

THE WATERFRONT

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 120 South 11th Street ♦ P.O. Box 239 ♦ Sunnyside, WA 98944

SVID Receives Environmental Excellence Award For Water Quality Improvements



SVID District Manager, Jim Trull and SVID Board President, Doug Simpson accept award from the Department of Ecology for water quality program.

The state's highest environmental stewardship award was recently awarded by the Department of Ecology to Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District, Roza Irrigation District, North Yakima Conservation District, South Yakima Conservation District, Benton Conservation District and Washington State University's Agricultural Research Station at Prosser. The Environmental Excellence Awards were presented to representatives of those organizations on April 27 at the Yakima Area Arboretum.

In 1995, the state Department of Ecology declared that approximately 253 tons of sediment was being dumped into the river each day from Moxee, Sulphur Creek, Granger, Spring Creek wasteways. In the 2003 irrigation season, sampling showed just 47 tons of sediment a day through those targeted drains.

According to the Department of Ecology, the Yakima River's water quality has improved by about 80 percent since 1995. This improvement is due in a large part to efforts by farmers in the Yakima Valley. A water quality improvement plan written in 1998 called for reducing sediment in the river by 90 percent over 10 years. Studies conducted by the Department of Ecology had identified rill or furrow irrigation practices were one of the major causes of sediment and pesticide residues in the river.


"The key has been that farmers have voluntarily taken on this challenge," said Jim Trull, manager of the Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District. SVID and the Roza Irrigation District have been leaders in tackling water quality issues.

SVID and Roza began a water-quality monitoring program in 1996 and have provided low-interest loans for irrigation system upgrades to reduce landowner return flow.

Some of the improvements that were attributed to the improved water quality were conversion to more efficient irrigation methods, sedi-

ment collection basins, water reuse systems, soil moisture monitoring and precision irrigation scheduling, the stabilization of canal banks, and improved management of water delivery systems. Ecology reported that the water quality efforts are resulting in farmers losing less topsoil, cleaner water and improved habitat for fish.

The department cited specific data for each of the targeted drains.

- Sulphur Creek drain in 1995 averaged 110 tons of sediment a day. In 2003, that was reduced to an average of 17 tons a day.
- Granger Drain in 1995 averaged 60 tons of sediment a day. In 2003, Granger Drain averaged 13 tons a day.
- Spring Creek/Snipes Creek in 1995 averaged 46 tons a day. In 2003, it averaged 6 tons a day. 



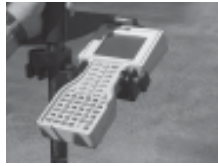
Sulphur Creek Wasteway 1997

Granger Drain Wasteway 1998

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Engineering Begins Using GPS to Map District Facilities



Earlier this year, Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District (SVID) Board of Directors approved the purchase of a Trimble Global Positioning System (GPS) unit, which will be used to locate all SVID facilities. The immense process of gathering the GPS data will begin in June when Roy Pasiscaran will begin gathering location data for SVID that serves over 86,000 irrigable acres.

GPS is a worldwide radio-navigation system formed from a constellation of 24 satellites and their ground stations. GPS uses these "man-made stars" as reference points to calculate positions accurate to a matter of meters. In fact, the Trimble GPS unit is accurate up to 3 cm horizontally and vertically. In a sense, it is like giving every square meter on the planet a unique address.

The GPS system will be used to identify the location of the facilities operated by SVID. These facilities include structures, laterals, drains and pumping stations.

Once the location data is gathered, a Geographic Information System (GIS) software program will be used to map the location data. By creating a shared database, data can be collected once and used many times. A GIS creates maps from data pulled from various databases.

Map products can then be created centered on any location, at any scale, and showing selected information symbolized effectively to highlight specific characteristics. The current set of maps will be updated with more accurate location data that will aid in designing and modifying facilities. To put this project in perspective, Pasiscaran will be faced with locating and documenting approximately 60 miles of main canal, 44 miles of major subsystem canals, 320 miles of laterals and branch laterals, 170 miles of drains and all the structures along the way!

