

Publication Date  
October 16, 2023

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## Eastern Irrigation District

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### District Water Supply

As of publication date, **major District reservoirs are 52% of FSL (Full Supply Level)**. For a summary of the 2023 irrigation season, see pages 2 – 4 and website links.

### Notice Of Auction For Expiring Private Grazing Lease Agreements

For private grazing leases expiring December 31, 2023, which are included in the auction process, a public auction has been set for **Thursday, November 16, 2023, at the Heritage Inn**, with bidding starting at 1:30 p.m. For additional information on these leases, the auction process, eligibility, and how to obtain a bidder's card, see pages 6 to 9 and upcoming information on the News/Ads page of our website at:

[www.eid.ca](http://www.eid.ca)



### New Irrigated Farm Leases

See page 10 for information on **3 potentially new Irrigated Farm Leases**.

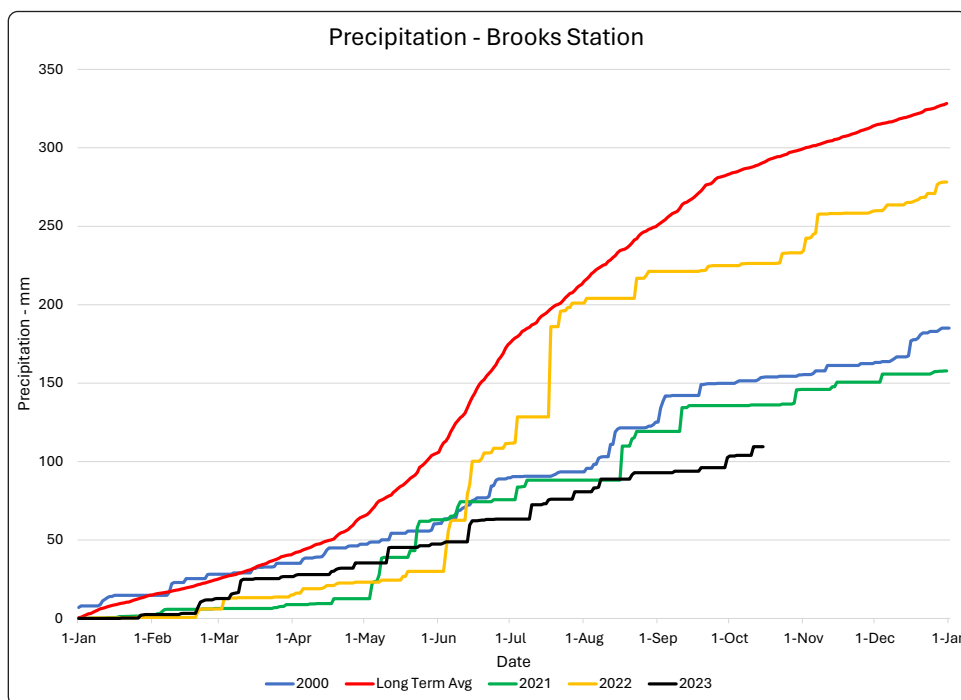
# IRRIGATION UPDATE

## 2023 Irrigation Season

Going into late April and early May, snow pillows were slightly below average to below average, depending on the snow pillow location, but not exceptionally concerning. Ice and snow persisted in the District headworks and system due to cooler temperatures through to mid-April, before thawing conditions allowed diversions to commence and to fill reservoirs prior to the irrigation delivery date.

May 5<sup>th</sup> was set for the delivery of water this past year, which is close to the long term average start date. An early irrigation date wasn't necessary as demand was absent, with irrigators waiting for ground conditions to dry and warm before seeding.

Demand was low after the water delivery date and through the early part of May, allowing all reservoirs to be filled to Full Supply Level (FSL), except the Rolling Hills Reservoir. Temperatures, however, starting in late April and in May, were above average and this warmer weather in the upper basin (mountains) created conditions where the snowpack started melting early (end of May) and concluded 1 month earlier than average (end of June is average). [\[click HERE to view the Snowpack Data \(https://rivers.alberta.ca/\)\]](https://rivers.alberta.ca/). While this was concerning, it, being coupled with the lack of rainfall (June being the typical rain month), particularly in the upper basin, created river flows the first part of June to drop to levels typically seen in late July, or 6-8 weeks sooner than average. The drastic drop in river flows seen in the first week of June to where the District was only meeting demands off the river and was relying heavily on reservoirs, clearly indicated that if these reduced flows continued along with increasing irrigation demands, reservoirs would be depleted during the summer months based upon the observed rate of draw down.



