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RSB JC UPDATE

Fall 2003

Volume 6, Number 2

A PUBLICATION OF THE ROZA-SUNNYSIDE BOARD OF JOINT CONTROL
 P.O. Box 810 ♦ Sunnyside, WA 98944

Sunnyside Canal Improvement Project Begins



Mile 2.92 was retrofitted with automated gates which allow for adjustments through wireless access.

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and Washington State Department of Ecology will partner with the Sunnyside Division Board of Control (SDBOC) to improve the efficiency of the Sunnyside Canal over the next 10 years. This project, called the Sunnyside Canal Improvement Project (SCIP), consists of rebuilding and automating about 30 check structures, constructing three re-regulation reservoirs with a total capacity of over 1000 AF, all supported by a Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system. Currently the majority of the funding will come from the federal government who has committed \$21 million for improvements. The state has committed an additional \$6 million.

Check structures currently must be adjusted manually every time a change in flow occurs in the Sunnyside canal. New gates set up to automatically hold a constant elevation upstream will eliminate this slow, labor intensive process.

Operational spill is necessary to manage fluctuations in canal flow. Excess water is spilled back to the Yakima River until it is needed to meet irrigation demands.

Due to the several day travel time required to get water from the reservoirs to the landowner through the canals, operational spill is necessary. Re-regulation reservoirs will be able to store excess water for later release and greatly reduce the need for operational spills.

Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) allows the water master to monitor the Sunnyside Canal from anywhere he has access to a computer. The automated gates coordinate the flow throughout the conveyance system, enabling accurate, timely response to demand fluctuations across the entire system. With the new technology, the gates can be adjusted in increments as fine as 1/100th of a foot. The added responsiveness enhances conservation by ensuring efficient water use and results in less water being diverted. In addition, gate adjustments may be made from the computer to manage reservoir elevations and to increase/decrease diversions from the Yakima River.

Two-thirds, about 54 cfs (cubic feet per second), of the saved water will be available to increase target flows below Sunnyside Dam in the Yakima River. The other one-third of the saved water will be available to firm up Sunnyside Division water supplies for irrigation. This is especially important in water short years.

Engineering work is scheduled to begin on the Sunnyside Canal Improvement Project (SCIP) this October. This summer SVID began the process of choosing an engineering firm to begin work on the canal improvements. Several companies responded to the Statement of Qualifications notice. Four companies interviewed and conducted presentations during the selection process.

CH2M-HILL was selected as the engineering firm to provide design and construction management services for the Sunnyside Canal Improvement Project (SCIP). CH2M-HILL edged out the other firms with a strong showing in SCADA and automation experience as well as assuring extensive local sup-

port through local CH2M-HILL staff and the addition of Huibregtse, Louman Associates, Inc and Conley Engineering to their team.



The above picture is of a manually adjusted gate that will be replaced with an automated gate.

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Proposed Irrigation Season Shut Off Schedule

Beginning the afternoon of October, 18th Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District will begin to shut off water delivery for the 2003 irrigation season. Service for water users at the west end of the canal system below the Sunnyside Dam will cease on the afternoon of Saturday, October 18. Because of the time it takes for the system to drain, water will be available in the eastern end of the system as late as October 22.

Roza Irrigation District will begin to shut off water delivery for the 2003 irrigation season on the morning of October 20th. Water may be available in some areas until October 24 as the water takes several days to reach the end of the delivery system.

Below is a list of the approximate timeframes of when to expect water delivery will cease by area. It is recommended that water users continue to utilize the water in the system as long as it is available as assists in the dewatering process. For deliveries using a pump, an automatic shutoff switch is highly recommended to avoid damage to your pump when water levels drop in the canal.

Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District Water Users

Dewatering schedule – approximate date of shut off by area:

Zillah area	October 18, 2003
Granger area	October 19, 2003
Snipes and Outlook	October 20, 2003
Grandview and Mabton	October 20, 2003
Prosser	October 21, 2003
Lower end	October 22, 2003
Shut down completes	October 22, 2003

Roza Irrigation District Water Users

RID Pump shut off dates:

Pumps 1-10 will be shut down on October 20, 2003.
Pumps 12-14 will be shut down on October 21, 2003.
Pump 15 will be shut down on October 22, 2003.
Pumps 16-17 will be shut down on October 24, 2003.

Gravity fed system – approximate date of shut off by area:

Terrace Heights-Zillah area	October 20, 2003
North of Sunnyside	October 21, 2003
Prosser	October 22, 2003
Benton City	October 24, 2003

Dry Summer Leaves Reservoirs Very Low

The reservoir storage system is currently at less than 210,000 AF (Acre Feet) or about 60% of average for this time of year. The mountains received no precipitation during the month of July and less than 10% of average precipitation during August. September precipitation was 40% of average for the month.

