



North Unit Irrigation District

2017 Water Recap & 2018 Water Supply Outlook by Mike Britton

2017 Water Recap

What a difference a year makes! The following was reported to NUID patrons via newsletter in March 2017 “All indications are pointing to a favorable irrigation season, at least compared to the past several years.” The Wickiup fill curve is trending almost exactly, as it has for much of the year, to last year’s fill curve which indicates Wickiup will likely fill to approximately 175,000 acre-feet compared to the 174,443 acre-feet in 2016. The good news is that there is an abundance of snow in the higher elevations, Oregon SNOTEL current (3/16/17) snow water equivalent percent of normal is 130 percent, which means we could see favorable in-stream flows this spring and summer should the spring melt come off slowly over a period of time and not in a flash as compared to last year.” In 2017 Wickiup filled to 172,773 acre-feet and snow remained in the hills well in to the spring and early summer. As a result of the abundant snow NUID received nearly 90,000 acre-feet of “natural flow” from the Deschutes River. Consequently Wickiup ended the season at 78,000 acre-feet, a huge improvement over recent years when Wickiup was drawn down to near record lows. All said 2017 was a pretty good water year having delivered 113,300 acre-feet to patrons while leaving Wickiup Reservoir in really good shape.

2018 Water Supply Outlook

Today by comparison the Upper Deschutes basin snow pack is currently (3/7/18) at 60 percent normal, up from 40 percent just a couple of weeks ago, as a result of a brief stormy period. Wickiup is close to full, currently at 193,332 acre-feet, and is anticipated to fill. However given the lack of current snow in the mountains “natural flow” in the Deschutes will likely be greatly diminished - nothing near the 90,000 acre-feet we enjoyed last season, which means another year where we’ll rely heavily on storage from Wickiup

and a reservoir that will end up at very low levels by seasons end.

Likewise on the Crooked side snow pack improved greatly with the recent storm and gives a glimmer of hope, in light of what was not a good picture just a week or two ago. The reservoirs on the Crooked side are a little more difficult to report on as one good storm could fill Prineville Reservoir given where it’s at 89,664 acre feet today. Crooked River above Prineville Reservoir is currently flowing at 446 cfs compared to 6,320 cfs last year around this time.

Folks are holding out for some more winter to improve conditions, but all indications are we’re in for another round of “dry year” conditions which will result in conservative water allocations to District patrons.

Each year the District emphasizes to its patrons the importance of conservative and efficient use of irrigation water. This mantra has become all the more important given current and future water and operational constraints for various reasons. We should all recognize our responsibility as stewards of the precious resource we have in our water and continue to find ways to be the best stewards of this great resource into the future.

Water Turn On & Allotment

The District’s Board of Directors has set the tentative water release date from Bend Headworks and Haystack Reservoir for Monday, April 2. District crews will begin priming the system on Tuesday, with water deliveries available in most areas of the District on Friday or Saturday.

The NUID Board of Directors also set a tentative water allotment at 2.25 acre-feet per acre for Deschutes River water right lands, and 1.25 acre-feet per acre for Crooked River water right lands. The District will continue to monitor weather and water supply conditions to determine whether adjustments to the allotment are warranted.

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Excess Water Charges

The District established an excess water charge in 1954 in accordance with its repayment contract with the Bureau of Reclamation. The following is a summary of the section of the contract that defines excess water charges:

The District shall levy a minimum annual operation and maintenance charge against each irrigable acre within the District, and the payment of such minimum charge shall be required whether or not water is used. The amount of water, if any, which will be delivered each year on payment of the minimum annual charge shall be determined by the District, but it shall not exceed two acre-feet. The amount of water, if any, which will be delivered each year in excess of the amount so established shall also be determined by the District after estimating the supply of water to be available for that year for distribution to the lands of the District. For water to be delivered each year in excess of the minimum amounts, the landowners or waterusers involved shall pay to the District an excess charge.

The minimum water before excess is charged has been set at two acre-feet per acre on Deschutes water right acres and one acre-foot per acre on the Crooked River water right acres.

