



ST. MARY RIVER IRRIGATION DISTRICT

PROPOSED IRRIGATION EXPANSION INFORMATION PACKAGE

Public Information Meetings:

Date: March 23, 2011

Location: Seven Persons Community Hall

Time: 1:30 p.m.

Date: March 24, 2011

Location: Bow Island Legion Hall

Time: 1:30 p.m.

Date: March 25, 2011

Location: Coaldale Community Center

Time: 1:30 p.m.

Plebiscite vote

Date: March 29, 2011

Time: 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

**Locations: Lethbridge and Bow Island District Offices
and Seven Persons Community Hall**

Advance Polls

**Advanced polls will be held from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
after each information meeting.**

St. Mary River Irrigation District

1210 - 36th Street North, Lethbridge, AB T1H 5H8 P.O. Box 278 T1J 3Y7
Telephone 403-328-4401 Fax 403-328-4460 Email smrid@smrid.ab.ca

To Our Fellow Water Users,

Your SMRID Board of Directors has authorized the holding of a plebiscite to ask the water users to approve a phased expansion of the District by about 10% or 40,000 acres.

Over the past 20 years, since the District was capped at its present size, both District water conveyance and on-farm application efficiencies have improved significantly and we expect these gains to continue. Combined, these gains in water savings exceed the additional water required to support the 10% expansion we are proposing and therefore mitigates the risk of water shortage in times of severe drought.

Benefits of Expansion:

- Allows for further and new development within the district, which can enable individual producers to enhance their enterprises for greater financial stability.
- Will expand the annual revenue base at very little cost to the District.
- Makes possible the creation of a significant financial reserve which will be used to stabilize our annual irrigation rates.
- Will enable the district to accelerate the pace of our canal rehabilitation program.
- Will demonstrate a greater use of our licensed water allocations to reduce the potential for regulatory reductions to our licensed authorizations through a possible “Use it or lose it” initiative.
- Will demonstrate proactive actions in responding to the Alberta Water Commission mandated program requiring water users to increase water use conservation, efficiency and productivity.
- Can provide an indication of expanded opportunities for value-adding processors to develop or expand their complementary operations.

Failing to expand now may have serious negative consequences. Rising costs erode our capability, at present budget levels, to provide existing levels of service and maintain the current pace of rehabilitation. Our existing reserves have proven inadequate to cope with the unforeseen emergency repairs now required on our main canal. The District would be in serious financial difficulty without Provincial Disaster Assistance. The window of opportunity to expand, as provided for in current legislation, is now open, but we cannot guarantee that it will remain that way into the future. Provincial water policies, particularly as they apply to irrigation water and irrigation licences, are under increasing scrutiny in the public arena.

We will be holding information meetings throughout the District and we invite you to come, listen and ask pertinent questions. Wally Chinn, former long-time irrigation engineer with Alberta Agriculture, will be moderating these meetings on our behalf and presenting relevant expansion-related information. Wally has been very actively involved with several of the irrigation districts who have pursued expansion initiatives during the past decade and is well-versed on all the issues. We urge you all to come and vote and exercise your right to help move the district forward.

Your SMRID Board of Directors

SMRID PROPOSED IRRIGATION EXPANSION

INFORMATION PACKAGE

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**RATIONALE FOR IRRIGATION EXPANSION
372,000 IRRIGATION ACRES TO 412,000 ACRES**

The Board of Directors have decided to take a proposal for a 40,000 acre expansion to the irrigators of the St. Mary River Irrigation District (SMRID) in the form of a plebiscite vote planned for March 29, 2011, based on the following rationale.

- 1. Water-use efficiency gains off-setting expansion water demands**
- 2. Rate stabilization and increase in revenues from expansion acres**
- 3. Accelerated rehabilitation**
- 4. Retention of licensed allocations**
- 5. Increase Irrican Power production**
- 6. Attract secondary value-adding industry and supporting production**

1. Water-Use Efficiency Gains

By legislation, in 1991, the size of the SMRID was set at a limit of 372,000 acres, based on water-use projections at that time. **It is estimated that, during the last 20 years, the District and its irrigators have saved, on average each year, 53,600 acre-feet of water through efficiency improvements.** On-going rehabilitation of District infrastructure accounts for approximately 24,000 acre-feet of water being saved annually. In addition, the irrigators of the District have saved, at the on-farm level each year, an average of 29,600 acre-feet of water, accomplished through improved irrigation water application practices and management techniques.

The 53,600 acre feet of water that has been saved is enough water to serve the proposed 10% expansion (40,000 acres). Water will continue to be saved through ongoing on-farm improvements and continuing rehabilitation efforts.

2. Rate Stabilization and Increase in Revenues

The District envisions using the income from the sale of expansion irrigation acres to stabilize future annual irrigation rates as well as to accelerate rehabilitation within the District. Adding 40,000 acres to the assessment roll at today's base rate of \$20 per acre would add \$800,000 annually to the operating revenues of the SMRID. As expansion will be limited to the infrastructure currently existing within the SMRID, additional operating revenues will be substantially higher than additional operating costs.