The decision was made to advise the irrigators as soon as possible of the water allotment potential based on the water supply/demand trends, and on June 13<sup>th</sup> Stage 3 of the Drought Plan was initiated. A 12" (16" below Crawling Valley Reservoir) water allotment was imposed, while allowing irrigators to transfer unused volumes of water between parcels (ultimately, 69 irrigators transferred volumes of water on approximately 124 parcels); with the Board being live to current information and any changes that may be required. As the irrigation season continued, modest precipitation events/thunderstorms in the upper basin and some localized precipitation events along with cooperative water sharing measures with the major water users on the Bow River system, which include TransAlta, City of Calgary, AEP, BRID, and WID, allowed additional water allocations to be added.

By July 19<sup>th</sup>, along with several earlier increases, the water allotment per irrigated acre was raised to 18" (21" below Crawling Valley Reservoir). [\[click HERE for a Timeline Summary of Seasonal Conditions & Board Decisions\]](#)

Reservoirs are built for years like this year and have been heavily utilized. With the major reservoirs well below winter levels, the decision was made at the August Board Meeting that an earlier shut down to help refill reservoirs



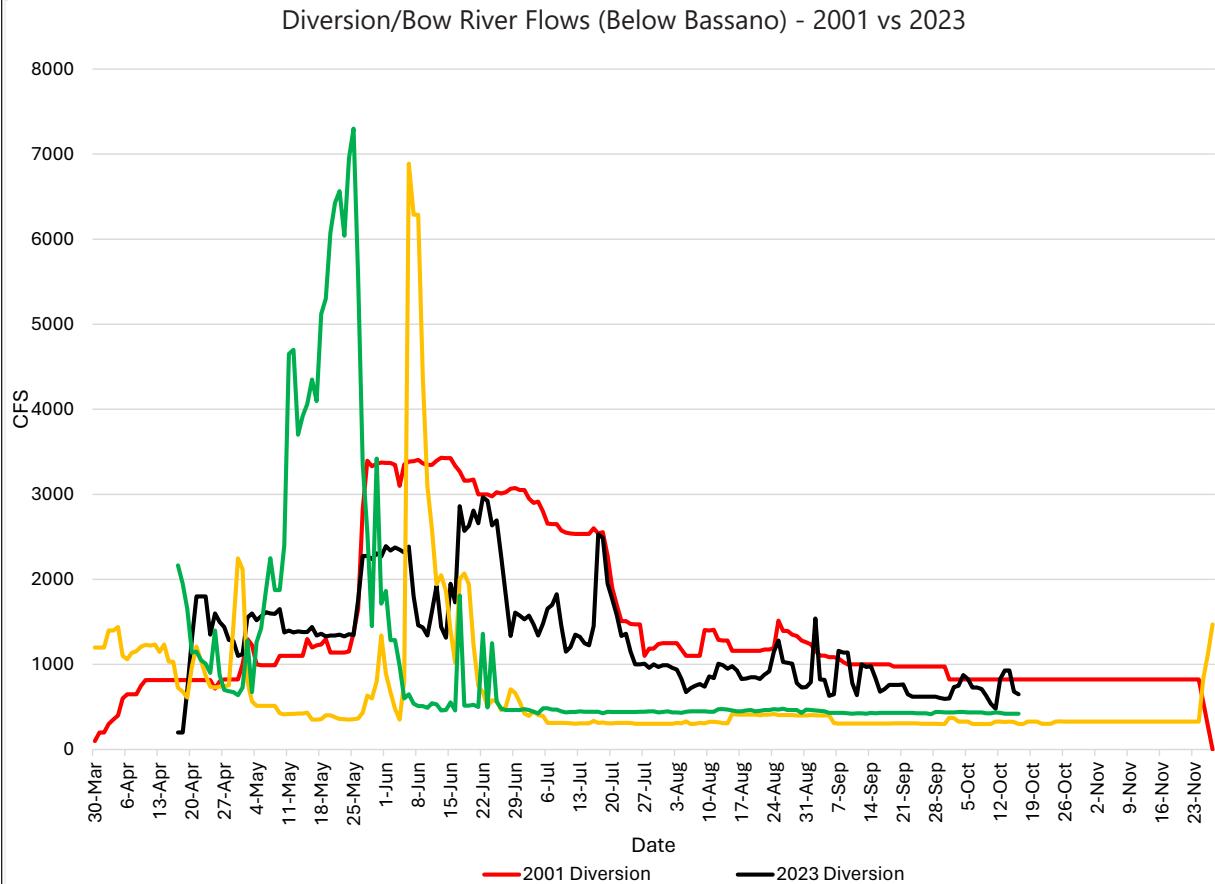
# IRRIGATION UPDATE

for next year was prudent. A September 25<sup>th</sup> date was set for shut down of irrigation and an October 5<sup>th</sup> date for stock watering and dugout filling. September 25<sup>th</sup> is approximately 2 weeks earlier than the average date but helped ensure reservoirs could be filled closer to normal winter levels and provide water security for next year.

