

Farm Improvement Policy

1.0 POLICY GUIDELINES

When an irrigator comes to the Eastern Irrigation District (the "District") with a development that will or has improved their irrigation farm operation and it will:

- (a) improve the District's infrastructure, or
- (b) save a significant amount of water,

the District may cost-share the project with the irrigator. Projects require the approval of the Board by resolution.

The guidelines to determine available cost-sharing and District contributions under the District Farm Improvement Policy are as follows:

2.0 INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT

2.1 Where a development results in an improvement or a reduction to the District's infrastructure which is on the landowner's timeline and is not part of a District project, the District will cost share the development as follows:

- (a) 50/50 cost-share up to \$15,000 maximum District share per quarter section; this includes:
 - (i) adding turnouts
 - (ii) changes to existing turnouts
 - (iii) canal or drain crossings for cattle or machinery

3.0 DRAIN AND CANAL RELOCATION GRANT

3.1 Where the landowner requests a drain or canal to be relocated and the relocation is on the landowner's timeline, is not part of a District project, the parcel has not received such grant before, and District staff is of the opinion the relocation is feasible, the District will cost-share the construction of the new drain or canal as follows:

- (a) 50/50 cost-share up to \$50,000 maximum District contribution:
 - (i) must have Board approval prior to work being done
 - (ii) work must be carried out or supervised by District staff
- (b) Eligible costs include excavating of the new canal or drain and leveling of the banks of the existing drain or canal.
- (c) Hauling of material to fill in the old canal or drain is the landowner's responsibility.

4.0 CONVERTING TO A MORE EFFICIENT METHOD OF IRRIGATION GRANT

Where a farm improvement on a landowner's parcel converts an existing irrigation method to a more efficient method of irrigation and which improvement is on the landowner's timeline and is not part of a District project, the District will cost-share the particular improvement as follows:

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- 4.1 Uncontrolled surface irrigation to machine leveled/improved surface irrigation:
- (a) 50/50 cost-share up to \$20,000 maximum District contribution.
- 4.2 Uncontrolled surface irrigation to gated pipe or permanent head ditch with controlled outlets:
- (a) 50/50 cost-share up to \$5,000 maximum District contribution.
- 4.3 Eliminating spill past a pump by moving a delivery or piping to a pump site:
- (a) 50/50 cost-share up to \$15,000 maximum District contribution.
- 4.4 Side-roll wheel moves to low pressure pivot:
- (a) Maximum District contribution is either:
 - (i) \$100/acre minus \$500/acre for irrigation acres outside of wetted area of pivot, or
 - (ii) \$100/acre plus the amount per acre set out in the prevailing Capital Assets Charges Bylaw for irrigation acres outside of wetted area of pivot purchased by the District.
- 4.5 Surface irrigation to low pressure pivot.
- (a) Maximum District contribution is either:
 - (i) \$100/acre minus \$500/acre for irrigation acres outside of wetted area of pivot, or
 - (ii) \$100/acre plus the amount per acre set out in the prevailing Capital Assets Charges Bylaw for irrigation acres outside of wetted area of pivot purchased by the District.
- 4.6 Surface irrigation to sub-surface irrigation.
- (a) Maximum District contribution is either:
 - (i) \$100/acre minus \$500/acre for irrigation acres outside of wetted area of sub-surface irrigation, or
 - (ii) \$100/acre plus the amount per acre set out in the prevailing Capital Assets Charges Bylaw for irrigation acres outside of wetted area of sub-surface irrigation purchased by the District.
- 4.7 On-farm work to accommodate more efficient irrigation, such as leveling or filling in old head ditches, field drains and dugouts which are in the path of a pivot:
- (a) The project must have Board approval prior to the work being done.
 - (b) The grant does not include brushing, the removal of trees, landowner's buildings and foundations, and hauling of any material. The landowner must provide any fill material.
 - (c) The work must be carried out or supervised by District staff.
 - (d) 50:50 cost-share up to \$15,000 maximum District contribution.
- 4.8 Pivot crossing on small canals or drains:
- (a) The District prefers bridged pivot crossings. The landowner may choose between bridges or culverts (and in choosing between bridges and culverts, pay for the lesser of the two material costs).