Due to the lack of precipitation and the warmer than average temperatures, the Bureau of Reclamation announced rationing early in July. The rationing level for August 1 through September 30 was upgraded to 92% of entitlement. The national weather service is calling for normal temperatures and above normal precipitation. "Although we are going into the winter with nearly empty reservoirs, the weather forecasts for this winter look favorable. If we get something near normal for snowfall we would expect to have an adequate water supply for next season," comments Ron Van Gundy, Roza Irrigation District Consultant.

Storage carryover is forecasted to be very low at the end of this irrigation season. The Bureau of Reclamation is estimating that the carryover in storage will only be 150,000 AF (acre-feet). "Storage in the Yakima basin only meets about 40% of the annual irrigation demand so starting the next water year with low carryover just adds to the water supply concerns. Every year we are completely dependent on snow pack to provide the other 60% so the message is the same, pray for snow and lots of it", states Don Schramm, Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District Assistant-Manager-Operations.

Keechelus Dam Repairs



Construction crews will soon begin filling a 400,000-cubic-yard hole in Keechelus Dam. The center section of the 86-year-old earth-and-rock dam was removed this summer. Crews from Kiewit Pacific Company of Seattle, numbering up to 70 people, have worked with heavy equipment since this spring on the 6,600-foot-long dam to take out numerous cavities first found inside the dam in June 1998.

The preliminary work on the \$32 million repair project began in May 2002 and heavy excavation work began in early May this year. Approximately 1,500 feet of the dam has been taken out of the center section that equals about 400,000 cubic yards of material. The center section is the deepest part of the dam where the crest is 102 feet high. A regular dump truck carries about 12 cubic yards and the larger ones used at the site can carry approximately 20 cubic yards.

The repair process involves removing most of the dam facing the downstream side, or the side where water climbs as the reservoir is filled. The material removed is sifted, filtered and separated as to grade. It is then replaced, repacked and reformed following the same configuration of the old dam. An impermeable layer of silt is placed on the outside of the reformed dam. The flanks or wings of the dam were excavated and replaced late last year and this spring and amounted to about 400,000 cubic yards of material.

The repairs on the center section began in early July and processing the material was recently completed. At peak operations, crews were removing 20,000 cubic yards in a 24-hour period, or nearly 1,700 dump truck loads a day. The contract calls for completion by November 15, 2003 and the contractor is currently on schedule.

During the project, crews found more cavities than expected. It is believed they were formed when wooden trestles rotted over time inside the dam. The trestles were used to support small trains that hauled fill to the dam. Since 1998, reservoir fill restrictions reduced capacity the dam could hold back by 14,000 acre-feet of water.

Crews working around the dam found several old harness riggings for horses or mules that were used in the 1917 construction project. They also found coal that had been used in stoves or for steam-powered equipment. Items such as planks, nails and horseshoes have also been recovered in the materials removed from the dam.

Crews are scheduled to leave the site in late October, weather permitting. Contracts are in the process of being approved with several companies, which will rehabilitate the disturbed area around the dam starting in spring 2004. The work will include replanting and reforestation. The borrow area northeast of the dam, where some new material was excavated, will be turned into a wetland as part of the mitigation for the work.



Construction Projects Planned

Roza Irrigation District (RID) and Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District (SVID) both have long lists of construction projects planned for the winter season.

SVID has an enclosed conduit project planned for Lateral 59.31 to Old Inland Empire Highway. The affected landowners may notice improved water pressure and will have more flexible control of the deliveries with flow meters after the enclosed conduit is installed. Lateral 59.31 services over 1,200 acres; the enclosed conduit project will include slightly more than 170 acres and install 1,219 feet of pipe. The irrigation district plans to continue enclosing several miles of open laterals every construction season.

SVID lateral piping projects include Lateral 35.51, Ryder 3.86, Harrison Hill Riverside extension, and Harrison Hill mainline on Grandview Avenue from Swan Road to Upland.

RID has several enclosed conduit projects on laterals: Lateral 16.4 serving 45.1 acres, Lateral 75.5 serving 56.9 acres, Lateral 75.7 serving 59.2 acres, and Lateral 76.6 serving 1088.4 acres. These enclosed conduit projects involve the installation of approximately 9 miles of PVC pipe at an estimated cost of \$910,000. To date over 49% of RID is served by the enclosed conduit system (34,971 acres). Approximately 193 miles of pipe or 79% of the laterals below the Roza Canal are enclosed. The enclosed conduit system and check structures are a continuation of RID's water conservation plan that was started over 20 years ago.

