



IDAHO WATER USERS ASSOCIATION

Quarterly Newsletter



September 2014

Three Idaho Projects Receive 2014 WaterSmart Grant Funding

Three Idaho water-related projects are included in \$17.8 million in water and energy efficiency grants to 36 projects in the western United States from the Bureau of Reclamation's 2014 WaterSmart program.

The three Idaho projects were awarded a total of \$895,761 in Federal funding, Reclamation officials said. The three Idaho projects are:

- **Idaho Water Resource Board, Phase Two - Provide Irrigation Flow Measurement Devices to Delivery Points Within Water District 02; Reclamation Funding: \$297,761 Total Project Cost: \$661,691;**
- **Oxford Reservoir and Irrigation Company, Innovative Energy Production and Irrigation Efficiencies; Reclamation Funding: \$298,000 Total Project Cost: \$598,644**
- **South Board of Control, South Canal 17.7 Pipeline Gravity Pressure Project Reclamation Funding: \$300,000 Total Project Cost: \$633,354**

The **Idaho Water Resource Board** in Boise, Idaho will install measuring devices and monitoring/telemetry equipment for 48 irrigation diversions and six pumping stations within Water District 02.

Solar and battery powered repeater towers will also be installed to ensure that the remote sensing system covers the entire District. Historically, diversions have not been regulated or routinely measured in the area.

As a result, the project will improve water use management and regulation of 222,340 acre-feet and reduce excess water diversion. Reducing excess water diversions is expected to result in annual water savings of 1,030 acre-feet.

Conserved water will remain in the Snake River channel, benefiting up and downstream users as well as the threatened and endangered salmon fish species in the Snake and Columbia River basins.

The **Oxford Reservoir and Irrigation Company** in southeastern Idaho will replace 4.5 miles of earthen canals with 4.1 miles of pipeline. The Company will also install metering devices at service connections and will install two hydro turbines with a combined 58.45 kilowatt capacity.

The project is expected to result in annual water savings of 1,080 acre-feet that is currently lost to seepage, evaporation, and on-farm flooding. The water conserved by this project will remain in the system to supplement existing water supplies.

The **South Board of Control** in Homedale, Idaho will convert an open lateral canal to 13,400 feet of pipe to supply gravity flow pressurized irrigation water to farm units that are currently irrigated by furrow and flood irrigation.

The project is expected to result in water savings of 1,100 acre-feet per year that is currently lost to evaporation and seepage, headgate leakage, and tail end spills and will increase energy efficiency in the system by reducing the amount of water that needs to be pumped at the Gem pumping plant.

The water that is conserved as a result of this project will be stored in Owyhee Reservoir where it can be used to supplement existing water supplies for future needs.

The water and energy efficiency grants and basin studies are parts of the Department of the Interior's WaterSMART Program. Reclamation selects the projects through a competitive process. The water and energy efficiency grants can be used for projects that conserve and use water more efficiently, increase the use of renewable energy, improve energy efficiency, benefit endangered and threatened species, facilitate water markets, carry out activities to address climate-related impacts on water or prevent any water-related crisis or conflict.

The water and energy efficiency projects are expected to conserve more than 67,000 acre-feet of water annually and 22.9 million kilowatt-hours of electricity—enough water for more than 250,000 people and enough electricity for more than 2,000 households.

Any entity receiving water and energy efficiency grants must provide at least a 50 percent match to the Reclamation funding. Entities that are eligible for funding include states, Indian tribes, irrigation districts, water districts or other organizations with water or power delivery authority in the 17 western states, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands and the Virgin Islands.

For complete descriptions of all 36 projects, visit the WaterSmart internet website: www.usbr.gov/WaterSMART/weeg/index.html.

Bureau officials also say entities interested in applying for WaterSmart grants should begin planning now to submit applications for the 2015 grant program. The deadline to apply is expected to be announced later this year. More information is available on line at the same website listed above.

Using News Releases and Website Together Can Help Keep Patrons Informed On Issues

How to best keep customers and patrons informed on important issues regarding the operational issues faced by water delivery entities is often a real dilemma for many organizations.

For example, water turn in and turn out dates and residential system delivery start and stop dates are essential to both agricultural irrigators and residents alike. Assessment notices, payment dates and potential tax deed action can be a major source of conflict. Easement violations or right-of-way rules coupled with system maintenance requirements can sometimes be the source of irritation between irrigation districts or companies and their patrons.

End users, especially residents inside the boundaries of the organization who are new to the area, frequently do not fully understand such things as assessment procedures, payment dates, failure to pay assessment implications, and tax deed actions. This is a particular problem in residential areas in growing urban locations.

Many organizations have developed internet websites that contain such information as water delivery notices, easement or right-of-way background information, assessment payment or delinquencies notices, and other important information. But the question is how to get patrons to use the website as a source of information. In many instances people may not even be aware that an organization's web site exists.

One IWUA member, an irrigation district, has made great strides in solving that problem by using a combined news release-web site combination.

