

MANAGER'S REPORT - FEBRUARY 2013

This report provides an overview of District issues and projects.

OFFICE: Billings are out. Money is coming in. Very few concerns about the rate increase. Lisa reports three comments and one whiner.

UPS REPAIR: The No. 2 motor at the UPS is ready to go in for repair. This is our insurance company's cost due to the vandalism last fall. During electrical inspections, it was noticed that none of the three pumps have rodent guards. Thus, rodents and birds have gotten into them, making nests, etc. Electricians are concerned about starting them up and, in fact, seem to be unwilling to do so. We will be getting the proper protection on the No. 2 motor while it is in for repair. We have a quote for doing the same to the other two pumps. This would require Board authorization since it was not part of our budget discussion for 2013.

POLICY MANUAL: In putting together the policy manual, I was surprised at how many policies we have developed over the past 16 years. They are now in one manual ready for the pickup at the Board meeting. There are two policies to be addressed at this meeting. 1) Update the water right transfer policy now that the Irrigon certificate is complete and Reclamation no longer needs a land classification. A copy of the old policy with changes and the new policy is in the Board packet. 2) An investment policy that SDAO wants us to have. Ours is very simple.

ISSUES and PROJECTS:

- 1) **BOUNDARY CHANGE & CONTRACT:** We are expecting a letter any day that the boundary change has been authorized by Reclamation. There will likely be an increase in our annual payment to Reclamation – around \$1500. So far, we understand this will pay off our federal account quicker. So, 2066 instead of 2119 to pay off our contract. However, there is a balloon payment of \$150 at the end.
- 2) **IRRIGON CERTIFICATE:** We sent confirmation letters to all landowners in Irrigon notifying them of the certificate and the amount of water rights on their property.
- 3) **PERMIT 7400 CERTIFICATE:** The certificate has been issued by the State. There is a copy in the Board packet. We will discuss the next steps at the Board meeting.
- 4) **WATER MANAGEMENT & CONSERVATION PLAN:** We completed the updates last month and it has been sent to Water Resources Department for their review. The 60-day comment period has lapsed with only Reclamation's positive comments.
- 5) **RECLAMATION URBAN CANAL REVIEW:** Reclamation's findings have been turned into recommendations. We expected this. It appears they plan to conduct a review every three years.
- 6) **RECLAMATION'S O&M REVIEW:** The three-year O&M Review will be done on February 27, 2013 by the local field office. Other than continuing work on the canal road (where the concrete has been exposed), we are not anticipating any issues.

- 7) **UMATILLA WATER COMMISSION/COALITION:** At the last Commission meeting, they discussed and decided to limit their role to the Phase I work of the Recharge project for which they have received funding. They will continue to meet at least until the end of May, 2013 when the funds are expected to be spent. They are charged with preparing a workplan, so that will be done. They plan to appoint Westland ID as the operating agent for the project, to keep it moving forward. The Coalition plans to become a 501 (c) (6) entity. That should be completed fairly soon. We are looking at corporation papers and by-laws now. This will be a dues-based organization with the ability to secure grants and loans. It will allow both public and private entities and individuals to join. This will be the long-term for moving the Basin issues forward.
- 8) **CTUIR WATER SETTLEMENT:** The meeting held January 21 focused on the use of Cold Springs Reservoir and Stanfield's contracted water.
- 9) **WELL WATER USERS:** The users have agreed to the one-year extension of the agreement.

DRAINAGE DISCUSSION: Over the years, several folks have asked the District about draining into the canal. We have limited the drains and charge a \$1000 annual fee for draining into the canal. But more folks are inquiring and it's time to take another look at what we want/can/are willing to do. We have made changes, from agencies' perspective, to the canal, due to the City's water. While these have not yet been approved by EPA, Reclamation has opened the door for the district to take ag drainage water. If this is something the Board would like to pursue, we can have discussion with Reclamation regarding the possibility. This is on the agenda.

IPS/UPS AGREEMENTS: I have talked to Alan Cleaver about sharing the cost of the proposed fish screen at the UPS. He does not think the current agreement covers the new screen. He would like something based on water use. Regarding the IPS, we are hearing that Stahl intend to replace the screens as they elsewhere in the Basin. They have not responded to any phone calls or in person discussion with me. However, I am including copies of both the Logan agreements (IPS & UPS) in the packet so we can all get ourselves up to date. For Cleaver, are we willing to consider a separate agreement based on flows (I'll mock up what he is thinking for the meeting). For Stahls, I just want us to be aware of the agreement.

FEDERAL WATER BASIN STUDY REQUEST: In early January, I sent a letter of interest to Reclamation, signed by the other ID's and JR, requesting their participation in a Basin study. This would be an inclusive, collaborative effort in the Basin to take a "big picture" look at the Basin. We would gather the information we have now, create a framework for moving forward (planning, prioritizing, etc), identify information gaps, and plan for future funding and projects. We have been "accepted" to move to the next step of the selection process, which is preparing a scope of work. There is a short turn-around to prepare a scope of work , which we were not ready to do as the basin is in a lot of flux (which is the problem we want to address). This request and its acceptance by Reclamation has created a lot of "buzz" in the Basin. We (districts, WRD, BOR) met with the CTUIR to discuss the request and get their support. We were very pleased with how it went. They were skeptical because they thought it would hold up their settlement. But, once they understood the project, they began to see some possibilities (at least I hope they did). They suggested we reapply next year when we have time to work collaboratively to develop a scope of work and budget. So, we did agree to that. This was really our "hoped for" outcome as we need to get them on-board in order to do any Basin-wide comprehensive planning. This item is on the agenda in case the WEID Board has any questions, comments or suggestion.