



North Unit Irrigation District

2018 Water Recap & 2019 Water Supply Outlook by Mike Britton

2018 Water Recap

As many of you know, 2018 began as a dry, warm spring, with a full Wickiup Reservoir (198,647 acre-feet on April 3, 2018); but after a long, hot and dry summer, the reservoir had been drawn to historic low levels (1% of capacity). Multiple factors can be attributed to the reservoir's record low levels: the acute impacts of the long, hot and dry summer or the new reservoir/river operations for the Oregon Spotted Frog, or the chronic impact of multiple preceding years with below-average fall/winter/spring precipitation which create a deficit in our basin's supply. Multiple years with below average fall/winter/spring precipitation has the ability to decrease spring and groundwater inputs, which have been a cornerstone water source within the Deschutes basin for decades. Against all odds, and as painful as it was, the District delivered 113,963 acre feet to our patrons; which is just a bit over the Districts 10 year delivery average of 113,038 acre feet. Unprecedented steps were taken to deliver that amount, including shutting deliveries down for a week in late September to "recharge" the system. The Crooked River system also suffered from warm dry conditions with limited stream flow requiring the purchase of the District's 10,000 acre feet from Prineville Reservoir. Finally, the District understands that this was a difficult season, particularly near the end of the season for many patrons as well. Towards the end it was literally day-to-day as to whether the District would have enough water to meet water needs. The District encourages water users to become familiar with the District's website as a means of obtaining the most current water supply information and also by providing the District with your email for updates as they occur.

2019 Water Supply Outlook

It's mid-March and the sound of shoveling snow has been replaced by the sound of melting snow. It's easy to think that these past late-season snowstorms have solved Central Oregon's water problems for the coming irrigation season, but the fact of the matter is: it didn't (though it did help a great deal given the dry weather conditions through most of the winter). I don't want to give folks the false impression or comfort level that every-

thing is OK, because we are still looking at, what I would consider, "drought conditions" with the region still under "moderate" drought designation. Before the late snows, the soil locally and in the mountains was very dry from the dry winter and just how much the soil will be absorb and how much will become runoff remains to be seen. Unlike last year, we will be starting locally with a good soil moisture base which should avoid the early, heavy demand that started the season last year and instead push any ground work well into April – it is really too early to tell the full impact that the snow will have on this year's water forecast and operations.

Today Wickiup Reservoir is at 133,271 acre feet or 66% of capacity. Needless to say, Wickiup will not fill or be full this irrigation season and we will start the irrigation season at a record-low reservoir level. The good news is the current amounts of snow in the mountains should provide for a robust offering of natural flow in the river systems. Although the reservoir is low the anticipated natural flow from the Deschutes River should make up a fair share of the District's water

(Continued on page 2)

Water Allotment

At the regular North Unit Irrigation District board meeting held on March 12, 2019 the board of directors set 2019 irrigation season allotments at 1.5 acre-feet per acre for Deschutes and .75 acre feet per acre for Crooked River acres. A 2019 irrigation start date was not set given current weather/snow conditions and conditions will continue to be monitored for a start date determination. Although the recent snow events have greatly improved conditions in the region it did not entirely eradicate drought conditions or concerns. While the extreme drought status has been lifted, over 60% of the state remains in severe to moderate drought including portions of Central Oregon. Snow accounts indicate that snowpack that influences NUID water supplies is average for the most part but the next few weeks and coming months will ultimately determine the water supply picture for this spring and summer. As noted above the district will continue to monitor conditions to determine an irrigation startup date as well as supply conditions.

Inside this issue:

Delinquent Accounts	2
Personnel & Office Hours	2
Canal Safety	2
Water Outlook (cont.)	2
Notice of Intent to Use Herbicide	2
Weed Control	2
Ownership of Land	3

Reclamation Reform Act	3
Excess Water	3
Non-Potable Water	3
District Industrial Hemp Growing Policy	3
New District Website	3
Federal Water	4
Ditchrider Phone Numbers	4

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 received 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 coloring 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.

Water Outlook

(Continued from page 1)

supply this season. For comparison the District obtained 26,859 acre-feet of natural flow (one of the lowest on record) from the Deschutes in 2018 compared to 94,592 acre-feet in 2017. On the Crooked River side of the equation, the recent snows changed that system from "drought preparedness operations" to "flood control operations." Although Prineville Reservoir is only 48% of capacity the spring runoff is anticipated to fill Crooked River reservoirs and potentially supply ample river flows for District uses.

If there is any specific message I would say: the snow was great, it

helped, but it didn't bail us out of this situation. We actually need multiple winters like this (average or above average) in order to get back to a level playing field.

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.

Notice of Intent to Use Herbicide

Application of aquatic herbicides to District irrigation canals will begin in May or June 2019 and continue periodically through October 2019. The aquatic herbicides may include the following products: Copper Sulfate, Cascade and Magnacide H with active ingredient Acrolin. 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
mbritton@northunitid.com
Gary Calhoun, Operations Manager
gcalhoun@northunitid.com
Marlene Lloyd, Office Manager
mlloyd@northunitid.com

Office Staff:

Pam Watson
pwatson@northunitid.com
Sue Light
slevitt@northunitid.com
Carla Bridges
cbridges@northunitid.com
Lisa Windom
lwindom@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

Weed Control

In preparation for the 2019 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.

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 ownership entitlement is 960 acres. If a landholder is a limited recipient (entities ultimately benefiting more than 25 natural per-

sons, 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.

Excess Water Charges

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. Any water usage over 2.00 acre feet of Deschutes water rights or 1.00 acre feet of Crooked River water rights is considered excess, charges will be assessed based upon water usage.

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, dish-washing, cooking or maintaining oral hygiene. Water delivered through the District's canals and delivery systems is for irrigation purposes only.

Industrial Hemp Policy

The District has adopted a policy regarding the delivery of federal water for growing and cultivating industrial hemp.

Patrons can only use District delivered water to irrigate industrial hemp if the patron has a current industrial hemp grower registration issued by the Oregon Department of Agriculture. Prior to the delivery of District water to a patron growing or cultivating hemp, a patron who intends to use District delivered water to irrigate industrial hemp must provide a written copy of that patron's current, valid industrial hemp grower registration to the District office in advance of any water delivery.

The District shall work with patrons to ensure their understanding of this policy. Patrons who fail to comply with the policy will not be entitled to District delivered water.

To view the entire policy visit the District website.

Updated District Website

Coming soon, our redesigned District website will have user friendly access to the latest news and information .

New online water ordering and tracking technology will also be introduced to the District on a limited basis this irrigation season.

In efforts to keep patrons more informed and connected you can also follow the District's Facebook page.



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.



2024 NW Beech Street
Madras, OR 97741

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 Garrett	(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