SVID crews will be working on several lining projects planned for Snipes 7.84 and Lateral 55.19. The lining projects are to increase the overall efficiency of SVID's delivery system by conserving water loss. In addition, this project will protect local groundwater from the canal's influence.

RID crews will be retrofitting several of the check structures along the canal with Langemann Automated gates. The automated gates coordinate the flow along the Roza Canal by maintaining user defined upstream water levels. Utilizing this technology enables the watermaster to maintain adequate water levels in the main canal even during low flow conditions. Structures scheduled for automation are Mile Post 86.0 and Mile Post 87.4. Check structure 32.8 will be added to the automated control system known as Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA), which allows the watermaster to monitor and control by computer. The check structure improvements are funded through a cost share program with the Bureau of Reclamation.

The Sunnyside Canal will undergo realignment near Mile 2.92 and Mile 19. Each year a section of the Sunnyside Canal undergoes rehabilitation and betterment work that includes channel shaping and bank stabilization. This will improve the canal efficiency due to less seepage and sediment deposition. Adjacent canal access roads will also be improved along the canal in those sections.

An RID crew will be working on the construction of an addition to the generator building at Kachees Dam. The Bureau will contract with the RID to construct the addition this winter.

On-Farm Loan Program Enters Final Loan Cycle

The On Farm Loan program has successfully assisted approximately one-hundred different farmers convert from rill irrigation to methods that are more efficient. The loan program began during the 2000 irrigation season but will come to end in November of 2004. Applications should be submitted by the spring of 2004 in order to be considered for the program.

The original loan for 10 million was awarded in 2000. All unused funds will be returned to the state revolving fund. Currently there is over 5 million dollars still available. The On-Farm Loan program has converted 8,397.51 acres to drip, sprinkler, and other approved irrigation methods.

The objective of the program is to assist farmers in upgrading their irrigation application type to achieve better utilization of their water. The On-Farm Loan program assists farmers to transition from rill irrigation to a more effective application practice such as drip irrigation, micro spray, solid set, wheel line, center pivot, and pump back systems. Additional projects that would improve water quality may be submitted for approval on an individual basis.

The basic structure for the On-Farm Loan Program includes the low interest rate of 1% with a four-year repayment term. The yearly payments are included in the water users' annual irrigation assessments.

For more information, please contact, Theresa Johnson, Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District (SVID) at (509) 837-6980 or Wayne Sonnichsen, Roza Irrigation District (RID) Engineer at (509) 837-5141.

Districts Experience Staff Changes

Just as the seasons change throughout the year, so have the faces at Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District and Roza Irrigation District.

Roza Irrigation District saw the retirement of Onni Perala, RID District Engineer in December 2002 after working for the district eight years. Onni's many years of hard work and dedication will be missed. RID's Lead Engineer, Mark Barnett resigned in June 2003 after working for Roza for ten years.

Staffing changes over the past year (2002-2003) for SVID have included the addition of Engineering Technicians, Ron Cowin in October 2002 and Eric Lucas in November 2002.

The year 2003 brought the Lower Division a new Operation and Maintenance Supervisor when Gary Fitch joined SVID in January. Gary is stationed out of the Grandview yard and brings many years of construction and supervisory experience to the lower division. Cassandra Strickland has resigned and the process of hiring a new RSBOJC Water Quality Specialist will be complete soon.

Doug Vining Retires From SVID Board Mike Hogue Appointed Director

Doug Vining, SVID Director for Division #4 resigned effective September 2, 2003. Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District would like to thank Doug Vining for his twenty-two years of service as board member. Doug has been active member of the board and has represented SVID at various events since January 1981.

The SVID Board of Directors and Board of Yakima County Commissioners approved the appointment of Mike Hogue as Director Division No. 4. He will serve as director until a director is elected at the next annual election. Mr. Hogue will represent Divi-

sion 4, which consists of the SVID service area east of Euclid Road from Yakima River to Grandview and east of Wilson Highway north of Grandview.

Mr. Hogue intends to run for this position through the nomination process that includes a petition signed by at least ten qualified landowners. The election is then held on the second Tuesday of December. Mr. Hogue will serve out the remaining year of Mr. Vining's three year elected term. The new term of office for this position will begin on the first Tuesday of January 2004.

Work Group Redefining Mission

The RSBOJC Work Group is attempting to confirm or redefine its mission. At the last meeting, the facilitator challenged the group to think about the role of the RSBOJC and the role of the Work Group.