The Management, Staff, and Board of Directors would like to thank all irrigators and other water users for adapting to quickly changing circumstances during this challenging year and to those who took conservation measures (i.e. no fall irrigation) to help ensure more water is available next year. The difficult decisions that were made considered many factors and carefully weighed the present and future risks. It is understood that the decisions made ultimately affected everyone differently, but with the purpose of minimizing negative impacts on the irrigators. With everyone’s cooperation both locally and externally, this year shows how resilient the system really is.

2023 was the first year the Drought Plan, within the Maximum Water Delivery Bylaw, has been triggered. This winter, the Board of Directors will be reviewing how the Drought Plan supported this year’s irrigation and operational season, the participation of irrigators in transferring volumes of water as provided under Stage 3, and any recommended revisions to bylaws, policies, and practices.

Irrigation Acres and Water Diversion		
Year	Total Irrigation Acres	Acre Feet Diversion
2023	315,646	470,000 (YTD)
2022	312,122	480,400
2021	309,822	537,700
2020	307,648	384,500
2019	305,859	508,900
2000	281,758	675,200



# IRRIGATION UPDATE

## Irrigation Recording and Management App

To support your on-farm tracking of water usage and aid in your irrigation planning, **please sign up for IRMA** (Irrigation Recording & Management App) by contacting Mark Porter. This tool provides real time water use information on all parcels in your farming operation and is especially useful if nearing a maximum use in water. [[click HERE to view IRMA](#)]

Mark Porter,  
Information Services Supervisor

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## Water Ordering and Recording

A parcel's total water usage for the irrigation season is calculated using the irrigation system's designated flow rate and the periods of time quantified between ON date & time and OFF date & time water orders. Timely communications with your Water Operator ensure an efficient conveyance system. And, if you have any concerns or questions regarding the flow rate on any of your irrigation systems, please contact your Water Operator or your Divisional Superintendent so that remeasuring may occur. **The District encourages irrigators to have their pivot or wheel flow rates metered for accuracy** prior to the irrigation season if, for example, the equipment has been renozzled.

## 2023 System Water Delivery Summary

Water Delivery Block	Water Operator	Irrigated Area (Acres)	Volume Delivered (acre feet)	Water Use / Acre (acre feet / acre)
Division N1 - Bassano	Lepp	19,645	20,600	1.05
Division N2 - Pitau	Fika	22,992	24,400	1.06
Division N3 - Gem	Kroschel	15,122	18,600	1.23
Division N4 - Rosemary	Hasper	22,670	26,000	1.15
Division N5 - Duchess	Berg	20,501	23,900	1.17
Division N6 - Cockerill	Leland	22,325	23,200	1.04
Division N7 - Millicent	Deschamps	22,057	24,900	1.13
Division N8 - Patricia	McInnis	18,226	22,900	1.26
Division S1 - Antelope Creek / Brooks	Klassen	21,628	25,600	1.18
Division S2 - Kitsim	Currie	20,144	26,400	1.31
Division S3 - Bow Slope	Thiessen	21,809	30,000	1.38
Division S4 - Aqueduct / Bantry	Canning	15,336	18,200	1.19
Division S5 - Elizabeth	Becker	15,874	17,100	1.08
Division S6 - Tilley	Perry	20,189	23,200	1.15
Division S7 - Rolling Hills North	Olund	18,975	24,000	1.26
Division S8 - Rolling Hills South	Beierbach	18,153	21,100	1.16



## Partners in Habitat Development

The PHD program was started by the EID and Pheasants Forever in 1998 with the intent of restoring upland game bird habitat in southern Alberta. The current focus of the program is planting shelter belts in the EID, but other habitat development or enhancement opportunities may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Typical shelter belt planting sites are pivot corners, field edges, small pastures, etc. Site size may range from 2 to 20+ rows with 200 to 2,000+ seedlings being planted on site.

Interest in the program has been strong, but we are still accepting potential new sites for the 2027 and subsequent seasons. For more information about the PHD program, or to secure your place on the list, please contact Daniel Buell.

