

Frenchman Cambridge Irrigation District

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RRA Audit (Reclamation Reform Act of 1982)

FCID was recently audited for compliance with the RRA rules and regulations. These audits occur every 5 years. Every land holder that farms 240 acres or more that have Reclamation water rights are required by law to submit RRA forms each year before water can be delivered. All land holders that farm over 960 acres by law can only irrigate a total of 960 acres; the land in excess of 960 cannot be irrigated with ditchwater.

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

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

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Frenchman Cambridge Irrigation District

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FCID Newsletter

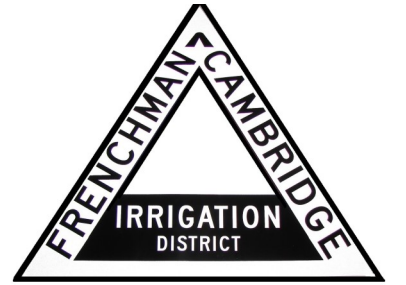
FCID agrees to assist Nebraska with Compact Compliance in 2019

As this water seasons ends, FCID has already began looking at next year's water supply and Nebraska's Republican River Compact obligations. On September 12th FCID officials met with Jeff Fassett, Director of Nebraska Department of Natural Resources. At this meeting a strategy was developed that has a very high probability to move Nebraska's Compact obligation from a "Water Short Year" and two-year average to the more desirable five-year average.

The objective is to increase Harlan County Reservoir's storage to approximately 242,500 acre-feet by December 31, 2018. This can be accomplished with an average inflow of approximately 100 cfs for the next 70 days. FCID has asked Reclamation to by-pass the inflows through Harry Strunk Reservoir until December 31st. This should get Harlan County Reservoir very close to the 119,000 acre-feet of irrigation supply needed to avoid a Compact "Water Short Year" designation for the 2019 calendar year. Some stream augmentation may be needed to top off Harlan County Reservoir's irrigation supply prior to December 31, 2018. FCID met with the MRNRD and the LRNRD boards; everyone agrees that we need to take the necessary steps to avoid the Compact's "Water Short Year" trigger.

With a 5 year average, Nebraska can eliminate the need to augment stream flows from Rock Creek and N-Corpe during the 2019 calendar years. This will save hundreds of thousands of dollars in pumping cost associated with stream augmentation. And for FCID water users on Cambridge Canal it will keep N-Corpe from depleting the headwaters of Harry Strunk Lake.

On January 1, 2019 the gates at Harry Strunk will close and Harry Strunk will fill by April 1st, 2019. This water management strategy is a win, win for all Nebraska Republican River Basin water users.



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Water Sustainability Funds Sought!

FCID has submitted a second grant application to the Nebraska Natural Resources Commission.

FCID is seeking funding to automate the remainder of the Cambridge Canal from mile 28.3 at Oxford to canal mile 43.2 near Orleans. This section will require an additional 17 Rubicon Flumegates; total project cost is estimated at \$881,071 of which 60% or \$528,643 has been requested from Nebraska's Water Sustainability Fund

This project has the potential to save an additional 1,400 acre-feet per year by eliminating nearly all of the canal spills. Additional benefits are realized by having the ability to make changes to your water order 7 days a week. Nebraska is expected to announce the successful grant applicants in January 2019.

Annual Water Users Meeting Has Changed.

In an attempt to improve attendance, FCID will now hold the annual water users meeting in early March of 2019. The exact day has not yet been determined. The meeting will also start at 6:00 pm with a meal; the business meeting will follow. The meeting will take place at the District Office and Shop located at 1310 West Highway 6, Cambridge Nebraska.

The annual budget hearing will still be held during our regular monthly meeting on December 4, 2018. A notice will be published in the local newspapers.

Colorado to pay 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.

During this same time, FCID officials have met with Nebraska's Attorney General and wrote letters to former Gov. Heineman seeking relief from Colorado's excess use.

Finally, with the leadership of Jeff Fassett, Nebraska will get compensated from Colorado for its overuse.

Gov. Ricketts has recommended that Nebraska invest the settlement money in surface water conservation projects in the Republican River Basin.

FCID has several conservation projects identified on the Meeker-Driftwood Canal that would benefit the water users that were harmed by Colorado's overuse.

Colorado's Augmentation Project.

Colorado Compliance pipeline is estimated to pump 13,000 acre-feet in 2019 for them to achieve compliance with the Republican River Compact.

Like Nebraska, Colorado's depletions to the stream from ground water pumping continues to increase each year. This requires more and more augmentation water pumped to offset those depletions to the stream that are in excess of Colorado's Compact water supply.



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

FCID's 2019 Water Supply Looks Good

All three of FCID's Reclamation Reservoirs finished the 2018 irrigations season with more carry over water than they had the previous year.

Swanson Reservoir is currently at 48% of full and 3,500 acre-feet ahead of last year.

Harry Strunk Reservoir is currently at 78% of full and 11,000 acre-feet ahead of last year. All inflows are being by-passed until December 31.

Hugh Butler Reservoir is currently at 50% of full and is 3,000 acre-feet ahead of last year. The current irrigation supply is at 7,000 acre-feet and deliveries for 2019 look favorable at this time. We will announce Red Willow Canal's allocation after January 15, 2019.

At this time, it looks like the 2019 per acre allocation will be the same as the 2018. Meeker-Driftwood at 7-inches per acre; Bartley Canal at 6-inches and Cambridge Canal at 8-inches. We will reevaluate those numbers in the spring and set a final allocation then. These numbers will not go down and have the potential to improve.