Water Rationing Announced for Junior Water Users

The Bureau of Reclamation released its irrigation water forecast for the region on May 7, notifying junior water right holders to plan for no more than 70 percent of their requested water. The rationing was due to low reservoirs, little spring rain and warm spring weather that has caused considerable snowpack loss. Bureau officials said the rationing level could go as low as 61 percent of a full supply if the dry weather persists. If the rains return, supplies could be as high as 80 percent.

Bureau Water Engineer Chris Lynch told managers the remaining snowpack is just 60 percent of average. Total precipitation for the water year is 89 percent of normal. Sustained warm, dry weather has melted off some of the mountain snowpack, and precipitation has been below normal for five consecutive months.

Rationing is imposed on holders of junior water rights; their supplies are reduced when there is not enough to go around. Older, senior rights will receive a full supply. Lands served by junior rights, such as Roza Irrigation District, make up more than half the 460,000-acre Yakima Irrigation Project.

Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District has a combination of senior and junior rights, the majority being senior and tends to share water within their boundaries, which softens the impact of short water supplies.

A firm rationing figure will be imposed when water must be released

GIS or GPS? What's the Difference

GIS is a system of computer software, hardware and data, and personnel to help manipulate, analyze and present information that is tied to a spatial location that is usually geographic.

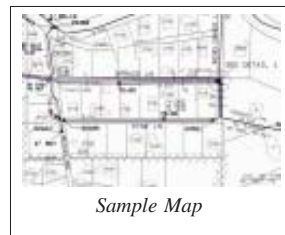
GIS is a method to visualize, manipulate, analyze and display spatial data. A database is a listing of information with no visual representation, just a list of data. Data can be tables of data, aerial maps and Global Positioning System locations.

GPS is Global Positioning System

GIS is Geographic Information Systems

GPS is Global Positioning System provides spatial data referencing its location. Exploring data using GIS turns data into information. GPS is a form of data gathered using special instruments.

SVID currently combines the data within its records system with the location data from Yakima and Benton County. This gives the district the basic mapping of roads and parcel data. Adding data gathered using the new Trimble GPS equipment will provide more detailed information that is not currently available. [W](#)

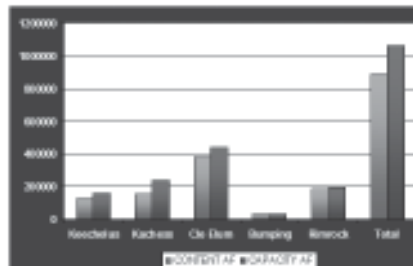


Sample Map

from the five project reservoirs to meet downstream demand. Storage control has not started yet and all users are currently sharing what is available from snowmelt runoff in the Yakima River to avoid drawing from the lakes. When storage control begins, river flows will drop and minimum flows at Sunnyside Dam at Parker, south of Union Gap, will be set at 300 cubic feet per second.

The fast-disappearing snow has resulted in record high river flows in Eastern Washington in March and April. This also means there will be less run-off during July and August.

The seriousness of the situation depends on water user's conservation and water management. This year's low water may also effect next year's water situation and could deplete next year's water storage reserves. [W](#)



On-Farm Loan Program's Final Season

DEADLINES

Application Deadline
July 1, 2004

Project Completion
Deadline
September 30, 2004

Invoice Deadline
October 31, 2004

The On-Farm Loan Program is in its final season. The program will continue funding irrigation conversions until November 2004 when funding will end. RSBOJC encourages all qualified landowners to take advantage of the On-Farm Loan program. If you are planning to utilize the funds for converting from rill irrigation, now is the time to apply. Applications will be accepted until July 1, 2004.

The RSBOJC On-Farm Loan Program was developed to assist landowners in complying with the RSBOJC water quality policies by offering a funding source to help finance on-farm irrigation projects. The irrigation improvements are focused on improving the quality of irrigation return flow by converting from rill irrigation to another approved application type.

The maximum amount of funding per acre for Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District (SVID) landowners has increased from \$800.00 to \$1,200.00 per acre. Currently approximately \$2.9 million dollars is still available

in the program for Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District (SVID) landowners. Approximately 4,800 acres have been converted from rill to more efficient methods over the life of the program which began in 2000.



