inspect the reserve from the office of the sheep men's literary apostle, Col. L. S. Howlett, it is natural to suppose they see the effects of grazing 6 feet under the snow and 50 miles away from the reserve. In the minds of 85 per cent of the home builders of Yakima County the subject is one of grave importance, and they are united, regardless of political faith, in their efforts to protect their homes and properties from invading shepherds.

The sheep industry should be an adjunct to agriculture, and farmers should be the sheep men of central Washington. At the present no farmer is engaged in the industry, and the range grazing is inimical to his business. It is reported that an addition of twenty or more foreign sheep owners has been made to the already too large number at Prosser, expecting to use the Government reserve and its ranges for protection next year. A great danger overshadows the farmers, and it is a question whether Yakima shall become a desert waste in a few years or remain the greatest agricultural and horticultural irrigated district in the world. If sheep grazing continues the farmers will be compelled to leave their homes for want of water to grow crops. The people are looking to their Congressmen and State Senators for relief and to the Government for protection to their homes and families.

JOEL SHOMAKER.

NORTH YAKIMA, WASH., *May 29, 1902.*

DEAR SIR: Relative to the agitation in regard to the matter of excluding sheep and cattle from the Rainier Forest Reserve on account of the damage done by grazing, I wish to state that in my opinion and in that of all disinterested persons there is no doubt whatever that the water shed is materially and permanently injured by such grazing, due to the destruction of vegetation and underbrush, and that the flow of water in the streams that are drawn on for irrigation purposes is gradually being lessened, or it would perhaps be more correct to say that the flow of water is not available for irrigation at the time when most needed, due to the earlier melting of the snow uncovered and unprotected by the natural growths on the mountain sides.

I base this opinion on correspondence in my possession with an ex-forest ranger; on conversations that I have had with miners and hunters who have been familiar with this region for years and who have carefully noted the effect that grazing has had on the vegetation, and on my own observation of the utter extermination of all vegetation on all lands that have been grazed over, especially by sheep, whether it be in the mountains or in the valleys.

I firmly believe that the enormous agricultural interests of this section demand that the grazing of stock on the forest reserves should be prohibited and that the permanency of these interests depends on such action.

Yours, very truly,

O. A. FECHTER,
Mayor of North Yakima.

HON. GEORGE TURNER,
Washington, D. C.

NORTH YAKIMA, *May 29, 1902.*

DEAR SIR: I am heartily in sympathy with your views of the grazing question on the Rainier Forest Reserve, and can indorse and know to be true all the facts forwarded to you of this date by the Yakima Husbandry and Cattle Association. I have lived in Yakima County for over thirty-five years, and have watched the country develop from almost a wilderness to a prosperous country of more than 15,000 people to-day, who depend wholly on irrigation. To make our farms productive we must have water, which is unquestionably becoming less every year from the effects of sheep grazing in large herds on the reserve, which is the natural and only protection to the watersheds of our water supply. Protect our waters properly, and we can build schoolhouses where to-day you see nothing but the sheep herder and his herd. By the denuding of the hills so the snow does not have the natural and proper protection to hold it until late in the season, when water is most needed for irrigation as it did before sheep were grazed in such herds as to ruin the country by grazing and tramping the vegetation and grasses all off the mountains.

From 1868 until about 1890 we always had the highest waters in June and July, but now for the last ten or twelve years, since sheep appeared at the heads of our streams in great herds, our highest waters come with the first warm weather in early summer.

From the size of the petitions forwarded to the Department by our association asking that sheep be prohibited from the reserve you will know that sheep grazing has always been allowed under a very strong protest by the farmers. Why should the east side of the mountain slope be ruined by sheep grazing at the expense of a prosperous county when grazing is not allowed on the west slope where there is more rain than what is beneficial?

Yours, very respectfully,

JAMES J. WILEY.

HON. GEORGE TURNER,
Washington, D. C.

NORTH YAKIMA, WASH., *May 27, 1902.*

Am a resident of Wenos Valley, in Yakima County, Wash.; have lived there for thirty-one years; am a farmer.

