

History

The Crawling Valley area was part of a land grant to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company Ltd. (CPR) by the Dominion of Canada in 1903. The CPR began construction of the irrigation system now known as the EID in 1910 with the construction of the Bassano Dam. Crawling Valley was a major obstruction to the gravity flow irrigation canal system of the time, requiring the construction of a wooden flume close to 500 m (1500 ft) long, 10 m (33 ft) high and 5 m (16 ft) across the top to transport the water across the valley.



EID Archives

Although the present reservoir was not constructed until the mid 1980's, the value of this site as a water storage location was recognized as early as 1925. The reservoir was fully operational by the spring of 1985, at which time the old wooden flume was retired. Much of the lumber from the flume was salvaged with the last remnants gone by the spring of 1991.

Irrigation Values

Crawling Valley Reservoir is a very important addition to the water delivery system of the EID. This new reservoir provides much needed water delivery security to the northeastern section of the District, whereas in the past, this region was prone to water shortages due to low river flows in the late summer months. Positive effects are also seen throughout the rest of the District as this reservoir provides another tool in the overall water management operations of the EID.



G. Bander

Location

The reservoir is located 8 km (5 mi) north and 6 km (4 mi) east of the Town of Bassano and can easily be reached from the Trans Canada Highway.

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Where Water Works Wonders

Crawling Valley Reservoir

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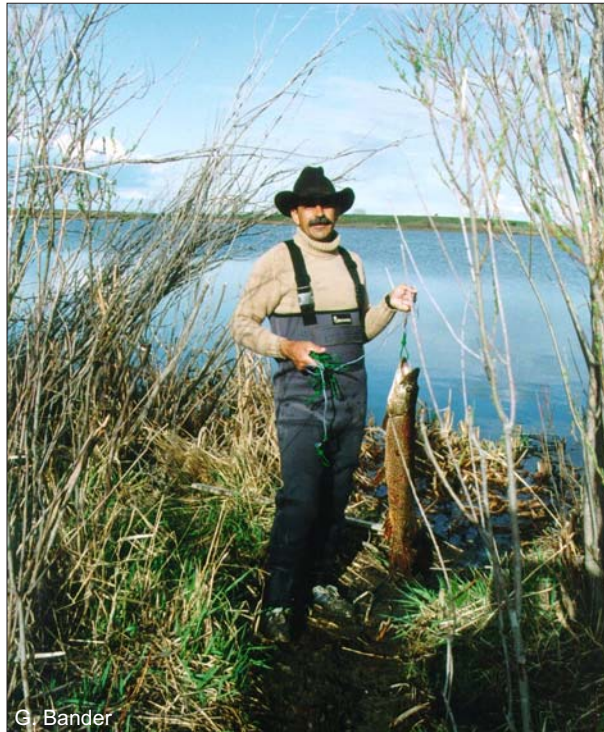
The development of the reservoir began in 1983 with the PFRA overseeing the design and construction. The Crawling Valley Reservoir is the second largest body of water within the Eastern Irrigation District (EID).

The surface area is approximately 2500 ha (6200 ac), and the lake is approximately 16 km (10 mi) long and 2 km (1.6 mi) across at its widest point, with a maximum depth of 16 m (52 ft). The reservoir was created with the construction of a dam across the south end of the valley. This is an earth filled dam 1.7 km (1.05 mi) long, 8 m (26 ft) wide at the top and 19 m (62 ft) high. The first water was diverted into the reservoir on October 16, 1984.



Wildlife and Recreation

Along with its agricultural importance, the reservoir offers a multitude of recreational benefits. Camping, boating, fishing and hunting are some of the activities that take place on or around the lake. Crawling Valley is well known for its excellent fishing.



The reservoir was originally stocked with 700,000 trout to provide a sports fishery, until species such as northern pike became naturally established. As the pike population increased, the trout population decreased. A total of 600,000 walleye fry were stocked in the lake between 1990 and 1993, to supplement the pike population.

Wildlife and Recreation

The walleye population appears to be doing well, but sport fishing for walleye is presently restricted to catch and release until a self-sustaining population is fully established.



The reservoir has also become an important staging area for migrating waterfowl with the north end of the lake managed by Ducks Unlimited for waterfowl production. Bird watchers are in for a pleasant surprise with a variety of wading birds and colonial nesters, such as white pelicans found in the area.