Daniel Buell,  
Land Administrator - Habitat, Wildlife & Access  
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## Hunting Permission

The EID continues to move towards mandatory written permission for hunting on EID owned lands. Visit the EID office or call EID reception (362-1400) to request a permission letter, or email Daniel Buell.

Thank you for your cooperation in ensuring EID owned lands remain open for public use. If you require additional information, please contact Daniel Buell.



## Trapping

The EID permits trapping for fur bearers on EID lands and in EID water bodies. This includes the use of snares, but only normal locking snares (no spring assistance) shall be used on EID land, and snaring may only occur between December 1<sup>st</sup> and February 28<sup>th</sup>.

Starting this trapping season, all traps and snares used on EID land or in EID water bodies are required to be tagged with a unique, permanent, identification number assigned by the EID. Any trapper who has not already received an identification number and wishes to receive one please contact Daniel Buell.

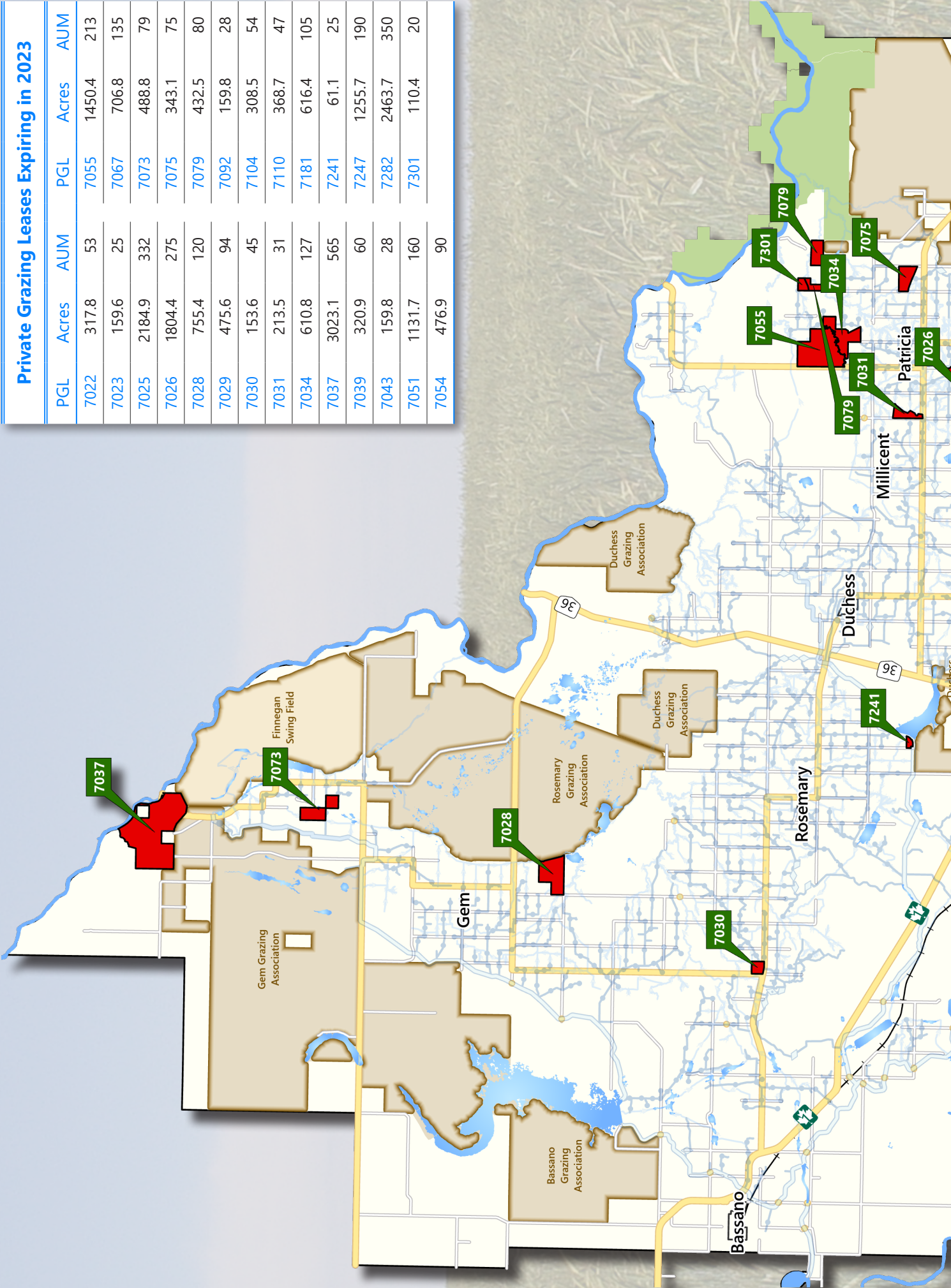
## Ice Fishing

All EID access rules remain in force during the winter [[click HERE to view the Access Policy for District Owned Lands](#)]. When accessing EID reservoirs:

- Keep highway vehicles on established roads and trails.
- No fires or camping on shore.
- Pets must always remain under control.
- If off-highway vehicles are to be used to access the ice, offload from the closest established trail, and then take the most direct route on and off the ice.

