



# North Unit Irrigation District

## 2020 Water Supply Outlook

by Mike Britton

Surprise! Once again, it's mid-March and a little blast of winter has blanked the region with a light dousing of snow, memories of last year, although not quite as grand. Other than the recent blast it goes without saying that we've experienced another drier than normal winter, which is compounding Central Oregon's water problems for the coming irrigation season. As much as I'd like to blame all our woes on the Oregon Spotted Frog, mother nature has not been our friend for some time now. Since 2014, the district has had to place allotments on its water users due to various factors including less than productive and mild winter weather. Today (3/16/2020), Wickiup Reservoir is at 134,782 acre-feet or 67% of capacity compared to 129,691 acre-feet on this day in 2019. Seasonal snowpack and precipitation for 2019/2020 are being reported at 81% and 73% of average respectively. More concerning is the forecasted lack of natural river flow in the basin. In 2019, the district received 28,334 acre-feet of natural river flow, far less than anticipated given the record snow seen in late February, early March, compared to an annual average of 57,944 acre-feet. The District is expecting less than average natural flow and potentially less than realized in 2019, given current conditions. On the Crooked River side of the basin Prineville Reservoir is at 98,930

acre-feet or 66% of capacity compared to 48% of capacity for this period last year. Prineville is expected to fill and NUID has already made its call on the Districts 10,000 acre-feet of stored water in Prineville reservoir and we expect "normal" flows in the Crooked River that will help to some degree. Needless to say, all of the above makes for another difficult irrigation season with limited supplies and less than favorable conditions going forward. In addition, the district is anticipating a high demand for water at the beginning of the season given current conditions. The district would ask that if waterusers are capable of spreading out their demand or watering different sets at different times to minimize demand that would be most helpful in conserving water and managing the initial demand. Each year the District emphasizes to its patrons the importance of conservation and efficient use of irrigation water. This mantra has become even more important given current and future water and operational constraints for various reasons.

### Water Allotment

At the regular North Unit Irrigation District Board of Directors meeting held on March 10, 2020 the board of directors set a tentative 2020 irrigation season start date of April 8. Priming of the system will begin on or around April 1, with farm deliveries anticipated being available on April 8. In addition, the board reviewed current weather and water supply conditions and have set a water allotment of 1.25 acre-feet per acre for Deschutes River water right lands and .60 acre-feet per acre for Crooked River water right lands. The District will continue to monitor weather and supply conditions throughout the season to determine whether adjustments to the allotment are warranted.

### Customer Water Portal

North Unit Irrigation District is happy to announce our customer portal for all rides! Track your water usage, your water rights, and place **online water orders**.

Starting with the 2020 irrigation season, **ALL** rides will be able to order water through the customer portal!

Water users will be able to log into their online account and see their water usage. **ALL** water users can schedule their water orders online.

**Water users** must call the main office to obtain activation code for their customer portal.

### Minimum Water Orders

With the exception of orifice deliveries, water orders shall be for a minimum of 0.10 cfs. A water order for less than 0.10 cfs shall be deemed an order of 0.10 cfs and charged accordingly.

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-6

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## Delinquent Accounts & Lien Process

The District's lien process includes assessing fees for the filing cost of placing and removing liens and for related administrative fees. The administrative fee is set at \$150 per account. The District sends delinquent letters to all accounts not paid as of May 15, of each year. A notice of intent to lien will be sent out on delinquent accounts on July 15, or the first business day thereafter, of each year. If payment is not received within 30 days a notice of claim of lien will be filed on August 15, of each year with the recording officer of the county in which the land is situated, pursuant to ORS 545.494. Pursuant

to ORS 545.496 the District will withhold delivery of water from any tract of land until the incurred charges for the current and any prior years are paid in full as well as all interest, lien fees, collection costs and administrative fees.

**For your convenience the District can receive payments via Visa, Mastercard, American Express, Discover and E-Check. The payment is processed through Point & Pay, a third party processing center that charges a convenience fee. Visit our website to pay online or contact the District office to process a payment.**

## Canal Safety

The District annually presents a canal safety program promoting safety and the awareness of hidden dangers in and around canals. Second graders from Madras, Metolius and Culver schools are provided a slide show of hidden dangers within the District and a video of Otto the Otter's Scary Rescue. Students are provided an Otto the Otter coloring book. The coloring book is available on the District's website.

**Please stay safe, do not swim in the canals and remember canal roads are located on privately owned properties, which the District has easements for operation and maintenance purposes only. Public access is not allowed and considered trespassing.**



## Employee Changes

After 40 years with the District Leonard Lang (Ditchride 43) has announced his retirement beginning in July 2020. Leonard started with the District in 1979. Leonard is currently training NUID maintenance employee Marc Chapman to take over Ride 43. Marc will continue to train with Leonard for the next couple of months.

Zach Bruce has recently joined our maintenance staff. Zach has an

extensive background in farm and ranch operations.

Lisa Windom has recently been promoted to Special Projects Manager for the District. Lisa previously held the position of Special Projects Coordinator with the District.

Please Join us in congratulating Leonard on his retirement and welcoming Zach, Marc and Lisa to their new positions.

### Notice of Intent to Use Herbicide

Application of aquatic herbicides to District irrigation canals will begin in May or June 2020, and continue periodically through October 2020. The aquatic herbicides may include the following products: Copper Sulfate, Cascade and Magnacide H with active ingredient Acrolien. The intended applications will control aquatic weeds and algae growth in District canals.

Interested persons can call the District office to obtain more information and to request notification in advance of treatments.

