

IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

REFERENCE SERIES

MARKET LAKE

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A large flat area of farm land traversed by Interstate 15 north of Roberts is of historic interest because a great Snake River flood of 1853 inundated it, forming a large lake that lasted for years. A still larger flood in 1862 recharged and enlarged it just in time for a gold rush that came that way to Montana. Known as Market Lake because of its great collection of waterfowl that provided a fine market for pioneer travelers and settlers, it gradually worked underground into buried lava channels recharged by Snake River that, blocked by a long series of old lava flows, bends southward. After a long underground journey, progressing at about a mile a year, some of that old floodwater from Market Lake now is emerging from Thousand Springs and adjacent large points of discharge in and around Hagerman Valley. Market Lake reformed briefly in 1976 when a flood from Teton Dam came by on June 5, but large as it was, that still was a lot smaller than torrents that created it in 1853 and 1862.

(This information has not been edited.)

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