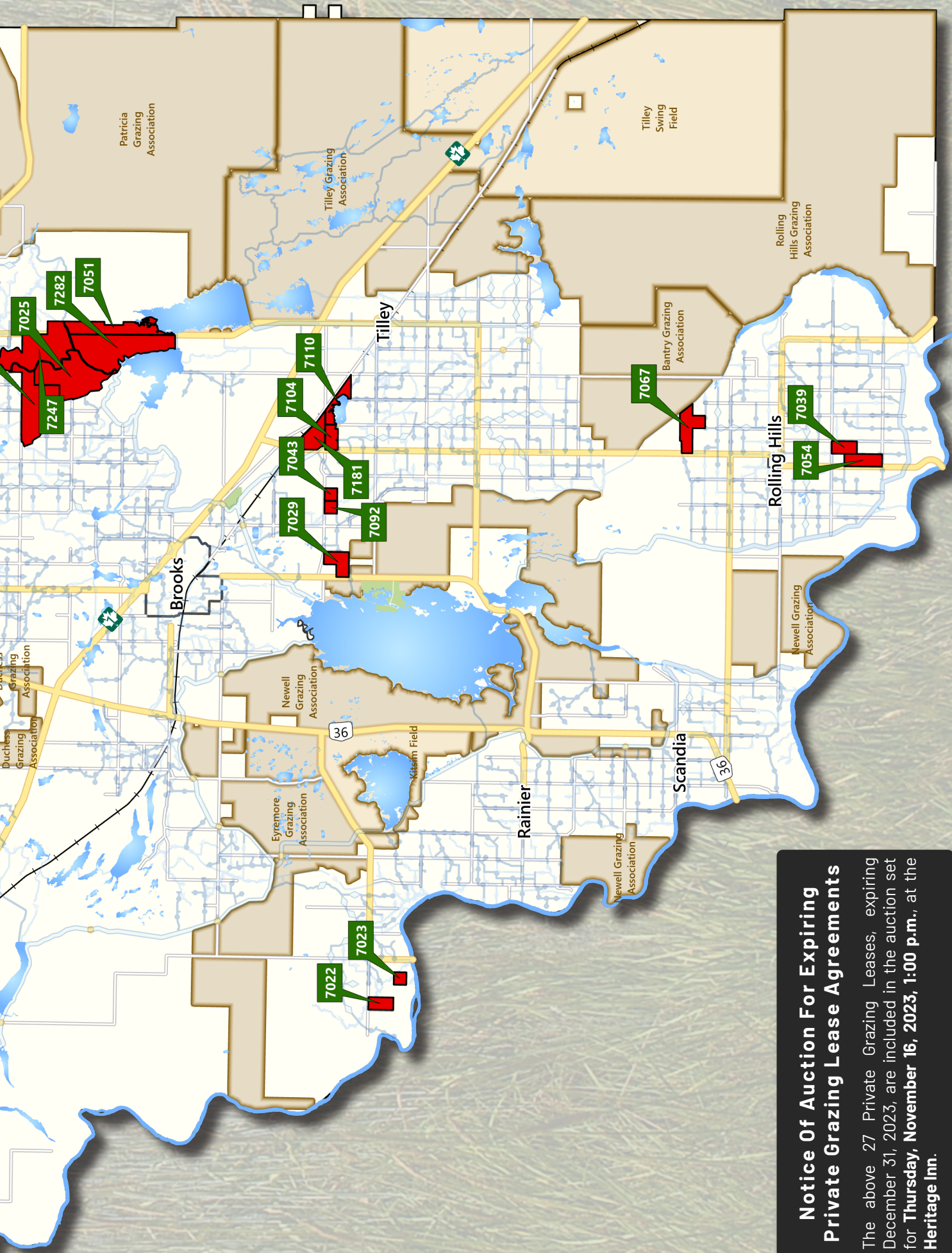
Water diversion off the Bow River is likely to continue well into late fall to help restore EID reservoirs to normal winter levels. This inflow at major EID reservoirs during freeze-up has the potential to create non-typical ice conditions. Use extra caution when driving or walking onto the ice on EID reservoirs this winter.





