



North Unit Irrigation District

Managers Message by Josh Bailey



During the June 11, 2024, NUID Board meeting, the NUID Board of Directors increased the patron allotment to **1.15** for Deschutes River water rights and **.58** for Crooked River water rights. Wickiup Reservoir is currently 52% full (104,088 acre-feet), compared to 42% (85,718 acre-feet) for this period in 2023. In addition, the District has received its full 10,000-acre-foot allotment from Prineville Reservoir. The cooler than usual spring has aided in stretching water supplies, but forecasts predict a drier than normal summer and fall.

Over this past winter, NUID staff and contractors achieved a significant milestone. They successfully completed constructing Segment 1 of the Lateral 43 Pipeline Project. This project was completed on time and is also functioning as expected. District staff are now focusing on completing some final ancillary items associated with Segment 1. We appreciate your patience while this work is being finalized. The District is now gearing up to complete the design and engineering on Segment 2 and expects to post solicitations for contractor bids later this summer. The lateral 43 project is being funded by NRCS and state funding via OWEB and OWRD.

NUID has been successful in securing multiple grants, each contributing to a diverse range of projects. These include \$5.96 million to replace the aging fish screens at NUID’s main diversion in Bend, demonstrating our commitment to environmental sustainability. We also received \$2.55 million to develop a floating solar project to offset patron assessments and help conserve water, showcasing our innovative approach to water conservation. Additionally, we secured \$2.0 million Congressionally Directed Spending to construct the Lateral 43 Pipeline Project, highlighting our commitment to infrastructure development. Lastly, we received \$76,000 from the U.S Bureau of Reclamation to investigate the potential of cloud seeding within the Deschutes Basin, showing

our dedication to exploring new water-sourcing techniques. This is just the beginning of our funding success, with many more ongoing projects. For a full list of projects and funding, I encourage you to look at the NUID Project List on the Project Gallery tab on the NUID website at <https://www.northunitid.com/project-gallery>.

Over the past few years, NUID staff have attempted to utilize all water available to the district, but at times, for various reasons, the district has been unable to capture water due to sufficient demand or a suitable process. In the past, this water was referred to as “Free Water,” and we were able to make this water available for on-farm use. We learned much from those experiences, and with the help of select patrons, NUID Board, and District staff, we are developing a pilot program to help direct a process when/if additional water supplies become available. A copy of the pilot program is posted online at <https://www.northunitid.com/operational-guidelines>. The pilot program will be effective September 2, 2024 and will likely be modified as time goes on. We appreciate your patience and encourage you to submit your input on the program as it unfolds.

We want to assure you that the NUID Board of Directors and staff are working hard to minimize the impact of the ongoing six-year drought in Jefferson County. Additionally, we are committed to using all available resources to assist other districts in the Deschutes Basin with water conservation efforts, including large-scale piping projects and on-farm conservation. The conserved water generated by these projects will help NUID meet present and future HCP obligations and ensure NUID water security in the future.

We hope you have a successful growing season!

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Maintaining Your Water Rights

Maintaining irrigation water rights on your property is important as a landowner. In short, state law has mandated that if your land has irrigation water rights, you must use those rights in a beneficial manner. For landowners with water rights “beneficial use” is a phrase that should be familiar, but can be confusing even for the most experienced water users. To fully use your water rights, the law requires that the total water right be used on the land, as mapped, at least one year in every five years in a “beneficial” way with any crop, lawns, or pasture (no sagebrush or scrub grass).

Failure to comply with the provision makes all or part of your water rights subject to forfeiture under ORS 540.610. Under this law the Oregon Water Resources Department considers these rights abandoned and can cancel them, which means that the water resource is lost forever to the district and the water user for irrigation purposes.

To prove the water right has been used beneficially landowners can provide one or more affidavits from persons who can attest from personal knowledge or professional expertise, that the right was exercised at the authorized location and for the authorized purpose. The affidavits must also include supporting documentation like crop receipts or expenditures, various agency records or dated photos. In a limited number of instances a user can provide documentation that the presumption of forfeiture would be rebutted under ORS 540.610(2).

