

MANAGER'S REPORT - MAY 2021

This report provides an overview of District issues and projects that we have been working on since the last board meeting.

OPERATIONS: First of all we had a positive covid test from a leased worker on the 12th and two of our employees plus the other leased worker had to enter Covid protocol. They just got their tests back showing negative, so our crew came back to work with isolation procedures Tuesday. This, on top of no telemetry, is a real problem (see below).

- Weeds are in the canal and we start with our acrolein treatment on Wednesday.
- Lateral 12 was turned on earlier this month. There are two hookups left to do. The irrigators have commented they are very happy with the new system.
- We have a number of small repairs in Irrigon. Equipment is back to Irrigon for those repairs. Tuesday of next week is the earliest we can get to them.
- We have a problem on 13th St-RL1 to solve. One of the irrigators – the mobile home park, has been getting a lot of air in his line since we removed the siphon has year. We have looked at it several times, but cannot find the problem. This and the Huke station leak are our first priorities in Irrigon.
- We have all four crew members three days per week – Tues, Wed, Thurs, Those will be our only repair days for now. Even with the temps, until the telemetry is up, we need to keep a close watch on the canal and system.
- Equipment battery cut-off switches. The crew has not had time for this work.

IRRIGON PUMP STATION UPDATE: Vern and Abe came to me with concerns about the Irrigon pump station after our discussion at the last Board meeting. Gary Moore has been in several times to work on setting some parameters for operation. He will be at the Board meeting or on the phone for discussion and to answer questions.

CONJUNCTIVE USE 2020: Our rate for 2020 ended up being \$15.66 (.20 above the estimated rate) and our total amount pumped was 5935 A.F. The bill from Reclamation was for \$92,912. This was under our budget for 2020, which we had anticipated. Remember that the Maxwell Diversion was off in 2019 and 2020 due to floods.

CONJUNCTIVE USE 2021: The estimated rate for 2021 is \$15.62. I believe that will be low as they have not considered the change in wheeling costs. The amount of water that was foregone from Maxwell Diversion last year was 4,000 AF. I anticipate us to use in excess of 10,000 AF of conjunctive use water this year, without adding in a drought factor. Our budgeted amount of \$165,000.

NEW PICKUP FOR 2021: Though Ben and I spoke several times about ordering the new pickup, I don't believe it has been done. I am curious if the Board wants to hold off for another year. If we bring someone new in, we can work out the use of a private vehicle. I believe we should consider putting that money to the telemetry upgrade (see below).

REQUEST FROM DOHERTYS: Ben met with Kelly Doherty and gave her the District's idea to replace her headgate. She said she would talk with Jim and let Ben know. Ben has not heard back.

TAILWATER COMPLAINTS: We have had tailwater complaints from Bates already this year. They do get a lot of tailwater. Ben hasn't had time to research it to see if it's different than usual. We did work at their box prior to start-up and we thought that would help take the water off their property.

TELEMETRY UPDATE: Since the last Board meeting, we have lost our telemetry system. It started with our upgrade to Windows 10. The software eventually failed. By the time we realized, we brought in JD who returned the system to Windows 7. However, our communication "bridge" had been corrupted. Aqua Systems, our supplier, spent several days remotely. They were able to bring the full Wonderware program back. Then, said they could nothing more as they could not communicate with the radios. Cecil Rock and crew took it from there and spent quite a bit of time last week.. They found the field radios trying to communicate and the software willing, but the master radio is non-responsive. That's a simple explanation of a complex issue. His crew has done a lot of work. They had to load a new program that could serve as the communication piece and believe they have found radios that will work with this program and our wonderware. I've authorized him to buy a couple radios at about \$700 each so we can try them out. We have known for years that the radios would eventually not work and we believe that is where we are now. The permit for the new tower has been obtained from the City and Cecil is trying to get them to waive the \$450 fee.

KROSKE UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIM: We disputed the Kroske employment claim and participated in a hearing. The judge was focused only on the actual separation, not events after it. I thought he was fair and Cougar was honest, admitting he has a temper and it was a problem he was trying to handle. That was a good move on his part. Mike Snyder represented the District and I was the witness. The judge correctly understood the instance and ruled that the District did not have enough reason in its action to overturn the original ruling and Kroske gets the unemployment.

HUWE/DOLLAR GENERAL UPDATE: We are ready, have the PVC parts and are waiting for a signed contract from Dollar General. They are on the Umatilla and, I understand, Pilot Rock stores before coming back to Irrigon.

FEDERAL CANAL RIGHTS: As mentioned last month, this is a large undertaking, but one that is needed. We will research and identify the origins of the federal canal and lateral easements. There are several layers to this work. I am listing them here so we have a written record.

Our goals:

- To have a right-of-way book.
- To understand what rights were obtained under the Act of 1890.
- To understand the 1914 court decree and how it guides many of our rights.

- To abandon the federal ditches that are no longer used.
- To provide the Counties and cities with a clear understanding of the federal rights.
- To prepare a map with legend indicating the various rights and how they were obtained that can be shared with local entities.

Along the way, we found that this is the time for us to confirm the actual location of our main canal relative to the County maps. Our mapper and Morrow County have already started work on this.

WATER RIGHT TRANSFERS: We got all our water right transfers to the State for 2021. Yes, I wish they would have been in earlier. We filed a third prior to start-up, then another third in early April and the rest now. We filed five notices of permanent transfer and six temporary transfers. We had a few new ones this year, and the mapping takes time for that. But, we are very pleased that we are complete for the 2021 transfers until the end of the season. We have some work to do on a 2017 transfer that needs to include cancelling a groundwater right, so that is the next water right project for us. Plus, we have an extension to file on the 2015 transfer and some notices of non-use to send out. Water rights work does not stop. Fortunately, Lisa is becoming very versed in this.

FARMERS CONSERVATION ALLIANCE: We are back on the list for the Farmers Conservation Alliance Modernization Program. Ben and I did a teleconference a few weeks ago and they will get us ready for start-up. It seems they plan to do work in the District this summer and fall.

2020 AUDIT: The auditors will be in May 25 and 26 for the field work on the 2020 audit.