

Publication Date
May 01, 2023

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Eastern Irrigation District

Snowpack Report

Even with the recent snow in the mountains the snowpack levels for the Bow River Basin continue to be average to below average. There is still some possibility for the snowpack to increase before the melt begins, depending on the weather.

Diversion began on April 17th, with priority going to refilling reservoirs in anticipation of the upcoming water season. The earliest date for water delivery remains at May 5th.

click [HERE](https://rivers.alberta.ca/) to view the Snowpack Data
(<https://rivers.alberta.ca/>)

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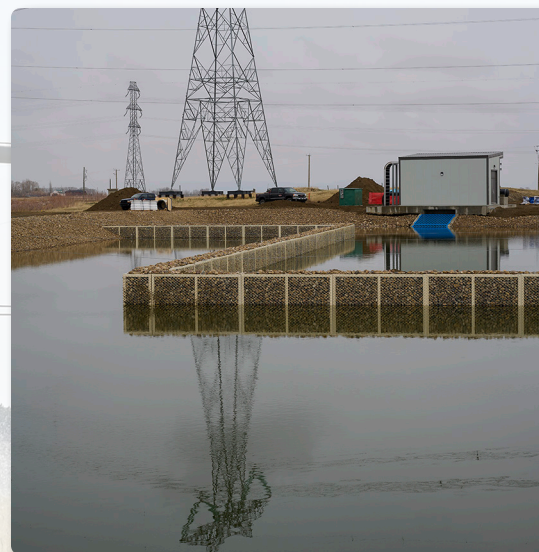


IRRIGATION UPDATE

Sprinkling of Roadways

Please be reminded that the sprinkling of water on the driving surface of roadways by irrigation equipment is prohibited within the County of Newell under County Bylaw No. 1743-11. Upon receiving notice of a violation, a Community Peace Officer will inspect the area and request the person responsible to remedy the situation immediately. Failure to stop sprinkling the driving surface at the request of the Community Peace Officer may lead to a charge being laid against the person or persons responsible.

The EID also urges irrigators to keep the irrigation water from all infrastructure equipment within the assessed irrigation area and advises that all water used, even unintentional irrigating of ditches and roadways, counts towards the total water allocation and could mean you reach your irrigation cap earlier than expected.



EID Irrigation Development

Pursuant to the Irrigation Acres Bylaw, any unused acres from prior years are "carry forward acres" and are pooled for future use. Since 2021, 397 reservoir supported acres have been carried forward. A proposal to develop 3 pivots on reservoir supported District lands was approved for this fall's application process as follows:

- SW 35-14-13 W4M, SW 27-14-13 W4M, and SE 25-14-13 W4M,
- as Irrigated Farm Leases,
- with corner arm pivots.

Subject to sufficient carry forward acres being available following approval of irrigator developments in November, individual District parcels will be:

- bid via a live auction for the right to acquire the lease agreement;
 - it is anticipated that an auction would be held in January 2024
- for a 5 year short term lease;
- with the EID installing the mainline, irrigation equipment, and pivot;
- the Lessee being responsible for equipment maintenance up to a determined amount; and
- the Lessee being responsible for breaking and leveling the parcel, etc.

Nathan Fontaine,
Land Supervisor

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Private Irrigation Development

Landowners are reminded that applications for projects requiring 50 or less irrigation acres to be added to existing irrigation parcels may be submitted throughout the year. Landowners with applications requiring greater than 50 acres, or for developing parcels which are currently dry (have no assessment), are to contact Staci Connauton and submit applications on or before September 30, 2023.

Staci Connauton,

Land Administrator - Assessment, Water, and Lands

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Aquatic Weed Abatement

To improve water quality, in addition to treating with chemical, the District has installed screens with mechanical sweepers and gabion walls. Where there is room, it is preferred to install gabion walls as there is little to no future maintenance and the walls are excellent at filtering aquatics from the water. Throughout the construction season, usually 4 – 6 new gabion walls are installed and in some cases they replace mechanical sweepers.

The District also undertakes a clipping program typically in the drainage systems to help increase flow and remove problems associated with cattails and willows. Drains that are selected are ones that are known to be problematic or are identified by Operations staff.

Chemical Treatment of Canals

The EID has seen successful results in implementing a scheduled chemical treatment program for canal reaches prone to aquatic weed issues. Following is the 2023 schedule, subject to weather conditions, for canals in this program:

- **Tilley Main Canal:**
 - May 10, May 24, June 7, June 21, July 5, July 19, August 2, August 16
- **North Branch Canal:**
 - May 17 – 18, May 31 – June 1, June 14 – 15, June 28 – 29, July 12 – 13, July 26 – 27, August 9 – 10, August 23 – 24
- **One Tree Canal:**
 - May 11, May 25, June 8, June 22, July 6, July 20, August 3, August 17
- **17-G Springhill:**
 - May 25, June 8, June 22, July 6, July 20, August 3, August 17, August 31
- **Rolling Hills Main and Secondary A Canals:**
 - June 28, July 14, August 31
- **Bow Slope and 17 Bow Slope Canals:**
 - June 22, August 30
- **16 Springhill:**
 - June 22, July 7
- **Antelope Creek Canal:**
 - July 12
- **H West Bantry Canal:**
 - June 23

Brent Kroschel,
Operations Manager
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Herbicides used are (Special Use Approval Registration Number 10572-05-00):

- Canals are treated with:
 - Magnicide H (Acrolein) – PCP Act Regulation Number 10948 – for aquatic vegetation and algae.
- Canal banks are treated with:
 - Vanquish Herbicide (Dicamba) – PCP Act Registration Number 26980 – for broadleaf weeds, brush and willows.
 - Vision Max Herbicide (Glyphosate) – PCP Act Registration Number 27736 – for Canary grass and cattail.

