



Modernizing Idaho's Water Infrastructure

An Ongoing Story Series on the Idaho Water Resource Board's Aging Infrastructure Grant Program **ISSUE NO. 9**

Enterprize Canal new water pipeline

Project description:

Enterprize Canal Company received a \$2.7 million Aging Infrastructure Grant from the Idaho Water Resource Board to replace an old canal with a new buried-pipeline irrigation system. The grant is part of Gov. Brad Little's Leading Idaho Initiative to modernize Idaho's water infrastructure statewide.

The pipeline is 1.6 miles in length with a 63-inch diameter. It will connect to Enterprize's existing irrigation network, which serves a total of 204 producers farming 5,436 acres of land, northeast of Idaho Falls.

"This project will allow Enterprize to replace its old canal system with a more efficient pipeline that will enable system autonomy, provide the ability to conserve water and ensure that Enterprize does not lose its water supply," said Darrel Ker, Enterprize Canal board member and project manager.



Contractors prepare trench for new 63-inch irrigation pipeline for Enterprize Canal Company northeast of Idaho Falls. (Courtesy Enterprize Canal Co.)

Background:

Enterprize Canal diverts natural flow and storage water from the Snake River for irrigation purposes. The water is distributed by an upper canal that is 6.5 miles long and unlined. That is the main canal used to distribute water to half of the water users (2,718 acres) in the northern part of the system.

To reach other water users, Enterprize uses a neighboring canal to wheel water to Willow Creek to serve 2,718 acres in the southern part of the system.

Due to severe flooding in the 1930s, a flume washed out that Enterprize used to serve the southern part of its system. Since that time, "we have had to rely on a neighboring canal company for water delivery," Ker says. "That agreement expires in 2024. So the new pipeline will allow us to serve our water users in the southern part of our system for the long-term."

"I cannot thank the Water Board and the Governor enough for funding our

- **Type of project:** New irrigation pipeline
- **Location:** Ririe, Idaho
- **Total project cost:** \$8.2M
- **AIG:** \$2.7 million
- **BOR WaterSmart grant:** \$1.9M
- **Local cost-share:**
- **Start date:** October 2023
- **End date:** 2024



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Enterprise Canal water pipeline (cont.)

project,” Ker says. “Access to our Snake River water means everything to the Enterprise Canal Company and our water users. This project is essential to sustain the family farms relying on us to deliver their water.”

Construction started in Fall 2023. The project is on time and on budget, Ker said.

Project benefits: The Enterprise pipeline project allows the canal company to build an independent, more efficient canal system and provide the ability to conserve and recharge water. It delivers a multitude of benefits to the State of Idaho:

- 1.) Increasing water management flexibility
- 2.) Improving water conservation
- 3.) Enhancing water reliability
- 4.) Providing capability to recharge and store water.

The 63-inch pipeline will have an estimated capacity of 110 cubic feet per second (cfs).

Regional benefits: Enterprise is a regionally significant canal company because it has the unique distinction of being only one of three entities in the state that can move water between two watersheds, the Snake River and Willow Creek. Enterprise's storage water agreements in three Snake River reservoirs (Jackson Lake, American Falls and Palisades) make it a valuable partner for water supply

in Idaho through leases and rentals.

Enterprise is a partner in the Sho-Ban agreement, and it leases and rents storage water to downstream water users during drought years.

“Enterprise can positively impact other users in the region in this way by conserving water within their delivery system,” Ker says. “The more water conserved by all results in better drought resiliency and more water supply available for the region.”

Enterprise Recharge Basins

Enterprise is developing three recharge basins near the pipeline project that will be completed by



Above, contractors weld together the irrigation pipe above ground before placing in the trench. Below, new Enterprise aquifer-recharge basin. (Courtesy Enterprise Canal Co.)



2024. The Idaho Water Resource Board has provided \$5.1M in federal ARPA funding to partner with Enterprise Canal to develop the recharge basins. The projects will add capacity to the Upper Snake River Valley Region for recharging the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer.

For more information, contact Darrel Ker at Enterprise Canal Co., darrelker@gmail.com.