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 cycle. 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. ^W

Court Decision Upholds Jurisdiction Over Drains



A Benton County District Court decision last fall has clarified the jurisdiction over the waterways that the Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District (SVID) has authority and obligation to operate and maintain. For several years, the Washington State Department of Fisheries (WDFW) asserted that SVID's drains were natural watercourses.

As a natural watercourse Washington State law requires any person working within the high water line to obtain a Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA).

On two occasions in 2002, the Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District (SVID) performed maintenance on the water quality monitoring station in Spring Creek Wasteway upstream of Hess Road. In 2003, WDFW filed a criminal complaint against SVID for not obtaining an HPA. At trial, SVID presented evidence to the Court that Spring Creek Wasteway was not a natural watercourse and SVID was not required to obtain an HPA. The Court agreed with those facts

In 1908, The Bureau of Reclamation put the Spring Creek Wasteway in use to provide passage of excess flow in the Sunnyside Canal to the Yakima River. The channel consists of a channel part of which was constructed by man and part of which was formed over time by the natural erosion of the earth's surface.

At the current time, Spring Creek Wasteway serves as a major control point for the Sunnyside Canal. However during the winter of 2004-2005 a re-regulating reservoir (one of three reservoirs referred to above) will be installed immediately upstream of the wasteway and operational spill to the wasteway will be virtually eliminated.

Incremental Pricing Users Reminder

Incremental pricing is applied to the lands that receive on-demand delivery (enclosed conduit with flow meter) and those taking delivery directly from the Sunnyside Main Canal.

Incremental pricing was designed to reduce water usage while being revenue neutral. Incremental pricing is structured as a tool to improve water management. Communication is necessary to deliver the amount of water actually required. This information is used by the watermaster and ditchriders to make adjustments in the delivery system in a timely manner.


Irrigation assessments are divided into two levy rates. Incremental pricing falls into Levy 1, which is a significantly lower rate. The lower assessment rate applies to the first 3.0 acre-feet of irrigation water per acre. The rate for each additional acre-foot of water used in excess of 3.0 acre-feet per acre is set annually by the Board of Directors and must be paid prior to use.

On incremental pricing deliveries without flow meters, water usage will be computed as the amount that has been ordered. It is very important to order your water off when not in use. Water will be considered in use until ordered off and will be included in your 3 acre-foot allotment. This procedure encourages better water usage management through improved communications with the ditchrider to order water delivery on and off. This policy also discourages the practice of over irrigating or letting the irrigation water run when it is not needed. ^W

Tips for Incremental Waterusers

Order your water on and off
Water usage is measured
If not using water, order it off
Usage postcards mailed in July

Tips For Ordering Water

- ◆ Ditch riders make water delivery every week day.
- ◆ Paying your bill does not turn on your water. Use the automated system to order water.
- ◆ Turning your water on or off can be done by calling the automated system. 837-8611 , 837-2223, 837-3115, 837-5040, 882- 4343, 877-2122, 854-1540, 588-5521, 837-3115
- ◆ Water delivery ordered today will be delivered the next weekday.
- ◆ Water delivery cannot be changed over the weekend. Only emergency service is available.
- ◆ Water can be ordered on the website. http://www.svid.org/order_water.htm
- ◆ It's easier to assist a customer if they know their lateral and delivery. It's located at the lower right hand corner of your bill. 

The Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District publishes **THE WATERFRONT** biannually for landowners. All articles, letters and other items submitted to Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District (SVID) for use in SVID's landowner newsletter become the property of SVID 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 SVID. SVID reserves the right to edit all items submitted. Douglas Simpson, Chairman. Robert Golob, Dave Michels, John Newhouse, Douglas Vining, Directors. Officers: James W. Trull, District Manager; Donald Schramm, Assistant Manager; Patricia Bailey, Secretary-Treasurer. Address comments to: Melodie Smith, Editor, P.O. Box 239, Sunnyside, WA 98944.

2004 Ditch Rider List

Below is a list of the ditch riders for the 2004 Irrigation Season as well as their major lateral delivery numbers. This information is located on your annual assessment.