The District’s policy allows waterusers who lease land for a full water season to combine all owned and leased land for the purposes of excess. This practice is referred to as “bunching”. If you don’t lease the property for the full water season, please contact the District office to determine your options.

If the District determines that there is a shortage of water for an irrigation season, the board will set an allotment. This is the total amount of water that the wateruser can use for the season. During short water years waterusers who are not going to use all their allotted water can sign a form to allow another user to use the water. But remember that excess is still charged on any water delivered to the user over the minimum.

Notice of Intent to Use Herbicide

Application of aquatic herbicides to District irrigation canals will begin in May or June 2018 and continue periodically through October 2018. The aquatic herbicides may include the following products: Copper Sulfate, Cascade and Magnacide H with active ingredient Acrolien. The intended applications will control aquatic weeds and algae growth in District canals.

Interested persons can call the District office to obtain more information and to request notification in advance of treatments.

Management:

Mike Britton, Manager
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Marlene Lloyd Office Manager
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Office Staff:

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Sue Light
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cbridges@northunitid.com

Board of Directors:

Division 1: Phil Fine
Vice Chairman
Division 2: Mike Kirsch
Division 3: Martin Richards
Chairman
Division 4: Richard Macy
Division 5: Vern Bare

Office Hours:

Non-Irrigation Season
Monday - Friday 8:00—4:30
Irrigation Season
Monday - Friday 8:00—5:00
Saturday 8:00—4:00
Phone: (541) 475-3625
(541) 475-3652
Fax: (541) 475-3905
Email: nuid@northunitid.com
Website: www.northunitid.com

Rebates for Energy Efficient Upgrades

Looking for ways to improve your agricultural business by making energy efficient upgrades to your irrigation system? Energy Trust of Oregon is available to Pacific Power customers in offering incentives to help pay for installation of new energy efficient equipment. Energy

costs can impact your bottom line, thanks to new industry technology and the rebates offered through Energy Trust of Oregon upgrades and/or improvements that can result in energy related savings can be realized. New irrigating technology equals better on farm efficiencies

which help conserve water, a benefit to us all. Please visit the Energy Trust website at:

www.energytrust.org

or call toll free 1-866-368-7878 for more details.

Water Right Location

It is important that waterusers know where the water rights are located on their property. Watering where a water right does not exist is prohibited (District regulations and state law). Lands with water rights must be beneficially watered at least once every 5 years. If irriga-

tion practices change such as installing a new pivot that does not water corners, then water rights may need to be transferred to another location. This also pertains to new structures such as homes, shops, hay and equipment barns/sheds, etc. If these structures

are constructed on water rights and not transferred there is risk of losing the water right at that location. Contact the District office for a copy of a water right map or water right transfer information.

Ownership of Land Within a Reclamation District

North Unit Irrigation District is a Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) project; as such there are ownership entitlements that must be adhered to in accordance with the Reclamation Reform Act (RRA), which was enacted on October 12, 1982. Implementation of this act placed limitations on the amount of land a landholder may own within a Reclamation project within the 17 western states.

If a landholder is a qualified recipient (individuals, married couples, entities ultimately benefiting 25 or less natural persons) your owner-

ship entitlement is 960 acres. If a landholder is a limited recipient (entities ultimately benefiting more than 25 natural persons, example: government agencies, large corporations) your ownership entitlement is 640 acres (other restrictions may apply if the limited recipient did or did not receive water prior to 10/1/1981).

If you purchase land with water right acres over and above your ownership entitlement it becomes "Excess Land". Excess lands are not eligible to receive Reclamation irrigation water. In order for excess

land to be eligible to receive Reclamation irrigation water, it must be sold at a price approved by Reclamation; this is a very slow and expensive process.

Under the District's contract with Reclamation, District landowners have the option to do a construction obligation payout, which would allow ownership of land over your entitlement. Payout must take place prior to exceeding your ownership entitlement. Please contact the District office if you have concerns regarding your ownership entitlement, payout questions and rates.