Private Grazing Leases Expiring in 2023					
PGL	Acres	AUM	PGL	Acres	AUM
7022	317.8	53	7055	1450.4	213
7023	159.6	25	7067	706.8	135
7025	2184.9	332	7073	488.8	79
7026	1804.4	275	7075	343.1	75
7028	755.4	120	7079	432.5	80
7029	475.6	94	7092	159.8	28
7030	153.6	45	7104	308.5	54
7031	213.5	31	7110	368.7	47
7034	610.8	127	7181	616.4	105
7037	3023.1	565	7241	61.1	25
7039	320.9	60	7247	1255.7	190
7043	159.8	28	7282	2463.7	350
7051	1131.7	160	7301	110.4	20
7054	476.9	90			





## Notice Of Auction For Expiring Private Grazing Lease Agreements

The above 27 Private Grazing Leases, expiring December 31, 2023, are included in the auction set for **Thursday, November 16, 2023, 1:00 p.m.**, at the **Heritage Inn.**

# IRRIGATION UPDATE

## Direction For Expiring Private Grazing Leases

The 15-year Private Grazing Leases (PGL) that commenced in 2009 will be expiring December 31, 2023. Preliminary information was included in past newsletters [[click HERE to view newsletters](#)] and a follow up meeting was held with grazing and non-grazing irrigators in November 2022. After continued review of the matter, the following motion was approved at the January 24, 2023, Board of Directors Meeting:

[3:20 p.m. T. Hemsing declared a pecuniary interest and exited the meeting.]

2023-01-025 Moved by D. Jacobson that the Board approve the following procedure for the Private Grazing Leases expiring December 31, 2023, that are not excluded from this process due to unique considerations:

- to randomly bid leases through a live auction process for the right to acquire the lease agreement,
- for a minimum bid amount consisting of the value of current improvements (fencing) and estimated costs of any future improvements (fencing or other issues) needed to separate the lease from adjacent landowners (no renewal fee added),
- for a term of 15 years,
- with the lease agreement being fully transferable to any eligible water user, and to include the standard:
  - PGL calculation for the annual rental fee,
  - grazing lease deduction if running cattle in a Community Lease,
  - 640 acre or 1 Private Grazing Lease maximum limitation, and
  - eligibility criteria as is used for Community Grazing Leases.

Seconded by B. Schroeder. CARRIED

IN FAVOUR – R. Hiebert, D. Peltzer, B. Schmidt, D. Jacobson, B. Schroeder

OPPOSED – R. Owen

[3:23 p.m. T. Hemsing rejoined the meeting.]

## Evaluation of Leases

Over the summer, administration met with current leaseholders to evaluate the leases, assess fences, identify any management issues, and flag leases that likely should be excluded from the auction due to unique considerations. Soils results have also permitted a few leases to be categorized under future irrigation development. Leases were categorized and reviewed individually with the Board in September to confirm or adjust the direction of each lease. The leases shown on the enclosed map are those that have been approved to be included in the auction process.

6 PGLs that have been removed from the auction have been deemed to contain unique considerations that would not permit the parcel to be fully fenced and operated as an accessible standalone lease or have been prioritized for future irrigation development.

## Auction Date

For PGLs included in the auction process (as shown on the enclosed map), a live auction has been set for:

**Private Grazing Lease - Agreement Auction**  
**Thursday, November 16, 2023, 1:00 p.m., at the Heritage Inn.**

## Preregistration and Bid Packages

**All bidders must preregister** to be eligible to bid at the auction:

- Irrigators are required to preregister at the EID Office from November 1<sup>st</sup> through to November 15<sup>th</sup>; proxy bidders may be designated. Irrigators that do not register before the auction will be denied bidding privileges.
- A bid package containing maps and details of all the PGLs to be auctioned will be provided; information will also be available on the District's website.
- A deposit will not be required.
- Bidders, or proxy bidders, must register at the auction to receive their bid card.
- Only verified eligible irrigators will receive a bid card.



# IRRIGATION UPDATE

October 16, 2023

## Eligibility

Eligibility criteria for PGLs is based on the same criteria as is used for Community Grazing membership. Main eligibility requirements are that you must live in the District and own a minimum of 100 acres in the District, of which at least 60 are irrigation acres or at least 80 acres are under a terminable agreement. A leaseholder may only lease up to a maximum of 640 acres, or one lease, whichever is greatest. Corporate eligibility requirements and spousal limitations apply. [\[click HERE to review complete criteria in section 3.0 of the Policy Governing Eligibility and Operation of Pastures on EID Lands\]](#) New leaseholders have no right of renewal upon expiry of the agreement. PGL agreements do not allow subletting.