Expansion would effectively reduce the SMRID's infrastructure replacement cost per acre, and thereby, lower maintenance and rehabilitation costs, when quantified on a per acre basis.

In a comparison with other Districts, two key factors have been noted as driving SMRID's water rates higher;

- A. SMRID is 94% reliant on rates for its income, whereas many other Districts have additional sources of income. While SMRID does not have the highest operating costs/acre, other Districts are able to subsidize rate payers with other sources of income. The sale of expansion acres will increase District Reserves, thereby adding interest revenue, which will help ease the potential need for future rate increases.
- B. SMRID has a high infrastructure replacement cost on a per acre basis. This impacts both maintenance and rehabilitation costs which make up 75% of SMRID's annual budgetary requirements.

3. Accelerated Rehabilitation

Revenue from the sale of new water rights on expansion acres can be directed to accelerate rehabilitation across the District.

4. Retaining Our Licence Allocations

As an irrigation district, we are concerned that regulatory authorities and some special interest groups are closely monitoring annual irrigation district water diversions, relative to licensed allocations, and we are projecting that if current irrigation water licences are not more fully utilized, relative to their diversion volume potential, they could eventually be in jeopardy of incurring allocation reductions.

By the SMRID expanding its irrigation area limits, it is demonstrating that the District is committed to work toward more fully using its currently licensed withdrawal amounts.

5. Increase Irrican Power Production

With the gain in on-farm water use efficiencies, the resulting reduction in water demand has meant decreased flows through the district and thereby causing declines in power production. Increased flows through the plants, as a result of serving expanded acres, will increase power production and revenues.

6. Attract Value-Adding Industry

As secondary or value-adding processors recognize the opportunity for primary production growth, derived from expanded irrigation acres, the potential for their increased presence can lead to expanded opportunities for water users.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Computer Modelling:

Alberta Agriculture's review of possible expansion in the SMRID, with the assistance of Alberta Environment, involved computer modelling scenarios. They applied 74 years of climate and river flow records, which have been accumulated for the period of 1928 – 2001, to derive irrigation water demands to be compared with water supplies from the rivers. The modelling referenced conditions equivalent to the 2009 crop mix, irrigation application techniques and water management practices. The modelling also included the operations, capabilities and limitations of current District infrastructure. The net results of the water demand created from the on-farm and district components and integrated with the historical weather data were measured against recorded river flows from 1928 through 2001. Modelled scenarios applied a variety of area expansion amounts. The resulting irrigation demand, when compared to the available water supply indicated what level of water-supply shortfalls may occur through the 74-year period. The incremental risk associated with a 10% expansion, or 40,000 acres, was determined to be one additional deficit year through the 74 years. With expansion to 412,000 acres, the highest modelled deficit was found to occur under 2001 climate and river flow conditions. The other modelled shortfalls of significance could occur if similar conditions prevailing in the 1930s and 1940s were experienced. **Available water under the worst scenario was still approximately 10 inches/acre at the farm gate.**

Gross Diversion Volumes of Water

The SMRID has three water licenses which authorize the diversion of up to 722,000 acre-feet annually. During the 34-year period of 1976 to 2009, inclusive, the gross diversion of water for the District, which includes water conveyed for other than irrigation purposes, seepage and evaporation losses, as well as return flows, has **averaged 392,157 acre-feet**. During this period, the gross diversion was greatest in 1988, at **563,621 acre-feet**, and was lowest in 1978 with **202,066 acre-feet** withdrawn. Through the 10-year period of 2000 to 2009, **the average irrigation use at the farm gate was 10.1 inches/acre, with the overall gross diversion from the source being 13.2 inches/acre.**

Costs to Add New Expansion Acres

It is envisioned that the cost for water rights on new expansion acres (levied through the District's Capital Assets Charge for new acres) will be offered at the current market rate so as not to devalue existing land values. The current **Capital Asset Bylaw**, established annually by the Board, has **set the charge at \$1,800.00 /acre.**

Further, where infrastructure additions or modifications are required to service new expansion acres, the water user adding those acres will be responsible for the capital costs associated with the required service installations.

Who and How to Acquire Acres

The District will be divided into four development blocks. **Each block will be allowed to expand by 2,000 acres per year.** Upon receipt of a **refundable** 10% down payment of the capital asset charge and an acceptable soils irrigability report, an applicant will be issued a **priority number**. The applicants for the first 2,000 acres in each block that meet the foregoing specified requirements of the District and the Irrigation Districts Act, will be allocated expansion acres in accordance with their respective priority number. Each applicant will be limited to adding a maximum of 260 acres in any given allocation year, unless not all of the 2,000 acres available are allocated. The Board of Directors will review the expansion progress at the end of each irrigation season and if the rate of expansion is found to be too detrimental to the interests of the irrigators, the Board of Directors has the option of adjusting or delaying any further expansion within each block.