Contact Brent Kroschel if you have any questions regarding this program.



IRRIGATION UPDATE

Annual General Meeting Update

In follow-up to the AGM, we would like to take this opportunity to further explain the financials and the related questions at the meeting. The \$11.2m surplus found on the Statement of Operations (page 19 of the Annual Report Book) is a product of revenue over expenses and not physical cash. There are certain accounting practices performed to specific accounts to adjust revenue and expenses year over year. For example, included in the expenses is amortization of all Irrigation Works and Buildings totaling \$19.8m in 2022. Additions to Irrigation Works are expensed (amortized) over 40 years. The actual project amount spent last year on new Irrigation Works was approximately \$39.9m.

The calculated \$11.2m surplus is added to a pool known as the Fund Balance for the end of the year. The Fund Balance of \$429m in 2022 (see page 18 of the Annual Report Book) essentially represents the Eastern Irrigation District's equity position at the end of the year and does not represent cash on hand. As per the Statement of Financial Position, the sum of cash, short term deposits, and all investments decreased by \$5.5m. This decrease is mainly due to an increase in capital works

expenditures (ie. pipeline/canal projects, Snake Lake Reservoir). At a basic level, the sum of cash, deposits and investments may be a better indicator in determining funds available for new capital works expenditures; assuming future revenues would offset operating costs and loan repayments. All things considered, the Eastern Irrigation District is cognizant of rising inflationary costs and is budgeting accordingly for future projects and expenditures.

As mentioned at the AGM, irrigators are encouraged to reach out to Directors to discuss any matters of interest including the following topics before the Board in 2023:

- Should the Capital Asset Charge be increased?
- Should large scale irrigation developments be allowed?
- What role beyond irrigation development does the District play in the economic development of the area?

The Board will continue to review updated costs to construct the Snake Lake Reservoir expansion.

Board of Directors Elections

Members of the Board of Directors are elected by the irrigators. The Eastern Irrigation District has adopted a practice of staggered elections in which 2 directors are elected in one year, 2 directors are elected the next year, and 3 directors are elected in the following year. This method of elections provides for long-term stability in the governance, administration, and operation of the District.

2023 Election Summary

- Division 1 (Gem/Bassano):
Mr. Richard Hiebert was elected by acclamation; this is Mr. Hiebert's 1st full term of office.
- Division 5 (Scandia/Rainier):
Mr. John Ketchmark was elected; this is Mr. Ketchmark's 1st term of office.

Behind the Matter... Irrigation District Boards

The board of an irrigation district must consist of elected members. Pursuant to Section 29 of the Irrigation Districts Act, the board consists of:

- 3 members, if the assessment roll of the district shows 90,000 irrigation acres or less,
- 5 members, if the assessment roll of the district shows more than 90,000 irrigation acres but less than 200,000 irrigation acres, or
- 7 members, if the assessment roll of the district shows 200,000 irrigation acres or more.

Effective April 23, 1974, and with the approval of Irrigation Council, the EID Board of Directors went from a 5 member board to a 7 member board.

Expiring Private Grazing Leases

After comprehensive Board and staff discussions, a fall 2022 newsletter, and a November 2022 meeting with irrigators, the renewal process for long term Private Grazing Leases expiring December 31, 2023, was approved as follows:

- All identified leases are to be bid randomly through a live auction process for the right to acquire the lease agreement.
- The minimum bid amount will consist of the value of the current improvements (fencing) and estimated costs of any future improvements (fencing or other issues) needed to separate the lease from the adjacent landowners. No renewal fee will be added.
- The length of term for the leases will be 15 years.
- The lease agreement will be fully transferable to any eligible irrigator.
- An annual rental fee will follow the current Private Grazing Lease fee calculation.
- The standard Community Grazing Lease deduction will apply (1 head for every 5 AUM carrying capacity of the lease).
- The standard 640 acre Private Grazing Lease limitation will apply (640 acres maximum of a combination of private grazing leases, or a limit of 1 private grazing lease which may be over 640 acres).
- The standard eligibility requirements will apply (a minimum of 100 acres of land owned within the EID, containing a minimum of 60 irrigation acres; a minimum of 18 years of age; and being a resident of the District).
- The spousal and corporate limitations will apply as outlined in the Policy Governing Eligibility and Operation of Pastures on EID Lands (Community Grazing Policy).

