

## SIMPLOT CLEANUP

I am very much in favor of forcing the Simplot Don plant to clean up its phosphorous pollution in the ground water. My main concern is for the water quality in the Portneuf River and especially in American Falls Reservoir.

This reservoir is of tremendous importance for migrating birds that spend time feeding and resting in and on its edges. Literally hundreds of thousands of ducks, geese, swans, pelicans, cormorants and gulls, as well as ibis and migrating shorebirds utilize the reservoir on an annual basis. Many of these birds are hunted for human consumption, but thousands of others are protected via international treaties.

My students and I first became concerned about contaminants in this reservoir after the Teton flood in 1976, when many pesticides were washed down into it. Since then we have been studying migrant shorebirds on the reservoir, now for over 20 years. We have gotten the northeastern section, called the Springfield Bottoms designated as a Regional Reserve in the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network.

These reserves are found throughout North and South America and managed by the Manomet Bird Observatory, with the recognition of the critical need for clean and reliable foraging and refueling sites for long-distant migrants. We have counted more than 30 species of shorebirds that feed on this reservoir, with annual numbers of over 100,000.

For the last several years I have conducted annual bi-weekly counts between July and September of shorebirds on a two-mile stretch of shore from the American Falls Dam to Willow Bay Marina. In the last five years I have noted reduced numbers of shorebirds feeding along this portion of the reservoir, and suspect water quality to be part of the problem. I have frequently noticed blue-green slime layers along the edge, which are presumably from algal blooms triggered by

the overabundant nutrients in the reservoir.

I realize that agriculture runoff is probably responsible for some of the excess nutrients in this reservoir, but the Simplot Don Plant must be a major contributor. Everyone who hunts, fishes, or simply watches wildlife on and around American Falls Reservoir should contact EPA (lynch.kyra@epa.gov) within the next month and encourage them to require a clean up this Super Fund Site. We all need to do all that we can to bring this source of pollution within compliance. Please help.

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