I knew the conditions of the mountains of Rainier Forest Reserve since 1853, and am familiar with these mountains now. Before sheep grazed these mountains the hillsides and along the streams had a thick covering of native grasses, underbrush, and other vegetation,

and at sources of the small tributaries of Tietan and Natchez rivers had a thick covering of grass, brush, weeds, moss, and other vegetation, which held back the melting snow, thereby letting the water flow off gradually, which furnished an abundance of water during the irrigating season. These places now show the sad havoc of sheep grazing.

Nothing left to hold back the snow, it comes down in early spring, causing floods, especially along the smaller streams. I have traveled over all of this reserve many times since 1867. Where formerly deer, goats, and birds were often met with, now there is no deer or goats to be seen, and the birds have about all disappeared. The fur-bearing animals no longer inhabit these mountains and streams.

My observations are that the reserve is being fast destroyed. Thousands of seedling trees and covering of soil humus are being destroyed and tramped out by the roots. Bare hills and underbrush all gone is the sight that meets one's eyes while traveling over this reserve. No grass can scarcely be found for horse feed where one camps for night.

In my opinion, if sheep are allowed to graze this reserve and continue the destruction in comparison to what damage they have already done to the timber and water flow in last ten years, these streams will become useless for irrigation.

DAVID LONGMIRE.

I came to Yakima County in 1876 and located near 6 miles west of North Yakima. About fourteen years ago I bought land on Cowiche Creek and have resided here continuously since. When I first came over here the water in the spring used to come out gradually as the weather got warm, but of late years the snow seems to all come out at once and wash out roads and bridges and do other mischief; and we have looked for the cause of the change in the waters, and have concluded the undergrowth on the mountains used to hold the snow, but since the sheep grazing has kept the undergrowth eat down and the mossy dates at the top of the little draws tramped and destroyed, the places where soil used to be porous and springy are now denuded of vegetation and packed as hard as a wagon road, so when a thaw comes it all comes down together, and, instead of being the life and source of all that is good, brings desolation and disappointment to those dependent on the snow water for their existence, and if it is allowed to continue as at present there is only one outcome in store, and that is the same as has been the experience of the mountain districts of other countries where the growth was all destroyed and the valleys made uninhabitable from lack of water to irrigate in the hottest summer months.

THOMAS FEAR.

NORTH YAKIMA, WASH., *May 16, 1902.*

I have lived on my farm in this valley since 1876. I have been all this time a farmer and stockman. From 1876 up to 1886-87 the conditions of the timber and brush thickets all over the mountains was good and the watershed was ample to protect the snow. There was a great abundance of grass and forage of all kinds all over the mountains.

The streams raised full during June and run full till some time in July, and we had plenty of water during the fall and winter.

Since 1886-87 most of the timber has been burnt over and a great deal destroyed, and most of the brush on the small branches and springs is killed and the grass and all forage growth pretty well destroyed, which I consider has been done by sheepmen and overstocking with sheep, and the watersheds are mainly destroyed.

With plenty of water this country is and will be a very prosperous country, and without water to irrigate with it will be worthless.

Since 1888 the streams raise from 1st of March to 1st of May and run down during June and July.

As a rule the sheepmen don't want to allow any grazing range to the farmers separately or apart from their grazing.

J. F. McCLURE.

MACKLIN, WASH., *May 17, 1902.*

DEAR SIR: If I may be admitted to say a few words in relation to the forest reserve, I shall be favored.

First, I have hunted for game, fur, and minerals in the Cascades from Snoqualmie Pass to Mount St. Helens for more than thirty years. In 1900 and 1901 I was a forest ranger in employ of Department of the Interior, and I think I know something of the region. Wherever sheep have been in the mountains the verdure is gone, totally destroyed. Don't pooh, pooh! Go and see. Cattle do great injury, but sheep destroy the vegetation. I have often talked with the herders; they admit that it is so, "but what is it to us; we work for wages." I know of numerous small streams that always were fine brooks until vegetation was destroyed by sheep and fires that got started accidentally (!) near sheep camps. Afterwards wind and sun carried away the water. No longer protected, the water courses are dry.

I know what I am talking about. The soil in the mountain region is light and shallow. Sheep pull up the grass; it dies, and the ground is left bare. Don't jump up and dispute with me because some friend of yours wants to feed stock in the reserve, or he won't vote for a certain man, and he has a "pull," but go up there, ride around far and wide, eyes open, and see how much I have misrepresented the matter.

