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COMMISSIONERS DELIVER ULTIMATUM TO GREAT FEEDER CANAL

RIGBY, ID, July 26, 2016 – The Jefferson County Board of Commissioners Monday gave the Great Feeder Canal Board a deadline to complete the lease agreement and open the road over the canal’s diversion structure by August 1 or Jefferson County “would vacate all agreements pertaining to public access, demand return of money remitted to the project, and allow the question of public access to be referred to the courts.” The demand was hand-delivered to the president of the Feeder Board July 25.

Jefferson County contributed about \$200,000 in cash and in-kind work for the bridge and approaches for the Great Feeder Canal Head Gate, and agreed to maintain the bridge portion of the structure and assume liability for the public’s continued use of the crossing. The public had unrestricted access over the head gate since the first structure was built in the late 1800’s. The canal company closed the access for construction in the fall of 2015 and has not opened it since.

The current structure was completed in early spring, but public access had not been restored as Jefferson County and the Feeder Board continued to negotiate the details of the partnership.

The county commissioners signed the lease agreement July 25, and verified with the County’s Public Works Director that all safety plans and structures were in place. The last of the safety barriers will be placed the first week of August.

Individual commissioners reported receiving numerous phone calls from residents complaining about the continued closure. At Monday’s meeting, the Board of Commissioners deemed that the County had completed all of its part of the agreement, and that there is no reason to prolong the closure.

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If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Rebecca Squires at (208) 745-0868 or email at rsquires@co.jefferson.id.us.