

# Naches-Selah Irrigation District

FALL/WINTER 2023

VOLUME 36

## "Muddy Reflection"

### A look back at the 2023 water season

It was no secret that the irrigation water was very muddy this year. Spring runoff was followed by thunderstorms over the 2021 Schneider Springs Fire burn area. Wildfire ash and debris was washed into Rattlesnake Creek and other tributaries of the Naches River, where our irrigation water originates. This continued through subsequent storms.

Patrolmen worked around the clock to keep screens clear and remove silt from problem areas. Canal areas that usually need cleared once at the end of the season have already been cleared four times.



Problems compounded with high temperatures in May and the muddy debris filled water flowing to your deliveries. Also, the silty debris collected in many parts of the canal and pipe systems. Once the Naches River was flowing clearer, muddy water from what collected kept plugging screens and sprinklers in July. System flows increasing on hot days would stir up this mess until it eventually flushed through.

**These burned areas will take more years to recover as enough vegetation grows to prevent further erosion. We are at risk for repeated muddy water events from this and other burn areas for the coming years.**



Muddy water flowing at the automated screen on the No. 3 Lateral

October 18



## Water Turn-off Date

Patrolmen will begin shutting the water off on October 18. It takes a few days to drain out of the system.

Don't forget to:

- Drain your irrigation lines this fall so you won't have any surprises when the water comes on in April.
- Repair your lines before the ground freezes this fall.
- Open your valves at the delivery. Water can get behind the valve, freeze, and break the valve. Close the valves before water comes on again.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Tom Allan, President  
Rod Matson, Director  
Craig Sundquist, Director

N-SID.ORG

104 W. NACHES AVE., STE. H.  
SELAH, WA 98942  
(509) 697-4177

# Water Rental Program

## Planning ahead for next year

When fall comes around, many of us are ready to take a break from struggling with sprinklers, pumps, and keeping those lawns green. But it's the perfect time to think about how much water you need next year. If you have at least 2.5 acres, you may be able to rent in additional water next season, depending on your situation. Maybe you have surplus water for your needs or don't have access to your water for some reason. You may be able to rent your water back to the District on an annual basis.

### Important Dates

- **February** - Our office will call current lessors to confirm participation for 2024 water season.
- **February 29** - All new rental agreements need to be signed and returned to the office.
- **April 15** - Payments for leased rental water must be received at the office.
- **Early May** - Checks to lessors will be mailed out, provided the first half of parcel's property taxes have been paid.



**If you have at least 2.5 acres, you may be able to rent water in or out next season. To discuss your rental water options, contact Heather Hadsel at officemgr@n-sid.org or (509) 697-4177.**



## Frequently Asked Questions:

### Why is my delivery so far away from my house?

In rural areas where subdivisions have occurred over many years as in our district, sometimes water users' private pipes cross several other properties to the delivery point.

Unlike residential city water where it's piped directly to your home, the District provides irrigation water to specific points along our system, and it is landowner responsibility to connect in and manage private pipes, pumps, filters, air vents and sprinklers. The District stops at the delivery.

### Do I still have to pay for my water if I couldn't run my sprinklers every day?

Yes. The assessment you are billed on your property taxes is used to keep the irrigation delivery system in working order to deliver the irrigation water to the delivery point.

You are provided water at a rate of flow measured at the delivery point. We don't meter and monitor how much water you use. Meters for 2,200+ parcels would increase the cost of water much more than water lost during the occasional down time.

### I have too much water pressure. Is there anything I can do about that?

One of the benefits of enclosing more and more of our system in underground pipes is that we're able to capture some natural pressure.

While that's an advantage, some users found that older valves struggled with the new pressure. Fall is a good time to replace old valves with a pressure-reducing valve if you're experiencing this.

## Receive Text or Email Alerts

Our new website has an "E-Notify" feature, able to send text and/or email notifications for various alerts like chemical applications, water quality or delivery issues.