A. P. CARR.

Hon. O. A. FECHTER,
North Yakima.

AHTANUM, WASHINGTON, *May 17, 1902.*

I have lived in this valley since 1879; have farmed and raised stock all the time. Am well acquainted all over this country, mountains and valleys.

From 1879 up to 1887 there was plenty of large bodies of timber, pole groves, and brush all over the mountains to protect the snow, and the snow laid in many large bodies till late in summer, and the springs never went dry during those years and the grass and all kinds of forage was in great plenty all over the mountain country.

About this time the sheep began to come in great numbers and the grass began to diminish and fires in the mountains began to be more frequent, so that where there was a great many groves and brush thickets that we couldn't ride through at that time, have disappeared by fire since, and the grass and all kinds of forage has diminished every year until now there is but very little grass and the growth in spring is weeds of different kinds.

Large bands of sheep going to and from their bedding ground and grazing ground kill all the small line and other kinds of trees by tramping them. It has been said that we had numerous showers and rains to renew the grass all summer on the eastern slope of the mountains in this county, which is not true, except in late fall, September and October, which is too late for much benefit of grazing.

From 1879 to 1888 or 1889 the streams generally raised till they were bank full during June, and begin to run down in July and August, and since that time they have diminished very greatly and they raise to their highest, but not near so high, earlier in the season and run down much earlier, and all the Yakima country is dependent upon the amount of water necessary to irrigate it to make it one of the best and richest valleys in the United States, and every individual of Yakima's population is dependent upon the agricultural possibilities of the country, and its productiveness is measured by the amount of water that its streams afford.

W. G. GRIFFETH.

AHTANUM, WASH., *May 17, 1902.*

I have lived in this valley twenty-four years; have always been a farmer and stock raiser; am well acquainted with the conditions of this country.

From 1878 up to 1888-89, the timber, pole groves, and underbrush were all growing and in a flourishing condition, and no burns of any note. The grass and all forage growth were in the best of condition, and the watersheds protected the snow so well that large bodies of snow would lay till fall season.

Since 1889 the timber has been mostly burnt out, and about all the pole groves and brush has been killed, and the grass and all forage has been killed and tramped so much that snow don't lay on late in summer, and the ground don't hold the water and the springs go dry early in summer.

From 1878 up to 1889 the water streams begin to get full and would get to top of banks and go down medium or low in last of July or August. Since 1889 the streams raise in March, April, or May, owing to the cold or warm weather in spring, and never get as full as they used to get, and in July about all the water has run out; and the summers of 1889 and 1891 the creeks went dry in the middle of summer, and the watersheds are about destroyed.

My opinion is that the large sheep owners are the ones that do the most damage and won't divide range justly with the farmers. But water to irrigate with is of first importance to every person here.

E. J. HACKETT.

AHIANUM, WASH., *May 17, 1902.*

I have been a farmer in this valley thirty-one years. I am dairying and stock raising at this time. Have been acquainted all over this country. From 1871 up to 1887 or 1888, the mountains in this county were covered with large bodies of timber, groves of poles and brush, all in a growing condition, and there was endless quantities of grass and forage of all kinds. Hundreds of springs that run water all summer. The snow laid in those timber groves till August, and the creeks generally raised to bank full in June and begin to run lower in July, and there was plenty of water all fall and winter.

Since 1887-88 the large bodies of timber have mostly been burned out and the pole groves and brush have been killed by burning or tramping with sheep herding. Most of the springs go dry in August or September and the snow goes off of the watersheds of the creek by the middle or last of June, where it used to lay until August. The creeks rise to their highest between March and May and do not get as high as they use to get, and run low in June and July. Some seasons they go dry in the valleys, and we have a great deal of sickness.

I have noticed large tracts where the young timber sprouts were killed by sheep tramping over them. About all the mountain country is tramped over by sheep.

