

**STATEMENT OF OSCAR K. BARNES, SPECIAL PROJECT LEADER,
AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE, UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING**

Mr. BARNES. Thank you, Senator.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Oscar K. Barnes. I am employed by the University of Wyoming in the Agricultural Extension Service on special projects. My past professional work has been in the field of soil and water conservation. I served as chairman of the Wyoming reclamation projects survey team that reported to the Secretary of Interior on several Wyoming projects in 1962-63. This report included the Riverton project.

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before the committee to explain the experiences of the Agricultural College of the University of Wyoming on matters relating to the Riverton project.

The Agricultural Experiment Station and Extension Service has done research and demonstration work for years in the Riverton area on problems related to soils, crops, irrigation, livestock, entomology, and agricultural economics. Thus we have had considerable experience and interest in this resource of the Riverton community. These services, of course, extend to all parts of the State, not just to Riverton.

The views of our specialists based on their research and experience down through the years is that the soils under consideration today on the third division, as well as those in the Midvale District, are entirely capable of sustained irrigated crop production. We recognize, as all those concerned with the problem do now, that certain reclassifications that have occurred down through the years very properly excluded certain soils from further irrigation. Had the techniques and standards of soil evaluations been better developed and understood 20 or 30 years ago, these soils would have excluded initially. The effects of inexperienced water management on many units cannot be ignored as a contributing factor in the loss of some land on the third division down through past years.

Recently I accompanied several recognized soil authorities from the university and U.S. Department of Agriculture on a tour of the third division lands. This group, with years of experience in the Riverton area, included the head of the university soils division, Dr. L. I. Painter. Dr. Painter's view has been and still is that generally the soils now classified as irrigable are clearly capable, in their present condition, of sustaining crop production under irrigation with ordinary experienced farm management.

This view was shared by the other soil experts on this inspection trip initiated by the university. These observations, based on the present classification, eliminates about 3,000 acres from the irrigable class since the 1961 reclassification. About 8,900 acres remain in the irrigable classification with a drainage system installed.

For various reasons, in the past little fertilizer was used on third division lands. Also, many operators failed to follow modern and commonly accepted cultural practices in their farm program. Studies made on these lands by the Agricultural College show that just the use of fertilizer can increase yields two to four times over unfertilized yields.