



WEST EXTENSION IRRIGATION DISTRICT

MARCH 2023 NEWSLETTER

WATER OUTLOOK

After a colder and wetter winter than in recent years, the Columbia Basin is predicted to see slightly above average snowmelt runoff and higher water levels this coming spring, according to State and local predictors. The current conditions mean the spring runoff will be moderately above average and could be a little later than normal due to the cooler temperatures. If so, this is good news for the region, and widespread flooding will likely be avoided. Later snowmelt will hold the river levels longer and contribute to a good water year for the District. The drought map on the back page shows that, after four years, we are out of a drought situation. Unfortunately, Central and Southern Oregon remain in severe drought, and irrigation water to patrons in those regions will continue to be curtailed.

The District's start-up is based on weather, wind and temperature conditions, as well as canal readiness due to off-season work & repairs. It varies from year to year. Now is the time to get your system ready: do any needed repairs: clean your headgates and ditches: close your valves. Once a time is set for start-up, it will be posted on the WEID website—westextension.com.

WEID CREW



WEID CONTACTS

Office: 541-922-3814

Emergency & Weekends:
541-314-0005

E-mail:

info@westextension.com

Water Orders: 541-922-9372

Meter Texts: 541-314-0005

Website: westextension.com

The WEID crew is getting the canal and system ready for start-up. We have two new employees this year, coming from other irrigation districts. Although new to our District,

this is a seasoned crew and we look forward to the 2023 season. From left, Bob Schlosser, Shara Weiss, Ben de los Santos, Alan Svatonsky, Daniel Rector.

HOW DO I PAY MY BILL?

Whether you pay all your bill, part of it or set up a payment plan, you have some options about how to pay your bill.

- 1) Pay at the office in person. Cash, check, money order, debit or credit card.
- 2) Drop your payment through the mail slot in the door.
Check or money order.
- 3) Pay by mail. Check or money order.
- 4) Pay by phone. Debit, credit (3% fee) or e-check (\$2 fee)
- 5) Pay on-line. Debit, credit (3% fee) or e-check (\$2 fee)

SETTING UP A PAYMENT PLAN: Many folks set up a 6 or 12 month payment plan.

- A. Six month plan available to all for March—August. No interest if payments are on time.
- B. Twelve month plan available to those on a fixed income. No interest if payments are on time.

All plans need to be set up in writing, so contact Lisa at the office prior to April 1 each year.

ON-LINE PAYMENTS

You will need your account number from the billing statement, the amount you want to pay and your credit card or bank information.

Go to website: westextension.com
Look for PAY button near top of menu. Click on it to go to payment site and follow instructions.

RECLAMATION REFORM ACT (RRA)

West Extension Irrigation District was originally built by the federal government, specifically the US Reclamation Service (Reclamation). Patrons are subject to federal laws, one of which is the Reclamation Reform Act (RRA). It requires anyone who owns, leases, farms or operates more than 240 acres (single, partnership or indirect owner) in an irrigation district under contract with Reclamation to file an annual certification form before water delivery each season. This is based on all federal districts in which you have interest, not just WEID. For a public entities, the acreage is 40 or more.

Lisa Baum, our Administrative Services Manager, attends the RRA trainings and is up-to-date on requirements and filings. If you were previously required to complete the RRA certification form, you should work with her to file for this year. If you are new to the District, have made any changes to your ownership, leasing, farming or operating practices, or have any questions about whether RRA affects you, also contact Lisa. Any changes during the irrigation season (you buy, sell, lease or farm or operate additional land) requires a new RRA form to be filed within 30 days of the change.

The District is required to state this disclaimer, "Improperly filed forms or forms not filed can lead to administrative fees charged to the landowners by the Bureau of Reclamation." Our RRA and delivery records are audited annually.

CANAL SAFETY

Waters in the canal are non-potable and for irrigation purposes only. Do not drink, swim, bathe or otherwise contact the water. It is not recommended for pet and livestock drinking.

The water is fast-moving and treacherous for humans and animals. For this reason, stay away from the canal and keep pets and farm animals away. If you see an animal in the canal, contact the District right away. Please do not attempt to remove any animal on your own.

