



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
Flathead Indian Irrigation Project
220 Project Drive
St. Ignatius, MT. 59865

Dear Water User,

It's early April and another irrigation season is right around the corner. We would like to remind you of some operational regulations and guidelines under which the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Flathead Indian Irrigation Project (FIIP) operates. While the following is not a complete list, understanding and following these key regulations and guidelines can help ensure we all experience a productive irrigation season.

Project Water Quotas

It is the goal of the FIIP to deliver available water for irrigation in a fair and equitable manner across all acres served in accordance with the regulations. To help accomplish this, the FIIP has historically implemented the use of a water quota system. The projected water quotas are the total volume of water estimated to be delivered to you during the irrigation season. We account for the water delivered by volume; in units of acre-feet (1 acre-foot of water is the amount of water to cover 1 acre 1-foot deep).

The quota amount is calculated based upon the volume of water stored in our reservoirs, plus a projection of water volume from snowmelt and runoff from spring and summer rains in the drainage basins. The allocation of this estimated total water supply is calculated for distribution to your irrigable lands on a per-acre basis. Please keep in mind that there are numerous variable (and uncontrollable) factors that could alter the quota projections. One important variable is whether we receive the projected precipitation in the upcoming months.

Water quotas are calculated and implemented every year for the Mission Valley and the Camas (Lonepine) irrigation areas. A water quota may be implemented in the Jocko Valley depending upon the runoff. Water quotas will be made available as soon as possible.

Water Orders

1. We would like to remind you that you are required to order water prior to delivery. Do not take water without ordering it first. You may place water orders in a few ways:
2. Call your Irrigation System Operator (Ditch Rider) directly on their work cell phone. If you do not know your Ditch Rider, please call the Main Office.
3. Call you respective Division field office. Leave a message if necessary. The field office numbers as follows: St. Ignatius Main Office (406) 745-2661; Camas Office (406) 741-2945; and Jocko Office (406) 726-3251.

If you cannot contact your Ditch Rider, please call the Supervisory Irrigation System Operator, Dan Olson (North Watermaster) at (406) 531-9575 Or Stormy Bacon (South Watermaster) at (406) 531-9567.

When ordering water please provide your full legal name, the land-owner name (if different), the land Tract number, the time and date you want the service, how long you want the service, and rate of water flow you want (if available). If you do not know you land Tract number(s) please call the Main Office for assistance. Please note that you are required to provide us with at least 48-hour notice for all water delivery turn-ons and at least 24-hour notice for all water delivery shut offs. Water deliveries will not be scheduled to start or stop on

Saturdays, Sundays, or Federal holidays.

Turnout & Check Structures

All water delivery turnout operations (opening, closing, and adjusting) and all adjustments of check boards shall be done solely by the Ditch Rider or under his specific direction. This is one of the most important items of the project operations and it is imperative that everyone follow these rules to help prevent delivery problems throughout the canals and laterals. Manipulating turnouts and check structures on your own can and does have a significant impact on the water delivery system and ultimately to downstream water users.

Waterway Obstructions and Canal Roads

Obstructions are not permitted upon project rights-of-way. If we discover an obstruction, we will notify you in writing to remove it. If you do not remove the obstruction, the FIIP will remove the obstruction and bill you for our costs. Please note, we may remove any obstruction without notice because of an emergency we have identified. Cattle fences should be removed from canals prior to running water and gates across canal bank roads must be kept open and unlocked throughout the irrigation season.

Prudent Use of Water

Please apply and manage your irrigation water for authorized uses and do not allow it to be wasted. You are responsible for your wastewater. Water running uncontrolled from your field on neighboring properties or roadways may be shut off by your Ditch Rider.

It is your responsibility to maintain your own farm ditch.

Special Use Permits

You are required to obtain an approved "Special Use Permit" prior to the placement of culverts, overland, or buried pipelines/powerlines, fences, gates, cattle guards, and any other structures across irrigation canal/lateral rights-of-way. A Special Use Permit is a written agreement between you and the BIA-FIIP. Your Ditch Rider can provide you a permit application upon request or direct you to the Main Office for assistance. Please submit the completed form to the Watermaster or the main office in St. Ignatius.

Delinquent Operation and Maintenance

If you have a delinquent Operation and Maintenance bill, water will not be delivered to you until that bill is settled. For irrigator whose bills are paid by your irrigation districts, please be advised that it is your district's obligations to pay the full amount of your assessment on your behalf, or you will not receive water. Users on gravity lines may not irrigate or use water for stock if someone on the line is delinquent, these lines will be turned off if violations persist.

We would like to thank you for your cooperation and look forward to the start of the new irrigation season. If you have any questions, please call the Main Office at (406) 745-2661.

Sincerely,



Lawrence A Nelson, Sr
Project Manager