Capacity

There will be canals, laterals and pipelines that may have capacity constraints that could limit their ability to effectively supply irrigation water to new expansion acres. During the approval process, the District will consider all applications received to determine if the applied-for-acres can be properly serviced.



Plebiscite Vote

Voting regulations for a plebiscite are identical to the election process for Directors. Generally each irrigator is allowed one vote. If two or more individuals have their names on one title of a single irrigated parcel, then only one of them can vote. If two or more individuals have their names on more than one irrigated parcel, then both or all can vote depending on the number of individuals and parcels. Companies are allowed one vote by a designated representative. There is no proxy voting.

The question in the plebiscite is approved if more than 50% of the irrigators voting vote in favour of the question, which will be: **“The Board of Directors is seeking the approval of the irrigators to change the expansion limit from 372,000 acres to 412,000 acres. Do you approve: Yes or No”**.

The **plebiscite vote** will be held at polling stations convened on:

Date: March 29, 2011

Time: 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Locations: Lethbridge and Bow Island District Offices and Seven Persons Community Hall

Advance polls will be held from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. after each of the public information meetings, which will be held as outlined in the following.

Public Information Meetings:

The Board of Directors will hold public information meetings for all irrigators prior to the plebiscite vote. These meetings will be held on:

Date: March 23, 2011

Location: Seven Persons Community Hall

Time: 1:30 p.m.

Date: March 24, 2011

Location: Bow Island Legion Hall

Time: 1:30 p.m.

Date: March 25, 2011

Location: Coaldale Community Center

Time: 1:30 p.m.

All irrigators are strongly urged to attend one of the meetings, at a location convenient to them, in order to hear the information presentation, gain a better understanding and to ask any pertinent questions on the expansion proposal.

“Proposed Irrigation Area Expansion” Summary Information

Background:

The Board of Directors of the St. Mary River Irrigation District (SMRID) is proposing to acquire authorization to increase the maximum size of the SMRID by an additional **40,000 acres**. As per the conditions specified in the Irrigation Districts Act (Table 2), a limit on the maximum area of the SMRID was set at **372,000 acres**. The increase to **412,000 acres** is being proposed in order to enhance the viability of the District in a number of ways. It will:

- (a) Allow for further development within the District which will increase the revenue base;
- (b) Increase the opportunity for water users to increase the size of their operations to more economically effective units;
- (c) Optimize the use of the water allocated to the District through existing licence allocations;
- (d) Utilize water that has been saved through on-going improvements to District infrastructure and through water users’ improved on-farm irrigation application management to irrigate new land areas;
- (e) Stabilize water rates and slow potential future rate increases with the help of the increased revenue from an expanded district;
- (f) Provide more capital funding for continued improvements to the District’s infrastructure; and
- (g) Increase the revenue from the Irrican Power generation plants, of which SMRID is a major owner, as a result of increased water deliveries through the irrigation system necessary to supply an expanded district.

Under the terms of the Irrigation Districts Act and associated Regulations, there is a formal process that must be followed in order to acquire the expansion authorization. The details of that legislated process are summarized within the attached documents referenced as “Irrigation Districts Act Requirements” on Pages 16-18.

Required Information:

Within the governing requirements, as specified in the Irrigation Districts Act and its Regulations, the Board of Directors must:

- Provide notice of their intention to increase its irrigation expansion limit;
- Provide specific water use and associated information to the irrigators;
- Hold at least one public meeting to explain the details of the proposed increase in the irrigation expansion limit, and
- Hold a plebiscite vote of the irrigators on the proposed expansion.

The following information is provided in accordance with the stipulation of the Irrigation Plebiscite Regulation and is to be referenced as supporting rationale for expansion and the basis on which a plebiscite vote is implemented. Much of the detailed water requirement data has been derived through irrigation demand modelling work carried out on behalf of the SMRID by the Irrigation and Farm Water Division of Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development. Other supporting documentation includes Figure 1, Table 1 and Figure 3 attached at the end of this section. The modelling analysis considered climate and water supply conditions representing 74 years of historical records.

As required in the Irrigation Districts Act, expansion assessments are compared with water requirements as if the District were developed fully to a 412,000 acre Expansion Limit. The state of the district in 2009 is the base reference year for modelling and references the crop mix (Figure 3), on-farm irrigation method mix (Figure 4), as well as the make-up of the District's infrastructure for that year.

In the following general analyses, all quantities derived and presented are based on average annual conditions.

A. Allocated License Volume of Water

The SMRID retains the equivalent of three (3) irrigation diversion licences. These are summarized as follows:

168,173 acre-feet with a priority date of 1899-02-07
331,827 acre-feet with a priority date of 1950-05-31
222,000 acre-feet with a priority date of 1991-08-23

Total = 722,000 acre-feet

B. Volume of Water Lost from Canals and Reservoirs

Water losses related to SMRID conveyance and storage operations occur as a result of seepage and evaporation from district canal systems, evaporation from reservoirs and from end of canal outflow that does not return to the system but flows to the river. Seepage has been significantly reduced over the last number of years through the rehabilitation of conveyance works and the installation of more and more pipelines. As of 2000, it was estimated that approximately 14,700 acre-feet of water was being lost annually due to canal seepage and 34,700 acre-feet was being lost from District reservoir/balancing pond evaporation, for a total of **49,375 acre-feet of water per operating season**.

