

## MANAGER'S REPORT - APRIL 2016

This report provides an overview of District issues and projects that we have been working on since the last board meeting.

**CREW:** Our crew hit the ground running with the water season. We have Ben (Irrigon), Ben (Boardman) and Casey training as ditchriders/maintenance. Frank is our main maintenance guy and relief ditchrider. Richard is the Field Superintendent. Ron and Tassie are temps. Plans are to have Ben de los Santos as the main Boardman ditchrider with Casey Surber as support and relief. Ben Svatonsky will be the main Irrigon person with Frank as secondary. Irrigon Ben and Casey will be the main canal ditchriders for the upper system. Casey will be training as the watermaster for the main canal. There is a lot of work and training to do. Saul has been in, working with Boardman Ben. Verlyn has been in, helping with some of the outages. Walt has been in quite a bit helping out in Irrigon and training the main canal run. This morning, he took everyone through the Irrigon system. Richard French is our Field Superintendent and is doing a great job under the pressure of start-up. He is using Jason Wise, Dave Payne and Walt for support plus his own contacts. His focus has been on repairs and putting out fires for now. He seems to be strong in teamwork, communication and getting specific work accomplished everyday. He is also able to prioritize work and change direction, as necessary. All very good attributes for this job.

**WATER START-UP:** Water start-up is substantially complete. The last of the pump stations in Boardman is ready for water. A part of the Irrigon system is down due to repair. This is the third repair in Irrigon so far. It has not been an easy start-up for Irrigon this year. Flood irrigators are starting to take water, so we'll get into a routine in Boardman fairly soon. The Lateral 7 project is running water, but the screen needs some tweaks. We are working on that.

### PROJECTS:

**Lateral 7 Piping Project:** The main part of the project has been installed and is running water. We still have 12-15 loads of fill to bring in and need to complete the covering of the pipe. As stated above, we are working on the screen and diversion to refine it. Jason and our temps are putting in the east leg of the project which will take water to the former Larry Sandlin property and complete the mainline installation of the project. That may be done on Friday. We have three small parcels to hookup to the existing Bonner Meadows pump station that will be next. I will work on a project expense update.

**IPS** – The project is complete and the system running. Well, until a few hours ago when it kicked off. The crew is checking on that and this is part of the weird start-up that seems to be the Irrigon system this year. We do have some clean-up work remaining on the site. The rest of the delivery line (30-inch C905 pipe) will be installed after the irrigation season. We haven't covered that pipe yet, but it's on a list to do.

**UPDATE:** Good thing Walt took the crew through the Irrigon system this morning and we discussed emergency outages. They've already had their first drill when the IPS shut off unexpectedly mid-day. We are now concerned about cavitation on the pumps. Herb Stahl called and they have been having problems. He thinks it may be the design. They have new

pumps that they pulled and just returned with the problem persisting. He said our pump was cavitating yesterday, which Rick Smull confirmed. We are checking into all this.

**Clean-up at the endspill:** We have lots of weeds to finish cleaning up at the endspill and some trees along lateral 31 that need to be piled up for burning. Other clean-up remains along the entire main canal.

**Robbins:** We will do a drainage project in the Robbins area. We haven't discussed the specific plans for that, but it will involve pumping water back to the canal.

**TELEMETRY:** Aqua Systems has been here replacing and upgrading two controllers. The work wasn't able to be done as other parts needed replacement (this system was installed in 2002 or so). They will be back later this month to finish the upgrades and do the training for our new crew.

**CITY OF HERMISTON PERMIT:** The permit is moving forward with DEQ. They have asked several questions responding to local concerns. We've responded to questions about the water flowing back into the fish forebay and gave that info to Reclamation for an official response to DEQ. I'll include the questions and response in the Board packet.

**WAYNE REFFETT METER:** Wayne called asking the District to put in a 6-inch meter instead of the 4-inch. He has built all his system to 6-inch and is concerned about loss of pressure, especially since some of the ground is at a higher elevation than the delivery. I told him I would bring this back to the Board for review.

**GRANTS:** We have been selected for recommendation for approval for both the WRD Storage Feasibility Study grant (\$40,000) and the BOR Grant for Lateral 11 (\$25,000). They need to be officially approved by the governing body.

There are many things that I am behind on in the office. Starting to do some catch up and need to be to the water right transfers. That is planned for next week. I am spending time each day with crew, as needed, and am training Casey on the water. I think it's important that the crew is trained the right way on everything and has their questions answered, as does Richard. I really see a solid crew developing, but I am typically the optimist.

They really need a few things – storage space at the shop area, security for shop and even pickups (we ask them to supply tools, but apparently don't have keys to the tool boxes we have), another 4X4 pickup with space (crew cab or ?), getting the current pick-ups better set for the job (two don't have tool boxes yet), running water at a shop, a bathroom (have been using a porta-potty for decades). Moving forward, we need to upgrade the pickups we are buying. Now that I have been using one, I realize that lack of automatic door locks, auto mirror adjustment, blue tooth and cruise control is a safety issue – well mostly. There is no space for personal gear – safety equipment, boots, coats, lunch boxes, ditchrider books, maps, and so forth. We will be heading towards purchasing notepads to increase our communication. This will put the ditchriders directly on the canal in the mornings, rather than gathering at the office. A lot of what I am mentioning will save time and make our crew more productive.