Current leaseholders have been informed of the above and will be contacted this spring/summer so that an assessment of the fences may be conducted and any issues of concern regarding the management of the lease may be identified. Lease information will be presented to the Board in September for confirmation of minimum bid values, etc. A fall newsletter will inform of the auction date and process, and accompanying detailed lease information packages will be compiled and made available. It is anticipated to hold the auction in mid-November, with new agreements finalized with successful bidders in November/December.

Certain leases that are to be excluded from the above process due to unique considerations will be identified and will be reviewed individually with the Board in the fall of 2023 to determine an appropriate course of action. Current leaseholders of these PGL's will be contacted once direction is confirmed by the Board.

Current leaseholders or irrigators at large are encouraged to contact Rick Volek with any questions or concerns.

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Land Administrator - Grazing
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IRRIGATION UPDATE

Updates on Policies and Bylaws

Bylaws and policies relevant to irrigators may be viewed on the District's website.

[see website for bylaws and policies] (https://www.eid.ca/bylaw_policy.html)

Capital Assets Charges Bylaw

- The Capital Assets Charges Bylaw levies a charge on each irrigation acre added to a titled unit and shown on the assessment roll and sets the purchase price the District will pay for irrigation acres sold to the District by a landowner. It also assigns a general assessment audit penalty for prohibited irrigating of acres, outlines responsibilities for irrigation works, and contains a 2% annual escalator. Purchase prices and charges may be adjusted more than the automatic 2% annual escalator by Board decision. The bylaw is reviewed annually in November. Any applicants in the following year will then be aware of any adjusted charges. The current charges are:
 - \$364/acre for converting terminable acres to irrigation acres
 - \$988/acre for infill and efficiency acres up to 50 irrigation acres per parcel
 - \$2,392/acre for infill and efficiency acres over 50 irrigation acres per parcel
 - \$2,392/acre for acres assessed to dry parcels (new acres)

Audio Recording Policy

- The Board of Directors voted unanimously to rescind the audio recording policy that was implemented in November of 2021. Removing this policy will facilitate the sharing of ideas and perspectives as well as discussion amongst the Board members at meetings. Administering the audio recording policy had required more time of EID staff, at times the recordings were inaudible, and overall, there had been minimal uptake in accessing the posted audio recordings.

2023 Fees Bylaw

- The 2023 Fees Bylaw was approved based on the calculated cost for the delivery of water, this year \$34.69/ac-ft being the average cost per ac-ft of water used. Depending on the type of water conveyance or agreement, the fees are either based on a percentage of this cost or will have a flat fee assigned and may include charges for additional water over a typical set amount.

Water Delivery and Operations Policy

- A penalty was added to the Water Delivery and Operations Policy for irrigators that do not communicate their irrigation needs to their Water Operator prior to taking water. Noncompliant irrigators will be subject to a penalty equivalent to 48 hours of usage charged against the affected parcel.

2023 Rate Bylaw

- The 2023 Rate Bylaw was approved with a \$5.00/acre water rate, an annual agreement rate of \$29.00/acre, and pressure surcharges remaining at \$10.00/acre.

Public Access

Fishing season in most of the District reopens on May 8, 2023. Anyone accessing EID lands is reminded to follow all EID Public Access rules, which can be found at: https://www.eid.ca/public_access.html. All watercraft, including kayaks, canoes, and paddleboards, must be registered with the EID's Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Program before launching in any EID reservoir. For more information on where to sign up visit <https://www.eid.ca/ais.html>.

The EID is moving towards mandatory written permission for hunting on EID land. In fall, written permission may be obtained on the EID website, by calling the office, or by emailing Daniel Buell. Starting in late 2023, all traps set on EID land during the trapping season will be required to be tagged with a unique ID number assigned by the EID. For more information contact Daniel Buell.



Daniel Buell,
Land Administrator – Habitat, Wildlife, and Access

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Rolling Hills Reservoir Campground

Subject to weather conditions, the Rolling Hills Reservoir Campground will open for the season this year at 8:00 a.m. on Monday, May 15, 2023 and close at noon on Sunday, October 1, 2023.

- **Daily Camping** - (110 daily sites) \$40/night, including GST, plus an additional \$5/day for 50 amp sites
403-363-5603
- **Group Camping** - (2 areas, 5 single sites each) \$200/night, minimum of 2 nights, plus \$25 reservation fee, including GST
403-362-1400



Scholarship Program

The Eastern Irrigation District Scholarship Program has been offered since 2008 and is continuing in 2023. Both residents and water users may apply, and all career fields are eligible! Scholarships are awarded for trades, diplomas, certificates, or degrees:

- Post-Secondary Education at a university - \$2,000
- Diploma or Technical programs - \$2,000
- Certified Trades - \$1,000

Master's programs or a second trade, diploma, certificate, or degree do not qualify. To obtain an application form and review requirements download the form from www.eid.ca under the Information tab or visit or call the District Office 403-362-1400.

Did You Know?

To date, \$657,000 has been granted to 340 local recipients of EID Scholarships since the program's inception 15 years ago in 2008.





Please Note:

All Annual Reports and
Newsletters can be read online at:
www.eid.ca