The landowner can avoid losing all or a portion of their water right by:

1. Using the water beneficially at the current location and be able to provide proof.
2. Permanent or temporary transfer of the water to a new location.
3. Leasing the water right instream.

Maintaining water rights is also important to the district to provide the most efficient and cost effective delivery of water for the benefit of all water users within the district. Landowners who would like a copy of their water right map can contact the district office. Knowing where your water rights are located on your property is the first step to protecting them.

Drought Declaration

When a drought is declared in the county by the Governor, as it has been in Jefferson County in 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024. It means that the drought declaration years give an extension/pause on beneficial use. As of June 27, 2024 Governor Tine Kotek declared a drought emergency in Jefferson County—<https://apps.oregon.gov/oregon-newsroom/OR/GOV/Posts/Post/governor-tina-kotek-declares-drought-emergency-in-jefferson-county>

An excerpt from Senate Bill 718 “A calendar year in which the Governor declares, pursuant to ORS 536.740, that a severe, continuing drought exists, or is likely to exist, within a county does not count toward the period of five successive years described in subsection (1) of this section for an owner of a perfected and developed water right within the county.”

For example:

2019	If you last watered in 2019
2020	Year 1
2021	Drought Declaration—Extension/pause
2022	Drought Declaration—Extension/pause
2023	Drought Declaration—Extension/pause
2024	Drought Declaration—Extension/pause
2025	Year 2
2026	Year 3
2027	Year 4—Time to water your property before year 5!
2028	<u>Year 5 - Beneficial Use! Need to Water!!</u>
2029	Year 1

****Please note that some exceptions may apply due to water right transfers in process****

However, the Patron must be ready, willing and able to make full use of the water right even in times of drought declaration. If you are unsure of when your property was last watered, please call the office at 541-475-3625. Please click below if you would like to view SB 718.

<https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2023R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/SB0718/Introduced#:~:text=Whenever%20the%20owner%20of%20a,part%20of%20the%20water%20right.>



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Division 2: Mike Kirsch, Chairman

Division 3: Ryan Feigner

Division 4: Evan Thomas

Division 5: Vern Bare

Office Hours:

Irrigation Season

Monday - Friday 8:00 - 5:00

Saturday 8:00 - 4:00

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Website: www.northunitid.com

Lien Process for Past Due Accounts

On May 15, 2024, letters of delinquency were sent to all past due accounts. If not paid by the date specified, a Notice of Intent to Lien will be sent to account holders on July 15, 2024, or the first business day thereafter. If payment is not received within 30 days of July 15, a lien will be filed in August. Fees will be assessed for the filing cost of placing and removing liens along with an administration fee of \$150. Pursuant to ORS 545.496, the district will withhold delivery of water from a tract of land until the incurred charges for the current year and any prior years are paid in full as well as all interest, lien fees, collection costs and administration fees.

Customers may conveniently pay by credit card or E-check via Point & Pay. A processing fee will be charged to you by Point & Pay. Click on the link below to pay online. <https://client.pointandpay.net/webportal/partner.do?method=prepare&webSiteId=986&pid=5331>

Prevent Meter Damage

The most common and expensive repair on a water flow meter is the replacement of the register. Damage commonly occurs when the water user is charging the irrigation system's mainline. If the valve that charges the mainline is fully open it will cause the water flow indicator on top of the register (looks like a speedometer) to go beyond its limits, causing internal damage. To help prevent damage, open the mainline charge valve slowly and check the water flow indicator on the top of the register to be sure flows stay within the range for which it was designed.

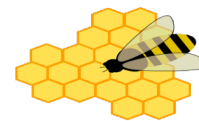
Call 811 Before Digging

The district and other utilities have numerous underground facilities. For **free** underground utility marking call **811** or **(800) 332-2344** two working days before you plan to dig. Or go to www.digsafelyoregon.com to enter your information online.



Beehive Safety

Please check with district management before placing beehives near areas frequented by ditch riders for operation and maintenance purposes. Any activity that impedes or interrupts their ability to work in a safe manner must be taken into consideration.