It was the consensus of the group to continue having meetings, approximately three times a year, March, July and November. More discussion will follow at the next Work Group Meeting. Monday, November 3, 2003 at 9:30 a.m.

Below is an article outlining the process the RSBOJC Work Group is currently ungoing to redefine it's mission.

RSBOJC WORKING GROUP: Why are we here?

By: Vicky Scharlau, Scharlau Consulting Inc.
Work Group Facilitator

Why does the RSBOJC Work Group exist? The answer will depend on who you ask, at what point they became involved in the Work Group and if they've consistently attended the Work Group meetings. As the need for the Work Group has changed over time, the Group itself is asking for their "reason for being" to be addressed. Some believe the Group should be completely dissolved. Some feel strongly that the Work Group should maintain their structure but change their focus by evaluating how they could be useful and then direct their efforts in that direction.

The Work Group had its first planning session to determine their future this summer. The Group in attendance went through a mini-strategic planning process and shared how they felt the Work Group was working and how it was not.

A larger Group will meet in the future to confirm and finalize recommendations for the future. However, to start the process we asked the question... "The workgroup exists to..." and the input we received was:

- Provide a forum for landowner and stakeholder communication and information exchange on water issues that affect the communities of the Yakima Valley. When a critical issue is addressed the workgroup can facilitate consensus problem solving through providing resources (human and financial).
- Notification of important upcoming events, relay possible funding opportunities and provide outreach to local and national legislative reps.
- Allow growers to participate and own processes that affect water management.
- Provide guidance and recommendations to the Joint Board in important areas of concern such as water quality and water quantity.
- Provide a sounding board for major RSBOJC policy decisions and provide a forum for information exchange on issues directly related to RSBOJC
- Be a liaison between board, management and agencies for wider vision of operation and communication as well as participation.
- Facilitate progress of the RSBOJC in areas of public concern.

Going around the room during our mini-planning session, the non-growers and the landowners of the group felt the Work Group had value. While the reason or type of value changed with whom you represented or whether you had land or not, all felt the Work Group had many different aspects of "value" and they included:

- Provide communications
- Provide information and education
- Usefulness to staff for communication efforts
- Being a conduit for and to other stakeholders

- Being a tool for landowners, the board and the two districts
- Providing a connectedness between parties
- Provide guidance
- Provide board feedback for better decisions
- Provide an opportunity for the agencies and the Tribe to see and learn things to take back
- Provide a way to affect public policy
- Provide a value added process
- Provide fundraising brainstorming
- Provide a sounding board
- Provide and increase interaction with the bureaucrats
- Provides a safe house for discussion to address issues
- Provide a collective hearing and input process

Obviously some of these 'aspects of value' have more value than others. Some are unique to the Work Group. And in all fairness, we discussed far more than just the value of the Work Group. We discussed the problems as well. The itemized list of both the real and perceived problems with the Work Group included:

- There is both work (time) and expense to RSBOJC and participating parties
- There is a lack of participation from growers and land owners that don't hold a board membership
- The workgroup is too time consuming
- Most of the mission statement goals have been accomplished
- There is very poor attendance of landowners
- If major policy decisions are infrequent some meetings may be necessary.
- Lack of major issues currently to maintain interest and participation
- Lack of attendance
- Need better communication to landowners
- Lack of participation may be reason for not continuing
- Too many meetings and we are doubling up on work in progress.
- Look around the room – no one here!
- If we needed it more then people would be here.
- Just another meeting of too many meetings to attend.
- Lack of burning issues
- Not well attended by rank and file landowners

This fall the RSBOJC Work Group will meet to take this raw material and massage it into a document that can be shared with the RSBOJC board. The Work Group would like to **STRONGLY** encourage you to attend to share your opinion at a meeting that may well decide the fate of the Work Group.

The Roza-Sunnyside Board of Joint Control (RSBOJC) publishes the **RSBOJC UPDATE** biannually for landowners. All articles, letters and other items submitted to RSBOJC for use in its landowner newsletter become the property of RSBOJC which is authorized to use any item submitted, without payment or compensation to the person submitting the item, in any newsletter or other publication of RSBOJC. RSBOJC reserves the right to edit all items submitted. Doug Simpson, Chairman; Mike Miller, Vice-Chairman; Robert Golob, Ric Valicoff, Larry Haak, Dave Michels, David Minick, John Newhouse, Cus Arteaga, Mike Hogue, Dave Olsen, Jim Willard, Directors. Officers: Ron Van Gundy, Secretary; Patricia Bailey, Treasurer. Address comments to: Melodie Smith, Editor, P.O. Box 239, Sunnyside, WA 98944.