C. Volume of Return Flow

Water related to the SMRID diversion licences that is returned to the natural river systems was estimated, in 2000, to average **33,370 acre-feet per operating season**. It is also recognized that in recent years (since the 2000 estimate) the District is making notable reductions in the quantity of return flow as a result of continued upgrading of infrastructure, primarily with closed pipelines, and through improved on-farm irrigation practices.

D. Volume of SMRID Licence Water Used for Other Purposes

The SMRID allocates **12,000 acre-feet** of its licensed diversion water to users other than irrigation. In 2009, approximately 25% of this volume had been allocated to other agricultural and industrial water conveyance agreements.

E. Volume of Remaining Licensed Water Allocations Available for Crop Use

The remaining licensed water available for use at the farm delivery is the net amount after the above “losses” or supply to alternate uses. This is equivalent to:

722,000 acre-feet (Total licensed volume)
- 49,375 acre-feet (Losses from canal seepage and evaporation)
- 33,750 acre-feet (Return Flow Volume)
- 12,000 acre-feet (Other Use Commitment)
<hr/>
626,875 acre-feet

F. Water Required at the Farm Delivery

During the past 34 years (1976-2009) the average volume of water diverted at the source to meet farm delivery requirements has been 392,157 acre-feet annually, ranging as high as 563,621 acre-feet (1988) and as low as 202,066 acre-feet (1978). This includes both the volume required for consumption by crops as well as the losses incurred through the water application and water delivery process, including delivery to other uses.

- 1) Average water delivered at the farm gate (2000-2009): 10.1 inches**
Average Gross Water diverted, including losses (2000-2009): 13.2 inches

- 2) Crop mix (2009)**
 - Forages (26.9%)
 - Cereals (37.3%)
 - Specialty Crops (18.9%)
 - Oilseeds (16.7%)
 - Miscellaneous (0.1%)

- 3) Level of risk of a water shortage:**

Under current water supply conditions and supplying water to meet the optimum modelled water demand for the crop mix in 2009, few water supply shortfalls are projected at the current Expansion Limit. At a 10% (40,000 acres) expansion, there would be an estimated 7% chance (5 in 74 years) of incurring a water supply deficit greater than 4 inches (see Figure 1 Modelled Water Requirements and Table 1: Modelled Deficit Frequency). With expansion to 412,000 acres, the highest modelled deficit is shown to occur in the year 2001, when available water was limited to just over 10 inches, with the other modelled rationing years of significance occurring under modelled climate and water supply conditions experienced in the 1930s and 1940s.

G. Total Acres that could Be Irrigated

Based on the modelled irrigation demand, applying an increasing irrigation management to meet 90 percent of crop water requirements, the District's current licensing has enough capacity to support the irrigation of at least 412,000 acres.

H. Current Expansion Limit

The defined Expansion Limit as identified within the Irrigation Districts Act is currently 372,000 acres.

I. Current Irrigation Area on the Assessment Roll

As of the 2009 assessment roll for the District, 370,964 were identified as irrigation acres, with an additional 989 acres supported through terminable water agreements and 1,139 acres serviced through annual agreements, for a total irrigation area of **373,092 acres**.

J. Proposed Expansion Limit

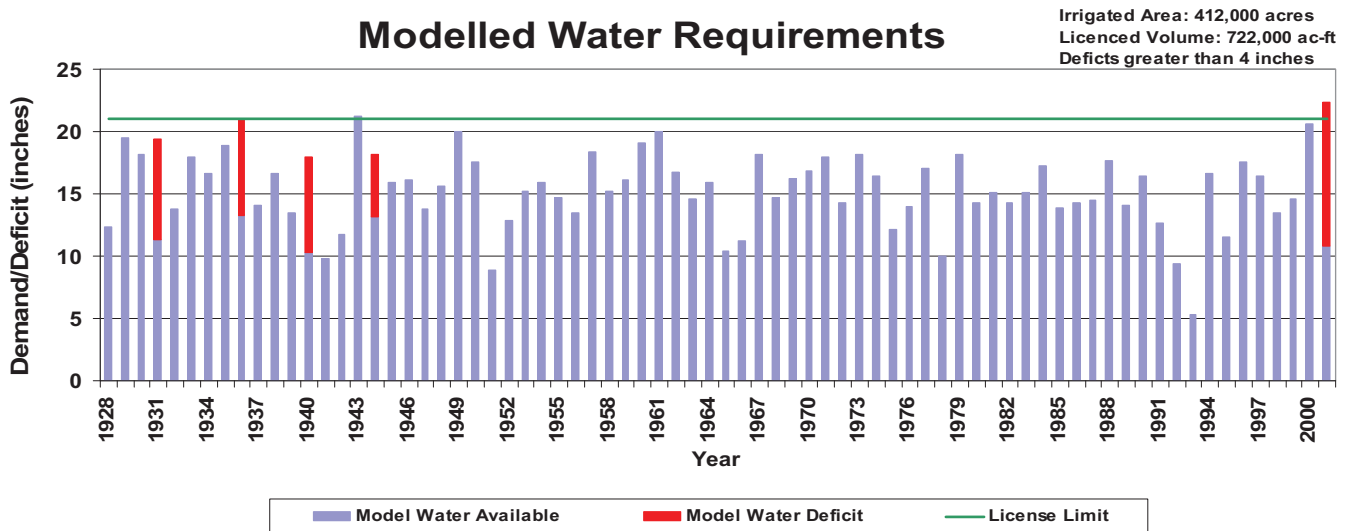
The SMRID Board of Directors is proposing a revised Expansion Limit of **412,000 acres**.