### Management:

Mike Britton, Manager  
mbritton@northunitid.com  
Gary Calhoun, Operations Manager  
gcalhoun@northunitid.com  
Josh Bailey, Watermaster &  
Construction Supervisor  
jbailey@northunitid.com  
Jackie Looney, Finance Manager  
jlooney@northunitid.com  
Lisa Windom, Special Projects Manager  
lwindom@northunitid.com

### Office Staff:

Pam Watson  
pwatson@northunitid.com  
Sue Light  
slevitt@northunitid.com  
Marie Kay Williams  
mwilliams@northunitid.com

### Board of Directors:

Division 1: Phil Fine  
Vice Chairman  
Division 2: Mike Kirsch  
Division 3: Martin Richards  
Chairman  
Division 4: Richard Macy  
Division 5: Vern Bare

### Office Hours:

Non-Irrigation Season  
Monday - Friday 8:00-4:30  
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  
Website: www.northunitid.com

### Weed Control

In preparation for the 2020 irrigation season District employees have been performing controlled vegetation burns in District ditches and along the main canal. In order to insure burns are carried out in the most efficient manner, make sure that all wheel-lines, hand-lines, equipment, livestock fences and any other items are not within the canal easements. You can check the location of the easements on your property by stopping by the office and reviewing the easement maps.

**The District is not responsible for damaged items that are left within the District's easements.**

# Ownership of Land Within a Reclamation District

North Unit Irrigation District is a Bureau of Reclamation project; as such there are ownership entitlements that must be adhered to in accordance with the Reclamation Reform Act (RRA), which was enacted on October 12, 1982. Implementation of this act placed limitations on the amount of land a landholder may own within a Reclamation project within the 17, western states.

If a landholder is a qualified recipient (individuals, married couples, entities ultimately benefiting 25 or less natural persons) your ownership entitlement is 960 acres. If a landholder is a limited recipient (entities ultimately

benefiting more than 25 natural persons, example: government agencies, large corporations) your ownership entitlement is 640 acres (other restrictions may apply if the limited recipient did or did not receive water prior to 10/1/1981).

If you purchase land with water right acres over and above your ownership entitlement it becomes "Excess Land". Excess lands are not eligible to receive Reclamation irrigation water. In order for excess land to be eligible to receive Reclamation irrigation water, it must be sold at a price approved by Reclamation; this is a very slow and expensive process.

Under the District's contract with Reclamation, District landowners have the option to do a construction obligation payout, which would allow ownership of land over your entitlement. Payout must take place prior to exceeding your ownership entitlement. Please contact the District office if you have concerns regarding your ownership entitlement, payout questions and rates.



## Reclamation Reform Act

The Reclamation Reform Act (RRA) requires that anyone who owns and/or leases 240 acres or more in a District under contract to the Bureau of Reclamation are required to submit certification forms before water delivery. This means that even if you own and/or lease less than 240 acres in North Unit Irrigation District but also own and/or lease in another Bureau of Reclamation District with your total acres adding up to 240 or more, you

will need to fill out a certification form. The exception to this is for a public entity that needs to report if they own and/or lease 40 acres or more. If you were previously required to complete certification forms, you would have received a separate letter, which addresses RRA issues in more detail. If you did not receive a letter and feel you may need to complete certification forms, please contact our office.

The Bureau of Reclamation will be conducting a review of our Districts RRA forms July 14, 2020. Please make sure you have completed your 2020 RRA forms.

**PLEASE NOTE: If you have any land ownership and or lease changes that happen during the irrigation season a new RRA form is required to be completed and on file with the District on or before the effective date of the change.**

## Excess Water Charges

If the District determines that there is a shortage of water for an irrigation season, the board will set an allotment. This is the total amount of water that the wateruser can use for the season. During short water years waterusers who are not going to use all their allotted water can sign a form to allow another user to use the water. Any water usage over 2.00 acre feet of Deschutes water rights or 1.00 acre feet of Crooked River water rights is considered excess, charges will be assessed based upon water usage.

### Non-Potable Water

Irrigation water is non-potable water and should be considered unsafe for human consumption.

Do not use irrigation water for drinking or other domestic purposes such as bathing, showering, dishwashing, cooking or maintaining oral hygiene. Water delivered through the District's canals and delivery systems is for irrigation purposes only.

### Traps

Animal traps have been found within the Districts easements. It is imperative to the safety of our staff that traps are kept off easements and working areas for the safety of NUID employees.



### DITCHRIDER PHONE NUMBERS

Ride 34	Ryan Garrett	(541) 546-5381
Ride 37	Craig Wiseman	(541) 546-6733
Ride 41	Jim Brown	(541) 546-6644
Ride 43	Leonard Lang	(541) 546-6722
	Marc Chapman	
Ride 51	Wayne Jakobsen	(541) 546-6232
Ride 53&58	Cesar Saldaña	(541) 546-6232
Ride 57	Tom Walton	(541) 475-7338
Ride 58-11	Jesse Young	(541) 475-2638
Ride 63	Dennis Krueger	(541) 475-2678
Ride 64	Seth Stites	(541) 475-2873

### **Federal Water Restrictions**

As a federal agency, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is obligated to adhere to federal law in the conduct of its responsibilities to the American people. As such, Reclamation will operate its facilities and administer its water-related contracts in a manner that is consistent with the Controlled Substance Act of 1970. This includes locations where state law has decriminalized or authorized the cultivation of marijuana. As a result no federal water, including water delivered by the District, may be used for the purposes of cultivation or propagation of marijuana. Reclamation will refer any inconsistent uses of federal resources, including the use of federal water for cultivation of marijuana, of which it becomes aware to the Department of Justice and coordinate with the proper enforcement authorities.