

FCID Newsletter

No Annual Water Users Meeting.

Notice: Due to the low turnout the last few years FCID will not have an annual Water Users Meeting in 2020. You can keep up-to-date with FCID by following us on Facebook or at our web page WWW.fcidwater.com.

2020 Water Supply Outlook

The 2020 Water supply for FCID water users looks fairly good. Currently FCID has over 85,800 acre-feet stored in the three Reservoirs. Harry Strunk is currently at 97% of full, Hugh Butler is at 65% of full and Swanson Reservoir is at 60% of full.

FCID will allocate 7 inches per acre to the Meeker-Driftwood system, the producers on this canal will have the ability to purchase an additional 1 inch per acre if needed.

The allocation for Red Willow Canal will be 8 inches per acre again this year. We should have sufficient carryover for a good start on the 2021 season.

The Bartley Canal will be allocated 6 inches per acre plus the ability to use River water from mid April to mid June. River water delivered will not count towards the 6 inch allocation. You will begin to use your 6 inch allocation when FCID calls for water from the Reservoirs, this is typically mid to late June.

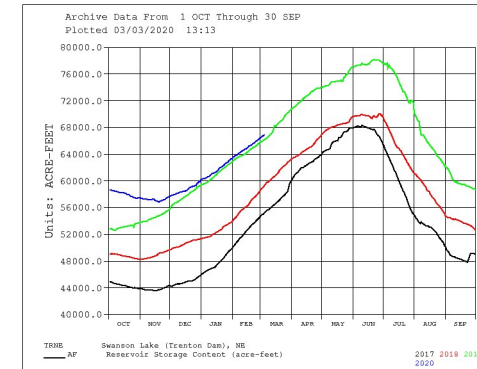
Cambridge Canal system will be allocated 8 inches per acre, the producers will have the ability to purchase an additional 1 inch per acre if needed. River Water will also be available to the Cambridge canal starting the first part of May until mid to late June.

2020 Water Tolls

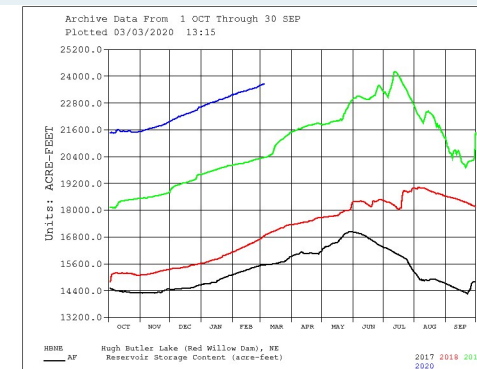
(\$4 per inch allocated, plus \$4 dollars per acre.)

- Meeker-Driftwood 7 inches allocated = \$28 + \$4 = \$32 per acre
- Red Willow Canal 8 inches allocated = \$32 + \$4 = \$36 per acre
- Bartley Canal 6 inches allocated = \$24 + \$4 = \$28 per acre
- Cambridge Canal 8 inches allocated = \$32 + \$4 = \$36 per acre

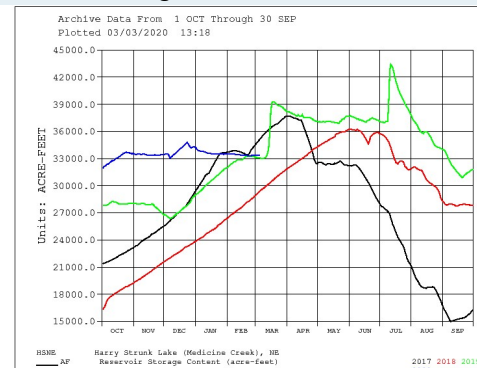
All additional water and river water is \$4 per acre-inch and will be billed in the fall for the total acre-inches that exceeds your allocation.



Swanson Reservoir



Hugh Butler Reservoir



Harry Strunk Reservoir

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Frenchman Cambridge Irrigation District

Board President, Dale Cramer
(Division II)

Vice President, Todd Lichty
(Division I)

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Staff: Brad Edgerton, Manager

Lorri Warner, Office Manger

Meeker-Driftwood Canal:

Ride 1 Travis Lindsey

Ride 2 Gerald Novak

Ride 3 Larry Young

Ride 4 Roy Kinne

Red Willow Canal:

Ride 5 Chuck Eubanks

Bartley Canal

Ride 6 Troy VanPelt

Cambridge Canal

Ride 7 Scott Minnick

Ride 8 Jerry Colson

Ride 9 Kurtis Huxoll

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

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Canal Infrastructure

Some of FCID's facilities are over 70 years old now, with that comes concerns about maintaining these facilities into the future. The good news, most of the concrete structures look real good considering their age. The most pressing issues is the wooden timber bridge structures, when possible we replace these bridges with a large culvert or remove them completely.