In essence, the District issues regular news releases to the local media that provide news about those types of issues. For example, a news release might be issued to provide water turn in or turn out dates, approaching annual assessment dates, or tax deed action information.

Included in the news release is a short sentence that notes "More information is available at the District's internet website www.websiteaddress."

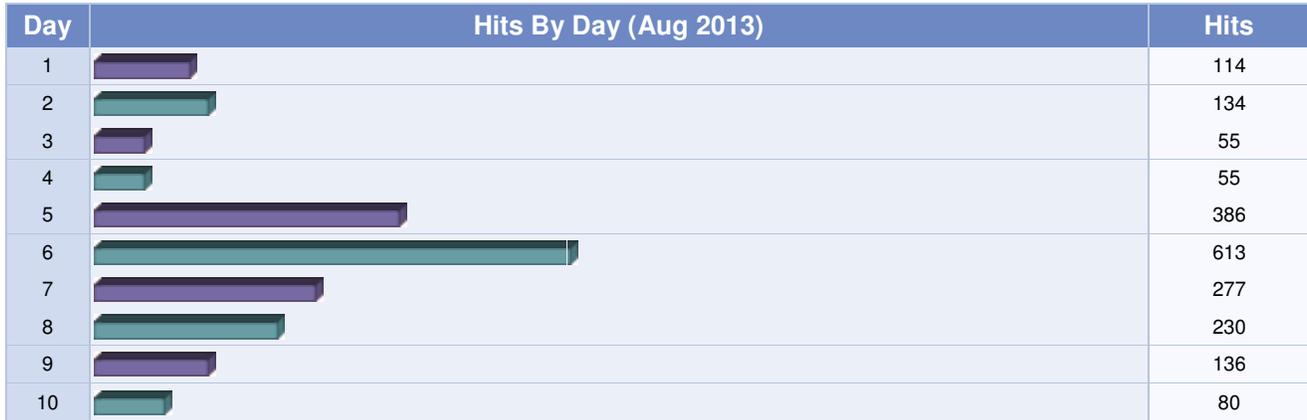
When that news release is published, the District consistently notes a marked increase in the number of visits to its website. Here's an example from 2013.

On the morning of August 5th the local paper published a District news release regarding potential tax deed action against properties whose assessments were three years in arrears. The release explained why the action was necessary and what the consequences would be if payment

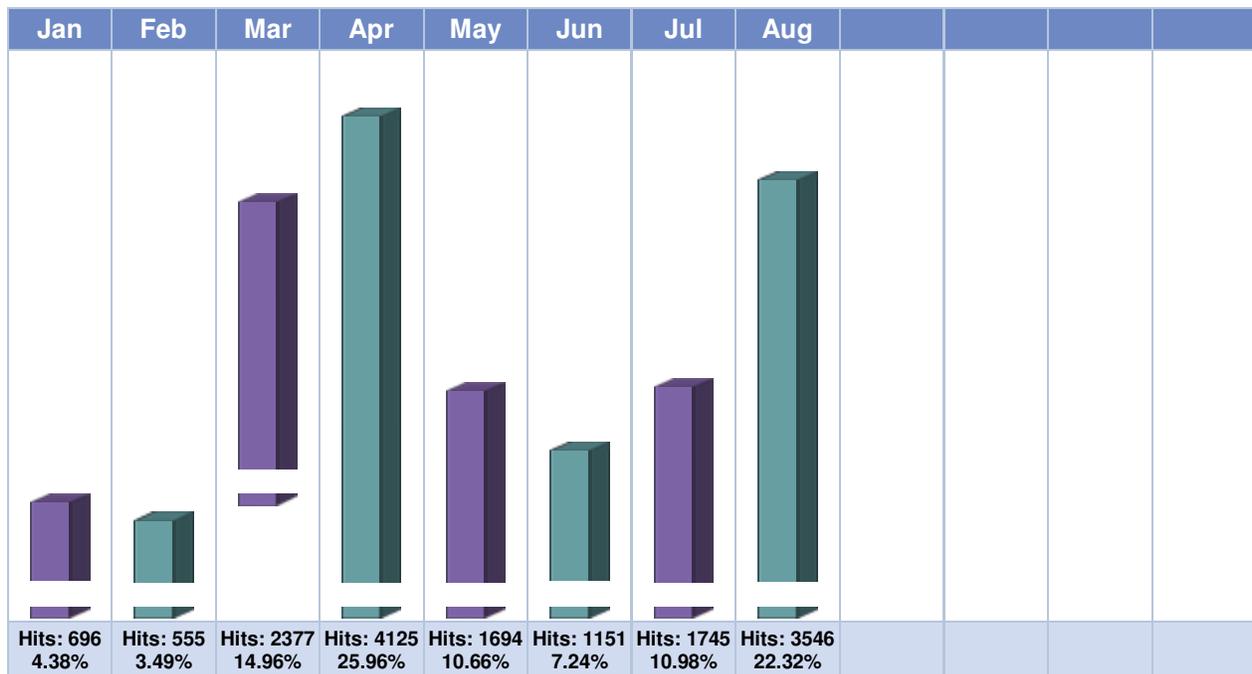
was not made. The release contained the standard statement letting people know more information was available on the District website.

