



WATER DISPATCH

SPRING 2020

DEADLINE TO APPLY FOR IRRIGATION ACRES: JUNE 10

Does your operation have room for more irrigation acres? Would more water help your business grow? The time to act is now!

The Western Irrigation District is offering 980 irrigation acres for sale for the 2021 water season. This is a reminder to get your application in by **June 10, 2020** for consideration.

The WID will assess applications for:

- Suitability of land for irrigation
- Present level of irrigation activity on the parcel
- System capacity
- On-farm system efficiency
- Conveyance system efficiency

These priorities are set to ensure water for irrigation can be reliably and effectively delivered to the proposed irrigation system, and beneficially used on the parcel.

Successful applicants will pay \$770 per acre by December 1, 2020. A maximum of 130 acres per farm operation may be purchased in this sale.

We can help you understand if your land is a good candidate for new or additional acres. Please contact Charlotte Mandel at the WID office to discuss.



WID LAND HAS GONE TO THE DOGS

.....
See how community
benefits from unique
land lease agreement,
page 3



AGM POSTPONED

As previously announced, our April Annual General Meeting was postponed due to COVID-19. Watch for an announcement about a new date, when restrictions are lifted.

WHAT MAKES FOR A SUCCESSFUL WATER SEASON?

We each have a part to play!

Spring is finally here, and we're looking forward to another excellent water season. 2019 was a record year in several ways for the WID – check out the Annual Report for highlights! And with your help, we will continue to deliver water security, service efficiency, and ensure financial sustainability through 2020.

What can you do to contribute?

To help the WID adjust to changing demands on the system, to avoid waste, and to prevent or an over-drawn system – you must **call your Water District Supervisor to request these changes:**

- Give the WID 48 hours notice before you turn your water on.
- Give the WID 24 hours notice before you turn your water off.
- Call the WID if your water needs will be interrupted for any length of time due to breakdown or scheduled maintenance of pumps or equipment.

To **request a free flow measurement** at your turnout, so you have an accurate number for the water entering your system – please call Brian Sander, Water Master, to make arrangements.

To **learn more about loaning your irrigation rights** so others can use on an annual basis, or to **consider a permanent transfer** if you do not expect to use them in the future – contact the WID office to explore the options or visit www.wid.net > [Services](#) > [Irrigation Acres](#)

WID STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

WATER
SECURITY



SERVICE
EFFICIENCY



FINANCIAL
SUSTAINABILITY



SUCCESS THANKS TO INCREASED IRRIGATION

For Tree to Tree Nurseries near Standard, AB, more acres means more business opportunity. The company purchased 27 additional acres from the WID prior to the 2019 water season, increasing their operation to 137 irrigation acres in total, about a 25% increase for their operations.

"We had to have the water to expand," explains Cody Brown, General Manager. "As soon as we saw acres available online, we applied. With the added irrigation, now we've been able to add 24,000 more trees to our farm."

The nursery uses drip irrigation and a variable drive pump, ensuring water goes where and when it is needed, with almost zero waste. Growing 30-40 varieties of landscape trees is not feasible without a reliable water source. "The WID has been great to work with," says Cody. "Without them, our business wouldn't be viable."

We'd like to share your story, too, about how expanding irrigation has enabled your farm to grow. Call or email our office to tell us what new acres has meant to you.



WID LAND HAS GONE TO THE DOGS

For a hunting and retrieving dog to do the job it is bred for, it needs room to run. The WID is happy to provide that space for trainers and their dogs through a unique leasing arrangement with the Wild Rose Hunting Retriever Club (WRHRC).

Near the hamlet of Kathryn, about 30 kilometers northeast of Calgary, the club leases approximately 40 acres of prairie land with a pond, to exercise and train their dogs throughout the year. The 55 members are a group of like-minded owners who endeavour to promote the interests of sporting dog breeds including retrievers, pointers, spaniels and setters.