Cattle belonging to the farmers in this county are assessed for \$27,000 more than the sheep and Mr. Sheller don't allow the farmers one-fifth the area for grazing, that he does to sheep men, and none at all to the farmers of Ahianum except in common with the sheep, which is equivalent to nothing, and threatened to sell cattle that wander off the district allotted to them and went on the forest reserve, where we have always used the range for thirty years. The large sheep men are never willing to divide range with any part of justice, but seem to want to devour and destroy everything and move on to the next victim. The sheep men say they are going to shave the farmers just as close as they can. With plenty of water to irrigate all the land tributary to Yakima Valley, it can support 1,000,000 population in good shape, but without irrigation it is a total failure, except a few flats close to the creeks, and when the creeks go dry they fail.

J. P. MARKS.

AHIANUM, *May 16, 1902.*

I have been a resident of Yakima County for the last twenty-two years; my occupation is a farmer and stock raiser.

The conditions of the water vary from year to year on account of the different falls of snow in the mountains. We look for high water about June or July and low water about August.

In about 1880 the conditions of the mountains were mostly covered with growing timber and tall grass. At the present time a great deal of the mountains are covered with dead timber, especially the thick timber belts.

If you would go into the mountains in the fall of the year, your eyes would behold dead timber and sheep trails. I have seen the dust arising from eight or ten bands of sheep at one time in the fall when the herders were moving them to the bed grounds. I think that sheep grazing is very injurious to the timber, all grass, and also to the watersheds of this valley and others located likewise.

In regard to my opinions of the majority of sheep men, they care nothing for the rights of others just so long as they get the grass.

There is a great deal more that might be said, but I will stop for this time.

STERLING P. VIVIAN,
Ahtanum, Yakima County, Wash.

AHTANUM, WASH., *May 17.*

I have lived in this valley thirty-four years; am a farmer, dairyman, and stockman. I am well acquainted all over this county, mountains and valleys.

From 1868 up to 1887 or 1888 there were many large bodies of fine timber, pole groves, and brush all through the mountains in a flourishing and growing condition, and the grass was fine everywhere, and the watersheds protected the snow till July or 1st of August. The streams would generally raise to top of the banks in June and begin to run down in July, and we had a good supply of water all the fall and winter.

Since 1887 or 1888 to the present time the largest part of the timber, pole groves, and brush has been burnt and killed and the brush tramped out by sheep herding over it; and the grass and all kinds of forage is gone or tramped out where sheep have been herded; and the water streams raise from March to May, and one-third or one-half full, and begin to run low in three or four weeks.

It is absolutely necessary to have water to irrigate this country to make it prosperous, and without it the country is worthless. In early years there were lots of deer and plenty of wild fowls, and since 1890 they are scarce or none at all.

MATT STANTON.

NORTH YAKIMA, WASH., *May 16, 1902.*

I have lived on my farm in this valley since 1871. Am a farmer, dairyman, and stock raiser. From the time I came here up to 1886 or 1887 the timber and brush groves were all in a good growing condition on the mountains and all the branches and the grass and forage plants were abundant everywhere. There was plenty of timber to shelter and shade the snow on the watersheds. From 1871 to 1886 or 1887, the water streams were full every year and commenced running full the last of May or first of June and commenced running down in the last of July and first of August. Since 1886 or 1887 the streams never get so high as they did before, and the rise comes a great deal earlier in spring and don't last so long.

Since 1886 at least one-half of the timber has been burned, and nearly all the brush groves and thickets on the branches and around the springs are dead, and the grass and forage plants are about all gone and killed out. The watersheds are badly injured.

With plenty of water to irrigate with this is a very prosperous country, and without it we can't farm and make a living.

J. H. ARMSTRONG.

AHTANUM, WASH., *May 16, 1902.*

I have lived on my farm in this valley thirty-five years. I am a farmer, dairyman, and cattle raiser; am well acquainted with the whole county of Yakima.

From 1867 to 1886 or 1887, the water streams always raised full the last part of May and in June and commenced running low about the 10th or 15th of July, and were always full every year.

Since 1886 and 1887 they rise much earlier in the spring and never get so full, and run low in a shorter period of time and gradually decrease from year to year.

When I first came here, and for seventeen years after, there were large bodies of timber all through the mountains and lots of shrubbery and brush groves on all the streams and branches and abundance of all kinds of grass and forage plants.