Irrigators that currently have a PGL(s) may bid at the auction; however, if they are successful and exceed the limitation, they must turn back their original PGL(s) to the District.

## Auction Process

**Bidding will begin at 1:30 p.m.** on Thursday, November 16<sup>th</sup> at the Heritage Inn:

- Qualified bidders will receive a bid card when registering at the auction (please arrive early).
- A random process will be used to bid PGLs; they will not be bid in numerical order.
- Each lease will be summarized and particular factors noted prior to the bidding beginning.
- The minimum bid for each lease is equivalent to the value of improvements (fencing, etc.); exceptions will be noted.
- All bids are final and subject to final Board approval. Successful bidders may not turn back their newly acquired PGL(s) at any time during the auction process, or at any time prior to executing the applicable PGL agreement to be provided by the District following receipt of payment.

## Bid Payment and Annual rent

Full payment of successful bids is due January 15, 2024. In addition to this initial bid payment to obtain a PGL agreement from the District, annual rent is charged. Lessees are invoiced in March of each year, with payment due in April. PGLs are administered using a Convenience Factor + Carrying Capacity Factor calculation for annual rent. The PGL fee calculation was developed to charge similar amounts for using EID pasture, whether through PGLs or Community Grazing Associations (CGA), and is reviewed and set by the Board every 5 years. The calculation to be used for the years 2024 through 2028 for these leases was recently reviewed and set at the September Budget Meeting as follows:

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Convenience Factor} \\ (\$4.00/\text{acre for 1st 160 acres}) + (\$6.00 \times \text{remaining AUM over 26}) \end{array} + \begin{array}{l} \text{Carrying Capacity Factor} \\ (\text{AUM Grazing Rate})(\text{full AUM}) \end{array}$$

The AUM Grazing Rate portion is set on an annual basis to cover the costs associated with the administration and operation of the CGA leases at a minimum break-even basis for the District. The AUM rate for 2024 has been set at \$21.00/AUM.

For fair access to District pastures, if a PGL lessee chooses to also run cattle in a CGA, the member is deducted 1 head from their maximum allotment per every 5 AUM that their PGL is assessed at.

## Lease Agreements

New lease agreements with successful bidders will be finalized after receipt of payment, EID Board approval, and execution of agreements. Lease agreements are for a term of 15 years, cannot be subletted but are transferable to any eligible irrigator, and have no right of renewal upon expiry. During the term, the 640 acre or one lease restriction will only extend to any future grazing permits or leases that are subject to that grazing restriction.

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Land Administrator - Grazing  
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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]*

## Irrigation Acres Bylaw

The Irrigation Acres Bylaw establishes the rules and procedures governing an application for an increase in irrigation acres and for an application to transfer irrigation acres. The new bylaw, given final approval on May 24, 2023:

- increased the total number of irrigation acres available per year to 3,000 (2,000 old bylaw), including 1,200 for off river (800 old bylaw);
- expressly authorizes the EID to develop EID lands with carry forward acres and gives priority to the EID to carry forward acres; and
- will be reviewed annually in November, after the approval of irrigation development applications, and along with the Capital Assets Bylaw.

Increasing both the reservoir and off river categories will allow for the queue of private development applications to be considered; as well as enable District developments which will in turn provide additional opportunities for irrigators via irrigated farm leases and provide increased revenue to the District.

## 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 acres have been carried forward. In continuance of the District's mandate to maintain and promote irrigated agriculture, 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 approval of the 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 all aspects of farming the parcel, including breaking and leveling

Subject to approval of the developments in November, a newsletter with additional information, including eligibility and bidding criteria will be forwarded to irrigators and posted to the News/Ads page of our website at [www.eid.ca](http://www.eid.ca) in early December. For more information, contact Nathan Fontaine, Land Supervisor.

**Nathan Fontaine,  
Land Supervisor**

Cell: 403-409-3548

Email: [nathan.fontaine@eid.ca](mailto:nathan.fontaine@eid.ca)



## Behind the Matter... District Water Recording

Besides maximum total diversion and maximum rate of diversion parameters under the Alberta Environment Water Licenses issued to the Eastern Irrigation District, there are monitoring and reporting conditions.

