

## MANAGER'S REPORT - MARCH 2018

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

**WINTER WORK:** Most of the work is done. The crew replaced 148 concrete panels and used 190 cu. yds of concrete. There was a lot of patchwork done, some flooring and 60% of the panels had drain tile put behind them. We have some concrete on the Boardman laterals left to be done, installation of the Lat. 11 pump station, and work to do in Irrigon to get the booster pumps ready. Crews will likely be well into mid-April before all the winter work is complete.

**CONCRETE AT THREE MILE DAM:** I took a good look at the concrete at the Dam with Walt and Ben. The water seeping and running through has been doing so for many years. It has found its path and the canal is actually protecting the bank by receiving the water. The floor is solid and there are no leaks occurring from it or the roadside concrete. We inspected the bank on the river side, no leaks or moisture from the canal. The bank behind this area is very solid, so the panels aren't going anyway in this area. We determined there is no need to do work here as there are much higher priority panels along the canal. This is inline with several areas along the canal where panel support is solid and we really won't make it better by replacing the panels. A redesign of some sort would need to occur that would collect the water.

**CANAL BRIDGE NEAR I-84:** Wayne Reffett found another RR wooden bridge for us. It's 35-feet wide and weighs about 30,000 lbs. It has more support than the previous one, so we committed to that bridge. Cost is \$5000. The Port of Morrow will install it for us. We will wait until after the irrigation season to put in the bridge. There just wasn't enough time to do it this winter. With the railing, decking, concrete, building up the access and so forth, I expect the total cost to be around \$10,000.

**HERBICIDE/HOUSEKEEPING:** We applied herbicide to most of the canal and road before water started. We'll get the rest done and some of the Boardman laterals as well, as time allows. For housekeeping, we picked up concrete as we went, except upstream of Slaughter Spill. We'll need to get back to that. We weren't able to get to any high brush areas this year so will get some of that this summer. Overall, we are way ahead regarding housekeeping than we were two years ago.

**IPS PROJECT:** We received the reimbursement check from IRZ for the work we had to do on the pump shaft after the rebuild two years ago.

**WATER START-UP:** We started water right on target – March 15 on the main canal. We are a few days earlier than typical due to the dry soil. The crews are working two long days and plan to have water into Boardman late Friday or Saturday morning. This is earlier than targeted and will leave some winter work undone (as mentioned above). The laterals are locked out until they are burned and ready to go. Several laterals have work to do – Lat. 15 has sand blow off the neighboring field; Lat. 24 has concrete work to do in several places; Lat. 7 (pipeline) needs to

have a Tee put in for the extension to the east, but we can shut down in April to do this work; Lat. 11 needs to have the pump station installed.

The original target date for Irrigon is April 2. We will try to get it ready next week for a start up on March 26 or 27. Likely, there will be some work left to do including a new 4-inch line on Gravel Pit Lane for three new customers.

**GRANT PROJECTS:** As stated above, we have the pump station for Lateral 11 to install. Everything is ready and all parts are here. We just need to find the time to get it done. I have the contract for the Rippee Rd E/W project. This will eliminate Lateral 5 by installing a 15-inch gravity flow line from Rippee Rd east along the north side on Wilson (on the Frederickson property). We plan to do this leg as soon as possible so it will be in use this season. The pipe and parts are already in stock. The west part of this project is replacing Lateral 9 this fall.

**FUTURE FUNDING:** I recently met with the folks from NCRS in Heppner who are putting their grant together to assist the landowners on Laterals 12, 13, 15, 17, 18 plus landowners along the canal between Peters and Toms Camp who will convert to flood over the next three years. They will also look for OWEB funds to help with purchasing the meters for this project. We will apply for Federal funds at the next cycle and DEQ revolving loan funds as soon as we can. The DEQ funding will set up an account that we can borrow from as needed. We don't pay anything unless we borrow. It is very low interest and many times the loans turn into grants for irrigation conservation projects.

**WATER RIGHT TRANSFERS:** This is an ongoing project and has taken up a lot of time over the six weeks. We have done four permanent transfers since 3111 (starting in 2006), two more this year plus the alternate point of diversion. The Claims of Beneficial Use (COBU) were held up while we were working through the McKay certificate process. We've been working with the new transfer gal at Water Resources Department to get the claims updated and filed. She's very thorough and helpful as we get through all the records. Of course, several small errors have been found plus some overlapping well rights, so adjustments have been made, new maps and so forth. In a nutshell, we are filing extensions on the COBU to allow time to thoroughly review, check all the supplemental rights and get proper documentation from the receiving landowners that they have irrigated. New certificates will be issued on all our rights when this is done. We will only do temporary transfers this year and they are in the process of getting filed.

**EXCHANGE/CONJUNCTIVE USE ACCOUNTING:** There was an error, I believed, in the accounting for the Phase I exchange and I contacted WRD about four months ago. It had to do with the gage readings in the Umatilla at UMT0, the site used to account for available flow for WEID. OWRD did find errors and made adjustments. They will review their findings with me at an upcoming meeting. In a nutshell, this lowered our potential bill for 2017 conjunctive use costs by about \$25,000 from what it originally looked like and we will be \$10,000 under our budgeted amount of \$165,000 for 2017. We'll put those funds into the conjunctive use reserve. This river accounting is always an issue and I sure hope we can find a way that doesn't rely on me finding problems.

**RECLAMATION ISSUES:** We received a response from Reclamation to our January letter. A copy is enclosed in the Board packet. We have a follow-up meeting set for April 11 with local BOR and WRD folks to talk about McKay certificate and the Maxwell Diversion. Our attorney has commented on the letter, so we'll go into executive session to review those comments.

**JOHN PARTLOW:** John will be at the Board meeting to discuss his plans for a pond so he can eliminate flood irrigation on his property. He is located just south of the Boardman rest area and receives flood irrigation through Lateral 31. The lower end of the lateral goes through several private properties to reach him, so lots of water loss occurs. Maps are enclosed in the Board packet.

**POM/NUISANCE WATER:** We met with WRD on March 6. There were three topics discussed and direction settled upon:

- 1) Surface run-off from irrigation within the District boundaries, We can pump the run-off water from the blueberry fields as long as we are pumping surface water. No permit needed.
- 2) Surface water from outside our boundaries. Bruce from GSI is moving forward with the permits for pumping the water from Bombing Range Road area. Mike Ladd believes this can be supplemental water with the ability to use it in lieu of primary water enabling the primary to be kept in-stream even though it may be available.
- 3) Groundwater pumping to alleviate damage to WEID canals. We will submit a map of the areas we plan to pick up water. They will be applied for on one permit and we can build them over time. We will have to decide on construction that will work for us and be within tolerances for WRD. This was a good step from where we've been.