METERS AND METER READINGS

The District continues to work towards a fully metered or measured system. Meters are a good management tool for the landowner, assures irrigation within the parameters of the District and State, and helps detect leaks on the system. All development requires metering and the District continues to ask for patrons to meter on their own. Starting in 2023, landowners over 15 acres are required to be metered. Letters will go out to those not in compliance with a one-year grace period. In Irrigon, lands over 3.0 acres are required to be metered by 2024 season.

CARING FOR YOUR METER: You should remove your meter for the winter to prevent any freezing. There are videos on YouTube that may help with repair ideas. It is your responsibility to keep your meter working throughout the season. No meter, no water, so be sure it is running.

READING YOUR METER: Last season was our first for folks calling in their meter readings. We had 60% compliance. Irrigators learned more about their own systems and helped keep the District costs down. We expect everyone to call in this season and will start assessing fees (\$25 each month) for those not in compliance, over-irrigating or having non-working meters. It's a tough fine, but the WEID is committed to water measurement and conservation.

To report your reading, call the office (541-922-3814) or text a picture or the reading to 541-314-0005, starting May 1. Sometime between the 25th and 5th of the month is ideal.

WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

WEID sponsors two water conservation programs for the benefit of its patrons.

1) **Free Nozzle Exchange Program.** Bring in your worn-out nozzle and exchange for a new 1/8" nozzle. All District landowners under 20 acres or on a District pressurized system qualify for this exchange. Contact the office with questions.

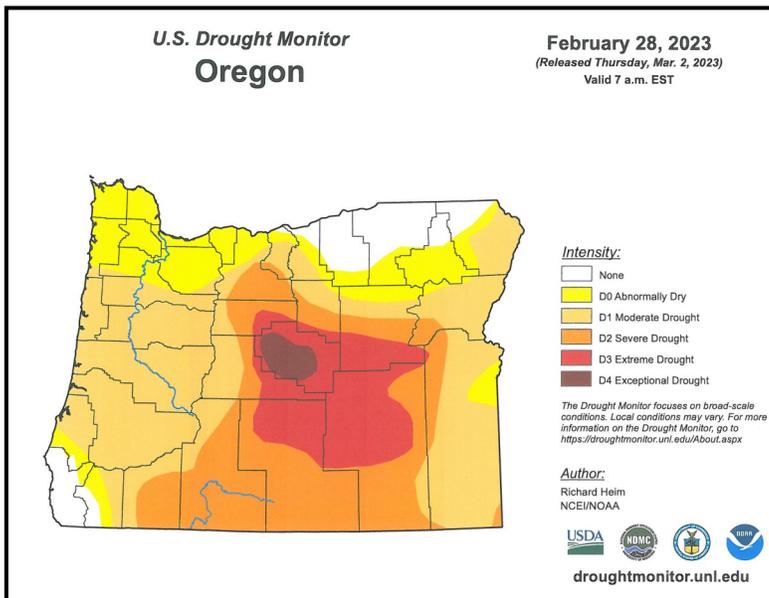
2) **Irrigon Water Savings Rebate.** This program will give the landowners under 10 acres in Irrigon a 50% match up to \$250 of costs to upgrade their systems. This includes sprinklers, new timers, controllers, valves, drip systems, and such. Labor costs are not eligible for rebate, only actual costs of supplies. An application form is required and will need to be approved. More information including the application form is found on the District website or at the office. The District's intern, Emma Mueller, will oversee this program. An on-site visit is required.

DUMPING LAWN CLIPPINGS, BRANCHES, GARBAGE, FUELS, GARDEN PESTICIDES, DEBRIS IN THE CANAL IS PROHIBITED.

Of course it is. These are harmful, plug up downstream irrigators and cause damage to pumps. Violators are be subject to law enforcement and trespass. We ask patrons to help the crew control this problem and report violations to the office. By working together, we can stop this practice and keep our canal cleaner.

