



## June 2022 Water Supply Update by Josh Bailey

Cooler, wetter conditions prevailed for much of April and May throughout Central Oregon, and late-season storms have helped increase live flow for irrigation districts, including North Unit. While the late-season moisture has helped, Central Oregon conditions are far from normal. Moderate to exceptional drought conditions persist across much of the state, and Emergency Drought Declarations have been issued for Jefferson, Deschutes, and Crook Counties.

Wickiup Reservoir started the season with 110,123 acre-feet or 54% capacity. Due to cooler weather and decreased NUID allotments, the reservoir is approximately 13,418 acre-feet above this time last year. While that may sound good, please remember we utilized all 10,000 acre-feet of NUID's stored Prineville Reservoir water last year. This year, NUID's Prineville storage is approximately 3,600 acre-feet due to low reservoir levels and proportional fill storage amounts.

January through March were drier than normal, with SNOTEL sites reading only 74% of normal for snow water equivalent. Due to cool weather and late-season moisture, SNOTEL sites in April were 97% of normal and as of

May 23rd, now sit at 149% of normal. Little to no snow remains at lower elevations, and upper elevation snowpack remains above average. The upper Deschutes and Crooked River basin precipitation as of May 23rd, is at 97% of normal.

NUID has benefited from live river flow and has not solely relied on Wickiup storage to meet demand. Live flow is higher than last year, but is still considerably lower than normal seasons. Last year's live flow did not materialize, requiring NUID to expend its stored water quickly. District water managers remain optimistic that live river flows will remain steady through the early irrigation season.

Temperatures and precipitation this summer are predicted to be slightly below average. Furthermore, significant pro-longed heat, similar to what we experienced last June, is not anticipated.

The district's intent is to maintain adequate storage supplies to facilitate water deliveries through October. The mid to late summer months will be the determining factor as to what water supplies will look like in September and October.

## Manager's Message by Josh Bailey

On May 20th, 2022, the NUID Board of Directors increased the patron allotments from .45 to .50 for Deschutes rights and .225 to .25 for Crooked River rights. NUID staff will continue to monitor conditions closely and make recommendations as necessary.

Emergency Drought Relief funds the district received, have been credited to patron accounts and refunds have been issued to eligible patrons who requested them. The state agencies tasked with administering the Emergency Drought Relief funds are beginning to roll out the programs and related funding. I encourage you to research Senate Bill 5561 for a complete listing of funding opportunities. Please check the district's website and your email for updates as programs are implemented.

In partnership with Famers Conservation Alliance, the district will be finalizing our Watershed Plan this summer. Once completed, the district will then be able to begin construction on a 6-year piping project for laterals 31, 32, 34, and 43.

State and federal agencies continue to work with district managers, implementing year 2 of the HCP. Adaptive management and collaborative efforts continue to be used as severe drought conditions persist.

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### Maintaining Water Rights

Maintaining irrigation water rights on your property is important to you as a landowner. In short, state law has mandated that if your land has irrigation water rights, you must use those rights in a beneficial manner. For landowners with water rights “beneficial use” is a phrase that should be familiar, but can be confusing even for the most experienced water users. To fully use your water rights, the law requires that the total water right be used on the land, as mapped, at least one year in every five years in a “beneficial” way with any crop, lawns, or pasture (no sagebrush or scrub grass).

Failure to comply with the provision makes all or part of your water rights subject to forfeiture under ORS 540.610. Under this law the Oregon Water Resources Department considers these rights abandoned and can cancel them, which means that the water resource is lost forever to the district and the water user for irrigation purposes.

To prove the water right has been used beneficially landowners can provide one or more affidavits from persons who can attest from personal knowledge or professional expertise, that the right was exercised at the authorized location and for the authorized purpose. The affidavits must also include supporting documentation like crop receipts or expenditures, various agency records or dated photos. In a limited number of instances a user can provide documentation that the presumption of forfeiture would be rebutted under ORS 540.610(2).

The landowner can avoid losing all or a portion of their water right by:

1. Using the water beneficially at the current location and be able to provide proof.
2. Permanent or temporary transfer of the water to a new location.
3. Leasing the water right instream.

Maintaining water rights is also important to the district to provide the most efficient and cost effective delivery of water for the benefit of all water users within the district. Landowners who would like a copy of their water right map can contact the district office. Knowing where your water rights are located on your property is the first step to protecting them.

## Drought Relief Resources

For information on the continuing drought, please visit our website or click on the following link: [Drought Relief](#)

Resources include relief and recovery at both the state and federal levels.

### DITCHRIDER PHONE NUMBERS

Ride 34	Wayne Jakobsen	(541) 546-5381
Ride 37	Craig Wiseman	(541) 546-6733
Ride 41	Seth Stites	(541) 546-6644
Ride 43	Cole Simmons	(541) 546-6722
Ride 51	David Ludwig	(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	Marc Chapman	(541) 475-2678
Ride 64	Kody Edmondson	(541) 475-2873

# Chemical Treatments

The district began adding aquatic herbicides to irrigation canals in May and will continue to apply, conditions allowing, periodically through October 2022. The aquatic herbicides may include: Copper Sulfate, Dipotassium Salt of Endothall (Cascade) or Magnacide H with active ingredient Acrolein. The intended herbicides will control aquatic weeds and algae growth in district canals.

Waters within the district's irrigation de-

livery system are intended for agricultural purposes. Customers are advised not to use treated water for recreation, aquaculture, human or animal consumption. Furthermore, irrigation water, treated or not, is not potable water and not intended for human consumption.

Please visit the district website to obtain more information or to request notification in advance of treatments.

## "No Spray" Zone means "You Spray" Zone

Putting up "no spray" signs is not enough to maintain a no-spray zone. Patrons need a no-spray permit from NUID to physically manage the noxious weeds growing within their designated no-spray zone.