Some parameters include:

### "MONITORING AND REPORTING

10. The licensee shall submit an annual water monitoring report to the Controller on or before December 1 in each year for that calendar year indicating:

- (a) periods and rates of water diversion
  - (b) daily minimum flow passing Bassano Dam
  - (c) total monthly quantity of water diverted
  - (d) total monthly quantity of water returned
  - (e) total annual quantity of water diverted
  - (f) total annual quantity of water returned
  - (g) total area irrigated
- and any other information requested by the Director."

Within the District's operations, the EID further strives to ensure all categories of its water conveyance, evaporation, operational spill, and farm spill are quantified. Additional District automation, accurate records of Water Operators, and timely water ON/OFF orders from irrigators help the EID manage the water in its conveyance system.

## Scholarship Program

The Eastern Irrigation District Scholarship Program has been offered since 2008 and is continuing in 2023. Both residents and irrigators 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](http://www.eid.ca) under the Information tab or visit or call the District Office (403-362-1400).



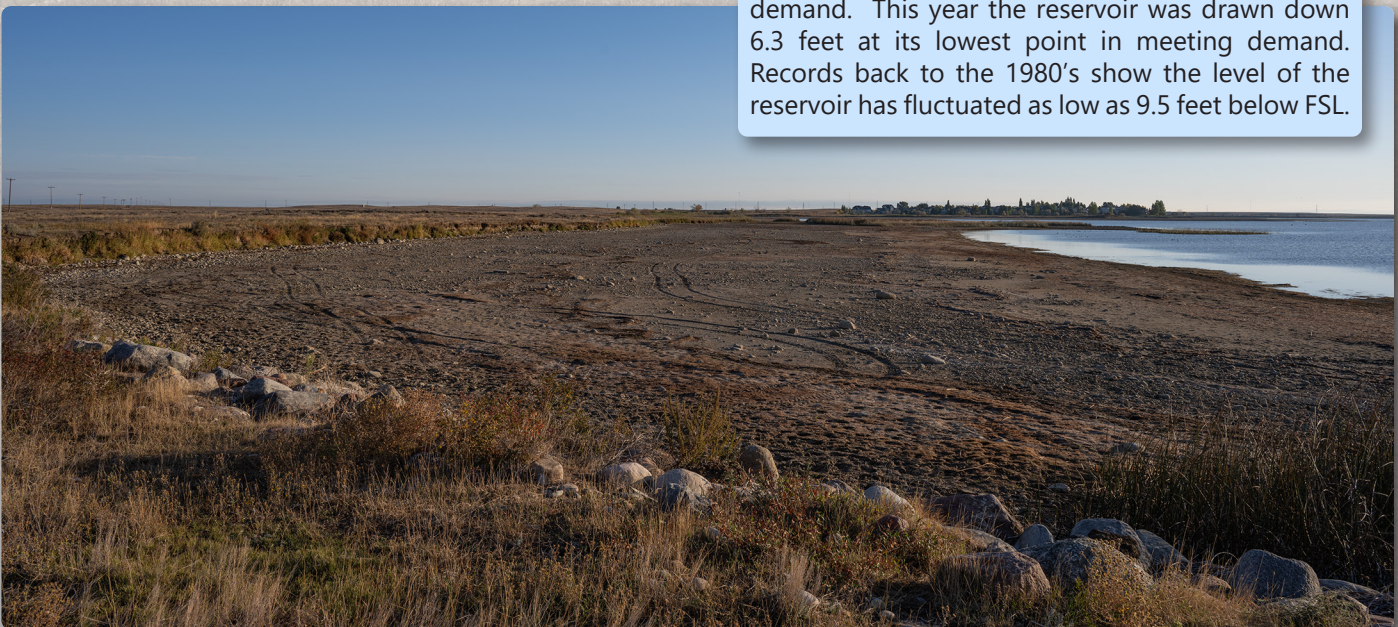
**Application deadline is October 27, 2023, 5:00 p.m.**

Brandi Doerksen,  
Land Administrator - Aquatic Invasive Species

Cell: 403-363-9694  
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## Did You Know?

Pursuant to District operations and in response to weather extremes and available river diversion, Lake Newell Reservoir can be drawn down as low as 10 feet below FSL (Full Supply Level) and still meet all irrigation, municipal, industrial, and rural supply demand. This year the reservoir was drawn down 6.3 feet at its lowest point in meeting demand. Records back to the 1980's show the level of the reservoir has fluctuated as low as 9.5 feet below FSL.





**Please Note:**

All Annual Reports and Newsletters  
can be read on-line at:

[www.eid.ca](http://www.eid.ca)

