

KITTITAS RECLAMATION DISTRICT

SECRETARY-MANAGER'S MESSAGE Urban Eberhart

Welcome to 2022! To start off the year with a major snowstorm is a good sign for water users in 2022. Hopefully it will melt in an orderly fashion. As of January 11, 2022 the cumulative snowfall at Snoqualmie Pass this winter is 1.8 times the 11-year average of 159 inches of snow. Practically the entire year's average supply of snow fell in a couple of days in much of our area!

Currently, the Kittitas Reclamation District (KRD) has multiple major construction projects scheduled to be completed over the next five years. Piping and canal lining are ongoing this winter on the South Branch Canal. We received notice in late December 2021 that KRD has been awarded an additional \$5 million dollars as part of the FY22 Continuing Resolution (CR) Drought Funding to accelerate our water conservation projects. This makes accessible a total of \$7.5 million in grant funds available for work this winter on the South Branch. Design work on additional North Branch conservation is also currently underway.

When the KRD Main Canal was built, the canal cut off fish passage to the upper Tucker Creek (Easton). As a result of the KRD Tributary Supplementation Program, the KRD has been able to implement water conservation projects that provide for better water deliveries to farms while at the same

time establishing perennial flows in multiple creeks. KRD also built temporary fish passage at the Tucker Creek canal siphon crossing. As a result of the KRD relationships with the Yakama Nation and the other Yakima Basin Integrated Plan partners, this winter we have been able to help reintroduce into Tucker Creek and Little Creek the most coho salmon that have been in them for nearly 100 years. A nearby habitat project is scheduled for 2022 that will provide better opportunities for salmon and steelhead as well as other species to return and continue to thrive. This is a great example of how collaboration through the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan can make things better for farms and fish.

The KRD Board has set the 2022 assessment rates between a minimum \$52.17 and maximum \$74.00 per acre. The assessment payment goes directly to the operation of the distribution system that gets water to your property. It also goes toward the cost of the original Construction Debt Retirement (CDR), as well as a major portion of it is paying for Operations and Maintenance (O&M) costs of the five (5) Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) Reservoirs in the Yakima River Basin. The costs that KRD is required to pay for the reservoirs are continuing to rise and are the primary reason for this year's assessment increase.

2022 WATER SEASON

KRD's Water Season typically runs from mid-April to at the latest October 15th. The KRD receives our water allotment for the season from the Bureau of Reclamation. The water allotment is based upon levels of precipitation, snow pack, and water storage. Since the KRD measures all water that leaves the system, landowners intending on using KRD to irrigate must call to "order" water from our Ditch Riders. They work Monday – Friday and request that you order water 24-48hrs in advance of when you plan on irrigating. The Ditch Riders take orders in the office Monday – Friday from 7:00am to 7:45am before going into the field for water deliveries. Their contact number is 509-925-6158.

CANAL SAFETY

Stay Out – Stay Alive!

Neighboring counties experienced tragedy this past summer. Multiple individuals of varying ages lost their lives as they were using irrigation canals and ponds recreationally. Specific to the KRD system, note that we can have water in our canal system all year long. Keep in mind that these canals, canal banks and associated facilities are built and maintained for the primary purpose of transmission and distribution of water. Swift undercurrents, steep banks, and dangerous debris make irrigation canals extremely hazardous. Fast moving water in the canal can carry a child or pet away in a blink of an eye. We are lucky to live in Kittitas County, where there are plenty of public recreation areas and trails to choose from, both in the cold and warm seasons. Please choose to recreate in a safe public space; stay away from the irrigation canals and private roadways surrounding them.

KRD ditch bank roads are considered private and not meant for public access. They are solely for the purpose of operation and maintenance (O &M) of the KRD canal system. Being a landowner within KRD does not give you the right to utilize these O & M roads. In most areas, there are locked yellow gates and or signage indicating that the roads are not to be used recreationally, as a private access to your residence, or as a quick detour around the county. They are not safe for these types of activities. Public use of these roads is considered trespassing and will be handled by the Kittitas County Sheriff's Office as needed. Thank you for your cooperation.

KRD ASSESSMENTS

1st half Kittitas Reclamation District assessment payments are due April 30, 2022. After April 30th, if 1st half is not paid, interest will accrue at the rate of 1% per month on the entire assessment amount until paid as set forth in RCW 87.03.270. Pursuant to Washington Governor Inslee's Proclamation 20-28, as amended (originally issued on March 24, 2020), our office remains closed to the public. We encourage you to mail your payments to P.O. Box 276, Ellensburg, WA 98926, or use our drop box located on our front door. We also accept credit/debit cards (which will include an additional 3% service fee). If you have questions or need assistance with the payment of your assessments, please call the Kittitas Reclamation District office at 509.925.6158.

KRD OFFICE

DUE TO COVID-19, THE KRD OFFICE REMAINS CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC. PLEASE CALL OUR OFFICE TO SET UP AN APPOINTMENT OR CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE.

PHONE: 509-925-6158

FOR UPDATES, CHECK OUR KRD FACEBOOK PAGE OR OUR WEBSITE!

WEBSITE

<https://www.kittitasreclamationdistrict.org/>

FACEBOOK

<https://www.facebook.com/KRDDistrict>