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- (b) The landowner is responsible for providing any needed backfill material to each crossing location, which could include purchasing it and paying to have it hauled to each site.
- (c) The District will install either a culvert or a bridge with no additional cost to the landowner.
- (d) The bridged crossings are the landowners' ongoing responsibility to maintain and replace.

5.0 APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- 5.1 Applications may only be made by the registered owner of the parcel.
- 5.2 An application for a grant under Sections 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6 will be considered for completed projects only. Satisfactory proof of project completion must accompany each application. Following Board approval the grant payment and amount is subject to completion of a survey or inspection of the project area by District staff.
- 5.3 Subject to policy constraints, the following acres are eligible to receive a Farm Improvement Grant:
 - (a) irrigation acres added to the assessment roll prior to 1999 (the beginning of the Farm Improvement Grant Program); and
 - (b) irrigation acres added to the assessment roll after 1999 to a parcel that already has irrigation acres (an "infill project").
- 5.4 The following acres are not eligible to receive a Farm Improvement Grant:
 - (a) irrigation acres added after 1999 to a dry parcel (a "new development");
 - (b) acres that are currently assessed as terminable;
 - (c) acres that were converted from terminable to irrigation prior to November 1999; and
 - (d) acres that were converted from terminable to irrigation since November 1999.

6.0 GRANT PAYMENTS AND DEDUCTIONS

- 6.1 For each fiscal year that this Policy is in force, the Board will approve an annual budget for Farm Improvement grant expenses. Unless otherwise permitted by the Board, the Board will discontinue approving Farm Improvement grant applications when any further approval will cause the budget to be exceeded. Any application not considered by the Board due to budget restrictions may be presented to the Board for consideration, in the order in which the completed application was received if a budget for Farm Improvement grant expenses has been approved for the following year.
- 6.2 Parcels that have previously received an Infrastructure Cost-Savings Grant due to efficiency/conversion gains are not eligible to receive a conversion grant through the Farm Improvement Policy.
- 6.3 Grants paid per acre will be calculated based upon the irrigation acres shown on the assessment roll as of the beginning of the Farm Improvement Policy program in November 1999.
- 6.4 The maximum per acre parcel contribution by the District under this, and any prior farm improvement policy, is \$100/acre in aggregate, excluding cost-share grants. Parcels for which grants have previously been approved and paid may be eligible for a partial grant utilizing the \$100/acre rate for conversions to pivot projects on future farm improvements. For example:

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- (a) If a Farm Improvement Grant has never been paid for the parcel, the irrigator may receive \$100/acre under a conversion to pivot project on any acres included in the improvement.
- (b) If a Farm Improvement Grant has been paid for the parcel, (i.e., for a flood to wheels conversion based upon \$42/acre) the irrigator may receive the remaining \$58/acre under a wheels to pivot conversion on a future improvement.

6.5 The District will set-off from any approved payments any amounts owing by the landowner to the District.

6.6 Upon providing the District with proof of installation date, applications will be considered on a 1 year retroactive basis while the program is in effect; with any approved payments based on the grant values in effect at the time of the applicable on-farm improvement.

6.7 If the amount of a grant from a prior farm improvement was reduced due to a landowner owning irrigation on the parcel outside a pivot/project area (the "Originating Parcel"), with the amount by which the prior grant was reduced, being hereinafter referred to as (the "Deduction") and:

- (a) such irrigation acres are being utilized for another farm improvement project on the Originating Parcel, with such parcel still being owned by the same landowner who received the prior grant, or
- (b) such irrigation acres are being utilized for another farm improvement project on a different parcel to which the irrigation acres have been transferred with the Originating Parcel still being owned by the same landowner who received the prior grant,

the Deduction will be paid to the landowner of the Originating Parcel.

6.8 If the amount of a grant from a prior farm improvement was reduced due to a landowner owning irrigation acres on the parcel outside a pivot/project area (the "Originating Parcel"), and the owner of the Originating Parcel is no longer the same landowner who received the prior grant, no Deduction is to be paid to the prior or current owner of the Originating Parcel.