

MARCH 2025

# SPRING NEWSLETTER

Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District

## Welcome to your spring newsletter!

Get the scoop on SVID's latest improvements and what they mean for you! From new infrastructure to water outlook updates, this newsletter is packed with information to help you prepare for a successful 2025 season.

## INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

This winter marked significant progress in our water conservation efforts. Here's what we accomplished:

- Installed 68 new flowmeters ranging from 2-inch to 8-inch sizes.
- Completed over 5.5 miles of new pipeline installation with pipes from 4 inches to 18 inches in diameter
- Installed 2,000 feet of canal lining across two different canals
- Enclosed five laterals, benefiting 812 acres of agricultural land



SVID Crews roll out liner in preparation for shotcrete.



## This issue:

Winter 2024 Conservation Achievements

Water Supply Outlook & Drought Updates

Understanding Your Water Rights: Senior vs Pro-ratable

Preparing for the 2025 Irrigation Season

Conservation Success: SVID's Impact on the Yakima Basin

Benefits of Enclosed Laterals: What It Means for You

Meet SVID Manager, David Felman



# Understanding Your Water Rights

**Water rights in the Yakima Basin reflect a complex system** developed over a century ago, shaped by the needs of early settlers and agricultural development. The pivotal date of May 10, 1905, marks a crucial divide in our water rights system, creating two distinct categories that affect how water is allocated during drought conditions.

Understanding these rights is essential for every grower in our district, as it directly impacts water availability and management decisions throughout the season.

## Key Points About Water Rights:

- Senior water rights (pre-May 10, 1905) receive their full allocation regardless of water supply conditions
- Proratable water rights (May 10, 1905) may be reduced during drought years
- SVID maintains a strong portfolio with 70% senior rights and 30% proratable rights
- Other districts in our region, like Roza, KRD, and KID, are fully “proratable” districts
- Cities like Yakima, and districts like SVID, YTID, NSID, SMID, and WIP, have mixed portfolios of both types of rights
- During drought conditions, only the proratable portion of SVID’s water rights faces rationing.
- The Bureau of Reclamation determines rationing amounts based on available water supply
- This unique structure means that even in challenging drought years, SVID can maintain a significant portion of its water delivery capacity through our senior water rights.

## Meet the Manager

**SVID welcomes David Felman as General Manager**, bringing 19 years of district experience and a strong vision for our water future.

After serving as SVID’s General Manager since April 2024, David continues to build on our foundation of innovation and sustainable water management. His extensive experience with complex irrigation projects and technical improvements has prepared him well for this leadership role.

David succeeded Lori Brady, who retired in June 2024 after an impressive career spanning over three decades. Under his management, SVID maintains its commitment to water conservation and system modernization, as shown by this winter’s substantial infrastructure improvements.

When not overseeing SVID’s operations, David enjoys exploring our region’s outdoor recreation opportunities with his wife, Sabrina, and their daughter, Lyla. His connection to the land and understanding of our region’s unique challenges helps inform his approach to managing the district’s vital water resources.







## Conservation Success Story

SVID's conservation efforts create a win-win situation: cleaner, pressurized water for our growers and improved stream flows for fish. **Here's how our ongoing improvements are making an impact:**

### Progress by the Numbers

- 38,000 acre-feet conserved for in-stream flows
- 135 miles of canals enclosed to date
- 27,000+ acres served by enclosed systems



## Preparing for 2025

As we look ahead, growers can take proactive steps:

1. Contact your ditch rider to establish a rotation agreement
2. Evaluate and adjust your irrigation system to operate efficiently at reduced flows
3. Check your system for worn out nozzles, leaking pipes, and failed joints or gaskets
4. Amend your limited water rights to beneficial



### Benefits to the Yakima Basin

Our conservation work makes a real difference for the entire basin. Water saved through these improvements is returned to the river, enhancing in-stream flows that benefit fish populations. During drought years, this additional water is especially crucial, helping both out-migrating and returning fish in the Yakima Basin.

### Benefits to Landowners

Enclosed laterals provide several key benefits:

- **Cleaner Water:** Reduced debris at your flowmeter
- **Improved Pressure:** Lower pumping requirements, sometimes eliminating pumps completely
- **Modified on-demand System:** Ability to turn on and off provided water orders are placed

These improvements enhance water delivery reliability while reducing energy costs for our growers.





## Water Supply Update: Drought Conditions and Outlook

The past two years demonstrate how drought conditions affect our water supply in the Yakima Basin. *Here's what we've experienced and what we predict to see in 2025:*

### 2023 Drought Year

- 72% rationing
- June 1st storage control date
- Entitlement reduced from 376,592 acre-feet to 268,428 acre-feet after storage control date
- Maintained normal flow rates to growers despite drought conditions

### 2024 Drought Year

- 52% rationing
- May 21st pro-rationing date
- Entitlement reduced to 269,436 acre-feet after pro-rationing date.
- Due to earlier rationing date Max instantaneous flow reduced to 6.7 GPM/acre for all landowners.
- Our senior water rights helped buffer drought impacts.

### 2025 Season Outlook



- Facing the 3rd lowest storage carryover since 1971.
- Probability of refilling reservoirs is unlikely, however Rimrock and Bumping are possible.
- Drought conditions likely to persist in 2025 with near average snowpack levels and below average precipitation and reservoir storage.

Spring Newsletter

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