K. Location of Expansion Area (if expansion restricted to defined areas)

Expansion will occur throughout the District, particularly where in-fill is beneficial and along main canal routes where adjacent lands may be more readily available.



Figure 1



Modelled water requirements are based on the 2009 data set for the SMRID, which includes the crop mix, on-farm irrigation method and complete inventory of pipeline and canal infrastructure. Yearly weather data and stream flow records from Alberta Environment (1928 – 2001) are incorporated into the model. Assuming expansion to 412,000 acres, the analysis presents a snapshot of supply versus demand through the period 1928-2001.

The graph shows the modelled gross optimum water demand (in inches) by the entire height of the bar. This demand includes all consumptive losses and return flow volumes. The red part of the line is a modelled water deficit, which means that the District would have been unable to deliver the entire modelled water demand in that year. Some reasons for this can be due to timing of the modelled water requirement, back-to-back dry years, or apportionment commitments to other priorities, all of which may have limited the District’s supply of water at a given time.

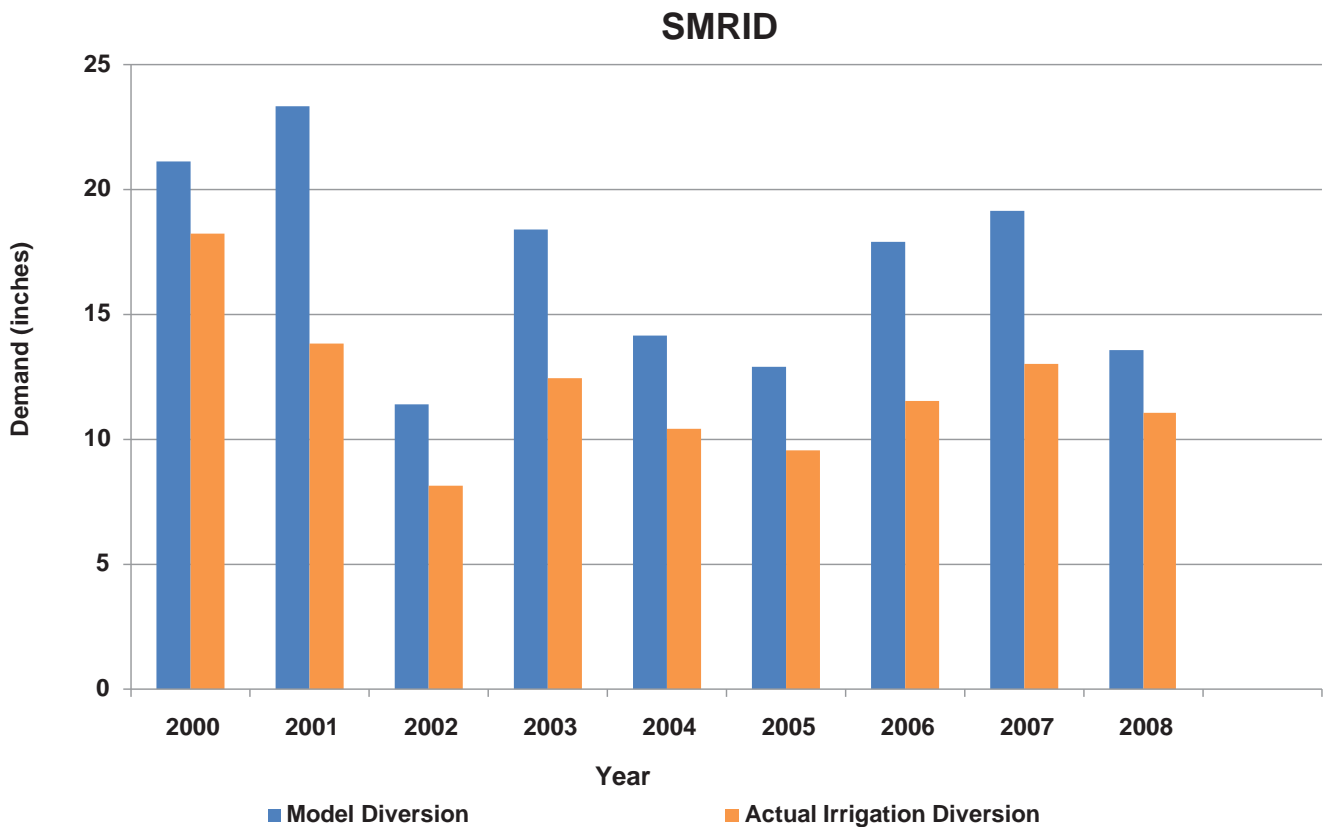
Any deficit less than 4 inches of modelled demand is considered to be of little significance and manageable by the District. Modelled demand deficits greater than 4 inches would be minimized by combined District and irrigator water management ensuring that any impact is reduced as much as possible. See Table 1 on the next page for a comparison of modelled deficits from the current limit to the proposed expansion of 412,000 acres.

