

## **2006 Annual Meeting**

Our number one goal, as the field staff, is to make customer service our highest priority. You can now talk directly to your ditchrider by cell phone. (See contact numbers below.)

A well-defined maintenance program, identifying both immediate and long-term needs, is underway. In March of 2003 we began extensive ditch maintenance on the entire Deschutes lateral.

During the season we split the workload to allow each of us to learn the intricacies of half of the district's delivery system. The time we spent logging water measurements, cleaning screens and sheparding water gave us the opportunity to become familiar with each of our customers' needs. During this time we identified some problems in the delivery system that if corrected would allow us to enhance water delivery. We began replacing worn out weirs in an effort to more accurately track and manage water. During the remainder of the season we developed our plan for maintenance that would allow us to incrementally upgrade the delivery system.

With the completion of the irrigation season, we began concentrating on the long-term maintenance issues. We excavated the last 2 miles of the main canal, which water users indicated had not been accomplished in a decade. The job was finished, providing very good results during the first stock run in December.

In 2003 the district invested resources to line the canal near Glacier View. The lining stopped substantial leakage during the season. After the December winter stockwater run, we continued priority maintenance projects, including restoration of a long stretch of canal between Robal and Cooley Roads, a stretch that was almost inoperative due to an overgrowth of willows. After a week's work of tree removal by excavator, the job was completed in time for the January stockwater run.

That brings us to 2004. We anticipate completing the following projects prior to the irrigation season beginning April 5th: excavation of most of the Butte Lateral, most of the open ditch sections of the Kotzman Lateral, leakage and ditch road repair on the main canal on Bureau of Land Management property, shoring up of ditch banks on the main canal located at Vogt Road, and finally, repairing a section of pipe at the head of the Rogers Lateral.

In addition to the maintenance projects on tap, an added goal for 2004 is to establish an effective long-term weed management program for the district in an effort to reduce this noxious weed problem to an easily manageable level and allow better water flow in the canal system. A three-day seminar on aquatic weeds sponsored by Portland State University provided us with some planning tools.

Field staff also have been training in implementing GPS (global position strategy) in the field. How does this help? We will be able to assist water users in assuring that their water rights are protected by using them in the correct place on their property to match up with the state recorded water right. If there is a variance, staff can then work with the users to make corrections in the state record.

With the completion of these projects, John and I feel we can be even more effective to meet your needs in the 2004 season. Many thanks to all of you in assuring a successful 2003 season - we look forward to continuing to work with you.

Call us if you have a problem, we want to take care of your needs.

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