

WELLTON-MOHAWK IRRIGATION AND DRAINAGE DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
MAY 17, 2022– 1:30 P.M.

AGENDA

1. Management of 2022 Water Use - Action
2. Call to the Public
3. Next Board Meeting, June 7, 2022
4. Consideration of Action to go into Executive Session (The discussions and minutes of the executive session shall be kept confidential. The executive session of the Board is not open to the public.)
 - a. Pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03(A)(3) to obtain legal advice from the District's legal counsel on any matter listed on the agenda.
5. Reconvene in Open Session
6. Consideration of Action Regarding Items Discussed in Executive Session
7. Adjourn

Management of 2022 Water Use – Action

As of May 10, the Bureau of Reclamation forecasts that the District will divert 428,759 acre-feet, 4,409 acre-feet in excess of the District's approved 2022 water order of 424,350 acre-feet. The District's consumptive use (diversions less return flows) is estimated at 290,332 acre-feet or 12,332 acre-feet in excess of the District's consumptive use entitlement of 278,000 acre-feet.

Per the 2007 Interim Guidelines and the Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plan, the Secretary has declared a Tier 1 shortage for the Colorado River system. Under a Tier 1 shortage, the Inadvertent Overrun Program (IOP) is not in effect. Water entitlement holders will be held to their approved order and entitlement. In July for entities forecasted to exceed either their approved order or their entitlement, Reclamation will begin requiring written plans on how the entity intends to reduce water use for the rest of the year.

While much of the year remains, including the monsoon season, the Board may wish to consider actions to take in the near term or later in the year to manage the District's water use.

Steps the District has used or considered in the past include:

1. Pre-plant irrigation of produce ground for weed germination and tillage preparation limited to one application.
2. Delivery of water to maintain standing water in a field for any reason, including seed germination, subbing to root transplant stock, or disease control is prohibited (still in effect).
3. Delivery of water to establish small grains (wheat) will not be made in the months of November and December.
4. A compensated program to restrict alfalfa irrigation during the months of October, November and December if necessary.
5. A hard limit on allowable on-farm deliveries per acre (see attached example for limits of 6.0 AF per contracted acre of Valley land and 8.0 AF per contracted acre of Mesa Land).

The Manager suggests that this issue be a standing agenda item for discussion and possible action depending on weather and cropping patterns for the rest of the year.



WELLTON-MOHAWK IRRIGATION AND DRAINAGE DISTRICT

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May 5, 2022

Dear District Landowners and Growers:

As I am sure you are aware, the Colorado River Basin continues to be in a severe drought. Lake Powell is at less than 25 percent capacity; Lake Mead less than 33 percent.

As a result, the Secretary of the Interior, as Water Master of the Lower Colorado River Basin, has declared a Tier 1 shortage condition. Pursuant to the 2007 Guidelines for the Operation of Lake Mead and Lake Powell, and per the Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plan, the Inadvertent Overrun Program (IOP) is suspended.

Entitlement holders such as the District will be held to their entitlement and approved water order. Both for 2022 and for as long as the system is in a declared shortage, the District will not be allowed to overrun its entitlement of 278,000 acre-feet of consumptive use.

As of April 30, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation forecast that the District is on track to exceed our entitlement by 11,000 acre-feet in 2022. As a result, the following steps are being implemented to insure that the District has sufficient water for the rest of the year:

1. Delivery of water to maintain standing water in a field for any reason, including seed germination, subbing to root transplant stock, or disease control is prohibited.
2. Pre-plant irrigation of produce ground for weed germination and tillage preparation should be limited to one application.
3. Delivery of water to establish small grains (wheat) will not be made in the months of November and December.

Per the District's Rules and Regulations for the Delivery of Water, supplemental water is delivered on an "as-available" basis. Please note that a hard limit on allowable on-farm deliveries may be required for the remainder of 2022. Depending on summer water use and weather conditions, 2022 use may be limited to 6.0 acre-feet per contracted acre of Valley land and 8.0 acre-feet per contracted acre of Mesa Land.

The District's Board will consider implementation of the above limitation at each subsequent Board meeting in 2022. The District's Board and staff fully recognize the difficulties caused by implementing a mid-year water usage limitation. However as stated above, the District will not be allowed to overrun its entitlement of 278,000 acre-feet of consumptive use.

While not yet officially enacted, you may wish to use these water use limits (6.0 acre-feet per contracted acre of Valley land and 8.0 acre-feet per contracted acre of Mesa Land) as a guide in planning your water use for the remainder of 2022.

Your contracted acreage is shown in the upper right-hand corner of your monthly invoice. "Total Acre-Feet Used Year to Date" is also shown on the invoice. The water remaining for use can be calculated by multiplying your Contract Acres by the appropriate number (6.0 acre-feet per contracted acre of Valley land or 8.0 acre-feet per contracted acre of Mesa Land) and subtracting the Total Acre-Feet Used Year to Date.

You should also plan on these maximum water use limits being in effect for 2023.

Please call if you have any questions.



Elston Grubaugh
Manager-Secretary