On August 4th, the day before the news release was published, the District website recorded 55 visitors. On August 5, the day of publication, there were 386 visits. On the 6th, the day after publication, there were 613 visitors. Five days after issue, the number of hits on the website had dropped to 80.

In the five days from the news release’s publication, the website recorded 1,642 hits, an average of 328 per day. Clearly, the news release resulted in a major increase in visitors to the website.



The 2013 monthly totals also clearly illustrate the effect of media efforts on visits to the web site. The two heaviest months – April (water turn in) and August (tax deed and water delivery outlook) correlate directly to District news release efforts in those months.



The numbers clearly demonstrate the impact of using a news release to get the message out to the public which, in turn, funnels the reader to the website for further information. The combination makes for an effective method of educating and informing your patrons and perhaps enhancing collection efforts while reducing staff time needed to answer telephone calls and questions.

If you would like more information on how to organize a similar program, please feel free to contact Dick Larsen, the IWUA Public Affairs advisor at: idah2oan@cablone.net or (208) 850-1961.

United States Committee on Irrigation and Drainage

Jerry Gregg, Area Manager for the Bureau of Reclamation Snake River Area Office, wanted to pass along to IWUA members information about the USCID annual conference, engineering scholarships, and award nominations.

USCID's Conference on Planning, Operation and Automation of Irrigation Delivery Systems will be held in Phoenix during December 2014. Now is the time to register for the Conference, make your hotel reservation, and sign up for an exhibit space or sponsorship.

The Conference will feature the ASCE Manual of Practice 131: Canal Automation for Irrigation Systems, prepared by the Task Committee on Recent Advances in Canal Automation of the Irrigation Delivery and Drainage Systems Committee of the Irrigation and Drainage Council of the Environmental and Water Resources Institute, American Society of Civil Engineers. Conference participants will receive a copy of the Manual of Practice as a part of the registration materials.

The USCID Board of Directors is pleased to announce that a \$1,000 scholarship is now being offered from the USCID/Summers Engineering Scholarship Fund. Only USCID Student Members are eligible to apply for the Scholarship. Application details at www.uscid.org/scholapp.html. The application deadline is October 1, 2014.

USCID Award Nominations now being accepted for the USCID Merriam Improved Irrigation Award and the USCID Service to the Profession Award. The deadline for submitting nominations is October 1, 2014. For nomination details, go to www.uscid.org/awardnom.html. The 2014 awards will be presented during the Phoenix Conference.

For more information visit the USCID website at www.uscid.org.

Army Corps to Keep Lake Pend Oreille Higher Longer

Water managers at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are planning to operate Albeni Falls Dam to hold Lake Pend Oreille to within half a foot of a lake level of 2,061 feet above sea level by the end of September, Army Corps of Engineers officials have announced.

Idaho Fish and Game has requested a winter elevation of 2,051 feet for regionally supported and important Clark Fork restoration work; however, IDFG has shifted the date for being at that level later from Nov. 8 to Nov 15. This additional week will allow the Corps to keep Lake Pend Oreille higher later into September.

The need to be down to 2,051 feet by mid-November is the issue driving the end-of-September lake level this year. Discussions are ongoing among the Corps, State of Idaho and the Bonneville Power Administration to address lake levels in future years.

The Army Corps plans to invite more participation this year in the annual August lake level meeting. Lake level meetings in August have always been open to the public, but the Corps will inform local officials, organizations and citizens to encourage greater participation in the process.

Free DVD Collection of Lost Films Chronicle Dawn of Northwest Hydroelectric Power

Portland, Ore. – The Bonneville Power Administration Library has released a new collection of six BPA-produced films from the 1930s, '40s and '50s that takes viewers on a cinematic journey into the early years of the Northwest hydroelectric power and transmission systems.

The DVD set, titled "BPA Film Collection Volume 1, 1939-1954," is the first compilation of films from the agency's archives ever made available. The DVDs bring to life not only the actual build-out of regional infrastructure, but also the attitudes and assumptions that supported development of

publicly owned power utilities in the Pacific Northwest, BPA officials said. To get a free copy of the DVD set, contact BPA's Public Information Center at 800-622-4520 or pic@bpa.gov.

Snake River Basin Adjudication Final Decree Signed

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia provided the keynote address at the Snake River Basin Adjudication celebration in Boise on August 25-26, 2014, marking the ceremonial conclusion of the SRBA process that has been on-going in Idaho since Nov. 19, 1987.

Approximately 158,700 water right claims have been adjudicated during the SRBA process. The SRBA Court has indicated the final decree will be available on-line after September 8th. For more information, visit the SRBA Court website at [www. http://www.srba.state.id.us](http://www.srba.state.id.us).

IWUA Represented At Pacific Northwest Economic Summit

Vern Case, left, and Norm Semanko, IWUA Executive Director and General Counsel, behind podium, represented the Association at the recent Pacific Northwest Economic Region Annual Summit in Whistler, British Columbia, Canada.