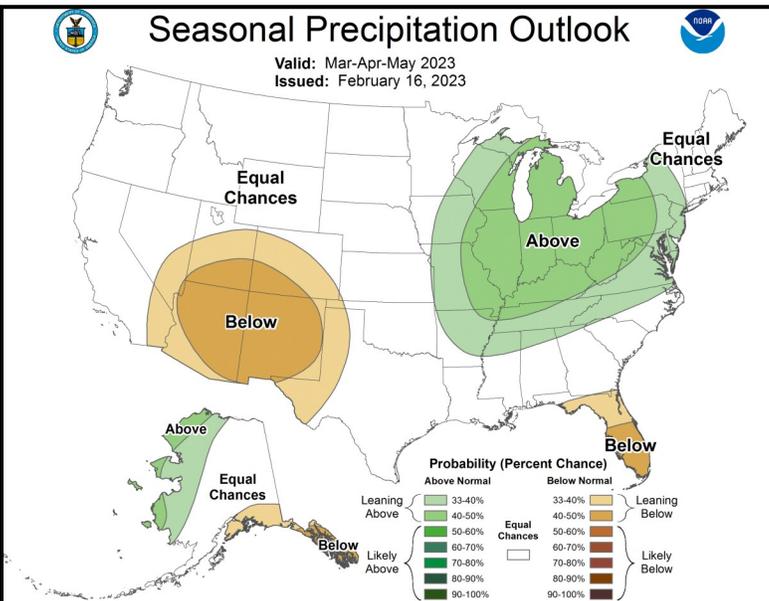
USE OF RIGHT-OF-WAY

The federal government has an interest in the canal and lateral rights-of-way (ROW). WEID is tasked to protect our joint interest for the operation and maintenance of the facilities. The use of the canal road or ROW without written permission from WEID and/or Reclamation, except for irrigation purposes, is not allowed and subjects the user to liabilities. Trespass issues, thefts, fences, buildings and so on are the concern. As more folks move in, we realize we need to provide what security we can for our patrons and make sure that all use of the federal ROW is authorized. If you have questions after reading this, give a call to the office and we can do research/answer your questions.



NOTICE—BURNING WEEDS

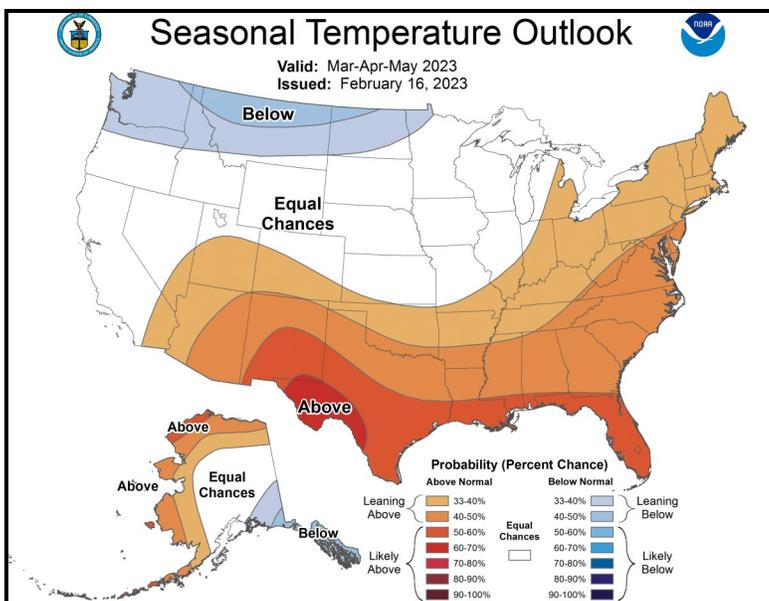
In preparation for irrigation water, the District crews will be burning weeds, and grasses in and along its canals/ditches. In order to assure burns are carried out efficiently, please remove any wheel-lines, irrigation equipment, fences and other items from the canal rights-of-way. If you do not want burning along your lateral, please contact the office and state your intent to remove the weeds and overgrowth yourself. The District is not responsible for damaged property next to the canals/ditches and within its rights-of-way. This is especially problematic in the Boardman area.



NOTICE-INTENT TO APPLY HERBICIDE

The District uses aquatic herbicides in its main canal to control pond weed, algae and other aquatic weeds. Terrestrial herbicides are used for control of noxious weeds along its canals/open ditches.

Weeds are a concern along the canal/ditches and the crew is already planning for spraying starting in early March.



Application of aquatic herbicides to the WEID main canal begins as early as May and continues to mid-September. The aquatic herbicides used are ACROLIEN (Magnicide-H), COPPER SULFATE (pellet) ARGOS (Chelated Copper) and ENDO-THALL products. Crews manage each treatment with minimized canal flows.

If you want more information on any of the products or want to be noticed ahead of the aquatic herbicide treatment, please contact the District office. Treatment days are noticed on the District website—westextension.com.