In Figure 1 above, the green horizontal line is the District’s licensed volume of 722,000 acre-feet per 412,000 acres of irrigation. The District requires approximately 21 inches gross diversion to supply 18 inches at the irrigator’s turnout delivery. It is deemed that the modelled optimum water demand is higher than what irrigators actually use. Figure 2 shows a comparison between modelled demand and more recently what the actual demand of the District actually has been.

Table 1, Modelled Deficit Frequency (1928 - 2001)

Modelled Deficit Range (inches)	Current SMRID Limit of 372,000 ac	Expansion to 412,000 ac
0	63 years with zero deficit	60 years with zero deficit
>0-4	7 years	9 years
4-6	2 years	1 year
6-8	1 year	2 year
8-10	0 year	1 year
10-12	1 (year 2001)	1 (year 2001)
Modelled years with deficits greater than 4 inches	4 years	5 years

Figure 2, Modelled Demand versus Actual Demand



ST. MARY RIVER IRRIGATION DISTRICT
BYLAW/#A 2011-2

Bylaw Respecting District Expansion

WHEREAS, by Section 177(2)(c) of the *Irrigation Districts Act*, RSA 2000, Chapter I-11 states that a District may make a bylaw establishing an expansion limit other than the expansion limit specified in Table 2 of the Schedule;

AND WHEREAS Section 12(1) states the sum of the irrigation acres plus the acres subject to terminable agreements in a District must not exceed the expansion limit for that District;

AND WHEREAS Section 12(2)(a) states subject to subsection (3), the expansion limit for a District is in the case of a District listed in Table 2 in the Schedule, the expansion limit specified in Table 2;

AND WHEREAS Section 12(3) states notwithstanding subsection (2), a District may by bylaw change the expansion limit;

AND WHEREAS Section 12(4)(a) & (b) states if a District proposes to make a bylaw under subsection (3), the Board must

- (a) hold a meeting with the public, and
- (b) by resolution authorize the holding of a plebiscite to obtain the approval of the Irrigators;

AND WHEREAS Section 12 (8) states the bylaw referred to in subsection (3) is approved by plebiscite if more than 50% of the irrigators voting vote in favour of the bylaw;

AND WHEREAS Table 2 of the Schedule in the *Irrigation Districts Act* states that the expansion limit for the St. Mary River Irrigation District is 372,000 acres;

AND WHEREAS the Board of Directors of the St. Mary River Irrigation District wish to change the expansion limit of the St. Mary River Irrigation District from 372,000 acres to 412,000 acres in conjunction with Section 12 of the *Irrigation Districts Act*.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED as a bylaw of the St. Mary River Irrigation District that:

1. Subject to requirements included in this bylaw and Section 12 of the *Irrigation Districts Act*, the expansion limit of the St. Mary River Irrigation District is changed from 372,000 acres to 412,000 acres.

2. The Board of Directors will review the expansion progress at the end of each irrigation season and if it is found to be too detrimental to the interests of the irrigators, the Board of Directors has the option of adjusting or delaying any further expansion within each block.

Read the first time this 26 day of January , A. D. 2011.

Read the second time this 26 day of January , A. D. 2011.

Read the third time this _____ day of _____, A. D. 2011.

Passed by the Board of Directors of the St. Mary River Irrigation District in accordance with Section 177 (5)(a) of the *Irrigation Districts Act*, Chapter I-11, R.S.A. 2000, this _____ day of _____, A. D. 2011.

Signed _____
Chairman

General Manager



ST. MARY RIVER IRRIGATION DISTRICT
BYLAW #R 2011-5

A Bylaw Respecting Capital Assets Charges.