Visit [n-sid.org](http://n-sid.org) and click on "**Sign up for Notifications**". If you have any troubles at all, we are happy to help you set up, just give us a call at (509) 697-4177!



Patrolman Scott rescued 12 baby ducklings this year that were caught in the canal and couldn't get out to their mother.



## Fire is a Part of Watersheds

Continuing impacts of the 2021 Schneider Springs Fire started off our water season. Devastating wildfires followed in Maui, Spokane and other areas with loss of lives and homes. Fire is a normal function in watersheds throughout the western United States.

However, unhealthy forests and other upland areas, heavy with fuels, result in intense fires that scar the land and decrease watershed function. Less rain seeps into the ground, snow melts faster, and erosion washes soil and debris down the rivers for poor water quality. Smaller streams stop flowing in early summer, stranding fish and limiting water supply in the basin.

Federal and state land management is important to watershed health. There are bills and funding currently being considered in Congress and our state houses. Please support funding and good practices to keep watersheds working for everyone's benefit.

## From the Manager

### Justin Harter



2023 has not gone exactly as expected. Winter snowpacks were below average but not terrible in the mountains.

Near 100 F temperatures in May melted the snowpack in a hurry. Naches River swelled with the runoff flow and debris plugged the fish screens at the start of the canal.

Temperatures returned to normal. Yakima Basin water supply was expected to be around 90%, but dropped to 72% in June. Thunderstorms dropped rain over wildfire burned areas bringing down the worst muddy, debris filled water seen in decades only on the Naches River.

Improvements made the last two years on the No. 3 Lateral are performing well. With any system changes there is an adjustment period as we learn what is needed to maintain flows at all deliveries connected to this now completed pipe system.

A few small pipe installations and usual maintenance for Patrolmen is planned be completed before next spring. From the canal bank to the office, we enjoy working with you to keep the water flowing to where it is needed.



## Tips for Managing Irrigation During Turbid Episodes

Many water users called our office unsure how to irrigate because mud was clogging sprinklers, filters and pumps.

Since irrigation water originates directly from the Naches River, mud and debris come right along with it. We understand it's not always a viable option to hold off on watering in summer when crops, lawns and landscape need the water.

### Here are a few tips:

- Increase filter size, capacity, with automatic flushing for heavier mud and debris load
- Flush pipes before and after filter, pump where possible. Avoid flooding neighboring properties.
- Open the filter, remove the screen and flush from there
- Install a sand or sediment separator
- Don't irrigate until the water clears up, if you can. The turbid water brings a lot of weed seeds that can cause long-term frustration. Even the large orchards in your neighborhoods with state-of-the-art systems choose to use this method at times.
- Bypass underground sprinkler and drip systems that require cleaner, filtered water. City of Selah, one of our water users, had to resort to running temporary above-ground irrigation (K lines) on some parks in May and June.

Most equipment uses flushing or back-flush functions, which can also add the challenge of water, sediment and debris to manage on your property.

Hopefully these tips will give you some options to consider for upgrades your system that may help prepare for muddy water in the future.

## These don't belong in the canal...

These are actual items we have found in our irrigation system. Please be respectful of District property and be safe!



## Tunnel Construction during WWI

*Excerpts from Engineering News-Record, August 17, 1919*

"During the most difficult year for construction work ever experienced in this country, the Naches-Selah Irrigation District carried out some interesting reconstruction work on its canal system."

"In the summer of 1917 the canal reached such a state of disrepair that several serious breaks occurred, resulting in interruptions to the water service aggregating over 30 days and a loss in the apple crop estimated to be not less than \$500,000." [*\$11.9 million in today's dollars*]

"The uniform net width of 7 ft. was adopted [for the tunnels]...because that was about the minimum width for...mules, which were used in hauling out the muck, to turn around."