Canal Modernization and Water Conservation

FCID has been very successful applying for and receiving funds from two different sources. In 2018 FCID was awarded Water Sustainability Funds from the State of Nebraska's Natural Resources Commission. These funds were used to automate the Cambridge Canal from Oxford to Orleans. Nebraska's WSF paid for 60% of the \$881,000 total project cost. The Cambridge Canal is now fully automated. FCID has utilized an Australia company called Rubicon Water Inc. Rubicon has developed technology that has proven to reduce canal spills. This modernization will drastically reduce canal spills and reduce the demand on our Reservoirs and put FCID in a good place to face the next drought.

In 2019 FCID applied for a WaterSMART grant to automate the Meeker-Driftwood Canal system with Rubicon Water technology. Just recently FCID was notified by Reclamation that we were awarded 1.5 million from the Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART program. This grant is a 50% matching grant, the matching funds for project will come from the money Nebraska received from Colorado for their Compact violations. FCID will provide the manpower needed to install the canal automation. This is a 3 year project, FCID hopes to get this project completed in two years. It's estimated that this project will save 2,300 acre-feet per year plus other on farm benefits.

Colorado paid Nebraska \$4M in Republican River Settlement

For nearly a decade, starting in 2003 Colorado has over-used its Compact allocation by nearly 100,000 acre-feet. All of the overuse is located upstream of Swanson Reservoir and had a big impact on Meeker-Driftwood Canal irrigators during that same period.

Moving forward, Colorado had very few options to comply with the Compact. The option they chose involved pumping nearly 11,000 acre-feet into the Republican River near Wray Colorado each and every year until the aquifer runs dry.

To date Colorado has pumped over 62,000 acre-feet into the Republican River near Wray Colorado. Colorado is now compliant with the Republican River Compact.



Colorado's RRWCD Board Members watching augmentation water go into the Republican River. This water is upstream of Swanson Reservoir.

2020 Election Results

In 2015 the Legislature changed the elections laws for Irrigation Districts. For the past 5 years FCID has conducted elections by mail in ballots. This has worked very well for the District.

Division II elections were held this January, Dale Cramer was reelected to the Board of Directors representing Division II. Each Director serves a 3 year term. Dale has served FCID well for 15 years and counting.

CREP

Many CREP contacts end in 2020. If you wish to re-enroll into CREP you must do so before August 23, 2020. If you miss this date you will need to re-establish those acres as irrigated before you can participate in CREP, which means you will need to irrigate them 4 out of 6 years, then hope the next Farm Bill still has a CREP provision available.

Water Market

FCID does allow water users to buy and sale water within a canal system. With Red Willow Canal operating for a second year there appears to be opportunity to purchase additional water from your neighbor on this canal. If you have water to sale you can list it on our website. WWW.FCIDwater.com Please call the office for details.

RRA Forms (Reclamation Reform Act of 1982)

FCID was recently audited for compliance with the RRA rules and regulations. These audits occur every 5 years and sometimes once every 3 years. Every land holder that farms 240 or more acres of land that have Reclamation water rights are required by federal law to submit RRA forms each year to the District. These forms must be filed before the District can deliver water to these lands.

All land holders that farm over 960 acres by law can only physically irrigate a total of 960 acres with ditch water at the District's accessed rate; You are allowed to use your total ditch allocation from all of your acres and apply it to the 960 acres. The lands in excess of 960 can be irrigated if the landowner request and agrees to pay Reclamation's full cost for the water. You can specify all or part of the acres in excess of the 960 acre limit that you wish to irrigate at full cost. If you need more information about Reclamation's full cost water please contact us.

When land under a Reclamation project change ownership, the new owner has 60 days to inform the appropriate Irrigation Districts of these changes.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation with this important federal mandate.

Occupation Tax Exemption As it applies to Surface Water Acres

The Occupation Tax is collected for the Natural Resources Districts by your local County. The County looks at land that is classified as irrigated and does not distinguish between "Certified Groundwater Acres" or "Permitted Surface Water acres" (water rights). There are significant differences with regards to the NRD's groundwater allocations and surface water allocations (ditch water) when it comes to applying for an exemption from this tax. If you exempt certified Groundwater acres the NRD will not give you an allocation for those acres that year. If you exempt surface water acres you keep your allocation from the canal and can use it on acres that you actually irrigate that year. If you decide to exempt your surface water acres you must do so each year by June 1st. If you have questions please contact your local NRD.