Road Watering Prohibited

The Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) has seen a steady increase in complaints over sprinkler end guns and wheel lines spraying public roads and creating a hazard, in addition to wasting water. In Jefferson County, the sheriff's office may respond to the complaints as a violation of ORS 368.256 "Creation of road hazard prohibited". In addition, OWRD's view is that water being applied to roads, including canal service roads, even inadvertently, is considered applying water to a location that does not have a

water right or that is not receiving beneficial use a violation of Oregon water right statute. The district asks water users to minimize or eliminate "road watering" not only to reduce a potential hazard but as responsible stewards of a limited resource.



Regional News

How an F-15 Landed in a Ditch: Blame All Around

By Greg Hadley

<https://www.airandspaceforces.com/f-15-canal-mishap-report-emergency-brakes/>

'The Evergreen': Water rights in much of Oregon are still based on policies dating back to the 1900s

<https://www.opb.org/article/2024/06/24/the-evergreen-podcast-water-drought-oregon-policy/>

Grocery chain tests consumer appeal of dry farmed crops

By Mateusz Perkowski

https://www.capitalpress.com/state/oregon/grocery-chain-tests-consumer-appeal-of-dry-farmed-crops/article_c495012c-1eaf-11ef-a710-df54d732de20.html

Fire breaks out at COSI

By Kiva Hanson

https://www.madraspioneer.com/news/fire-breaks-out-at-cosi/article_161e7d4e-2832-11ef-88e6-cf3d537822b3.html

Rebuilding spotted frog numbers, one genome sequence at a time

By Michael Kohn

https://www.capitalpress.com/ag_sectors/water/rebuilding-spotted-frog-numbers-one-genome-sequence-at-a-time/article_61be09e2-2702-5e2f-9bfd-ebafa63149d0.html



DITCHRIDER PHONE NUMBERS

Ride 34	Wayne Jakobsen	(541) 546-5381
Ride 37	Craig Wiseman	(541) 546-6733
Ride 41	Seth Stites	(541) 546-6644
Ride 43	Cole Simmons	(541) 546-6722
Ride 51	David Ludwig	(541) 546-6232
Ride 53 & 58	Cesar Saldaña	(541) 546-7658
Ride 57	Tom Walton	(541) 475-7338
Ride 58-11	Jesse Young	(541) 475-2638
Ride 63	Marc Chapman	(541) 475-2678
Ride 64	Kody Edmondson	(541) 475-2873

Delivery of Irrigation Water Through Private Ditches

Water users who use private ditches to receive irrigation water must maintain delivery easements and/or facilities for water conveyance beyond the district's headgates. District personnel do not have the right to cross private property the district does not have an easement for and/or access to private facilities without prior landowners approval. It is the water user's responsibility to maintain facilities beyond the district's point of delivery and it is the water users responsibility to coordinate with neighboring water users to ensure they are properly receiving irrigation water.

The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) offers a dispute resolution program for farmers, ranchers, and rural landowners. The program known as the Central Oregon Water Dispute Program is a special program created to help resolve issues that come about when property owners have disputes arising over property boundaries, water distribution, maintenance responsibilities, weeds or right-of-way. ODA helps bring property owners together to resolve disagreements, manage water rotation schedules, facilitate coordination with irrigation districts, address weed problems, property access issues and help foster other beneficial arrangements mutually developed by irrigators, through mediation. Working together can lead to better irrigation efficiency and water quality as well as reduce tension among neighbors. Contact ODA at (503) 986-4558 for more information or fees for this service visit <https://www.oregon.gov/oda/AboutUs/ComplaintsDisputes/Pages/Complaints.aspx>

This summer stay cool, but don't use a canal as your pool!

Please remind kids to stay out of the canals



Please remember Otto the Otters 6 Rules to Live by!

1. Stay away from canals! They are dangerous.
2. Don't play near water by yourself.
3. Learn to swim really good, like an otter!
4. If someone falls in water, get help! Don't rescue them yourself.
5. Only swim in safe areas like a swimming pool.
6. Say **NO** to swimming in canals and ditches.

