

Notice of Availability of Draft Watershed Plan-Environmental Assessment and Virtual Public Meeting July 25, 2022 for North Unit Irrigation District Infrastructure Modernization Project

The United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announces the availability of a Draft Watershed Plan-Environmental Assessment (Draft Plan-EA) for the North Unit Irrigation District Infrastructure Modernization Project. North Unit Irrigation District proposes to install 27.5 miles of gravity-pressurized, buried pipe and construct four 1,000 cubic yard retention ponds, each about 0.5 acres in size. The proposed project would improve water conservation in District-owned infrastructure and improve water supply management and delivery reliability to District patrons, in order to support drought resilience across the District. The Deschutes Basin Board of Control is the project sponsor and North Unit Irrigation District is the project co-sponsor. Farmers Conservation Alliance is assisting NRCS in this planning process. The proposed improvements may be partially funded by NRCS through the Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act of 1954 (PL 83-566).

The proposed project is located in Jefferson County, Oregon. The National Environmental Policy Act and the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations at 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508 require evaluations of the potential effects of federally funded projects on human and natural resources. These evaluations include input from the public. NRCS has reviewed the potential impacts of the project and released a Draft Plan-EA for public and agency review.

You are invited to attend a virtual public meeting to provide input on this project. At the virtual meeting, project partners will present the range of resource issues associated with the project and alternatives to addressing system improvements in North Unit Irrigation District. The presentation will be followed by a question and answer session.

Date: July 25, 2022

Time: 6 PM to 7 PM

Register at: oregonwatershedplans.org

The meeting will be held virtually using Zoom. A recording of the meeting will be available afterward at the same website. Media inquiries should be sent to BJ Westlund at bj.westlund@fcasolutions.org.

Comments on the Draft Plan-EA may be submitted during a public comment period starting **July 6, 2022 and ending on August 10, 2022**. You can view the complete Draft Plan-EA and other project information online at oregonwatershedplans.org. A printed copy of the Draft Plan-EA is also available at the Jefferson County Public Library (241 SE 7th St, Madra, OR 97741).

Comments may be emailed to northunit.id.comments@gmail.com, submitted online at oregonwatershedplans.org, submitted via phone to (541) 716-6085, or mailed to: Farmers Conservation Alliance, 102 State Street, Hood River, OR 97031.

Additional information is available online at oregonwatershedplans.org or the NRCS Oregon public notices webpage at nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/or/newsroom/pnotice/.