From 1886 and 1887 to 1892 the large bodies of timber were nearly all burned out and the brush groves and shrubbery were mostly dead and the grass and forage plants were failing very materially, and our watersheds are in a poor condition.

It is absolutely necessary to have water to irrigate if this country prospers; without it the country would be worthless.

D. HEATON.

AHTANUM, WASH., *May 17, 1902.*

I have lived on a farm in this valley ever since 1868. I am a farmer, dairyman, and stock raiser.

From 1868 up to 1886 or 1887 there was large quantities of large timber and pole groves and brush in a growing and flourishing condition all over the mountains, and great quantities of grass, all kinds of forage in abundance everywhere, and the watershed was ample to protect the snow so it did not melt off until July and first part of August.

Since 1886 and 1887 large bodies of the timber has been burnt and most of the young timber and brush has been killed and the grass and forage has disappeared and tramped to a dust heap by herding sheep over it. Prior to 1886 and 1887 the water streams usually ran bank full in June and began to run down in July and there was plenty of water the latter part of summer, and since that time the streams rise from March to 1st of May and never get as full as they did before, and run low the last of June and through July, and the snow is in a bad condition and don't protect the snow. Sheep herding over the mountains kills all the young timber that starts to grow.

There was lot of deer and plenty of grouse and fool hens and other game birds prior to 1887 and 1888, but now there is no deer and but very few grouse and other birds.

H. E. CROSSO.

NORTH YAKIMA, WASH., *May 16, 1902.*

In regard to the preservation of the forest reserve and the resultant protection of the watershed for the benefit of irrigation, would say I have been a resident of this valley since the fall of 1883; have been familiar with conditions in both mountain and valley during that time, making numerous trips in the Cascade Range from near Mount Adams to head of Cle-Elum River.

From 1884 to 1888 and 1889 there were large tracts of timber and dense thickets of underbrush that shaded, held, and protected the snow until hot weather of midsummer, thus keeping the water back until it was needed for irrigation of crops in the valley. In the summer of 1888 and also in 1889 large bands of sheep were driven in from Oregon. Soon fires started in all parts of the mountains and continued year after year so long as there was anything left that fire would burn. What the fires did not destroy the 300,000 head of sheep that have pastured in the Cascades every season from April to October did.

The results in the valleys are high water the first few warm days of spring, when but little irrigation is needed, with great scarcity in the hot months of July and August, at a time when our crops require the most water.

At the time the Rainier was set aside as a reserve we were told by the "wise" men in Washington that forest preservation was the object sought. The direct opposite has been the result, as every old settler knows.

Why does our Government spend thousands of dollars in the Eastern States teaching the people the great benefits of forests, while here in the West a few men are permitted to destroy the forests at will?

The future prosperity of the Yakima Valley depends on the water supply. With water, a garden spot; without water, a sage desert.

H. D. WINCHESTER.

APTANUM, WASH., *May 19, 1902.*

We are farmers and were raised on a farm in this valley. We are 28 and 32 years old, respectively, and are well acquainted with conditions in the mountains for the past eighteen years.

A man can ride for miles now over country that was almost impassible fifteen to eighteen years ago. It has been a well-known policy of sheepmen to fire large bodies of timber to make roadways, thereby destroying thousands of acres of valuable timber as well as small brush that would protect the snow on our watersheds. As a result of allowing large bands of sheep to have full swing in our forests, springs that once ran all summer are dry by the 15th of July. The hillsides that were once covered thick with grass and brush are bare and dusty. The watersheds are literally plowed and harrowed by these hooved locusts until hardly a spear of grass or young shrub is left.

The snow is unprotected from the first warm days, and all melts at once and comes down in a rush and is all gone by the 15th of July, when the farmers need it the worst. Still, in the face of all these conditions, the sheepmen tell us the sheep are an advantage to the country.

The small farmers along the borders of the range are eaten out of house and home by these migratory bands of sheep. They eat out every corner, and in most cases part of their fields.

In our opinion every pound of wool that has been produced in the State of Washington has cost the State \$1 in timber burned and watershed destroyed.

Yours, respectfully,

E. B. MARKS,
CHAS. A. MARKS.

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