Because most canal roads are easements through private property, the district respects landowners' requests to establish no spray zones throughout their property. As of 2020, we require an application to acquire a no spray permit. Once you complete the application, and approved by the NUID board, we will respect the boundaries within the zone. Once a no spray zone is established, the responsibility of eradicating weeds within the easement returns to the landowner.

Not managing weeds within your zone, could result in enforcement spraying, fees and property liens.

*Please remind kids to stay out of the canals!*



## Help Prevent Meter Damage

The most common and expensive repair on a water flow meter is the replacement of the register. Damage commonly occurs when the water user is charging the irrigation system's mainline. If the valve that charges the mainline is fully open it will cause the water flow indicator on top of the register (looks like a speedometer) to go beyond its limits, causing internal damage. To help prevent damage, open the mainline charge valve slowly and check the water flow indicator on the top of the register to be sure the flow stays within the range for which it was designed.

# Drainage

District responsibility for water delivery ends at the district's point of delivery, measuring weir, or headgate. The water, including tail water and run-off, then becomes the responsibility of the water user or users, on that ditch or drain.

Landowners/water users that drain runoff to private drains and ditches have both a right and a responsibility to work with their neighbors to maintain these facilities. When problems occur, the district is able to assist, clarify issues, or suggest solutions. However, the responsibility ultimately lies with the landowners/water

users along ditches/drains to resolve these matters. In addition, it is the landowners/water users responsibility to ensure these drainage facilities are kept clean and free of debris to prevent damage to neighboring properties, roads, etc.

The district can provide ditch/drain cleaning services for a fee, based upon operator and equipment availability.

## Management:

Josh Bailey, District Manager  
jbailey@northunit.com  
Mike Britton, Executive Manager  
mbritton@northunitid.com  
Gary Calhoun, Operations Manager  
gcalhoun@northunitid.com  
Jackie Looney, Finance Manager  
jlooney@northunitid.com  
Dennis Krueger, Watermaster  
dkrueger@northunitid.com

## Office Staff:

Collin Cowsill  
ccowsill@northunitid.com  
Pam Watson  
pwatson@northunitid.com  
Sue Light (until 6/18)  
slevitt@northunitid.com  
Michelle Camphouse  
mcamphouse@northunitid.com

## Board of Directors:

Division 1: Ryan Boyle  
Division 2: Mike Kirsch  
Vice Chair  
Division 3: Martin Richards  
Chair  
Division 4: Evan Thomas  
Division 5: Vern Bare

## Office Hours:

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

## Beehive Safety

Please check with district management before placing beehives near areas frequented by ditchriders for operation and maintenance purposes. Any activity that impedes or interrupts their ability to work in a safe manner must be taken into consideration.



## Dig Safely

The district and other utilities, has numerous underground facilities throughout the project. Please call the district before digging or excavating. For free underground utility marking call 811 or (800) 332-2344 two working days before you plan to dig. Or visit [www.digsafelyoregon.com](http://www.digsafelyoregon.com) to enter your dig information online.

### Delivery of Irrigation Water Through Private Ditches

Water users who use private ditches to receive irrigation water must maintain delivery easements and/or facilities for water conveyance beyond the district's headgates. District personnel do not have the right to cross private property the district does not have an easement for and/or access to private facilities without prior landowners approval. It is the water user's responsibility to maintain facilities beyond the district's point of delivery and it is the water users responsibility to coordinate with neighboring water users to ensure they are properly receiving irrigation water.

The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) offers a dispute resolution program for farmers, ranchers, and rural landowners. The program known as the Central Oregon Water Dispute Program is a special program created to help resolve issues that come about when property owners have disputes arising over property boundaries, water distribution, maintenance responsibilities, weeds or right-of-way. ODA helps bring property owners together to resolve disagreements, manage water rotation schedules, facilitate coordination with irrigation districts, address weed problems, property access issues and help foster other beneficial arrangements mutually developed by irrigators, through mediation. Working together can lead to better irrigation efficiency and water quality as well as reduce tension among neighbors. Contact ODA at (503) 986-4558 for more information or fees for this service visit [www.oregon.gov/oda](http://www.oregon.gov/oda). Mediation is also available from the Oregon USDA Certified Agricultural Mediation Program and is free to the agricultural community on many issues. Please call (888) 628-4101 or visit [office@6rivers.org](mailto:office@6rivers.org) for more details.

## Lien Process for Delinquent Accounts

On May 15, 2022, letters of delinquency were sent to all past due accounts. If not paid by the date specified, a Notice of Intent to Lien will be sent to account holders on July 15, 2022, or the first business day thereafter. If payment is not received within 30 days of July 15, a lien will be filed. Fees will be assessed for the filing cost of placing and

removing liens along with an administration fee of \$150. Pursuant to ORS 545.496, the district will withhold delivery of water from a tract of land until the incurred charges for the current year and any prior years are paid in full as well as all interest, lien fees, collection costs and administration fees.

Customers may conveniently pay by credit card or eCheck via a service known as Point & Pay. A processing fee will be charged to you by Point & Pay. Visit the district website or office for payment processing information.

## Road Watering Prohibited

The Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) has seen a steady increase in complaints over sprinkler end guns and wheel lines spraying public roads and creating a hazard, in addition to wasting water. In Jefferson County, the sheriff's

office may respond to the complaints as a violation of ORS 368.256 "Creation of road hazard prohibited". In addition, OWRD's view is that water being applied to roads, including canal service roads, even inadvertently, is considered applying water to a location that does not have

a water right or that is not receiving beneficial use a violation of Oregon water right statute. The district asks water users to minimize or eliminate "road watering" not only to reduce a potential hazard but as responsible stewards of a limited resource.