"The tunnels were all driven by station men...In all cases but one, the drilling was done with coal augers, as the material encountered was either sand, rock or shale, relatively soft and dry in all cases."

"It must be noted that this work was carried out during the stress of war:...and that workmen were very scarce and mostly old men."



TUNNEL FACE SHOWING USE OF COAL AUGERS

## Know what's below

Call before you dig



Fall is a great time to make those irrigation repairs and upgrades, but don't forget to locate utility lines by calling 8-1-1 or submitting a request online **FIRST!**



What is the ratio of a pumpkin's circumference to its diameter?

**Pumpkin Pi**

# District Updates

## Director Position #2 Nominations are Open

Naches-Selah Irrigation District Board of Directors are elected for staggered three-year terms. **Director nominations will be accepted for Position #2. A Declaration of Candidacy must be filed in our office by 4:00 p.m. on Monday, November 6.**

At the end of the term, a Director may submit a petition to continue serving. Position #2 is currently held by **Craig Sundquist**. He has expressed his willingness to serve another term.

To be a qualified elector, a person must be 18 years old, a U.S. citizen, reside in Washington state, hold title or evidence of title to assessable land within the District.

If there is a joint water right, the Watermaster is the designated voter. For entities, a voter proxy must be on file in the office designating a voter.

Each candidate must obtain a minimum of 10 signatures from landowners within the District.

If only one Declaration of Candidacy is submitted, no election is needed and that person becomes Director by board resolution.

Please refer to RCW 87 or contact our office for more information.

## Board of Equalization Meeting

The Board of Equalization Meeting will be held on **Monday, December 11 at 9:15 a.m.** at the District office (104 W. Naches Ave., Suite H, in Selah), and is open to the public.

Legal notice will be published in the Yakima Herald-Republic and at [n-sid.org](http://n-sid.org).

**Q:** What is a Board of Equalization Meeting?

**A:** An irrigation district board cannot levy an assessment under RCW 87.32.060 before the assessment roll has been equalized pursuant to RCW 87.32.040. Equalization ensures that landowners are being assessed using the same standard, so that no one is billed disproportionately. The assessment roll will be available in our office for inspection by any interested water users.

Dotting our I's and crossing our T's!



## Office Closures

**Our office will be closed for the following holidays:**

November 11  
Veterans Day

November 23 & 24  
Thanksgiving

December 25-29  
Christmas Break

January 1  
New Year's Day

February 20  
Presidents' Day

## Upcoming Board Meetings

- October 10
- November 9
- December 11
- January 10
- February 9
- March 11

NSID board meetings are held monthly in the District office at 9:00 a.m. and are open to the public.

## NSID Processing Fees

**Short Plats & Boundary Line Adjustments** \$100

**Long Plats** \$100 + \$20/parcel  
+ Water Covenant \$25

## Water Sales/Transfers

Single owner \$25/parcel  
Multiple owners \$50/parcel

## Rental Water

Lessor (water out) \$20/annually  
Lessee (water in) \$30/miner's inch









Check out our

# NEW WEBSITE!

[n-sid.org](http://n-sid.org)

We've been working hard to provide improved customer service to our water users, and that includes a website full of features to streamline your requests and provide up-to-date information.



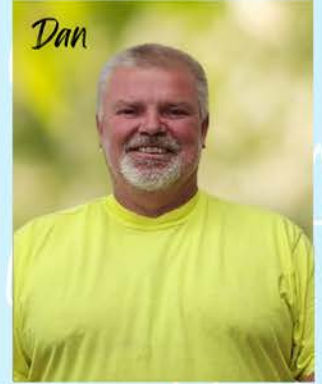
-  Water Orders
-  Delivery Status
-  Policies & Forms
-  Meeting Dates
-  Chemical Applications
-  Legal Notices

Thank you, Patrolmen!

Lee



Dan



Scott



Buck



These guys put in long hours this season to keep the water flowing!

FALL & WINTER NEWSLETTER