They host a number of events during the year, including a large hunt test annually. This offers participants the chance to have their dog judged against a standard skill set. The non-competitive nature of the club fosters a cooperative spirit amongst members with the common goal that everybody ends up with a better trained dog for the field.

Several mock tests and themed training events are held from May through September as training opportunities. Participants attending from afar stay in nearby hotels and campgrounds.

While these dogs are bred to be hunting companions, only about half the members actually hunt. "Many participate for the pure joy of watching their dog develop such fine-tuned skills," says club director Bill Young.

The group operates under the Canadian Kennel Club guidelines and focuses on the highest standard of humane treatment of animals and respect and ethical behavior. This standard is also reflected in how they care for the land they lease.

Club president Daniela Trnka explains that members keep access and parking areas mowed, potholes filled, and fences repaired. They contract a company to provide proper control of any invasive and noxious weeds.

"We feel very grateful for the relationship we have with the WID," explains Trnka. "With this property, we have a base from which to operate. It's very valuable to us to have the space and a gathering place for members to socialize. We steward the land in the most responsible way we can."

Check out the club at www.wrhc.com



Wild Rose Hunting Retriever Club: Few proud club members with their retrievers (photo: Daniela Trnka)

FRESH AIR SO IMPORTANT DURING COVID-19

Although the club has cancelled organized events for 2020 due to COVID-19, the WID leased land offers a great space to escape the stresses of the times for members and their dogs.



PROVINCIAL INVESTMENT IN IRRIGATION YIELDS LARGE BENEFITS

The WID works throughout the summer and fall to install pipelines and upgrade canal systems. These improvements ensure water moves through the system in the most efficient way possible. And, the infrastructure projects stimulate the economy in the short and long terms.

As you may know, the Irrigation Rehabilitation Program (IRP) is a partnership between the Government of Alberta and the irrigation districts. The Province provides 75% of the funding for approved rehabilitation projects, and districts cover the remaining 25%. Along with provincial IRP funding, the WID also invests its own revenue into upgrades, accelerating the progress and further bolstering the economy.

The Province's investment is key to driving the rehabilitation and has significant economic impacts within the WID's footprint. The Alberta Irrigation Districts Association commissioned a study in 2015 titled "Economic Value of Irrigation in Alberta". It shows that for every dollar invested in irrigation by the Province, three dollars of economic spinoff benefit is created.

The benefits don't stop there.

The same study shows that rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure throughout Alberta creates about 1,000 full time equivalent jobs, contributes \$74.5 million to Alberta's GDP and about \$48.5 million in labour income.

"When we can help to convert dryland farming to irrigated, those farms increase their productivity, which in turn increases employment on farms and in value-added processing," explains David McAllister, General Manager for the WID. "Substantial employment is also generated in construction."

As an example, the potential benefits from the North Cluny Rehabilitation within the WID, a 3-year project, include:

- \$3.7 million investment results in \$11.1 million overall economic benefit
- Potential \$1 million increase in annual farm sales and value-added processing
- Expansion of 1,175 irrigation acres, adding 12 additional full-time equivalent positions for farms and value-added processing.

The WID has a number of shovel-ready projects and is looking for opportunities to accelerate construction, to sustain the rural economy in the district.



WID BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Doug Brown	Division 1
Henry Colpoys	Division 2
Rick Page	Division 3
Dan Shute – Chair	Division 4
Ray Kettenbach – Vice Chair	Division 5

WATER SUPPLY CONTACTS

Brian Sander	Water Master	403-325-0493
Derrick McGougan	Chestermere	403-899-4638
Clive Tilson	Carseland	403-899-4641
Joe Friedman	Gleichen/Cluny	403-325-4642
Wes Sproule	Rockyford	403-325-4640
JR Dunbar	Crowfoot	403-325-4639
Jaye Wegener	Strathmore	403-325-4601

Our office is closed to visitors during COVID-19, except by appointment.

Please call **403-934-3542** or email inquiry@wid.net, we will respond promptly.