BEAT 1 - RANDY JENKINS

HEADGATE TO 22.56 MAIN CANAL INCL. KONEWOCK, PIETY, 11.83 - 11.98 - 13.02 - 13.91 - 14.17 - 15.28 - 16.72 - 16.82 - 17.32 - 17.50 18.83 - 19.67 - 20.44 - 20.64 - 21.06 - 21.22 - 21.26 - 22.12 - 22.56

BEAT 2 - TIM WALSH

MAIN CANAL 22.60 TO 29.38 - 22.83 - 23.08 - 24.35 - 24.73 - 25.24 - 25.47 25.76 - 26.79 - 27.09 - 27.53 - 27.69 - 28.07 - 28.28 - 28.60 - 28.90 - 29.38

BEAT 3 - JIM CAMPBELL

MAIN CANAL 29.58 TO 34.59 - 58.58 - 29.68 - 29.94 - 30.16 - 31.23 - 31.65 32.18 - 32.769 - 32.77 - 33.21 - 33.74 - 34.10 - 34.42 - 34.59 - SN 0.91 SN 1.15 - SN 1.41 - SN 2.15W - SN 2.39 - SN 3.00 - SN 3.35 - SN 5.84 SN 5.95

BEAT 4 - JIM RICE

MAIN CANAL 34.60 - 39.79 - 34.60 - 34.99 - 35.22 - 35.51 - 35.97 - 36.15 36.52 - 36.74 - 36.98 - 37.37 - 38.95 - 39.01 - 39.077 - 39.08 - 39.70 - 39.79 SN.6.62 - SN 7.29 - SN 7.43

BEAT 5 - HECTOR FONSECA

OLD OUTLOOK I.D. (30.20) OLD GRANGER I.D. (23.10) OLD SNIPES MT I.D.

BEAT 6 - AARON KNIGHT

SN MAIN 6.42 - SN 6.50 - SN 8.38 to end - SN 9.04 - SN 9.06 - SN 10.21 SN 10.61 - SN 11.43

BEAT 7 - NICK GONZALEZ

39.90 to 49.55 MAIN CANAL - 39.90 - 40.20 - 40.86 - 42.33 - 42.44 - 43.23 44.30 - 44.38 - 45.43 - 46.76 - 47.14 - 47.81 - 47.90 - 48.25 - 48.84

BEAT 8 - CHAD SMITH

49.79 to 51.71 MAIN CANAL - MATHISON Subsystem - 49.90 - 50.04 50.52 - 51.18 - 51.26 - 51.36 - 51.71

BEAT 9 - GARY BARNETT

RYDER - ROCKY FORD

BEAT 10 - DWIGHT FRENCH

51.87 to 55.05 MAIN CANAL - PROSSER Subsystem (gravity) 51.87 - 52.53 - 52.90 - 53.81 - 54.01 - 54.12 - 54.55 - 54.90

BEAT 11 - JAMES TRUMBLE


55.19 to 60.00 MAIN CANAL & Pumps - 55.19 - (N. PROSSER Pump) 59.30 - (SPRING CREEK Pump) - 55.56 - 55.91 - 56.07 - 56.46 - 57.53 - 58.75 - 59.17 - 59.30 - 59.31 - SP CR 59.31 - BN 59.32

BEAT 12 - RON SEARCY

MABTON

Lateral Status Updates Available on Website

Sometimes irrigation pipes leak or even break and repairs require shutting down a delivery or a lateral. If you need to know when your delivery is off for repairs, just check the SVID website at www.svid.org. From the main page is a link that will lead you to Lateral Status Web Page.

Daily updates are posted on this site. Laterals out of service are listed with estimated back dates, when available. This site is updated when new information is available from the area watermasters and ditchriders. 

Water Pooling Agreement Information

Water use for two or more parcels anywhere in the district subject to incremental pricing may be pooled at the request of the landowner or operator. Water use on parcels subject to incremental pricing may also be pooled with parcels not subject to incremental pricing. All parcels pooled will be subject to incremental pricing.

The Pooling Agreement will take effect for the entire irrigation season as soon as it is requested. Pooling Agreements must be approved by August 1. Water use is pooled for billing purposes only. All other delivery policies and procedures still apply. A Pooling Agreement form is available at the SVID office.

The Board of Directors continues to refine the policy to make it user friendly. The Bylaws, Rules and Regulations were amended to expand the application of pooling of water use records subject to incremental pricing for leased land with the same farm operator. Pooling was previously only available on lands in the same ownership. 