WHEREAS, by Section 125 of the *Irrigation Districts Act*, "A Board may pass a bylaw imposing a Capital Assets Charge on parcels that have irrigation acres added to the Assessment Roll",

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ENACTED that:

1. All new parcels of land added to the assessment roll following an application in accordance with Section 84 of the *Irrigation Districts Act* or increases in acres to existing parcels of land in accordance with Section 96 of the *Irrigation Districts Act*, shall be assessed a charge to be known as a "Capital Assets Charge" in the amount of \$1,800.00 per acre for each new acre added to the Assessment Roll.
2. Prospective irrigators must enter into an agreement with the St. Mary River Irrigation District pursuant to Section 126 of the *Irrigation Districts Act* in respect to the total cost of new irrigation works to supply water to new parcels added to the assessment roll in accordance with Section 84 of the *Irrigation Districts Act*, or increases in acres to existing parcels of land added to the assessment roll in accordance with Section 96 of the *Irrigation Districts Act*.
3. The new irrigation works installed under Clause 2 shall be to standard approved by the Board and shall be completed by district forces or by a contractor approved by the General Manager and become the property of the District.
4. All accounts for Capital Assets Charges shall form an integral part of the collector's roll of the Board and shall be subject to the Sections of the *Irrigation Districts Act* regarding the collection and recovery of amounts on the collector's roll.
5. The total outstanding balance of each amount in the collectors roll shall be increased after the close of business December 31st and June 30th each year by a percentage interest charge at such rates as set by the Board of Directors each year.
6. Interest, calculated as per Clause 5 becomes due and payable on the interest dates specified in Clause 5.
7. Bylaw #R 2010-5 is rescinded as of the effective date of this bylaw.
8. This bylaw shall take effect on January 1, 2011.

Read the first time this 20 day of OCTOBER, A. D. 2010.

Read the second time this 20 day of OCTOBER, A. D. 2010.

Read the third time this 20 day of OCTOBER, A. D. 2010.

Passed by the Board of Directors in accordance with Section 177 of the *Irrigation Districts Act* this 20 day of OCTOBER, A. D. 2010.

Signed _____
Chairman

General Manager



“Irrigation District Act” Requirements

The following regulatory requirements govern the approval of an increase in an irrigation district’s expansion limit.

Irrigation Districts Act (c. I-11, RSA 2000)

Expansion Limit

- (1) The sum of the irrigation acres plus the acres subject to terminable agreements in a district must not exceed the expansion limit for that district.
- (2) Subject to subsection (3), the expansion limit for a district is:
 - (a) in the case of a district listed in Table 2 in the Schedule, the expansion limit specified in Table 2.
 - (b) in the case of a district that is formed after the coming into force of this Act, the expansion limit specified in the order under section 79(1)(a);
 - (c) in the case of an amalgamated district, the expansion limit specified in the order under section 79 (1)(c).
- (3) Notwithstanding subsection (2), a district may by by-law change the expansion limit.
- (4) If a district proposes to make a by-law under subsection (3), the board must:
 - (a) hold a meeting with the public, and
 - (b) by resolution, authorize the holding of a plebiscite to obtain the approval of the irrigators.
- (5) A board of a district, not less than 30 days before the board intends to consider a resolution referred to in subsection (4)(b), must give public notice of its intention to consider the resolution and the date, time and location of the meeting with the public.
- (6) The question that the plebiscite shall determine must be:
 - (a) in accordance with the regulations, and
 - (b) included in a resolution of the board of the district.
- (7) The provisions of Part 3 governing an election apply to the holding of a plebiscite unless otherwise provided by regulations under this Act:
- (8) The by-law referred to in subsection (3) is approved by plebiscite if more than 50% of the irrigators voting vote in favour of the by-law.
- (9) Notwithstanding subsection (4), the Minister may waive the requirements for a plebiscite under this section if the board establishes to the Minister’s satisfaction that
 - (a) the proposed change to the expansion limit will have no significant effect on the risk of water shortage to the irrigators of the district,or

- (b) the allocation of water licensed to the district under the Water Act has increased in an amount sufficient to service the number of acres in the proposed increased expansion limit.
- (10) The Minister may not waive the requirement for a plebiscite until the board has made information available to the public as required by the regulations and the meeting with the public referred to in subsection (4)(a) has been held.
- (11) Where the board gives public notice under section (5) it shall also give notice to Council.

ALBERTA REGULATION 79/2000
Irrigation Districts Act
IRRIGATION PLEBISCITE REGULATION

Public notice

- 1 (1) A public notice under sections 7(2), 11(2) and 12(5) of the Act must be in the form set out in the Schedule to this Regulation.
- (2) If a plebiscite is held under section 7, 11 or 12 of the Act, the board of a district must, at least once in each of the 2 weeks preceding the week during which the plebiscite is to be held, publish in a newspaper of general circulation in the district, a public notice in the form set out in the Schedule to this Regulation.