Reclamation Reform Act

The Reclamation Reform Act (RRA) requires that anyone who owns and/or leases 240 acres or more in a District under contract to the Bureau of Reclamation are required to submit certification forms before water delivery. This means that even if you own and/or lease less than 240 acres in North Unit Irrigation District but also own and/or lease in another Bureau of

Reclamation District with your total acres adding up to 240 or more, you will need to fill out a certification form. The exception to this is for a public entity that needs to report if they own and/or lease 40 acres or more. If you were previously required to complete certification forms, you would have received a separate letter, which addresses RRA issues in more detail. If you

did not receive a letter and feel you may need to complete certification forms, please contact our office.

PLEASE NOTE: If you have any land ownership and/or lease changes that happen during the irrigation season a new RRA form is required to be completed and on file with the District on or before the effective date of the change.

Delinquent Accounts & Lien Process

The District's lien process includes assessing fees for the filing cost of placing and removing liens and for related administrative fees. The administrative fee is set at \$150 per account. The District sends delinquent letters to all accounts not paid as of May 15 of each year. A notice of intent to lien will be sent out on delinquent accounts on July 15, or the first business day thereafter, of each year. If payment is not re-

ceived within 30 days a notice of claim of lien will be filed on August 15 of each year with the recording officer of the county in which the land is situated, pursuant to ORS 545.494. Pursuant to ORS 545.496 the District will withhold delivery of water from any tract of land until the incurred charges for the current and any prior years are paid in full as well as all interest, lien fees, collection costs and administrative fees.

For your convenience the District can receive payments via Visa, Mastercard, American Express, Discover and E-Check. The payment is processed through Point & Pay, with a convenience fee that will be assessed by Point & Pay. Visit our website to pay online or contact the District office to process a payment.

Canal Safety



The District annually presents a canal safety program promoting the awareness of hidden dangers in and around canals. Second graders from Madras, Metolius and Culver schools view a slide show of hidden dangers within the District and a video of Otto the Otter's Scary Rescue. Students are provided an Otto the Otter coloring book. The color-

ing book is available on the District's website. **Please stay safe, do not swim in the canals and remember canal roads are located on privately owned properties, which the District has easements for operation and maintenance purposes only. Public access is not allowed and considered trespass.**

Non-Potable Water

Irrigation water is non-potable water and should be considered unsafe for human consumption. Do not use irrigation water for drinking or other domestic purposes such as bathing, showering, dishwashing, cooking or maintaining oral hygiene. Water delivered through the District's canals and delivery systems is for irrigation purposes only.

Weed Control

In preparation for the 2018 irrigation season District employees have been performing controlled vegetation burns in District ditches and along the main canal. In order to insure burns are carried out in the most efficient manner, make sure that all wheel-lines, hand-lines, equipment, livestock fences and any other items are not on the canal easements. You can check the location of the easements on your property by stopping by the office and reviewing the easement maps. **The District is not responsible for damaged items that are left within the District's easements.**



**North Unit
Irrigation District**

2024 NW Beech Street
Madras, OR 97741

Federal Water Restrictions

As a federal agency, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is obligated to adhere to federal law in the conduct of its responsibilities to the American people. As such, Reclamation will operate its facilities and administer its water-related contracts in a manner that is consistent with the Controlled Substance Act of 1970. This includes locations where state law has decriminalized or authorized the cultivation of marijuana. As a result no federal water, including water delivered by the District, may be used for the purposes of cultivation or propagation of marijuana. Reclamation will refer any inconsistent uses of federal resources, including the use of federal water for cultivation of marijuana, of which it becomes aware to the Department of Justice and coordinate with the proper enforcement authorities.

DITCHRIDER PHONE NUMBERS

Ride 34	Rex Phipps	(541) 546-5381
Ride 37	Craig Wiseman	(541) 546-6733
Ride 41	Jim Brown	(541) 546-6644
Ride 43	Leonard Lang	(541) 546-6722
Ride 51	Ryan Waddell	(541) 546-6232
Ride 53&58	Cesar Saldaña	(541) 546-7658
Ride 57	Tom Walton	(541) 475-7338
Ride 58-11	Jesse Young	(541) 475-2638
Ride 63	Dennis Krueger	(541) 475-2678
Ride 64	Seth Stites	(541) 475-2873