Public information respecting expansion limit

- 4 (1) Before a board of a district holds a meeting with the public as required under section 12(4)(a) of the Act, the board must make the following information available to the public:
 - (a) the volume of water allocated to the district under all of the district's existing water licences;
 - (b) the volume of water lost from canals and reservoirs;
 - (c) the return flow volume;
 - (d) the volume of water allocated under the district's water licenses for uses other than irrigation;
 - (e) the remaining volume of water available for crop use;
 - (f) the gross volume of water required per acre at the farm turnout for crops, including data on
 - (i) the average net depth of water required per acre,
 - (ii) the percentage of each crop type and,
 - (iii) the level of risk of a water shortage (deficit and frequency);
 - (g) the total acres that could be irrigated based on the calculations made under clause (f);
 - (h) the present expansion limit;
 - (i) the number of acres on the current assessment roll;

- (j) the proposed expansion limit;
 - (k) a description of the areas in the district where additional irrigation will be allowed if the district will not allow additional irrigation in all areas of the district.
- (2) The volumes of water specified in subsection (1) may be reported in acre feet or in cubic metres.
 - (3) If a board of a district intends to make a request to the Minister to waive the requirement for a plebiscite under section 12(9) of the Act, it must reveal its intention to make such a request both at the meeting with the public and in the information that is made available to the public.

Ballot

- 5 (1) A ballot must,
 - (c) for a plebiscite under section 12 of the Act,
 - (i) set out the present expansion limit,
 - (ii) state the estimated number of acres that could be irrigated with the water allocated under the present district water licences issued under the *Water Act*, and
 - (iii) set out the proposed expansion limit.
- (2) A ballot used in a plebiscite under section 7, 11 or 12 of the Act shall be in the form set out in the Schedule to this Regulation.

Form 3A
IRRIGATION DISTRICTS ACT
(Section 12)

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING
(name) IRRIGATION DISTRICT
CHANGE TO THE EXPANSION LIMIT

TAKE NOTICE that a public meeting will be held at (name and address of location) on the (date) day of (month, year) beginning at (time) o'clock in the (am/pm) to discuss a proposed change to the expansion limit of the (name) Irrigation District from the existing limit of (number) acres.

Additional information regarding this proposed change is available to the public at the offices of the district.

Date at (city/town), this (date) day of (month, year)
(name) Manager
(name) Irrigation District

Form 3B
IRRIGATION DISTRICTS ACT
(Section 12)

SAMPLE BALLOT

The (name) Irrigation District presently has an expansion limit of (number) acres. The Board of Directors has determined that (number) acres could be served with its existing water licence(s). The Board of Directors is seeking the approval of the irrigators to change the expansion limit to (number) acres.

Do you approve:

- Yes, I am in favour of changing the expansion limit to (number) acres.
- No, I am against changing the expansion limit.

Form 3C
IRRIGATION DISTRICTS ACT
(Section 12)

NOTICE OF PLEBISCITE
(name) IRRIGATION DISTRICT
PROVINCE OF ALBERTA

TAKE NOTICE that a plebiscite will be held for the purpose of seeking approval to the irrigators to change the expansion limit of the (name) Irrigation District from the existing limit of (number) acres to (number) acres.

Additional information regarding the proposed change is available to the public at the offices of the district.

The plebiscite will take place on the _____ day of _____, 20____, between the hours of (start time) and (closing time).

Voting stations will be located at:

Date at _____ of _____ in the Province of Alberta, this _____
_____ day of _____, 20____.

Figure 3

SMRID 2009 Crop Mix

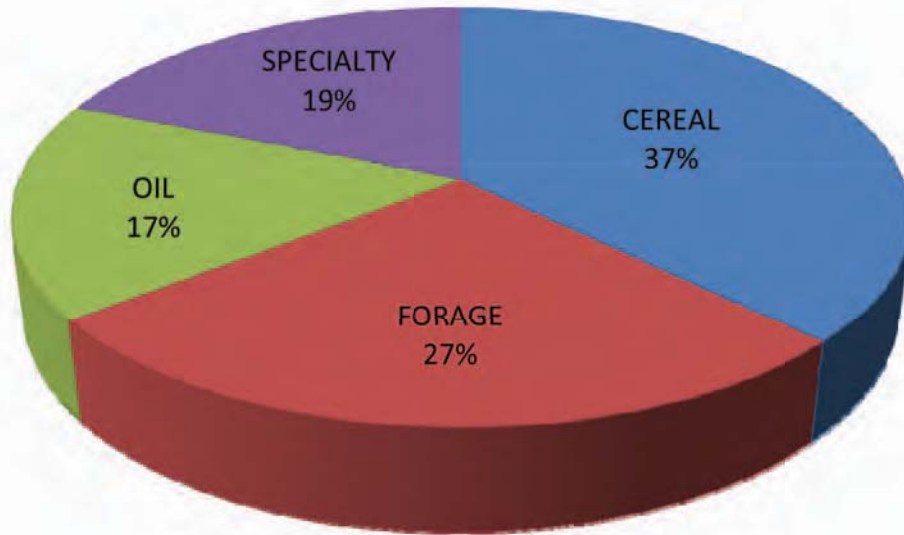


Figure 4

SMRID 2009 Irrigation Systems In Use

